Strength at Home - Couple's Program

TARGET AUDIENCE
This program is for military couples, in which the male partner has been exposed to trauma, who are experiencing relationship problems.

SUMMARY
The Strength at Home - Couple's Program is a community-based program that is designed to prevent intimate partner violence (IPV) and improve relationship quality in military couples.

EVIDENCE
One pre-test post-test internal pilot study in a small sample demonstrated reductions in male Veteran-perpetrated mild physical IPV and mild and severe psychological IPV at a 6-month follow-up. In addition, there were also reductions in female partner-perpetrated physical IPV and mild and severe psychological IPV at the 6-month follow-up. Results from one internal randomized controlled trial demonstrated that intervention couples engaged in fewer acts of physical and psychological IPV at a follow up that was 12 months after program completion, compared to couples in a supportive prevention control group. There were no differences between groups in levels of relationship satisfaction.

COMPONENTS
This program intends to help prevent IPV by teaching participants conflict resolution skills and imparting information on how to enhance intimacy and relationship quality and improve communication skills. The program is conducted in a group format with three to five couples per group. Each session includes educational materials, group activities, practice of new behaviors, and discussion time for problem solving. Session topics are as follows:

- Session 1-3 Psychoeducation: Learn about post traumatic stress disorder and how exposure to trauma and separation during deployment can contribute to relationship problems; consider topics of trust, power and control, self-esteem and intimacy; discuss healthy relationship behaviors; specify treatment goals; and learn how to enhance positive relationship interactions;
- Session 4-6 Conflict management: Acquire skills to help identify and manage difficult situations; analyze individual conflict management style; assess personal behaviors for healthy and unhealthy responses to conflict;
- Session 7-9 Communication skills: Explore and practice communication skills, including active listening, identifying emotions, speaking assertively and expressing feelings; and
- Session 10: Examine positive progress and make plans for continued change and improvement.

PREVIOUS USE
Previous use information was not located.
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**TRAINING**

Sessions are delivered by one male and one female doctoral-level therapist. Training information was not located.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Considerations for implementing this program include acquiring participant buy-in and locating space to hold sessions.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

**IMPLEMENTATION**

If you are interested in implementing Strength at Home - Couple's Program, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you!

Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

**TIME**

This program consists of 2-hour sessions held weekly for 10 weeks.

**COST**

Cost information was not located.

**EVALUATION PLAN**

To move Strength at Home - Couple's Program to the Effective category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence, at least two evaluations with strong study designs, a representative sample, and demonstration of positive sustained effects must be performed. One of these studies must be conducted independently of the program developer.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals.

Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

**CONTACT**

Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program.

Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact Casey Taft by mail National Center for PTSD, Boston VA Medical Center (116B-4), 150 South Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02130 or email casey.taft@va.gov

**SOURCE**

Taft et al. (2014).