



Community Circles of Support  
for Veterans' Families

blue shield of california  
foundation

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## Blue Shield of California Foundation Community Circles of Support for Veterans' Families (CCSVF)

### Preventing Interpersonal Violence Initiative

Is the most current iteration of an ongoing multi-state, replicable and scalable demonstration project that addresses the need to provide services with a "no wrong point of entry" philosophy for the families and the OEF/OIF veteran, as well as geographically dispersed activated reserve and guard. Interpersonal violence (IPV) within military families can largely be attributed to combat-related PTSD or to a prior history of trauma. Military methods of conflict resolution are poorly suited to family life. By supporting new Community Circles for Veterans' Families nationally recognized tools including "Strength At Home" - a psycho-educational resource, that pairs the returning war fighter with a parent, sibling, or romantic partner, to community based providers in underserved communities, Blue shield of California Foundation is helping to prevent IPV and improve the resiliency of our veterans and their families.

#### Project Design

##### Goals

- **Prevent conflict** and IPV in military families where the war fighter has traumatic stress issues and relationship distress but no current violence.
- **Train community based clinicians** in manualized *Strength At Home* psycho-educational clinical intervention.
- **Educate the community** about the experiences of veterans and families enhancing referrals to *Strength At Home*.

##### Outcomes

Outcomes of the Community Circles of Support for Veterans' Families to prevent IPV include:

- **Improved relationship functioning** by reducing the impact of traumatic stress-related symptoms while improving their conflict management skills and extending those gains to other interpersonal relationships
- **Enhanced provider skills** to meet the needs of veterans' families.
- **Increased public and individual awareness** of experiences of veterans and their family members and available resources.

##### Measures/Metrics

The metrics for dyadic *Strength At Home*:

- Unique Identifiers assigned to each couple
- Pre and post intervention assessment
- Data analysis packaging results for publication in Peer Reviewed Journals
- Surveys to measure satisfaction with outreach activities and quantifying the number and type of participants.

##### Veterans with traumatic stress issues, compared to civilians, are:

- 3x more likely to be unemployed
- 2 x more likely to be divorced
- 3x rate of interpersonal violence & more severe

**A specialized group therapy for veterans' families.** The National Center partnered with Dr. Casey Taft, Associate Professor, Boston University School of Medicine, National PTSD Center and Boston VA Medical Center to tailor his *Strength At Home* psycho-educational group clinical intervention to specifically meet the needs of this Initiative.

**Specialized two day trainings for community based providers.** Specialized trainings involve educating community social services providers on the specific service needs of veterans with PTSD and TBI symptoms and their families, training providers in the manualized *Strength At Home* including out-of-session assignments.

**A Community Outreach Campaign** designed to increase public and individual awareness of the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform and their families as they serve our country and the range of responses to stressors that include combat-related experiences, family disruption & separation, and the strain of deployment and reintegration. Since IPV within military families is largely attributable to traumatic stress problems (PTSD & TBI) and prior history of trauma as well as military methods of conflict resolution that are poorly suited to family life, the community outreach campaign uses non-medical zed language to encourage military families at risk of IPV to seek help.

#### Who We Are

Established in 1988, **The National Center on Family Homelessness (NCFH)** is the nation's leading authority on the impact of trauma, poverty and homelessness on families and children. With a diverse team of researchers, social scientists, clinicians, and community organizers, NCFH designs innovative family-oriented programs that improve the lives of vulnerable families and strengthens the communities in which they live.



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON  
**Family Homelessness**  
*for every child, a chance*

#### Additional Funders

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#### Affiliations

