

# Children's Rights

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**<https://www.childrensrights.org/child-abuse-in-army-families-rises-40-percent-whats-being-done-to-stop-it/>**

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

An investigation by the Army Times found 3,698 reported cases of child abuse and neglect in Army families last year, a staggering 40 percent increase from 2009. According to a [Huffington Post report](#), the military has yet to come up with an explanation for the increase. Meanwhile, the cases of horrific child abuse and neglect keep mounting:

**John E. Jackson, 37, a U.S. Army major and his wife, Carolyn, 35, were charged in May with unimaginable cruelty to children, NBC Philadelphia reported. The two allegedly abused their three adopted and three biological children, but the adopted kids bore the brunt of the torture.**

**According to the news source, the parents forced their kids to eat hot sauce, withheld water, broke the kids bones and told their biological children that such practices were a form of training, and that they should not tell anyone about the horrors they witnessed.**

Some of these cases are even unfolding on Army bases, as was the case with Pvt. Connell Williams family. Williams and his girlfriend killed one of her two children while living in Army housing:

**It was there that Williams and his girlfriend starved Marcus, beat him with a bat and forced the little boy to march around wearing 50-60 pounds of gear, according to court documents obtained by the news outlet.**

**Marcus died on May 5, 2011, weighing just 44 pounds.**

The U.S. Army Family Advocacy Program offers seminars, workshops, counseling and intervention services to prevent such tragedies, and the Army is building child and behavioral health centers at major bases. However, significant obstacles stand in the way of more being done about this worsening problem.

While there has been pressure on the Army to resolve domestic violence issues, that is not the case with child abuse, according to Dr. Rene Robichaux, a social work programs manager at Army Medical Command. Further complicating matters is that many cases of child abuse and neglect in the Army go unreported.

The stigma and career damage that can come with reporting such cases is one reason why, according to Jeanette Werby, Commander, Navy Region Southeast counseling and advocacy coordinator. She adds that it is the Army's responsibility to take the lead on protecting the children of Army families:

**Raising awareness about child abuse underscores that the problem is still here and so are the people who care about its resolution, Werby said. Those in leadership roles set the tone and course for awareness, response and intervention.**

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