

Navy Family Study

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The Navy Family Study (NFS) was conducted by the Wellesley Centers for Women in collaboration with the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), under a contract with the U.S. Department of the Navy.

The Navy Family Study (NFS) was a longitudinal, prospective study of a sample of 530 Navy families referred to the Navy's Family Advocacy Program (FAP) for at least one of three types of family violence, parent-child sexual abuse (CSA) (18.5%), parent-child physical abuse (CPA)(38.9%), or spousal/partner violence (PV)(42.6%). This FAP sample of families was assessed soon after the report of family violence to FAP and evaluated at an additional three follow-up assessment points. Interviews commenced in March 1998, and continued to May 2004.

In the second part of the study, a comparison sample of 127 Navy families who had no history of being reported to FAP and who were matched on several important demographic variables to the FAP sample were recruited into the study and assessed on one occasion.

NAVY FAMILY STUDY GOALS

The Navy Family Study had several important goals.

Goal 1. Gather descriptive information about Navy families reported to FAP

Using in-person interviews and standardized assessment instruments, the NFS was designed to develop a descriptive profile of families reported to FAP. Information gathered includes victimization and other trauma history of all family members; history of familial and non-familial violence perpetration; marital and family history; personal history; history of previous FAP involvement; and Navy career history.

Goal 2. Gather descriptive data about FAP families over time

The NFS assessed the functioning of families for three years after a report to FAP for family violence. Information gathered over time included individual functioning of the family members (victims, offenders, non-offending parents/spouses); parent-child relationship functioning; marital/sexual functioning of parents; family life changes; recidivism for family violence; and functioning after FAP interventions.

Goal 3. Are the goals of the Navy Family Advocacy Program being achieved?

The NFS examined the type and level of services provided to families and any association between services received and outcomes. The NFS was designed to examine the extent to which the following FAP goals were achieved:

- Identify, assess, and intervene in cases of family violence, including spousal violence, child physical abuse, and child sexual abuse
- Provide information, referral, intervention, and treatment in cases of family violence
- Prevent future incidents of family violence
- Promote appropriate marital and parent-child relationships
- Help maintain healthy, safe, functioning Navy families

Goal 4. Prepare assessment instruments for use with FAP clients

The NFS developed and refined assessment instruments to be used in FAP practice settings. These include testing measures for screening for prior abuse, victimization, and trauma, assessing personal history, and diagnostic assessment.

FINDINGS FROM THE NAVY FAMILY STUDY

Two reports describing findings on the adult sample and the child sample are available here:

[Men and Women Referred to the Navy Family Advocacy Program: Violence, Mental Health and Assessment Services Received](#)

[The Navy's Future: Issues Related to Children Living in Families Reported to the Family Advocacy Program](#)