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Sixteen years! The Center for Deployment Psychology (CDP) was established 16 years ago with the help of the American Psychological Association with a mission to prepare active duty military psychologists to deploy and to provide effective garrison care for service members and their families. I joined the 14-person CDP team over 15 years ago. Recently a colleague looking at my curriculum vitae sarcastically suggested that I should think about finding something I am passionate about and sticking to it for a change. The interesting thing is that there are four employees who have been at CDP longer than me! There are 14 employees of our now 57 person team who have been at CDP for over 10 years. Even with our growth in recent years the average tenure of our team is 8+ years. This is a team with a passion for getting high quality training, education and support tools to behavioral health professionals and this shows the commitment of our team to our mission and to ensuring access to the highest quality behavioral health care for our service members, veterans and their families. This year we provided training and education to just under 10,000 military and civilian providers working with military-connected individuals. You will see the team’s passion and dedication to improving the lives of our service members, veterans, and their families reflected in the pages of this report.

Over the last 16 years we’ve had the honor of training over 96,000 behavioral health professionals, but our work is not done. We are expanding our ability to deliver evidence-based interventions for suicide prevention, such as lethal means safety counseling and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Suicide Prevention, and will surge our training capacity to meet the training needs of the Military Health System (MHS) in the coming years. We are engaging with social work training directors and bringing social workers to our Pathways to Military Internships training courses and we are learning lessons for tomorrow’s U.S. military through partnerships with Ukrainian behavioral health professionals as they support their troops and families today. The question now becomes what do we do to ensure the readiness of the next generation of behavioral health professionals? What are the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by the military behavioral health professional in future near-peer warfare? What tools do community providers need in order to care for veterans and their families over the next 20 years as the OIF/OEF generation ages? How do we expand the pipeline of behavioral health providers working in the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the general community? CDP is embarking on a strategic plan for 2023 to 2028 to address these questions and we look forward to engaging with you on our shared mission.

William Brim, Psy.D.
Executive Director, Center for Deployment Psychology
Mission
The mission of the CDP is to lead the development of a community of culturally mindful and clinically competent providers through the delivery of high-quality training and education, the convening of experts, and the dissemination of research-based treatment and the latest topics in military behavioral health.

Vision
CDP will be the central hub for the MHS in the development and implementation of behavioral health training and education to clinicians in order to ensure that all service members, veterans, and their families receive quality behavioral healthcare that meets their unique needs.

History
CDP is a tri-service consortium headquartered at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) in Bethesda, Maryland. Since 2006, CDP has remained an innovative education and training center, training thousands of behavioral healthcare professionals annually on topics including military culture, evidence-based psychotherapies (EBPs), suicide prevention, and much more. CDP has developed a portfolio of professional education programs to train and educate behavioral healthcare providers in the unique needs and challenges of treating service members, veterans, and their families. To date, CDP has trained over 96,000 professionals worldwide through over 100 training events annually.
CDP's very own Drs. William Brim and Andrea Israel were cited by name in the American Psychological Association Presidential Citation presented to Division 19: The Society for Military Psychology for their extraordinary support provided to the National Psychological Association of Ukraine (NPAU). Drs. Brim and Israel were recognized for how they swiftly brought together a range of resources for soldiers, military families, children, and healthcare providers caught up in the war following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Drs. Brim and Israel, and their colleagues not only provided these resources to NPAU, but they also adapted them to social media microlearning components to facilitate transfer between professionals and civilians in the highly fluid context of the invasion. As the war continued and additional support was needed, Drs. Brim and Israel, along with other members, provided materials to assist in intervening with acute stress, supporting military family needs, and implementing child-focused programs. They collaborated with Project ECHO®, a University of New Mexico initiative to empower local communities to access expert knowledge, to develop and implement training specifically for hospital providers confronted with the myriad needs of soldiers and families facing the physical and emotional consequences of wartime trauma. The Presidential Citation recognized their active provision of assistance to NPAU and the Ukrainian people, for their generosity of spirit, for their flexibility and openness, for their innovation and creativity, and for their potentially generational impact.
CDP trained a total of 9,923 providers and professionals in both live and asynchronous trainings to provide quality care for service members, veterans and their families.

A total of 1,940 participants attended “CDP Presents,” a monthly live webinar series that covers various topics including the unique needs of military families, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) treatment approaches, and technology and telehealth.

CDP trained 2,833 providers in EBPs via multi-day intensive workshops.

3,664 participants attended a CDP-supported Star Behavioral Health Providers tier training workshop.
Ukraine Healthcare Provider Support

CDP responded to two requests to facilitate Ukrainian providers’ use of evidence-based, trauma-informed behavioral health practices in armed conflict settings involving both military and civilian (including pediatric) populations. In March 2022, CDP led a collaborative effort with Division 19 of the American Psychological Association and a colleague from the National Center for PTSD to develop microlearnings to support behavioral health service provision in crisis and acute stress situations. Materials reached the National Psychological Association of Ukraine within days of the initial request, and were supplemented by a website developed with materials on specific topics in trauma-informed care.

Continuing a trend in relevant, impactful, and timely offerings, CDP also participated in a Project ECHO® (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) Armed Conflict Trauma Training series that was requested by the Ukrainian Ministry of Health and co-facilitated with the Swiss Foundation for Innovation. CDP developed and delivered 16 microlearning didactics on trauma-informed behavioral health topics to Ukrainian medical providers, who indicated that the information greatly enhanced their ability to care for military and civilian (adult and pediatric) patients in a pre-hospital conflict zone. Across all activities, CDP was able to uniquely integrate expertise on military psychology, trauma-informed care, and specialization in the delivery of care to families and youth. As a result of successful contributions in this global space, CDP has been approached by other international organizations to deliver training and education to Ukrainian providers. Further, CDP has started dissemination of lessons learned via formal and informal mechanisms, including presentations at professional conferences.

Strategic Planning Working Group

CDP leadership established an internal Strategic Planning Working Group with the primary goal of identifying the anticipated behavioral health needs among service members, veterans, and their families in the next two to three years and resources required to respond to these needs. The working group connected with current and potential CDP stakeholders (i.e., DoD leaders, military and civilian DoD organizations) as well as current CDP employees. The process provided a wealth of information on the future needs of military behavioral health training across the DoD. The information gathered will be utilized to inform upcoming CDP programming and strategic plans.
Targeted Assessment and Clinic-Tailored Implementation of Change Strategies

CDP’s five-year collaborative research project, the Targeted Assessment and Clinic-Tailored Implementation of Change Strategies (TACTICS) study, has come to a close. CDP and its partners aimed to leverage the latest dissemination and implementation science strategies to help Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) improve their ability to use EBPs for PTSD, particularly Prolonged Exposure therapy (PE). Project staff are now involved with data analysis for the primary outcomes; however, there were two early publications submitted in 2022. The article, “Barriers and potential solutions to implementing evidence-based PTSD treatment in military treatment facilities” was published in the Journal of Military Medicine and a second article “Policy recommendations for increasing the use of evidence-based psychotherapy for PTSD in the military health system” was recently accepted by the Journal of Military Medicine.

Mobile Stress and Anger Management Tool

In 2022, CDP published findings from a research project that investigated the effectiveness of a novel wearable technology/software package on the reduction of symptoms of stress and anger. CDP partnered with Design Interactive (DI) to investigate DI’s wearable technology platform called Mobile Stress and Anger management Tool (MSAT). This IRB approved study was conducted at Brooke Army Medical Center. The results from this study demonstrated the feasibility of pairing data-driven mobile applications like MSAT with cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) in vulnerable populations, leading to an improvement in therapy compliance and a reduction in symptoms compared to CBT treatment alone. Results were presented at the American Psychological Association’s annual conference in 2022 in a presentation entitled, “Wearable technology and the warfighter: Clinical practice and performance optimization applications”. These findings were also published in an article in the peer-reviewed journal Frontiers in Digital Health.
DoD Collaboration Study

In collaboration with the Kennedy Krieger Institute, CDP continued a study investigating the feasibility and best practices for enhancing and expanding capabilities to deliver telehealth services to military children with developmental, emotional, and behavioral health needs. Currently, service members can enroll any dependent with special needs into the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP). This enrollment leads to restrictions where they can be stationed, as they must be located near a medical team that can provide optimal care. In 2022, the team completed a Defense Health Agency (DHA) supported needs assessment looking at provider and other support professionals’ needs for training and education in working with military-connected children and families. The team is analyzing the needs assessment results, with preliminary data guiding the development of tele-education and tele-mentoring efforts.

The study is using the Project ECHO® model to help meet these needs by connecting geographically dispersed civilian experts in childhood neurobehavioral disorders with military healthcare providers (i.e., pediatricians, family medicine providers, behavioral providers) on-site in the MTF and community-based providers near the installation. The team completed five sessions of the Military Child ECHO with participants from the state of Georgia in 2022; these sessions will continue in 2023. Also, CDP has developed three asynchronous trainings: 1) Military Kids & Families Know the Drill; 2) Actionable Intel: Essentials in Military Cultural Competence; and 3) Strengthening the Homefront: A Tactical Toolkit for Deployment. CDP held thirteen informal and formal meetings with prominent military family organizations to discuss the state of military children and families and the ongoing needs of this important population. Key staff from these organizations have been invited to a convening meeting in May 2023. The team has also collaborated with DHA to identify DoD stakeholders working with military children and families for a second convening meeting in August 2023 to determine the service-level needs to assist in providing evidence-based care for military children and families.

Convening Experts, Disseminating Best Practices

CDP hosted its second annual EBP conference April 19-21 with the theme, “Making Space For Change: Focusing on Process in Evidence-Based Treatment.” Speakers included top national experts in EBPs and psychotherapy processes, with the keynote address presented by Dr. Kirk Strosahl, “Process-based Therapy: The Future of Evidence-Based Practice.” New this year, the conference included speakers selected from presentation proposals in addition to invited presenters, and a new virtual poster-session during the lunch break with posters also selected from proposals. The 2022 conference again offered supplemental pre-conference EBP training workshops to 91 providers across three topics: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Suicide Prevention, and PE. Over 130 participants attended the main conference day. Planning has commenced for CDP’s third annual EBP Conference, to be held in May 2023.
Second Life Island to Prevent Suicide

In 2021, CDP was awarded an intramural grant to develop and test an asynchronous, virtual learning experience in Second Life to train behavioral health providers in suicide prevention. The first phase of the project was completed in 2022 and consisted of the development and construction of the Second Life Island to Prevent Suicide (SLIPS). The virtual environment provides behavioral health providers a unique opportunity to extend their learning from a standard didactic two-day training workshop in suicide prevention skills into an interactive, experiential learning experience. CDP started the second phase of the project in 2022, which is evaluating the effectiveness of the immersive, interactive environment to improve practical clinical skills, as demonstrated in expert-rated simulated clinical interactions with standardized patients. To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the utility of immersive training for behavioral health professionals and may increase our understanding of effective training strategies for EBPs.

DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office

CDP continued working with the DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (DoD SAPRO) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Victim Services Division (FBI VSD) to develop training materials and assessment tools to enhance the capabilities of these federal agencies to serve victims of crime. This involves creation of a 5-day training curriculum which will be used to train all DoD and FBI victim advocates and victim specialists in the encounter skills necessary to work successfully with vulnerable populations. This training curriculum will integrate breakout exercises, rating scales for assessing skill acquisition, and numerous handouts for participants. The project also involves CDP and SAPRO/FBI VSD creating a needs assessment tool for personnel to better assess and connect victims with relevant resources, as well as a tool to assess victim’s satisfaction with the services they receive from the victim advocates or victim specialists. During 2022, CDP has successfully met milestones for this project, receiving excellent feedback from our collaborators on the deliverables submitted to date, which includes three separate literature reviews, drafts of the Victim Satisfaction Survey and Victim Needs Assessment tools. CDP staff are finalizing the training curriculum and materials for the 5-day Encounter Skills course, in collaboration with SAPRO/FBI VSD.
Pathways to Military Internships: The Summer and Winter Institutes

Since 2015, CDP has hosted an intensive five-day course, Pathways to Military Internships: The Summer Institute, at USU to foster clinical and counseling psychology doctoral students’ interest in a military psychology career. Each summer, students from across the U.S. and U.S. territories come together to explore the opportunities offered by military internships and gain knowledge on the various roles of psychologists in the Armed Forces. In 2022, CDP introduced its inaugural three-day virtual Winter Institute to expand this unique training opportunity to more doctoral students by offering a condensed version of the curriculum online and at a different time during the year. Thirty-six students attended the Winter Institute, and 20 attended the Summer Institute, with 56 students completing the Pathways program in 2022.

Designed to enhance students’ competitiveness for an active duty military internship placement, both the Summer and Winter Institutes require no tuition cost and cover similar topics including military culture, the roles of military psychologists, the military family experience, and ethical considerations when treating military members. Student feedback about both institutes was extremely positive this year with all participants providing an overall rating of excellent or good for the program as well as reporting their overall interest in pursuing a military-focused career in psychology increased significantly. As one student reflected, “That was a life changing experience! Every session I have learned so much more about topics that I had limited knowledge of. I fell in love with a branch that I knew nothing about before, but now I’m ready to go home and start this process of applying to a new branch.” The CDP anticipates reaching a larger and more diverse applicant pool in 2023 by offering both institutes again.
Military Internship Support

Since its inception in 2006, CDP has provided a wide range of support to DoD’s behavioral health internship training programs. In 2022, the CDP’s Military Internship Support Team (MIST) expanded its support to a greater number of MTF based training programs, including all social work internship sites and a limited number of psychiatry residencies. CDP personnel routinely coordinate with training directors (TDs) from all services to identify needs and work to create resources for these programs. Example resources include didactic training materials and webinars, consultation in EBPs for PTSD and other conditions, as well as coordination with DoD TDs to ensure that military interns and residents have early access to CDP’s EBP training workshops. Through MIST, CDP also expanded the Training Resource Library (TRL), a repository of didactic materials and other training enhancement tools accessible to DoD psychology and social work training faculty.

Training in Brief Behavioral Treatment of Insomnia and Suicide Prevention

In 2022, CDP expanded its collaboration with DHA by providing training and consultation to Behavioral Health Consultants (BHCs) in primary care clinics across the Army, Air Force, and Navy. In addition to six 1.5-day workshops in Brief Behavioral Treatment of Insomnia (BBTI), CDP offered eight one-day workshops in Suicide Prevention. Suicide and sleep disturbance continue to be important areas of focus across the DoD. CDP trained a total of 192 BHCs in 2022 in one or both of these evidence-based interventions.
Veterans Affairs Civilian Training

CDP has partnered with the VA to train civilian behavioral health providers working with veterans in military culture, assessment of PTSD, and suicide risk assessment. A large proportion of U.S. veterans live far from VA hospitals and other VA-affiliated treatment facilities, and often receive behavioral healthcare from private-sector providers and health systems. This two-day training workshop prepares civilian providers unaffiliated with the VA to be military-culturally competent in assessing two of the most pressing behavioral health concerns among veterans (PTSD and suicide) with recommendations for further training for EBPs to treat each condition. A total of 243 providers were trained in 2022.

Star Behavioral Health Providers

Star Behavioral Health Providers (SBHP) is a tier-based training and provider referral program offering continuing education to civilian behavioral health providers at no cost. Developed by CDP and the Military Family Research Institute (MFRI) at Purdue University, SBHP enhances community providers’ military cultural awareness and skills for treating service members, veterans and their families. SBHP also maintains an online registry to make it easy for military-connected clients and referring professionals to find trained local providers.

Through continued funding from the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and other partners in 2022, SBHP is currently offered in 32 states (see the green states below), with seven new states added in October (Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Michigan, North Dakota, and Wisconsin). This year, SBHP delivered 70 tier (Tier One, Tier Two, and Tier Three) and sustainment trainings to a total of 3,887 attendees. Presently, there are 1,527 providers listed on the SBHP registry with 42% accepting Tricare and 60% offering telehealth services.
PARTNERS

CDP partners with various DoD as well as with public and private entities in order to support and train behavioral health providers working with service members, veterans, and their families. We maintain close communication with the DoD community in order to best meet the specialized needs of the military services. See below for an abbreviated list of some of our recent and ongoing partnerships and activities:

Defense Health Agency

Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office Program Partners

- Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office
- Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Victim Services Division

Kennedy Krieger Institute

Second Life Island to Prevent Suicide

- 2b3d Studios

Star Behavioral Health Providers Partners

- Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University
- National Guard Bureau
- Ohio State University
- Oregon National Guard
- U.S. Army Reserve

TACTICS Study Partners

- Palo Alto Veterans Institute for Research/National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
- South Texas Research Organizational Network Guiding Studies on Trauma and Resilience/University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
- University of Washington
- University of Texas at Austin
- Social Sciences Innovations, Corp.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Scholarly Contributions

In 2022, CDP continued developing high quality contributions to scholarship in a number of creative ways. CDP subject matter experts (SMEs) contributed scholarly works to peer reviewed journals (see the publications page) and presented at a variety of professional conferences (see the scholarly presentations page). CDP’s Speakers Bureau program also allowed both civilian and DoD organizations to request presentations from CDP on a variety of topics. CDP SMEs also contributed to weekly blogs on a variety of military-related behavioral health topics to include: seasonal affective disorder, provider resilience, misconceptions about sleep, military couples communication, suicide prevention, and many more.

Additionally, season two of the “Practical for Your Practice” podcast, a bi-weekly podcast hosted by CDP’s SMEs was completed featuring collegial conversations with expert guests, stories, ideas, support, and actionable intel to empower behavioral health providers to keep working toward implementing EBPs with fidelity and effectiveness. CDP’s podcast audience and reach continues to grow, as it is now hosted on 24 different podcast platforms and to date has had over 4,800 cumulative plays.

Finally, CDP’s monthly webinar series (CDP Presents) completed another successful year of timely and relevant presentations for all behavioral health providers, especially those working with service members and veterans. Approximately 2,000 providers participated across the eleven webinars in 2022, which are archived and available for viewing on CDP’s website.
SCHOLARLY PRESENTATIONS
(Names in bold represent CDP Personnel)


Heflin, K., & Israel. A. (June 2022). Strengthening the homefront: A tactical toolkit targeting key factors during deployment [Presentation]. 2022 Military Psychology Summit of APA Division 19, virtual meeting, United States.


PUBLICATIONS
(Names in bold represent CDP Personnel)


* These publications were noted on the 2021 list when they were published online. The print publications have now been released and the 2022 information reflects the full citation (online pub in 2021; print pub in 2022).

+ These publications are abstracts published as supplements in a journal following presentation at a scientific conference.