"It's On Us" - NAMRU San Antonio Women Learn how to Fight Sexual Assault with Self-Defense Skills | Navy Medicine



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"It's On Us" – NAMRU San Antonio Women Learn how to Fight Sexual Assault with Self-Defense Skills

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The Navy's goal is to eliminate sexual assault by fostering a culture of prevention.

By Flisa Stevenson, NAMRU San Antonio

Women staff from the Naval Medical Research Unit San Antonio (NAMRU-SA) embraced the theme "Eliminate Sexual Assault: Know Your Part, Do Your Part." They were taught Krav Maga strategies to protect and defend themselves in an attack or abduction situation, during the annual "Dangerously Cute" self-defense seminar that occurred earlier this year and benefits the local Rape Crisis Center

The command's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) coordinator Melanie Friesenhahn, organizes the command's participation in the women's only event each year with one goal –preventing and responding to sexual assault.

More than 200 women from the San Antonio area attended the personal protection training and were taught a variety of Krav Maga defense techniques to ward off attackers or potential abductors.

For some NAMRU-SA women, this is their second training event. They returned this year to strengthen the skills they first learned last August.

Friesenhahn said, "Repeating the seminar each year helps women stay strong, confident, and safe by raising awareness about sexual assault and by providing a 'real-life' self-defense skill

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to help women fight sexual assault."

Krav Maga, which means 'contact combat' in Hebrew, is a self-defense system developed for the military in Israel that focuses on neutralizing aggression and threat with a wide combination of effective and efficient counter-attack techniques.

Krav Maga also strives for maximum versatility because you actually defend and attack simultaneously to quickly get yourself out of danger.

The workshop instructor informed participants to first be aware of their surroundings and be prepared to react effectively. Before the workshop ended, each woman had the opportunity to test her response skills.

One at a time participants were brought to the middle of the floor, and asked to close their eyes to simulate the disadvantaged position of not knowing they would be "attacked."

At the sound of the instructor's whistle, a male trainer dressed in padding attempted to either pick up and abduct the woman from behind or attack and choke her from the front.

All who participated used their new skills efficiently and effectively, and walked away from the training confident and empowered.

The Navy's goal is to eliminate sexual assault by fostering a culture of prevention. During the month NAMRU-SA also participated in "Drive Out Sexual Assault" Golf Tournament and 'Eliminate Sexual Assault: Know Your Part, Do Your Part!' 5K Run/Walk.

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