

Prevention: Stuttgart's ACS drives activities for April's Child Abuse, Sexual Assault Prevention Months

By Brittany Carlson

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The total well-being of service members and their families is critical to the military community, and preventing abuse is one of many ways that Army Community Service is seeking to improve quality of life in U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart.

ACS will host a variety of programs in April, which is both Sexual Assault Prevention Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month, to promote education and awareness on similar services offered year-round.

Sexual assault prevention

According to the Defense Department's Sexual Assault Statistical Report for fiscal year 2010, there were 1,390 unrestricted reports and 299 restricted reports of sexual assault in the Army during FY2010, an eight percent decrease from FY09. However, only 33 percent of service members have a propensity to report assault, the report states.

"This is obviously an issue. We see that DOD-

wide. We see that world-wide," said Mariana Graupmann, the contracted victim advocate coordinator for the garrison.

In USAG Stuttgart, there are very few reports of sexual assault, said Graupmann, who handles reports for adults ages 18 and over. However, one instance of assault is one too many.

"Our numbers are low here, but that doesn't mean that nothing's happening," she said.

To heighten community awareness of sexual assault, ACS will host a "Denim Day," event April 27, in which community members support sexual assault victims by wearing jeans. Denim Day originated in protest to a 1999 Italian High Court decision to overturn a rape charge because the victim was wearing tight jeans, which the court stated could not have been removed without the victim's help.

"As a community, we're getting an opportunity to talk about sexual assault and raise awareness on that day," Graupmann said.

The community event builds on the annual sexual

assault prevention training Graupmann provides to service members. The training defines sexual assault and describes the different types of reporting available to victims. It also focuses on bystander intervention.

"Even if they themselves aren't the victim, they will know someone who is," Graupmann said. The training focuses on "being able to identify high-risk behavior [and] knowing what sexual assault is, so that you can intervene."

ACS also provides youth-oriented training throughout the year.

Joneila Henselman, ACS Family Advocacy Program educator, conducts a teen dating violence program for Stuttgart middle and high school students.

"It's great that they have the opportunity to reflect on healthy relationships and say, 'Yea, that's what I want to be a part of — that's what I want to actively look for,'" Henselman said.

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Sea Gals, Bryan Ricci visit USAG Stuttgart



Comedian Bryan Ricci acts as master of ceremonies for the Seattle Sea Gals show March 27 before performing himself.



Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony M. Bryant (left), garrison command sergeant major, and a Stuttgart community member stretch with a Seattle Sea Gal and the Seattle Seahawks' mascot, Blitz, during the Armed Forces Entertainment show at the Patch Community Club March 27.



Photos by Steve Roark

USAG Stuttgart community member Tilaya Lyons (front center), 4, poses with the Seattle Sea Gals following their performance March 27 at the Patch Community Club. The Seattle Sea Gals and Bryan Ricci were on a two-week tour of Germany and the United Kingdom.

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Are you ready for PCS season?

Experts advise preparing for a permanent change of station move months in advance. Keep your security deposit (and sanity) with these moving tips.



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Growing up on the wrestling mat

Child, Youth and School Services wrestling has a strong following in the Stuttgart military community—in part because so many parents believe in the lessons it teaches their kids.

