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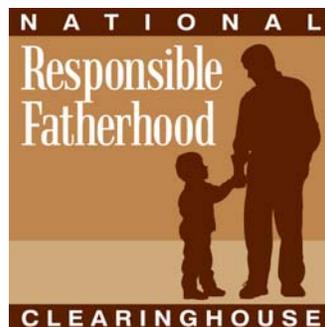
Promising Practices in Self-Sufficiency & Employment Programs for Fathers: Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed Research Findings

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INTRODUCTION

Men who are experiencing financial hardships or problems with employment often encounter difficulties with becoming responsible fathers (Kotloff, 2005). In the last few decades, the United States has experienced a decline in the availability of employment opportunities for unskilled males, yet few policies or programs are aimed at helping such men support their families (Bronte-Tinkew, Bowie, & Moore, 2007; Edin & Nelson, 2001; Kasarda, 1989; Wilson, 1996). Although all fathers may face difficulties with financial hardship and employment problems, young fathers and nonresident fathers (i.e. fathers who do not reside with their children) are particularly vulnerable, as they are more likely to have low levels of education and job experience, to be in poor health, to have a history of involvement with the criminal justice system, to earn low hourly wages, and to work fewer hours (The Future of Children, 2004). A lack of employment opportunities is of particular concern because the lack of stable employment and adequate income limits fathers' ability to financially support children, including difficulty making child support payments (Sorenson & Lerman, 1998). Studies show that fathers often want to provide financial support to their children, but lack the means to do so (National Women's Law Center, 2004). While some programs do exist to help fathers gain stable employment, increase their incomes, and make child support payments, few fathers are currently served by such programs (Bronte-Tinkew, Bowie, & Moore, 2007; (Bronte-Tinkew, Burkhauser, Mbwana, Metz, & Collins, 2008; Bronte-Tinkew, Burkhauser, & Metz, 2008) Johnson, Levine, & Doolittle, 1999). The current review examines a number of employment/self-sufficiency programs for fathers that have been evaluated and that can begin to answer the following questions: *What practices have been found to be successful in programs aimed at increasing self-sufficiency and employment among low-income fathers? What matters? What really works?* This review helps to begin answering these questions more definitively.

It is important, however, to note the limitations of this review. Research on "what works" in fatherhood programs is still in its earliest stages. To date, few self-sufficiency/employment-based fatherhood programs have been evaluated and even fewer have undergone rigorous (i.e., experimental) evaluations. Due to limitations such as small sample sizes, lack of comparison groups, inappropriate statistical analyses, and limited outcome measures, most of the programs included in this review have not been rated "model" programs. That said, there is still much to be learned from examining program practices across successful programs that have adhered to specific evaluation research criteria as are described below.

MAKING THE CASE FOR FATHER SELF-SUFFICIENCY/EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Financial security and employment stability have important implications for fathers' individual well-being, their involvement with children, family structure, and child outcomes. Unemployment and financial hardship have adverse effects on fathers' mental health, often causing high levels of stress and psychological problems such as depression, low self-esteem, and feelings of hopelessness (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Kagan & Levi, 1975; Kasl & Cobb, 1979; Meyer & Lobao, 2003; Patten et al., 2006; Smith, Buzi, Weinman, & Mumford, 2001; Thomas, Benzeval, & Stansfeld, 2005; Bronte-Tinkew, Horowitz, & Carrano, 2009). Such problems may arise in part because unemployed men or men with low incomes experience distress at being unable to fulfill their expected role as provider to their children (Menaghan, 1989). Even among employed fathers, conditions such as job insecurity (i.e., uncertainty about whether the job will exist in the future) can also lead to psychological distress (Burchell, 1994; De Witte, 1999; Oropen, 1993; Roskies, Louis-Guerin, & Fournier, 1993). In addition to its psychological effects, unemployment and low income can also negatively impact men's physical health, leading to higher body mass index, decreases in exercise and the consumption of healthy foods, and higher rates of smoking (Novo, Hammarstrom, & Janlert, 2001; Wadsworth, Montgomery, & Bartley, 1999). Such psychological and physical impairments are especially pronounced among fathers who experience long-term unemployment, job insecurity, or financial distress (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Morrison, O'Connor, Morrison, & Hill, 2001).

The level and quality of a father's involvement with his children are also affected by financial instability and unemployment. Negative work experiences, unemployment, and financial hardship may lead

to stress, which has been found to be associated with poorer parenting behaviors, such as harsher and less responsive parenting, inconsistent discipline, lower levels of nurturing, and higher levels of child abuse (Almeida, Wethington, & Chandler, 1999; McLoyd, 1989; Rosenthal, 1988; Short & Johnston, 1997; Stewart & Barling, 1996). Nonresident fathers who lack stable employment and financial security are more likely to be absent from their children's lives and to exhibit low-quality parenting behaviors if they are involved (Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1999; Coley & Hernandez, 2006; Landale & Oropesa, 2001; Sullivan, 1989). This is particularly true among young disadvantaged fathers and African-American fathers (Danziger & Radin, 1990; Gavin, Black, Minor, Abel, Papas, & Bentley, 2002). In addition, nonresident fathers who pay child support show higher levels of involvement with their children, suggesting that fathers who are unable to provide such support are at risk for becoming uninvolved in their children's lives (Seltzer, 1991). Evidence also suggests that mothers may serve as "gatekeepers" and restrict access to children if nonresident fathers are unable to provide financial support, thus prohibiting financially insecure men from seeing their children even if they want to be involved (Arendell, 1996). On the other hand, stable (i.e., consistent and legal) employment and increased job opportunities appear to foster high levels of positive father involvement, perhaps because such employment fosters more mainstream values about fathering or because receipt of a steady income enables men to better meet the role of provider (Danziger & Radin, 1990; Waldo & Cina, 2007). In fact, some studies suggest that many fathers want to be more involved in their children's lives but feel they lack the economic opportunities that would enable them to be good parents (Anderson, 1999; Sullivan, 1993).

Employment and financial stability also have implications for men's family formation patterns. Men who are unemployed or who experience financial hardship are less likely to enter into marriage and more likely to experience marital distress and/or dissolution if they are married (Atkinson, Liem, & Liem, 1986; Danziger & Radin, 1990; Elder, Conger, Foster, & Ardel, 1992). Thus, efforts to increase fathers' self-sufficiency may play a key role in reducing rates of single-mother households (Sullivan, 1989).

Finally, paternal financial instability and job insecurity/unemployment may have both direct and indirect effects on children's well-being. Numerous studies point to positive links between fathers' employment status and children's cognitive development (see Amato, 1998). In addition, behavioral problems are higher among young children when fathers work fewer hours (Parcel & Menaghan, 1994). Middle-school children whose fathers experience a job loss are at increased risk of engaging in risky behaviors such as smoking (Unger, Hamilton, & Sussman, 2004). Fathers may exhibit less positive parenting behaviors as a result of job or financial instability, which may lead to children acting out or experiencing lower levels of self-efficacy (Stewart & Barling, 1996; Whitbeck, Simons, Conger, Wickrama, Ackley, & Elder, 1997). On the other hand, children of fathers who have positive work experiences may exhibit more positive parenting skills, which may result in increases in children's self-efficacy (Whitbeck et al., 1997). In addition, poverty itself has been associated with negative influences on children's well-being. Children in poor households are at risk for numerous negative outcomes, including high mortality rates, low birthweight, greater risk of injuries, higher rates of asthma and chronic illness, lower educational attainment, lower IQ, poorer language proficiency, higher rates of internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems, higher rates of substance abuse, and higher rates of teen pregnancy and childbearing (Aber, Bennett, Conley, & Li, 1997; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997). Thus, the inability of fathers to provide adequate financial resources to their children is likely to negatively affect children's development.

Together, this evidence suggests that programs aimed at improving fathers' self-sufficiency and employment opportunities may have important benefits for fathers, their partners, and their children. In addition, qualitative studies have found that employment assistance is the service most frequently requested from men enrolled in fatherhood programs, suggesting that there is a desire for such programs in addition to a need (Smith, Buzi, Weinman, & Mumford, 2001; Weinman, Smith, & Buzi, 2002). Furthermore, as evidenced in this review, several programs have demonstrated success in increasing fathers' employment and earning, suggesting that programmatic efforts in this arena are warranted.

Program developers recognize that low-income fathers have a variety of needs, and many programs designed for unemployed or financially insecure fathers incorporate a number of component, including job

search/placement assistance, résumé preparation help, career counseling, training/educational opportunities, referral services, and occasionally, post-employment services. Although some of the programs included in the current review focused exclusively on increasing fathers' employment and earnings, some also included additional activities such as improving parenting skills and contact with children. Regardless, all of the programs reviewed were designed to improve the lives of low-income fathers and their families. As a group, self-sufficiency and employment programs for fathers tend to focus on a number of outcomes related to self-sufficiency:

- **Employment:** Virtually all self sufficiency programs for fathers include employment as a key outcome. Programs aim to help unemployed fathers obtain part- or full-time jobs or to assist employed fathers with obtaining better, higher-paying, more stable jobs. Men who experience problems with employment often encounter difficulties with becoming responsible fathers (Kotloff, 2005). Unemployment and job insecurity are associated with poorer physical and mental health outcomes for fathers, including anxiety and depression (Meyer & Lobao, 2003; Novo et al., 2001; Patten et al., 2006; Smith et al., 2001; Thomas, Benzeval, & Stansfeld, 2005). Among nonresident fathers, unemployment is associated with lower levels of involvement with children, a decreased likelihood of paying child support, and higher rates of father absenteeism (Danziger & Radin, 1990; Johnson, 2001). Unemployment may be associated with less positive parenting behaviors (McLloyd, 1989), which may in turn lead to increases in child behavioral problems (Parcel & Menaghan, 1994; Unger, Hamilton, & Sussman, 2004). (McLloyd, 1989) Thus, fatherhood programs that can successfully improve employment outcomes for teen fathers have the potential to improve not only the lives of these fathers but also child support compliance (Turner & Sorenson, 1997), father involvement (Danziger & Radin, 1990), and child well-being (Argys, Peters, Brooks-Gunn, & Smith, 1998; Greene & Moore, 2000).
- **Income:** Another major goal of father self-sufficiency programs is to help fathers increase their incomes or earnings. Most programs aim to do this by providing job training, educational opportunities, and other resources to help unemployed and underemployed fathers obtain jobs that provide a living wage. Higher income is associated with better father health (Meyer & Lobao, 2003; Novo et al., 2001; Patten et al., 2006; Smith et al., 2001; Thomas, Benzeval, & Stansfeld, 2005), higher levels of involvement with children among nonresident fathers (Ahmeduzzaman & Roopnarine, 1992; Johnson, 2001), and more positive parenting behaviors (Almeida, Wethington, & Chandler, 1999; McLoyd, 1989; Whitbeck et al., 1997). In addition, men who earn sufficient incomes are better able to provide child support or other financial resources that can help children avoid the negative effects associated with child poverty (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Sorenson & Lerman, 1998).
- **Education/Training:** Many of the programs reviewed aim to help fathers obtain higher levels of education (e.g., through the completion of high school or GED programs) or complete job training activities (e.g., through certification programs, internships, or on-the-job training opportunities). Such education and training opportunities are necessary for the promotion of self-sufficiency and financial security, especially since the current United States economy provides few employment opportunities to men who lack a high school diploma or job skills (Edin & Nelson, 2001; Kasarda, 1989; Wilson, 1996). Furthermore, educational attainment is associated with a number of positive outcomes for both adults themselves and their children. Among adults, higher levels of education are associated with higher lifetime earnings (Day & Newburger, 2002; Miller, Mulvey, & Martin, 1995), upward social mobility (Haverman & Smeeding, 2006), a lower risk of becoming unemployed (Caspi et al., 1998), better physical and mental health (Ross & Wu, 1995), and lower rates of divorce (The National Marriage Project, 2004). For children, higher parental education is

associated with a number of positive outcomes, including academic success, better health and more positive health-related behaviors, and higher rates of pro-social behaviors (Child Trends, 2003). In addition, children of more educated parents also have access to greater material, human, and social resources (Coleman, 1988).

- **Public Assistance Receipt:** Many fatherhood self-sufficiency programs target the receipt of public assistance as an outcome. These programs aim to reduce the number of fathers whose children are on public assistance received through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). This is an important component of such programs, as receipt of public assistance indicates a lack of financial self-sufficiency. All of the programs reviewed aim to accomplish this goal by helping fathers increase their earnings from jobs. Because such programs focus on increasing earnings in addition to reducing reliance on public assistance, they are likely to have positive benefits for children. Studies of families who leave the welfare rolls generally show that when recipients stop receiving benefits, children show improvement in academic/cognitive and emotional/behavioral outcomes, but only if their families also experience economic progress (Zaslow et al., 2002).
- **Child Support Payments:** Finally, a number of the programs included in this review aim to increase nonresident fathers' payment of child support. Research finds that few nonresident fathers who owe support pay the full amount and many do not pay at all (Mincy & Pouncy, 1997). However, studies suggest that many fathers simply lack the financial means to meet their payments (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2007) Mincy & Sorensen, 1998; Sorenson & Lerman, 1998). Fathers who have greater financial resources, better work experience, and higher levels of education are more likely to make child support payments compared with fathers who lack such resources (Cooksey & Craig, 1998; Danziger & Radin, 1990; Seltzer, 1991), suggesting that programs aimed at improving fathers' outcomes in these domains may be effective at increasing rates of payment. This is particularly important because child support payments have a number of benefits for children. Fathers who pay child support are more likely to spend time with their children (Koball & Principe, 2002; Seltzer, 1991) and children whose fathers pay support are less likely to live in households that are dependent on public assistance (Chien-Chung, Junz, & Garfinkle, 2002). In addition, the provision of child support is associated with several indicators of child well-being, including better cognitive development, academic achievement, and behavior (Graham, Beller, & Hernandez, 1994). In fact, some studies suggest that child support is more beneficial to children who do not live with their fathers than other sources of income (Knox & Bane, 1994).

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS AMONG UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED FATHERS

Fatherhood programs often have difficulty recruiting unemployed and underemployed fathers and have moderate to high attrition rates. Fathers are reluctant to start and have difficulty completing fatherhood programs for many reasons, including:

- Scheduling conflicts with work or school (Kost, 1997);
- Lack of transportation, or child care (Fuger, Abel, Duke, Newkirk, & Arnold, 2008)
- Unstable living situations (Bloom, Redcross, Zweig, & Azurdia, 2007; Kost, 1997; Kotloff, 2005)
- Current or past involvement with the criminal justice system and/or illicit employment ("hustling") (Fuger et al., 2008; Doolittle & Lynn, 1998)
- Substance use and/or mental health problems (Kotloff, 2005);
- Limited English proficiency (Freedman et al., 2000); and
- Mistrust of authority figures and/or skepticism about the program (Doolittle & Lynn, 1998)

IDENTIFYING RIGOROUS RESEARCH: THE TEN PRINCIPLES

So, what works in father self-sufficiency/employment programs? Only rigorous evaluations of programs can provide evidence of whether or not programs actually have a desired effect. While several studies have examined the effects of programs on outcomes for fathers and their families, the evidence-base varies widely as does the quality and rigor of research methods. *In general however, results that come from well-designed programs that have been rigorously evaluated should be taken more seriously than results from less-well-designed and evaluated programs.* There are several principles of rigorous research that have to be considered and that often yield high quality results. The extent to which each of these principles is adhered to by the studies used in this review is provided in the individual program summary descriptions (see Appendices 1-3). Each of the ten principles of rigorous research is discussed below in more detail.

- **Principle 1: Evaluation Design.** The evaluation design recognized as the gold standard is a random assignment study (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). This design is used to determine causality (i.e., to determine whether the observed outcomes or changes that resulted for fathers and/or their families were the result of participation in the program). In a random assignment study, fathers are assigned to two groups: a *treatment group* (a group that receives services) or a *control group* (that does not receive program services but may receive other instruction or services). This design, if well-implemented, is the only way to create equivalent groups. That is, fathers with varied characteristics (e.g., age, race, and motivation) will be equally (or very close to equally) represented in both the treatment and control groups. This design therefore reduces the likelihood of “selection bias” (i.e., more highly motivated fathers being more likely to choose to attend the program, or more fatherhood programs being likely to be implemented in communities with more “at risk” unemployed or underemployed fathers). Few of the studies in the current review used random assignment designs, while the majority used quasi-experimental or pre/post-test designs. This means that selection bias, or other kinds of biases may have affected results. These biases can obscure actual positive program effects or overstate positive program effects when they did not actually occur (Rossi et al., 2004).
- **Principle 2: Sampling of Programs.** Different program approaches have been used in father self-sufficiency/employment programs to address the behavior and well-being of fathers and their families. However, in selecting programs, care must be taken in using the results from a small group of studies of fathers to draw inferences across a wide range of programs. The problem with generalizing from the small group of programs in this review to a larger group is that findings may work well with some fathers in some contexts, but not as well with others, and additional studies are needed with varied samples of fathers in different settings. In addition, programs that are well-funded often tend to have more well-trained staff, more resources, and are better run programs, yielding positive evaluation results which may not yield the same findings when replicated in other settings that do not have access to the same resources and may have staff with less training (Kirby, 2001). Newer programs may also be prematurely evaluated, before elements of implementation have been addressed, yielding less positive evaluation results than programs that have been in the field for a longer period of time.
- **Principle 3: Sample Size.** It is commonly agreed that rigorous studies require a sufficient sample size to detect expected impacts. The necessary sample size varies according to the outcome measure, the magnitude of the effect that needs to be detected and the level of statistical significance (a measure of how confident one can be in the results) (Kalton, 1983). In general, a minimum sample size of 30 in the control group and 30 in the treatment group (after attrition) is needed to obtain robust results. Much larger sample sizes, though, are needed if sub-group analyses are planned—e.g., analyses of fathers in different racial or ethnic groups (Kalton, 1983). There are several reasons

- **Principle 4: Follow-Up.** Several programs that have been evaluated suggest that it is important to follow-up at least over a six-week period to measure the impact of programs on father behaviors, but follow-up for a year or more is necessary to establish whether impacts or effects endure. The length of follow-up often varies, and is dependent on the outcomes being measured, the curriculum that is being used, and the amount of time that fathers are likely to attend. Follow-up is required for several reasons. First, it can provide information about short-term effects. Second, some program effects are likely to diminish over time and it cannot be assumed that short-term results will endure. Third, if programs are trying to influence changes in behaviors, such changes are only likely to be detected after a period of time has elapsed.
- **Principle 5: Validity and Reliability of Study Measures.** Fatherhood interventions often strive to measure changes in behaviors and other outcomes for fathers and their families. Typically these behaviors can only be estimated from data that individuals report about themselves. Rigorous research often uses instruments (single item measures and scales) that have been validated in previous research. In short, measures that have previously been used with populations of fathers and that have been assessed for their psychometric properties and found to be both valid and reliable are recommended.
- **Principle 6: Appropriate Statistical Analyses.** Rigorous evaluation studies conduct appropriate statistical analyses of the data that have been collected. This includes the testing of hypotheses, using proper statistical tests, and reporting all of the results of the test, in the expected and unexpected directions.
- **Principle 7: Dissemination of Results.** Evaluation studies that are rigorous and well-designed often attempt to publish results, whether they are positive or negative (Kirby, 2001). Studies that are large, well-funded, well-designed, and have advisory boards that include experts in the field of fatherhood and are widely known while in progress are more likely to have published results, regardless of whether they show expected or unexpected results. At the very least, results should be reviewed and shared with the field.
- **Principle 8: Independent External Evaluator.** Rigorous evaluation studies are often conducted by an independent external evaluator for a number of reasons. First, external evaluators are less likely to be biased and more likely to be objective in assessing results. Second, external evaluators bring technical expertise that may not exist in program staff such as knowledge of appropriate measures, statistical analyses, etc. Third, external evaluators offer a new perspective and may bring fresh insights. Finally, external evaluators are often also more efficient because of experience with evaluation and often have greater credibility.
- **Principle 9: Replication.** The replication of results is a hallmark of good science and an important aspect of demonstrating program effectiveness and understanding what works best, under what conditions, and for what target populations (Metz, Bowie, & Blase, 1997). A program that achieves positive results in one setting should be replicated in another setting with a new target population and re-evaluated to determine the generalizability of the model. For example, a program that may have positive effects in one setting may not have the same effects in another setting primarily

because there may have been unique characteristics of the first program setting that may have accounted for positive results. When tried in another setting, the results may differ, and may have been a result of chance, or a function of a more motivated group of fathers. Effective programs whenever possible should be replicated before being widely adopted (Kirby, 2001).

- **Principle 10: Fidelity to the Program Model.** Fidelity refers to the extent to which the delivery of an intervention adheres to a protocol or program model originally developed (Mowbray, Holter, Teague, & Bybee, 2003). Ineffective programs can be implemented well, and effective programs can be implemented poorly. Neither is desirable. Desirable outcomes are only achieved when effective programs are well implemented. Therefore, it is critical that program evaluations include a fidelity assessment to ensure that essential elements of the intervention service model or curriculum have been implemented with integrity to the original model.

Summary. These ten principles were used to guide how we derived the criteria to select programs to be a part of this review. The identification of these principles, however, does not suggest a need to incorporate every principle into every evaluation study. Conducting evaluation studies that meet all or most of these criteria are often time intensive and costly.

CRITERIA USED IN THIS REVIEW FOR CONSIDERING FATHER SELF-SUFFICIENCY/EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

The ten principles identified above were considered when establishing the criteria used to identify the father self-sufficiency/employment programs included in this review. Several of the research criteria used to select fatherhood programs are currently being implemented in other “promising practices” efforts such as SAMHSA’s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2007) and the Promising Practices Network (2007). For the current review, we selected fatherhood programs that met the following criteria:

- The program/intervention was implemented in 1980 or later.
- Evaluation data were collected from U.S., Canada, U.K, Australia, and European samples of teen fathers and their families.
- The study used a sample size of at least 15 in both the treatment and control or comparison groups.
- The intervention aimed to impact father employment/self-sufficiency.
- The study design was an experimental, quasi-experimental, or outcomes study with baseline and follow-up data, and follow-up data from intervention and control or comparison groups being used to determine “effect” or “impact.” Implementation studies were also included.
- Involvement of participants in the interventions was known by the researchers and not based on participant recall.
- The study follow-up time was at least one month after the intervention was initiated.
- Appropriate statistical analyses were used.
- Program evaluation documentation was available.
- The evaluation was conducted by an external independent evaluator.
- The magnitude of change in at least one measured outcome is at least 5%.

Programs included in the review did not:

- Have to have findings published in a peer-reviewed journal;
- Have to be replicated;
- Have to be currently in operation or currently being implemented in some location.

The following table categorizes father self-sufficiency/employment programs into three groups: “*model*” programs, “*promising*” programs, and “*emerging*” programs on the basis of these criteria and drawing on the ten principles of rigorous research identified above. Although emerging programs do not

meet these criteria, they provide useful information for future research, especially in the area of early program development.

TABLE 1: CRITERIA FOR RATING FATHER SELF-SUFFICIENCY/EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Criteria	“Model” Programs	“Promising” Programs	“Emerging” Programs
Evaluation Method (experimental, quasi-experimental, outcomes monitoring)	Randomized controlled trial (experimental design)	Quasi-experimental study. Study has a comparison group, but there are some weaknesses, such as the groups may lack comparability on pre-existing variables or the analysis does not employ appropriate statistical controls	Descriptive Study. Study provides descriptive data but does not use a comparison group. The study only includes an implementation component
Effect Size or Outcome Magnitude	At least one outcome is positively changed by 10%	Change in outcome is more than 5%	No outcome is changed more than 1%. Outcome changes not documented.
Statistical Significance	At least one outcome with a substantial effect size is statistically significant at the 0.05 level	Outcome change is marginally significant at the 0.10 level	No outcome change is statistically significant
Sample Size	Sample size of evaluations exceeds 30 in both the treatment and control or comparison groups	Sample size of evaluations exceeds 15 in both the treatment and control or comparison groups	Sample size of evaluation includes less than 10 in the treatment and comparison groups
Attrition	Study retains at least 60% of original sample	Study retains at least 50% of original sample	Study loses more than 50% of original sample
Associations with Outcomes	Outcomes for fathers, their partners/spouses, or fathers and families	Outcomes for fathers, fathers and partners or fathers and families	Outcomes not considered/documented.
Independent External Evaluator	Yes	Yes	Internal Evaluator
Publication of Evaluation Results	Publicly Available	Publicly Available	Distribution restricted only to the sponsor of the evaluation

Table 2 summarizes all programs reviewed according to which category they fell into (i.e., “model,” “promising,” or “emerging”), based on the ratings criteria identified in Table 1 above.

TABLE 2: EVIDENCE-BASED FATHER SELF-SUFFICIENCY/EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS USING RATING CRITERIA

“Model” Program (Experimental Evaluation)	“Promising” Program (Quasi-Experimental Evaluation)	“Emerging” Program (Descriptive/Pre-Post Test Evaluation/Implementation Evaluation)
Center for Employment Opportunities	Moving to Opportunities (MTO)	The Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative
Los Angeles Jobs-First Gain (LA GAIN)	Parents’ Fair Share (PFS)	Detroit One- Stop Fatherhood Program
The Self-Sufficiency Project	STEP-UP: Mentoring for Young Fathers	Fathers at Work
Young Dads		Fathers for Life
		The Forever Fathers Program
		Maryland Responsible Fatherhood Program
		Paternal Involvement Demonstration Project
		Teen Father Collaborative
		Work and Family Center
		Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project

EIGHT PRACTICES FROM “MODEL” AND “PROMISING” FATHER SELF-SUFFICIENCY/EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

This review identified seven father self-sufficiency/employment programs that were considered effective (i.e., fell into the “model” or “promising” category). These programs all underwent either experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations, had low attrition rates, were conducted by external evaluators, and had publicly available evaluation results. Although the focus of these programs varied, “model” and “promising” father employment/self-sufficiency programs shared many of the promising practices noted below. The eight promising practices outlined below reflect different aspects of teaching and the particular context of programs. As yet, there is no evidence to suggest which combination of these promising practices contributed to the overall success of the programs. Nor is there evidence that each program had to incorporate all of these practices to have a measurable effect on participants. The specific program descriptions for these “model” and “promising” programs are in Appendices 1-2 (pages 20-53).

- **Promising Practice #1: Effective programs partnered with job placement and other state and community agencies to serve low-income fathers.** Nearly all of the “model” and “promising” programs partnered with a wide variety of community organizations (e.g., job placement agencies) and state agencies (e.g., child support enforcement offices) in an effort to recruit and serve low-income fathers. For example, the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) program works with the New York Division of Parole, their primary source of participants. *CEO* also works with public agencies in New York including multiple sites of the City University of New York, Department of Transportation, and the city’s Department of Citywide Administrative services, to provide work sites for *CEO* participants. Private employers also work with *CEO* to place participants into permanent jobs. Additionally, some “model” and “promising” programs partnered with community organizations (e.g., substance abuse services) or with local businesses in order to meet participants’ unique needs and to place participants into available jobs. For example, staff at the *LA GAIN* program cultivated relationships with local employers and compiled lists of available jobs and tried to match participants with applicable employment opportunities.
- **Promising Practice #2: Effective programs enabled vocational specialists to assist fathers on a one-on-one basis.** Effective programs incorporated individualized services such as case management that enabled them to identify the specific needs of each father and to provide services accordingly. This one-on-one work often allowed programs to create individualized service plans to meet the needs of low-income fathers. Each participant in the *Young Dads* program, for example, worked closely with a case worker who helped participants to identify their service needs, recognize their strengths and talents, and find work. Fathers participating in *CEO* program worked one-on-one with a vocational specialist who assisted them in preparing for and finding an appropriate permanent placement. Working one-on-one with participants gave job coaches the opportunity to get to know participants, assess the type of job they were interested in, deem when they were ready, and find them an appropriate placement. Such relationships also acted as sources of emotional support for fathers and increased the overall effectiveness of the programs. For example, mentors and case managers in the *STEP-UP* program were able to overcome young fathers’ initial mistrust of authority figures through the development of personal relationships.
- **Promising Practice #3: Effective programs offered a comprehensive array of employment services to help fathers overcome barriers to self-sufficiency.** The fathers served by employment/self-sufficiency programs have multiple barriers to self-sufficiency, including low levels of education, lack of job skills, and limited work histories. In order to assist these fathers in obtaining employment and becoming self-sufficient these needs must be simultaneously addressed. The “model” and “promising” programs reviewed here all offered a range of services to participants.

Most programs offered both pre- and post-employment services to help fathers both obtain jobs and to subsequently keep those jobs. Pre-employment services typically included educational/training opportunities, job search, resume preparation assistance, and skills-building workshops. Post-employment services included follow-ups and on-going services offered to fathers after they obtained work. For example, the *CEO* program offers pre-employment classes, job coaching and placement, and up to 12 months of post-placement support. Similarly, *LA GAIN* offered job clubs that assisted fathers with pre-employment services such as resume preparation assistance, building interview skills, and finding job openings. Participants were also eligible for services such as case management, counseling, and on-going educational opportunities for up to one year. In addition, many programs offered transitional employment services that enabled unemployed men to gain job experience prior to obtaining permanent work. For example, *CEO* offers participants paid transitional employment opportunities, in which fathers are assigned to work groups for four days a week and receive job preparation assistance on the fifth day. Fathers continue in this transitional program until they are able to find permanent jobs.

- **Promising Practice #4: Effective programs offered long-term services including transitional employment and post-employment supports that last a sufficient amount of time to complete important core activities.** It takes a considerable amount of time to recruit fathers and engage them in a program that will eventually lead to changes in their behaviors. Most of the fathers served by “model” and “promising” self-sufficiency programs faced barriers to employment (e.g., lack of education/training) that could not be addressed with short-term programs. Effective self-sufficiency programs delivered services over a length of time that typically spanned several months. For example, job preparation and transitional employment services in the *CEO* program were delivered daily over the course of several months. In addition, some of the programs provided ongoing post-employment supports that fathers could utilize after completing the program. Both *CEO* and *LA GAIN* offered participants up to 12 months of post-placement support.
- **Promising Practice #5: Effective programs used trained vocational specialists who were experienced and well-connected and provided them with staff training.** Staff working for the “model” and “promising” programs were usually experienced professionals. For example, trained vocational specialists worked with fathers in the *CEO* program and counselors in the *STEP-UP* program had experience with the practice of assessing current needs and problems, helping clients develop action plans for growth, making referrals to educational and job training/vocational programs, and providing advice about the job search process and managing financial affairs. *Young Dads* utilized trained educational-vocational counselors and social workers who served as case managers. Staff at *Moving to Opportunities (MTO)* all underwent two weeks of training and *STEP-UP* provided staff with six months of training and preparation time. In fatherhood programs with an employment component, it was important for at least one staff member to be well-connected in the community in order to help participants find jobs. One of the social workers involved with the *Young Dads* program was successfully able to network with local politicians and business owners in order to help participants find work.
- **Promising Practice #6: Use incentives to recruit fathers, assign them to work crews, and encourage them to stay employed.** Most of the programs that were found to be “model” or “promising” used incentives to motivate fathers to participate. For example, incentives were an integral part of the *CEO* program, which served ex-offenders. Fathers were motivated to participate because they were assigned to a work crew at minimum wage after only four days of training. Additionally, after being permanently placed in a job, participants received incentives to remain employed at 30-day milestones. *MTO* also used incentives despite high interest and enthusiasm for

the program. Upon enrollment, adults were given \$50 and children were given gifts in order to ensure high survey participation rates. *STEP-UP* offered child care and transportation funding to participating fathers and *the Parents Fair Share (PFS)* program provided clients with transportation and clothing assistance as well as a \$20 incentive for completing the six-month interview. Some of the programs evaluated served fathers who were mandated to participate, in which case sanctions for non-participation were used as incentives. For example, enrollment in the *PFS* program was mandatory and fathers who failed to participate faced possible incarceration. Likewise, participants in *LA-GAIN* faced financial sanctions (reductions in welfare benefits) for noncompliance.

- **Promising Practice #7: Effective programs took a holistic approach to service delivery and addressed additional needs above and beyond employment-related concerns.** Fathers involved in employment/self-sufficiency programs tend to have a number of additional needs that are not necessarily employment related but that can make it difficult for them to find work or be good fathers. Effective programs recognize the need to address these problems in addition to providing services that were directly related to employment (e.g., training, job search assistance). For example, *Young Dads* provided participants with medical care and referrals, housing and legal advocacy, cultural and recreational activities, and parenting skills training. Fathers in the *Step Up* program participated in peer support groups and classes focused on parenting, life skills, and relationship training. When appropriate, participants also received substance abuse treatment and/or domestic abuse treatment. Holistic approaches to service delivery enable programs to address fathers' physical, emotional, and behavioral barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment, thus increasing program effectiveness.
- **Promising Practice #8: Effective programs incorporated teaching methods and materials that are appropriate for unemployed and underemployed fathers.** Our review suggests that effective fatherhood programs tailored their materials to serve the populations of unemployed and underemployed fathers and were culturally sensitive in the provision of the various services and components. For example, the *Young Dads* fatherhood program targeted African-American adolescent fathers and used male social workers who were thought to be better equipped to serve young fathers. Staff who engaged fathers were often targeted to be within the same cultural group or from a similar living environment, so that they could better relate to program participants.

EIGHT PRACTICES FROM “MODEL” AND “PROMISING” FATHER SELF-SUFFICIENCY/EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS¹

1. Partner with job placement, and other state and community agencies to serve low-income fathers.
2. Enable vocational specialists to assist fathers on a one-on-one basis.
3. Offer a comprehensive array of employment services to help fathers overcome barriers to self-sufficiency.
4. Offer long-term services including transitional employment and post-employment supports that last a sufficient amount of time to complete important core activities
5. Use trained vocational specialists who are experienced and well-connected and provide them with staff training.
6. Use incentives to recruit fathers, assign them to work crews, and encourage them to stay employed.
7. Take a holistic approach to service delivery and address additional needs above and beyond employment-related concerns
8. Incorporate teaching methods and materials that are appropriate for unemployed and underemployed fathers.

EARLY CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE STATUS OF FATHER SELF-SUFFICIENCY/EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the many studies reviewed:

- Few of the studies covered in this review meet all of the criteria required for rigorous research. Of the evaluation studies of employment/self-sufficiency programs that are documented, only a few used random assignment designs, most had small sample sizes, most did not use a comparison group, some used inappropriate statistical tests, and some used psychometrically sound measures. Some reported positive results.
- Few of the interventions assessed long-term effects of participation on father or child outcomes, instead focusing only on outcomes at the time of program completion or no more than one year later. Thus, the long-term effects of self-sufficiency/employment programs are unclear.
- Most attention has been focused on the employment and economic outcomes of low-income fathers rather than on the impact of the intervention on fathers’ behavior and interactions with his children or outcomes for children.
- Few “model” or “promising” father self-sufficiency/employment programs have been replicated. This points to the issue of making general statements about the effectiveness of some types of program based on the results of non-replicated studies.
- Several studies use non-standardized measurement instruments. Some studies lack measures that demonstrate adequate psychometric properties.
- Most of the studies reviewed were hampered by some methodological constraints, including the lack of control or even comparison groups or the use of exploratory analyses in the “emerging” programs. As such, results may likely be biased.

Despite the real limitations of the research in this field, we should be encouraged by the progress currently being made in numerous programs that are targeting unemployed and underemployed fathers and their families for intervention efforts, as well as by the use of stronger research and evaluation strategies in connection with these programs.

¹ All programs have been experimentally or quasi-experimentally evaluated.

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Appendix 1:

“Model” Fatherhood Programs

CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (CEO)

OVERVIEW: The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) is an employment program for ex-offenders in New York City. The program offers ex-prisoners with job-readiness training and counseling then places ex-offenders in paid temporary employment while they are assisted in looking for permanent employment. In a random assigned experimental evaluation of the program ex-offenders participating in the CEO program were more likely to be employed and to stay employed than their non-participating peers. They were also less likely to be convicted of new crimes.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- To assist ex-offenders to transition from New York’s prison system into permanent employment;
- To reduce recidivism rates among program participants; and
- Assist program participants in reestablishing ties with children after incarceration, navigating the child support system, improving parental skills, and encouraging parental bonding through its Responsible Fatherhood Program.

LOCATION: New York City

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED:

There were 568 ex-offenders randomly assigned to the experimental group to be recipients of the CEO employment program, the Neighborhood Work Project (NWP). Another 409 ex-offenders were assigned to the control group to be recipients of a standard employment assistance program, the Resource Room Group. General characteristics of all participants were as follows:

- The average age was 33.7 years old with approximately 57% aged 31 years old or older;
- Approximately 64% were Black, non-Hispanic and 31% Hispanic;
- Approximately 93% were male;
- Approximately 57% reported at least one child with about 16% living with a child under age 18;
- Nearly half the participants had either a GED (43%) or completed high school (10.3%);
- Most participants (57 %) lived with family or friends. About 18% rented or owned homes and 12% lived in transitional housing;
- Approximately 63% were single, 21% unmarried and living with a partner, and 9% married living with a spouse; and
- Approximately 81% reported that they had been employed at least once in their life.

EVALUATION DESIGN: EXPERIMENTAL (RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL)

- **Outcomes:**
 - Employment; and
 - Recidivism.
- **Method:** Participants in CEO’s program are directly referred to its Neighborhood Work Project (NWP) employment training program by the New York Prison system. Forty percent of all referrals are mandated to complete NWP while 60% are referrals by parole officers. Between January 2004 and October 2005, 977 ex-offenders who had never participated in NWP before and were not part of those mandated to participate in NWP were randomly assigned to one of two groups; the experimental NWP or the Resource Room Group. Potential participants were only randomly assigned during weeks when new enrollees exceeded the number of available NWP working slots.

- *Neighborhood Work Project Group* (experimental group, 568 participants): Participants placed in this group were eligible for all of CEO’s program services including:
 - A four-day Life Skills training class;
 - Placement in a transitional job;
 - Job coaching;
 - Job development services;
 - All post-placement services (into permanent jobs); and
 - Other services including the Responsible Fatherhood Program.
- *Resource Room Group* (control group, 409 participants): Participants in this group received a set of services aimed at helping them find and retain gainful employment. Services provided included:
 - A one and one half day modified Life Skills training class;
 - Access to a resource room that had computers with job search software, phones, voice mail, printers and fax, and additional job search resources such as publications.
 - The Resource Room had a staff member to assist users, if needed, in use of the equipment and writing resumes.
- **Sample:** There were 568 ex-offenders randomly assigned to the experimental group. The control group had 409 ex-offenders.
- **Measures:**
 - Participant employment
 - Recidivism

Criminal Justice Service data were available for each participant in the study both before and after entry into the study.

- **Statistical Analyses:** Chi-squares and t-tests were used to analyze differences between employment and recidivism rates by quarter between participants in the experimental and control groups.
- **Attrition:** Results of employment rates are reported for all 977 participants in the study. Results of recidivism rates are reported for 565 participants in the NWP (experimental) group- 3 respondent’s data are not available.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualification and Support**
 - **Staff-participation ratio:** Not available for class training or work site. Each participant has access to their own job coach.
 - **Staff Education:** Job coaches were trained vocational specialists.
 - **Staff Experience:** Information currently not available.
 - **Staff Training:** Job coaches were trained staff members.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Information currently not available.
 - **Staff Wages:** Information currently not available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Some of the staff were former participants in the CEO program who chose to continue working with CEO as employees.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Recruitment:** Participants in CEO’s program were directly referred to the Neighborhood Work Project (NWP) employment training program by the New York Prison system. Specifically, participants were referred by their parole officer.
- **Space:** Participants in the NWP complete 4 days of classroom-based training and 4 days weekly with a work crew.
- **Materials:** Information currently not available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** CEO works with the New York Division of Parole, their primary source of participants. CEO also works with public agencies in New York including multiple sites of the City University of New York, Department of Transportation, and the city’s Department of Citywide Administrative services, to provide work sites for CEO participants. Private employers also work with CEO to place participants into permanent jobs.
- **Community Organizations:** Information currently not available.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model:**
The CEO Program has four main components:
 - *Pre-employment classes:* Participants engage in four days of intensive in-class pre-employment training. Among the four days of training, participants learn how to answer questions about their convictions while on interviews for permanent placement. They also participate in interactive exercises to improve their decision making skills, goal setting, verbal/non verbal communication, and interview skills.
 - *Paid transitional employment:* Participants are assigned to work crews and engage in four days of work per week. The work may include providing maintenance and repair services, grounds keeping and maintenance, and minor construction. They are paid a minimum wage.
 - *Job Coaching and Placement:* On the fifth day of every week, participants met with a trained vocational specialist who would assist them in being ready for permanent placement. The job coach teaches the 4 day classes, tracks participant’s attendance and performance at work sites, and communicates with parole officers. The job coach continues to track participants once they have permanent employment to encourage job retention. When the job coach deems a participant is ready for a job, they assess what type of job they are ready for and match the participant to a permanent job.
 - *Ongoing and post-placement support for up to 12 months.* Among the programs of support are:
 - Responsible Fatherhood Program: The primary goals are to assist participants re-establish ties with their children and navigate the child support system.
 - Occupational Skill building: Eligible participants are offered two short-term courses— Information Services and Customer Service. Information Services provides basic instruction in using computers while Customer Service provides training to help participants learn how to work with customers.
 - Rapid Rewards Program: Participants received incentives to remain employed at 30-day milestones.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group Size:** Information currently not available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** Four days of classes are followed by 4-day work weeks. The fifth day is designated time for the participant and job coach.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Upon placement, participants work four days a week.
- **Diversity of activities:** In addition to four days of class training, participants work paid jobs as well as receive counseling from a job coach.

- **Incentives for participation:** Once participants are permanently placed in a job, they receive incentives at 30-day milestones.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Impacts on Employment:

- Approximately 80% of participants in the CEO program were ever employed through 4 quarters after random assignment versus 56% of the control group. The 24% difference was statistically significant, $p < .001$.
- Approximately 22% of CEO participants were employed throughout the 4 quarters following random assignment versus 11% of the control group. The difference was statistically significant, $p < .001$.

Impacts on Recidivism:

- CEO did not generate many significant differences with the control group on many measures of arrests, convictions, parole outcome, and incarceration during the first year. However, statistically significant differences ($p < .1$) were recorded for felony convictions. Control group participants were convicted at a higher rate. They were also incarcerated for a new crime at a statistically significant ($p < .001$) rate than CEO participants.
- Recidivism outcomes are more positive when restricted to analysis of all participants who were randomly assigned to the CEO program or control group within three months of being released from prison. A 10% difference in incarceration rates was observed between CEO participants and control group participants within the first year. The difference was statistically significant, $p < .001$. A five-percentage decrease in incarceration for new crimes for CEO participants was also observed, $p < .001$.

SOURCES:

Bloom, Dan, Redcross, Cindy, Zwieg, Janine, Azurdia. (2007). Transitional jobs for ex-prisoners: Early Impacts from a random assignment evaluation of the Center for Employment Opportunities Prisoner Reentry Program. (Working paper) MDRC

CEO and MDRC. (2006). The Power of Work: Center for Employment Opportunities comprehensive prisoner reentry program.

EVALUATORS AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

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LOS ANGELES JOBS-FIRST GAIN

OVERVIEW: The Los Angeles Jobs-First GAIN (Greater Avenues for Independence) program was an employment-focused mandatory welfare-to-work program operated by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) from January 1995 through March 1998. Recipients from both single-parent and two-parent families were tracked for two years in order to assess the program’s impact on a number of outcomes including employment, earnings, and welfare receipt. Evaluators also assessed the cost-effectiveness of the program. The evaluation found that overall during the two-year follow-up period Jobs-First GAIN led to substantial increases in employment and earnings, and reductions in welfare and Food Stamp receipt for recipients from two-parent families (of which more than half were male).

PROGRAM GOALS:

The program’s goal was to transfer welfare recipients into full-time work. Using a Work First approach and offering job assistance as its primary service, the program aimed to help greater numbers of welfare recipients achieve self-sufficiency.

LOCATION: Los Angeles County, CA

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: Evaluators collected a random sample of welfare recipients from single-parent and two-parent families located in the inner-city neighborhoods of Los Angeles as well as outlying suburbs. Recipients from single-parents families were only 7% male while the recipients from two-parent families were more than half male (53%).

- **Demographics among two-parent families:**

- 53% male
- Average age – 36.2 years
- 47% Hispanic, 5.3% African American, 28.1% non-Hispanic white and 20% Asian (primarily Cambodian and Vietnamese)
- 60% had a child under 6 years old and the average recipient had 2.4 children.
- Fewer than half, 40%, had graduated high school or had a GED
- 30% had worked for pay in the past year and 68% had received welfare for two years cumulatively
- 87.8% were married
- About half, 52%, had limited English proficiency

EVALUATION DESIGN: EXPERIMENTAL (RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL)

- **Outcomes:** The outcomes studied for recipients from two-parent families include:
 - Participation in Jobs-First GAIN’s services
 - Employment and earnings
 - Welfare receipt
 - Cost effectiveness of the program
- **Method:** The evaluation utilized an experimental design. Individuals who showed up at a Jobs-First GAIN office to enroll in the program between April 1996 and September 1996 were assigned, at random, to the *experimental group* or, for comparison, the *control group*. Experimental group members were given access to Jobs-First GAIN’s program services, subject to the program’s mandatory participation requirements and could incur a sanction – reduction in welfare benefits – for noncompliance. Those in the control group were still eligible for AFDC/TANF and could seek other services in the community as well as childcare assistance should they enroll in a work program under their own initiative. The evaluation involved three main components:
 - **Participation analysis:** Examined the participation rates of experimental and control group recipients.

- **Impact analysis:** Examined differences between Jobs-First GAIN’s experimental participants and a control group in employment rates and earning/income and welfare receipt. Evaluators also assessed the impacts on child care usage, child outcomes, household structure, and medical coverage for a subsample of single mothers (findings not shown in this summary)
- **Benefit-cost analysis:** Data from the impact study and fiscal data were used to compare financial costs and benefits experienced by recipients, the government, and taxpayers as a result of the Jobs-First GAIN program.
- **Sample:** Welfare recipients who inhabit the inner-city neighborhoods of Los Angeles as well as outlying suburbs. The sample was diverse with respect to race and ethnicity, age, and family size, and includes 15,683 single parents (Aid to Families with Dependent Children – Family Group - **AFDC-FGs**), and 5,048 members of two-parent families (Aid to Families with Dependent Children – Unemployed Parents – **AFDC-Us**).
- **Measures:** The evaluation utilized data from a number of different sources, including:
 - Employment and earnings
 - Receipt of AFDC/TANF and Food Stamps
 - Receipt and costs of Medi-Cal benefits
 - Participation in employment-related activities within and outside Jobs-First GAIN; educational attainment; employment history; household structure and income; medical coverage and receipt of noncash benefits; level of food insecurity and hunger; use of child care for employment and for other reasons; and indicators of children’s school progress, emotional and behavioral well-being, and safety.
- **Statistical Analyses:** To assess the effects of the Jobs-First GAIN program, impact estimates were regression-adjusted for differences between the two research groups in baseline characteristics, prior earnings and employment, and prior AFDC and Food Stamp receipt. Differences between the experimental and control groups were considered statistically significant if the result of a statistical test (typically a t-test) indicated that there is less than a 10 percent probability that they could have occurred by chance.
- **Attrition:** Not currently available.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Not currently available
 - **Staff Education:** Not currently available
 - **Staff Experience:** Not currently available
 - **Staff Training:** Not currently available
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not currently available
 - **Staff wages:** Not currently available
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Not currently available

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION

- **Space:** Not applicable
- **Materials:** Not currently available
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) implemented the Jobs-First GAIN with help from the Los Angeles County Office of Education (COE). Job developers in each GAIN office cultivated relationships with local employers and compiled lists of jobs positions and tried to match enrollees with open positions.

- **Community Organizations:** Not currently available

PROGRAM CONTENT

- **Curriculum or Program Model**

The key features included:

- **Intensive program orientation** aimed at motivating new enrollees to find work quickly.
- **High-quality job clubs**, the leaders of which taught job-finding skills and engaged participants in activities aimed at boosting their self-esteem and motivation to work. The clubs also provided job development activities to increase job opportunities and to match people with prospective employers.
- **A strong Work First message**, communicated through written handouts and group presentations and in one-on-one meetings with program staff.
- **Time limits on welfare eligibility.** Recipients received a warning, conveyed orally and in writing that California would impose time limits on welfare eligibility for those who did not work.
- **Education regarding welfare grants.** A concerted effort to teach people that California’s relatively generous rules for calculating welfare grants would help them increase their income in the short term by combining work and welfare.
- **A relatively tough, enforcement-oriented approach** to encourage people to complete the program activities and find work quickly.

After the passage of the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, Los Angeles County’s TANF program, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) replaced Jobs-First GAIN in April 1998. Most features of Jobs-First GAIN continued under CalWORKs and several new features were added including:

- **Time limits on welfare eligibility** - Welfare recipients in California, as elsewhere, are subject to TANF’s five-year lifetime limit on eligibility for federally funded benefits.
- **Grant diversion-** CalWORKs offers new and returning applicants for assistance who meet specific criteria a onetime payment (equivalent to up to three months of benefits) if they forgo welfare.
- **Stronger financial incentives** – The CalWORKs formula gives recipients a somewhat stronger incentive to increase work hours than the previous Work Pays formula in effect under Jobs-First GAIN.
- **Extended transitional benefits** - CalWORKs offers recipients who leave assistance for employment subsidized child care for two years or until the family’s income reaches 75 percent of the state median. Under Jobs-First GAIN and the previous GAIN program, transitional child care benefits were available for only one year after welfare exit. CalWORKs also extends medical coverage for up to two years (compared with one year under Jobs-First GAIN and Los Angeles GAIN) to people who leave welfare for employment.
- **Post-employment services** - CalWORKs enrollees who find employment are eligible for case management services from the program while still receiving welfare and for one year after ceasing to receive a grant.
- **Special services** - DPSS devoted additional funding and special training to help CalWORKs staff identify enrollees with problems related to mental health, substance abuse, or domestic violence. These enrollees may be referred to special counseling or treatment services instead of job club and still receive credit for meeting CalWORKs’ work requirements. Under Jobs-First GAIN (and its predecessor), many of these enrollees were exempted from the program’s participation requirement without being referred to treatment or counseling.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Group size:** DPSS maintained an active caseload of about 45,000 under Jobs-First GAIN from 1995 to 1998 and around 100,000 under CalWorks from January 1999 onward.

- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration) :** Six hour group orientation followed by a one-on-one appraisal meeting with a case manager during their first day in the program. Information regarding further hours spent with Job Clubs and program staff not currently available.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Not applicable
- **Diversity of activities:** Activities revolve around finding and maintaining employment. Job clubs provide instruction in many of the skills needed to obtain employment including writing a resume, finding job openings and interview skills. Benefits such as child care and Medi-Cal are offered during recipients’ time on welfare and during the transition period. Under CalWORKs, recipients receive post-employment services for one year such as extended case management, counseling, mentoring and on-going education.
- **Incentives for participation:**
 - Financial sanctions (reductions in welfare benefits) for noncompliance
 - Parents not employed after 18-24 months must perform community service
 - 5-year lifetime limit on cash assistance (after the 1996 passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act)
 - Earnings disregarded
 - Transitional benefits for those who leave welfare due to employment including: Subsidized childcare and Medi-Cal coverage, additional vocational training, help obtaining EITC.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Employment/Earnings Findings for AFDC-U:

***All findings described below are statistically significant at $p < .01$ unless otherwise noted**

- Approximately two-thirds of experimental group members found employment in the two-year follow-up period (a similar proportion to that among AFDC-FGs). Jobs- First GAIN produced large two-year impacts on both employment and earnings — 10 percentage points and \$2,050, respectively.
- Jobs-First GAIN decreased the average length of AFDC/TANF receipt by a little over a month (7 percent) and reduced welfare expenditures by \$1,429 per experimental group member (12 percent) over the two-year follow-up period. Reductions in Food Stamp receipt and expenditures were similar in size.
- The two-year earnings gain for the full AFDC-U sample was offset by reductions in AFDC/TANF and Food Stamp payments. As a result, Jobs-First GAIN did not change sample members’ combined income from these sources.
- Jobs-First GAIN led to employment and earnings gains and welfare reductions for both AFDC-U males and AFDC-U females. Impacts on employment were larger for women (12 percentage points compared with 8 percentage points for men), whereas men experienced a larger two-year earnings increase (\$2,645 versus \$1,486 for women). The average two-year reduction in welfare expenditures was also larger for AFDC-U males than females: \$1,750 (14 percent) versus \$1,005 (9 percent).
- AFDC-U women’s earnings gain resulted primarily from increased job finding (74 percent) and less so from decreased time to first job (23 percent). In contrast, the earnings gain for AFDC-U men resulted from a combination of job finding (39 percent), decreased time to first job (26 percent), as well as increased earnings on the job (21 percent) (statistical significance test results not provided). Employed female experimental group members earned slightly less per quarter than their control group counterparts, whereas employed male experimental group members earned about 6 percent (\$168) more (statistically significant, p-value not provided).
- Jobs-First GAIN achieved substantial earnings gains and welfare savings for several subgroups of AFDC-U. Remarkably, Jobs-First GAIN increased two-year total earnings by over \$2,000 for the “most disadvantaged” recipients (sample members who were long-term welfare recipients, had no high school diploma or GED at random assignment, and were not employed in the year prior to random assignment), as well as for Hispanics and Asians not proficient in English. The program did not increase

earnings for several other subgroups of AFDC-Us, including whites, high school graduates and GED recipients.

SOURCES

Freedman, S., Knab, J.T., Gennetian L.A., Navarro, D. (2000). *The Los Angeles Jobs-First GAIN Evaluation: Final Report on a Work First Program in a Major Urban Center*. New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

EVALUATOR(S) AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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THE SELF SUFFICIENCY PROJECT FOR LONG-TERM WELFARE RECIPIENTS (SSP)

OVERVIEW: The Self-Sufficiency Project for Long-Term Welfare Recipients (SSP) program was launched in 1992, a ten year project involving more than 6,000 single-parent families in British Columbia and New Brunswick. SSP was conceived and funded by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), managed by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), and evaluated by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) and SRDC. It used a complex design to enroll participants in three linked research samples and used a random assignment evaluation design. An evaluation of the long-term welfare recipients, found that a well-structured financial incentive program can encourage work, increase earnings, and reduce poverty.

PROGRAM GOALS: SSP had two goals: 1) to create credible evidence about the effects of changing policy; and 2) to demonstrate that a particular policy — focused on earnings supplements — could be effective. The SSP program aimed to:

- Encourage work and independence among welfare recipients
- Ensure that welfare recipients had adequate incomes to support themselves and their families
- Increase parents’ earning and income
- Reduce reliance on welfare
- Determine whether a program like SSP would harm or benefit child
- Affect parents in the period after parents were no longer eligible to receive the supplement benefits.

LOCATION: British Columbia and New Brunswick, two provinces of Canada

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED:

Recruitment in SSP’s main research study began in November 1992 and was completed in March 1995. Each month, Statistics Canada used Income Assistance (IA) Administrative records to identify all people in selected geographic areas who met the following criteria:

- were single parents;
- were 19 years of age or older; and
- had received IA payments in the current month and at least 11 of the prior 12 months.

Baseline Characteristics

- 43% of the parents had been on welfare for at least three years.
- 21.7% of the sample were 19 – 24
- 53.5% of the sample had 1 child under age 19, 32.9% had 2 children, and 13.6% had 3 or more children
- 95.3% of the sample had previous work experience, 52.7% had less than a high school education, 10.5% had some post-secondary education

EVALUATION DESIGN: EXPERIMENTAL (RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL)

- **Outcomes:** Because the evaluation of SSP assigned people to the program and control groups at random, the *impact* or effect of the supplement offer is measured as the difference in employment, earnings, income, IA benefits, and SSP benefits and other outcomes between the two groups.
- **Method:** Using a rigorous random assignment design, half of the project recipients were randomly assigned to a program group and offered the SSP supplement, while the remainder formed the control group.
 - A baseline survey was administered to all sample members just prior to random assignment and informed consent was provided. The survey included questions about respondents’ gender, age,

race/ethnicity, and other demographic characteristics; household composition and family structure; child care needs; general quality of life; employment and earnings; current income sources and amounts; and attitudes toward work and welfare.

- Single parents who were recruited into the recipient study were randomly assigned to either the program group (offered the SSP earnings supplement), or the control group (not offered the supplement).
 - Most sample members completed follow-up surveys approximately 18, 36, and 54 months after random assignment.
 - Administrative data sources provided monthly information on income assistance and SSP supplement payments.
- **Sample**: Nearly 6,000 single parents in British Columbia and New Brunswick who had been on income assistance for at least a year participated in SSP. The program group contained 2,880 recipients; the control group contained 2,849.
 - **Measures**: Differences in employment, earnings, income, and other outcomes between the two groups.
 - **Statistical Analyses**: Logic probability modeling was used to determine whether the job-ready program group members were more likely to take up the supplement. A two-tailed t-test was used to determine outcome difference between program and control group. A statistical test (the F-test) was performed to determine whether differences between subgroup impact estimates could easily be due to chance factors.
 - **Attrition**: Of the original sample of 5,729 members, 4,852 completed the 54-month survey — 2,460 in the program group and 2,392 in the control group (for an 84.7 per cent response rate). The effects of SSP were examined using only these sample members, a group called the *report sample*.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio**: Not currently available.
 - **Staff Education**: Not currently available.
 - **Staff Experience**: Not currently available.
 - **Staff Training**: Not currently available.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination**: Not currently available.
 - **Staff wages**: Not currently available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction**: Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Space**: Not currently available.
- **Materials**: Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages**: Not currently available.
- **Community Organizations**: Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model**: Understanding the structure of the SSP’s incentive is crucial to understanding the effects of the supplement offer. Key features of the SSP Earnings Supplement included:

- **Full-time work requirement.** Supplement payments were made only to eligible single parents who worked at least 30 hours per week and left income assistance.
- **Substantial financial incentive.** The supplement equaled half the difference between a participant’s earnings and an “earnings benchmark.” During the first year of operations, the benchmark was \$30,000 in New Brunswick and \$37,000 in British Columbia. Unearned income (such as child support), earnings of other family members, and number of children did not affect the amount of the supplement. The supplement roughly doubles the earnings of many low-wage workers (before taxes and work-related expenses).
- **One year to take advantage of the offer.** A person could sign up for the supplement if she found full-time work within the year after random assignment. If she did not sign up during that year, she could never receive the supplement.
- **Three years of supplement receipt.** A person could collect the supplement for three calendar years from the time she began receiving it, as long as she was working full time and not receiving income assistance.
- **Voluntary alternative to welfare.** No one was required to participate in the supplement program. After beginning supplement receipt, people could decide at any time to return to income assistance, as long as they gave up supplement receipt and met the IA eligibility requirements.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group size:** Not currently available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** Not currently available.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Not currently available.
- **Diversity of activities:** Not currently available.
- **Incentives for participation:** Not currently available.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

- **One third of the long-term welfare recipients who were offered the SSP earnings supplement worked full time and took up the supplement offer.** On average, these supplement takers received the supplement for 22 months over their three years of eligibility and received more than \$18,000 in supplement payments over that time, at the level of (p=.01)
- **SSP increased employment, earnings, and income, and reduced welfare use and poverty.** By the end of the first year after random assignment, program group members were twice as likely as control group members to be working full time, and the effect of SSP on employment continued to be strong through most of the follow-up period. These impacts were concentrated among individuals who took up the supplement offer, suggesting that SSP’s effects were nearly three times as large among supplement takers, at the level of (p=.01)
- **The effects of SSP on employment, welfare use, and income were small after parents were no longer eligible for the supplement.** Members of the program group could receive supplement payments for up to three years, and the program’s effects were strong throughout the period when parents were eligible for the supplement. In the middle of the fifth year after random assignment, which was after supplement takers could no longer receive the SSP earnings supplement, the program and control groups were equally likely to work.
- **Elementary-school-age children in the program group performed better in school than similar children in the control group.** Parents in the program group gave their elementary-school-age children higher marks on school performance than did parents in the control group (children who were 5.5 to 7.5

years of age by the end of the period studied in this report), at the ($p=.05$) level of significance. For children in other age groups, however, there were few differences in outcomes between the program and control groups.

- **Government agencies spent money to achieve SSP’s positive results, but society as a whole benefited from the program.** Government agencies spent about \$1,500 per program group member administering SSP. From society’s point of view, however, the program cost less than the benefits it provided. When fringe benefits are included, program group members earned \$4,100 on average more than they would have without the program, at the level of ($p=.1$).

SOURCES:

Michalopoulos, C., Tattrie, D., Miller, C., Robins, P., Morris, P., Gyarmati, D., Redcross, C., Foley, K., and Ford, R. (2002). *Making Work Pay: Final Report on The Self-Sufficiency Project for Long-Term Welfare Recipients*. Retrieved May 16, 2007 from: <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/cs/sp/sdc/pkrf/publications/research/2002-002340/mwpssp.pdf>

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“YOUNG DADS”

OVERVIEW: The “Young Dads” Program targeted African American adolescent fathers to help them become more confident and responsible fathers. The evaluation of the “Young Dads” program suggested that programs for young fathers that only focus on teaching parenting skills are ineffective. The evaluation revealed statistically significant changes for fathers who participated in the program in employment rates, vocational plans, perceptions of current relationships with their children, perceptions of the quality of the future relationship with their children, frequency of contraceptive use, and the availability of persons with whom a problem can be discussed.

PROGRAM GOALS:

The “Young Dads” parenting program aimed to increase African American adolescent fathers’ ability to:

- Establish and meet individual goals
- Develop stronger support systems
- Develop more consistent and positive feelings about their relationships with their children now and in the future

LOCATION: New York City, New York

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED:

The sample served included first-time fathers between the ages of 16 and 18 years. The characteristics of the evaluation sample included the following:

- All participants were African American and from the same geographical area
- The mothers of the participants’ children were receiving services through a teen mother’s support program or were in a mother-baby group residence.
- The mean age of their children was 9 months
- On average, couples had known each other for almost a year before the women became pregnant

EVALUATION DESIGN: EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN (RANDOM ASSIGNMENT)

- **Outcomes:**
 - Employment
 - Vocational plans
 - Current Relationship with child
 - Perception of future relationship with child
 - Establishment of a 10-year plan
 - Use of contraceptives
 - Number of close friends
 - Discussion of problems with others
- **Method:** Adolescent fathers were randomly assigned to treatment or control group. The fathers were interviewed at two time points: at the time of referral and six months after referral. The experimental group received individual and group counseling, education/vocational referrals and placements, medical care and referrals, housing and legal advocacy, cultural and recreational activities, and parenting skills training. Control group fathers received weekly group parenting skills training and were invited to participate in the child welfare agency’s case planning for their children.
- **Sample:** 60 (30 fathers in the treatment group and 30 fathers in the control group) African American adolescent fathers were included in the sample.
- **Measures:** Fathers were interviewed at the two time points: the time of referral, and six months after referral.

- *Employment.* Fathers were asked if they were employed.
 - *Vocational Plans.* Fathers were asked if they had a vocational plan.
 - *Current Relationship with Child.* Fathers were asked to rate the quality of their relationship with their child as “excellent”, “good”, “fair”, or “poor”.
 - *Future relationship with Child.* Fathers were asked to predict the closeness, quality, and consistency of their relationship with their children in the future. Fathers could rate the relationships as “excellent”, “good”, “fair”, or “poor”.
 - *Establishment of a 10-Year plan.* Fathers were asked if they had developed a ten-year plan.
 - *Use of Contraceptives.* Fathers were asked if they used birth control “always”, “often”, or “sometimes”.
 - *Description of Being a Man.* Fathers were asked to provide a description of their views of being a man.
 - *Number of close friends.* Fathers were asked the number of close friends they had.
 - *Discussion of Problems with others.* Fathers were asked with whom they discussed problems. Fathers had the options of choosing a relative, friend, child’s mother, social worker, or no one.
- **Statistical Analyses:** Data were analyzed using chi-square analysis.
 - **Attrition:** Not currently available.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Two social workers, a parenting instructor, and an educational-vocational counselor were assigned to thirty fathers.
 - **Staff Education:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Experience:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Training:** Not currently available.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff wages:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION

- **Space:** Not currently available.
- **Materials:** Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** Not currently available.
- **Community Organizations:** Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONTENT

- **Curriculum or Program Model**

The program involved using a comprehensive set of services that were tailored to the individual needs of young fathers. Fathers were contacted through their child’s mother’s adolescent mother programs in a local hospital. Once enrolled, the fathers were asked to list areas in their lives where they needed assistance. The program model assumed that male social workers were better equipped to serve the young fathers and thus used the relationship between the adolescent fathers and male social workers as a therapeutic (through counseling and regular meetings), mentoring, and supportive male relationship throughout the program. The male staff members also served as positive parenting role models. The fathers received individual and group counseling, education/vocational referrals and placements, medical care and referrals, housing and legal advocacy, cultural and recreational activities, and parenting skills training.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Group size:** 30 fathers were enrolled in the program.

- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** Not currently available.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Not currently available.
- **Diversity of activities:** The fathers received individual and group counseling, education/vocational referrals and placements, medical care and referrals, housing and legal advocacy, cultural and recreational activities, and parenting skills training.
- **Incentives for participation:** Not currently available.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Employment

- At the second time point, 97% of the fathers in the treatment group were employed, compared to 31% of control group fathers who were employed ($p < .01$).

Vocational Plans

- At the second time point, 87% of treatment group fathers had a vocational plan in comparison to 42% of control group fathers ($p < .01$).

Current Relationship with child

- At the second time point, 77% of the experimental group reported that their relationship with their child was “excellent” or “good”. 50% of the control group reported an “excellent” or “good” relationship with their children at the second time point ($p < .02$).

Expectation of Future Relationship with the Child

- 96% of treatment group fathers predicted that their future relationship with their child will be excellent in comparison to 73% of control group fathers at the second time point ($p < .02$).

Use of Contraceptives

- At the second time point, 90% of fathers in the treatment group reported that they use contraceptives always or often, in comparison to 73% of fathers in the control group ($p < .01$).

Discussion of Problems

- At the second time point, no treatment group reported that they did not have someone to discuss their problems with, in comparison to 27% of control group fathers.

SOURCES

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EVALUATOR(S) AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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Appendix 2:

**“Promising” Fatherhood
Programs**

MOVING TO OPPORTUNITY (MTO)

OVERVIEW: Moving to Opportunity (MTO) was a demonstration program funded by Congress aimed at answering questions on what would happen when very poor families are given the opportunity to move out of subsidized housing in very poor neighborhoods of Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York City into more affluent neighborhoods. Over four thousand families were informed about the program and randomly assigned to one of three groups; a treatment group offered vouchers to move **only** into low poverty neighborhoods; one group was offered Section 8 vouchers to move into any neighborhood and a final control group not offered any vouchers. Midway into the 10 year program, interim evaluations show that MTO had positive effects on neighborhood quality for families in the experimental group, marginal improvements on adult and children’s health, and marginal positive effects on the quality of children’s schools. However impacts on educational achievement, employment and risky behavior were mixed.

PROGRAM GOALS:

Moving to Opportunity (MTO) was designed to test the long-term effects on adults and children’s well being when poor families from public or project-based assisted housing in poor areas moved to private-market housing in low poverty areas.

LOCATION: Baltimore, MD; Boston, MA; Chicago, IL; Los Angeles, CA; New York City, NY.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED:

In order to be eligible for MTO families had to live in public housing or private assisted housing in areas of the central cities with poverty rates of 40% or more, have very low incomes and have children under 18 years old. Characteristics of families in the experimental, Section 8 and control groups were:

- Sixty three (63) percent of families in the entire sample (all locations combined) were African American with 96% and 98% for Baltimore and Chicago respectively. Thirty (30) percent of the families in the entire sample were Hispanic.
- The heads of households were predominantly women (92%).
- Sixty two (62) percent of the heads of households were never married. Approximately 11% were married, 17% widowed or separated and 10% divorced.
- The median number of children per family was three.
- The average total household income was \$9,314.
- Approximately 62% of the families depended on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) as the primary source of income.
- Forty (40) percent of heads of households graduated from high school. Another 20% had a GED. Forty (40) percent were neither high school graduates nor GED holders. About 16% of these heads of households were currently in school.
- About 72% of the heads of households reported that they were not working. Only 16 % worked full-time.

EVALUATION DESIGN: EXPERIMENTAL (RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL)

- **Outcomes**

The MTO interim evaluation was designed to assess impacts at about the midpoint of a 10 year research project. At the time of interim evaluation, families had been enrolled in MTO program from 4-7 years. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used to measure six outcome areas:

- Adult and youth employment and youth earnings.
- Mobility, housing and neighborhood.
- Adult and child physical and mental health.
- Child educational achievement.
- Youth delinquency and risk behavior.
- Household income and public assistance receipt.

- **Method**

Between 1994 and 1997, the Public Housing Authorities (PHA) in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York conducted outreach to all eligible households and interested households were given the opportunity to apply for the MTO program. All applicants were placed on waiting lists of the respective local PHA's.

Applicants were then drawn from the intake list and given an explanation of the MTO demonstration. Interested candidates signed enrollment forms and completed baseline surveys. These candidates were then screened using Section 8 eligibility criterion; 4,608 candidates (families) were eligible. The eligible candidates were then randomly assigned into one of three groups;

- *Experimental group:* They received rental assistance vouchers that could only be used in census tracts with poverty rates of below 10 percent as of 1990 and a lease up time limit. Mobility counseling was provided by non-profits contracted by PHA to help participants find locations within the time limit. Group members continued to be eligible for project-based assistance.
- *Section 8 Group:* They received regular Section 8 vouchers that could be used anywhere. Time limits were also imposed but counseling was not offered. Project-based assistance eligibility was maintained.
- *Control Group:* They did not receive vouchers or counseling. They continued to be eligible for project-based assistance.

In addition to the baseline survey, data on the MTO sample were collected between January and September 2002 through interviews, direct measurement and educational testing. Three surveys were administered by trained staff in the respondent's homes using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing, namely;

- Household survey (administered to adults)
- Youth survey (administered to children between 12-19 years old)
- Children survey (administered to children 5-11 years old).

Some of the measurements were also based on interviewer observations. Administrative and published data about employment, public assistance outcomes, residential locations and schools attended were also collected. Extensive interviews were also conducted on a small subset of the sample to assess effects of neighborhoods on the behavior and experiences of family members.

- **Sample**

The full sample size for the program enrolled between June 1994 and July 1998 was 4,608 families. The interim study included 4,248 families enrolled through December 1997. There were no statistically significant differences between the interim and final sample. All participants included in interim study had participated in MTO for at least 4 to 7 years. Evaluation was conducted on individual family members for a total sample size of 10,931 individuals for the interim study.

Measures

- *Mobility, Housing and Neighborhood:* Using tracking and interim household survey data, a sequence of all residential moves, location and duration of stay was developed. Mobility measures included length of stay at each location, neighborhood characteristics of each location, respondent's interactions with the community and the respondent's reasons for staying or moving.

Housing and neighborhood data were collected from respondent's baseline surveys and HUD administrative data. Three sets of measures were used: housing assistance; housing status (costs, burden of cost and housing insecurity); and impact measures concerning housing and neighborhood conditions and safety.

- *Adult and child physical and mental health:* With the exception of blood pressure, all health data for adults and youth (ages 12-19) were self-reported and collected from the interim survey. Data for children (ages 5-11) were collected from parental or caregiver reports. Some of the health measures collected include: general health, asthma, height and weight, smoking, psychological distress, obesity and whether the respondents were depressed.
- *Child educational achievement:* To estimate the effect of residential location on educational performance, data on community and school characteristics; student and parent attitudes; and behaviors and student achievement were collected. Data sources included interviews, interim surveys and administrative records.

Some of the measures included grades, coursework taken, grade retention, high school completion and college attendance. All children were administered four achievement subtests from the Woodcock-Johnson-Battery-Revised to measure cognitive ability and achievement.

- *Youth delinquency and risk behavior:* With the exception of arrests and contact with the criminal justice system, data was collected from the interim surveys. Some of the measures include an abbreviated behavior problem index, a delinquency index and a risky behavior index.
- *Adult and youth employment and youth earnings:* The primary data sources were respondent self reports during the surveys and state unemployment insurance records. Some of the measures are whether the respondent was employed, labor force participation, earnings and idleness (being unemployed and not attending school).
- *Household income and public assistance receipt:* The primary data sources were respondent self-reports and state TANF agencies. Some of the measures included whether respondents were recipients of food stamps, Social Security income and Medicaid. Total household income was also assessed.

- **Statistical Analyses**

In order to estimate the effect of (a) living in private housing of one’s choice relative to living in public housing and (b) living in private housing in a low poverty neighborhood relative to living in public housing, two basic comparisons were performed;

- Section 8 vouchers versus controls, and
- Experimental group versus controls.

Linear regression models estimating differences in outcome means between the treatment and control groups, a measurement of intent-to-treat (ITT), were conducted. Baseline measures were included to increase precision of measured differences.

A second set of analysis was conducted to estimate the effect of actually receiving the treatment, treatment-on-treated (TOT). This involved regression models using only those who complied to treatment versus an inferred subsample from the control group who were presumed to have been willing to accept treatment had it been offered to them.

- **Attrition**

The use of incentives and over 100 trained interviewers ensured an overall weighted participation rate of 89.6% for all household surveys.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualification and Support**

- **Staff-participation ratio:** Information currently not available.
- **Staff Education:** Information currently not available.
- **Staff Experience:** Information currently not available.
- **Staff Training:** All staff underwent two weeks of training on survey administration, data collection and data transmission.
- **Planning Time and Coordination:** Information currently not available.

- **Staff Wages:** Information currently not available.
- **Staff Satisfaction:** Information currently not available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Space:** Information currently not available.
- **Materials:** Interviews were conducted using laptops.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** The MTO program worked with local Public Housing Authorities, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and non-profits to recruit and counsel eventual participants.
- **Community Organizations:** Information currently not available.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model**
With assistance from local Public Housing Authorities, HUD and non-profits, 4,248 families were recruited for the MTO program. These families were randomly assigned to an experimental (1,729), Section 8 (1,209) or control (1,310) group.
 - Families in the experimental group were expected to use vouchers to lease up into neighborhoods with 1990 poverty rates below 10 percent within a given time limit of several months. They were expected to sign one year leases. Thereafter they were free to move as they willed.
 - Section 8 voucher holders had no restrictions on how long they had to live in their new residence but also faced lease up time limits.

Interim evaluation was conducted for families who were involved in MTO for 4-7 years.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group Size:** Information currently not available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** All participants in the interim MTO evaluation had been involved with the program for 4-7 years.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Participants enrolled once.
- **Diversity of activities:** Not applicable.
- **Incentives for participation:** The opportunity to participate in the program was perceived as advantageous and waiting lists were used. However, upon enrollment, financial incentives (\$50 for adults and gifts for children) were offered to ensure high survey participation rates.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

- *Adult and youth employment and youth earnings:*
 - Participation in the MTO had marginally significant positive effect on labor participation rates (being employed or actively seeking employment) of 3.8% and 4.1% for the experimental and section 8 group respectively. The significance level was $p < 0.058$.
 - Participation in the MTO significantly reduced idleness for youth in the experimental group. Participation in schooling increased by 6% as employment remained constant relative to the control group. There were no significant differences in time spent employed for the experimental and control group. These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
- *Mobility, housing and neighborhood:*
 - Participants in the experimental group lived in neighborhoods whose poverty rates were likely to be 17 % lower than the control group (TOT). Section 8 participants lived in neighborhoods

- whose poverty rates were 10% lower than the control group (TOT). These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
- Participants in the experimental group lived in neighborhoods whose minority populations were likely to be 10 % lower than those of the control group (TOT). These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
 - There were no significant differences in total housing cost or burden across the three groups. However participants in the experimental group were the most likely to experience utility payment problems at about twice the rate of the control group. The Section 8 group fell in between these two groups and the results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
 - The percentage of experimental group participants receiving housing assistance was 16 % (TOT) higher than the control group. It was 13 % higher for the Section 8 group. These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
 - Participants in the experimental group reported living in better quality neighborhood. They reported lower incidence of such measures of neighborhood quality like the presence of vermin and peeling paint. They also self-reported higher feelings of safety, lower use of drugs and alcohol in the neighborhood and lower incidence of litter and graffiti. The Section 8 group straddled the middle on these measures. These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
- *Adult and child physical and mental health:* Statistically significant results were not observed across most health measures for the 3 groups.
 - The incidence of obesity was reduced by 11% (TOT) for the experimental group. These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
 - Measures on the psychological distress index were 7% lower for the residents in the experimental group. Their measures on depression were also 8 % lower than the control group. These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
 - *Child educational achievement:* Children in the experimental group were more likely to be attending schools with fewer children eligible for free lunches, fewer minority students and fewer limited English proficiency students relative to the control group. Similar, but more modest results were recorded for the Section 8 group. These differences were significant at $p < 0.05$. Significant differences on the Woodcock Johnson-Revised test measuring cognitive ability and achievement were not observed.
 - *Youth delinquency and risk behavior:*
 - Youth aged 12-19 years in the experimental group self-reported more incidents of behavioral problems than the control group by 8 points (TOT). These were significant at $p < 0.05$.
 - Females aged between 15-19 years in the Section 8 group ever arrested and ever arrested for violent crime were significantly lower than the control group by 11 and 15 points respectively. The chances of males in the experimental group being arrested for property crime were higher by 12 points (TOT). These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
 - The likelihood that females in the experimental group would be engaged in risky behavior reduced by 15% (TOT). These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.
 - *Household income and public assistance receipt:*
 - Section 8 participants in the MTO increased the likelihood of receiving AFDC/TANF receipts marginally over a 5 year period. Their total food stamp payments increased by \$334. These results were significant at $p < 0.05$.

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EVALUATORS AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

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PARENTS’ FAIR SHARE (PFS)

OVERVIEW: Parents’ Fair Share (PFS) was a national demonstration project implemented from 1994 to 1996 that was authorized by the Family Support Act of 1998, which was enacted to enforce the collection of child support from noncustodial parents. PFS sought to provide better options for low-income fathers who have more difficulty maintaining child support payments. Collaboration among the state child support enforcement agency, employment service providers, and community organizations were essential to the operation of the program. The evaluation found that the practices in the program did lead to increases in formal child support payments, but this was the case mostly with fathers who could pay without the assistance of PFS. PFS was not successful in increasing the employment earnings above those of the control group. Generally, PFS did not affect the fathers’ involvement but increased visitation among those that were initially the least involved. The evaluators found that the program could be effective when targeted to the most disadvantaged group of fathers.

LOCATION: PFS was implemented in seven sites across the U.S.:

- Dayton, Ohio
- Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Jacksonville, Florida
- Los Angeles, California
- Memphis, Tennessee
- Springfield, Massachusetts
- Trenton, New Jersey

PROGRAM GOALS: PFS was a national demonstration program which sought to help noncustodial fathers:

- Increase their employment and earnings
- Increase their child support payments
- Increase their parental involvement to support and improve parenting behavior

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: The program served non-custodial parents who were delinquent in their child support orders, unemployed or underemployed, and who had a child that was receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds. 98% of the participants were men. The participants in the program had the following characteristics:

- 59.6% were African American, 23.2% were of Hispanic descent, 14.8% were White, and 2.3% were identified as “Other”;
- 49.5% had no high school diploma;
- The average hourly wage was \$7.04;
- 36.9% of the sample reported living alone, 23% reported living with parents, and 24.8% reported living with a spouse or partner;
- 67% had been arrested prior to program entry;
- 1/3 of the fathers in the sample saw their children at least once a week at the start of the program, 30% did not see their children at all in the six months leading up to the survey;
- 33% lived with parents or other relatives, 23% moved 3 or more times during the year; 9% homeless in 3 months prior to survey at PFS;
- On average, 6 was the youngest age of the child of the noncustodial parents in the sample.

EVALUATION DESIGN: EXPERIMENTAL (RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL)

- **Outcomes:**

- *Employment and Earnings*
 - *Financial Support*
 - Formal child support payments
 - Informal cash child support payments
 - In-kind support
 - *Non-financial Involvement*
 - Noncustodial parents’ contact with the focal child
 - Noncustodial parents’ parenting
 - Custodial and noncustodial parents’ conflict
- **Method:** The evaluation of Parents’ Fair Share used an experimental design that randomly assigned 5,611 noncustodial parents that were delinquent in their child support payments to either the Parents’ Fair Share group or to a control group. The control group was exposed to standard child enforcement procedures. The evaluation included a follow-up period of two years. An ethnographic study was also done to track over 30 men in the PFS group and their time in the program (findings are not detailed here).

Information from the child support agency and the employment office was used to collect data on the noncustodial parents’ employment and earnings. Surveys were also administered to a randomly selected subgroup of fathers (n=553), and another group of custodial mothers (n=2,005) associated with the men in the evaluation. Generally, surveys were administered one year after each father entered the program, and they asked about activities that occurred within the time span of the previous six months. The surveys collected information on employment and earnings, visitation, and informal support. The youngest child of the noncustodial parents was the focal child in surveys.

Random Assignment. There were two different points of random assignment used in this design:

- Extra outreach and case review: A representative sample of noncustodial parents from a site’s child support caseload who appeared-based on information in administrative records-to meet the PFS eligibility rules were assigned at random to one of two groups: an extra outreach group subject to extra outreach and case review or a standard group subject to the site’s usual CSE practices.
- Referral to PFS Services and coverage of PFS mandates: Noncustodial parents who appeared at a hearing or case review and were judged eligible and appropriate for PFS by site staff were assigned at random to one of two groups: a program groups that was given access to PFS services and was subject to its mandates to participate or a control group that did not receive those services and was subject to normal CSE practices. Members of the control group were free to participate in other services in their community on their own initiative.”

Noncustodial parents referred to the PFS group had the option of reestablishing their child support payments and declining PFS services.

- **Sample:** 5,611 noncustodial parents were included in the full sample. Surveys were also administered to a randomly selected subgroup of fathers (n=553), and another group of custodial mothers (n=2,005) associated with the men in the evaluation.
- **Measures:** The evaluation captured the level of noncustodial parents’ financial support and non-financial involvement. The evaluation measured:
 - *Employment and Earnings*
 - These were estimated using fathers’ survey responses as well as looking at quarterly state unemployment insurance (UI) records.

- *Financial Support*
 - *Formal child support payments* (including the average amount of child support paid for the target case, totaled across six months before the survey)
 - *Informal cash child support payments* (cash contributions that the custodial parent received directly from the noncustodial parent six months before the survey, or 7-12 months after random assignment). The average dollar value was measured. Custodial parents were asked about the focal child as well as support for siblings.
 - *In-kind support*. Any support besides money provided to the custodial parent or her household.
- *Non-financial Involvement*
 - *Noncustodial parents’ contact with the focal child*
 - *Noncustodial parents’ parenting*
 - *Custodial and noncustodial parents’ conflict*
- **Statistical Analyses:** When relevant, descriptive analyses were used to compare custodial and noncustodial parents’ response to questions that were common in their individual surveys. A matched sample was used (which had a joint response rate of 78%, and a response rate of 94% when both parents responded). The analyses exclude those where the custodial and noncustodial parents reported that they cohabitated, and those where the custodial parent noted that she was not living with the child. Regression analysis was used for background characteristics of the sample (age, race/ethnicity, education, marital status, prior employment, prior child support payments, and other relevant demographics). The impacts were also weighted to reflect representation of each site in the full sample. Subgroup analyses were conducted to see how the impact of PFS varies due to different family characteristics and the implementation site.
- **Attrition:** Not currently available.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Education:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Experience:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Training:** Not currently available.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff wages:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Space:** Not currently available.
- **Materials:** The Responsible Fatherhood Curriculum, used in the peer support groups, were developed by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC).
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** The program operated using local partnerships among child support agencies, employment and training providers, and community-based service organizations.
- **Community Organizations:** Community-based organizations were partnered with the child support agencies and employment providers to provide services. Previously, their role had been advocating for low-income families, but this demonstration shifted their responsibility to reporting on the father’s employment outcomes and noncompliance to the program.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model:** The PFS program is built around 4 core components that were developed from background research and the pilot program:
 - **Employment and training services**—These services included activities that assisted participants in obtaining sustainable employment with earnings that enabled them to support themselves and their children. These services could include job search assistance, opportunities for education and skills training, on-the-job training, paid work experience, and other activities that combined skills training or education with employment.
 - **Peer support groups** – These groups were conducted using the “Responsible Fatherhood” curriculum developed by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC). Each site was expected to provide regularly scheduled support groups for participants. The groups were conducted to inform participants about their rights and obligations as noncustodial parents, encourage positive parental behavior and sexual responsibility, strengthen their commitment to work, and enhance the participants’ life skills. The topics that were covered included: parental roles and responsibilities, relationships, managing anger, and coping with problems on the job.
 - **Mediation to improve relations with custodial parents**— The sites were expected to provide opportunities for parents to mediate their differences based on models that were typically utilized in divorce cases. The sites had formal agreements with mediation organizations, and participants were told about the availability of the services.
 - **Enhanced child support enforcement**—As this activity was a major objective of the demonstration project, the sites were expected to develop new procedures, services, and incentives to enforce child support obligations. This could also include expediting the establishment of paternity and child support awards, and negotiating reduced child support orders while the noncustodial parents participated in the program.

Staff responsibilities were divided into two categories: *specialists* (who played specific roles in the demonstration such as peer support facilitator or job developer), and *case managers*, who tracked the progress of the participants through their stay in the program

Case manager responsibilities included:

- Orienting the fathers to the program
- Making service plans
- Assessing need for support services
- Making referrals to program components or outside services
- Monitoring program compliance

Child support enforcement staff in the government agency had responsibilities to:

- Lower child support orders
- Give the noncustodial parents time to participate in peer support and move toward employment

If a participant was noncompliant, the child support enforcement worker had to work with the parent to retain services. If this was unsuccessful, the worker would increase the child support order back to the original level and conduct normal enforcement procedures.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group size:** Not currently available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** After 6 months of steady payment of child support, the participant was disenrolled from the program. If he became unemployed once again, he was instructed to contact the case manager to reenter the program.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Fathers were required to attend the peer support sessions. These sessions met a minimum of two to 3 times a week for a set number of weeks to cover all the topics. Participants were required to attend a minimum number of sessions to have completed this component.
- **Incentives for participation:** — Participation in the program was mandatory, or the participants faced possible incarceration.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS: (The Springfield sample is not included in the following evaluation findings).

Employment and Earnings

- No site produced increases in employment and earnings that were consistent and statistically significant during 18 months of follow-up. However, the Grand Rapids and Dayton sites increased earnings by a statistically significant amount. Grand Rapids increased earnings in their later quarters, and Dayton increased employment and earnings in their early quarters.
- Though not statistically significant, the program increased earnings for the full sample, but the growth was concentrated among men with greater employment barriers (those with no HS diploma and no recent work experience).
- A subgroup analysis revealed that the program produced a statistically significant increase in employment for fathers without a diploma (69.6% versus 64.6%) and no impact for their more-educated counterparts.
- The program did not significantly affect hours worked, with small movement toward full-time work (statistically insignificant).
- PFS did not succeed in helping fathers find better, high-paying jobs.
- Non-African American men moved into better jobs than they would have obtained otherwise (jobs that paid \$9 or more and offered health insurance), but had a little effect on African American fathers.

Child Support Payments

- Parents referred to PFS were more likely to pay child support through the child support enforcement system compared to the control group across the seven sites combined.
- The proportion of those who paid support increased by about 4.5 to 7.5 percentage points
- There was not a statistically significant change in the total average value of support provided.
- The amount of child support paid over the 18 months increased by a statistically significant amount in only 2 sites.

Paternal Involvement

- PFS did not change the frequency or length of visits between noncustodial parents and their children.

- The subset analysis from the survey the activity that religious activities were increased by a statistically significant amount 14.7 more likely to state that they engaged in this activity with their children.
- PFS did not affect the overall likelihood that the parents spoke to each other in the 6 months leading up to the survey, the frequency with which they discussed the child, the likelihood that the noncustodial parent was involved in major decisions about the child, or the likelihood that the custodial parent reported any improvement in the noncustodial father’s role as a parent.
- PFS caused a small increase of 3.5 percentage points in the proportion of custodial parents who reported frequent disagreements.
- There was a no increase in the overall proportion of custodial parents who reported aggressive styles of conflict.
- PFS decreased the amount of informal support to custodial parents.

SOURCES:

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The Responsible Fatherhood Curriculum can be found at: <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/40/abstract.html>.

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STEP-UP: MENTORING FOR YOUNG FATHERS

OVERVIEW: The STEP-UP program was launched in 1990 in order to address the challenges faced by young fathers in Phoenix, Arizona. Initially, STEP-UP offered counseling and case management services. In 1992, however, STEP-UP was awarded a two-year grant by the Demonstration Partnership Program of HHS’s Office of Community Services to design and implement a new mentoring and educational support component. An experimental evaluation of the impact of this new component found evidence to suggest that being mentored by successful men, either professional case workers or volunteers, can have a positive impact on young fathers.

PROGRAM GOALS: The STEP-UP program was intended to help young fathers achieve self-sufficiency and effectively take responsibility for their families. Program partners and counselors wanted to help young fathers “achieve harmonious family relationships,” “healthy minds and bodies,” and “adequate provider incomes.”

LOCATION: Phoenix, Arizona

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: The STEP-UP program targeted low-income fathers between the ages of 16 and 22. Fathers included in the sample had the following characteristics:

- 86% were minorities;
- All had incomes below 125% of the Phoenix area’s poverty level;
- All had unstable employment status and low incomes;
- Educational backgrounds ranged from completion of grades 6 through 12;
- All demonstrated weak problem-solving skills;
- All had little trust in authority figures;
- 97% had seven or more risk indicators of substance abuse.

EVALUATION DESIGN: EXPERIMENTAL (RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL)

- **Outcomes:**
 - Employment/occupation improvements
 - Income improvements
 - Educational improvements
 - Family relationship improvements
 - Other relationship improvements
 - Health improvements
 - Motivation
- **Method:** Participants recruited by STEP-UP were randomly assigned to one of four experimental groups of equal size: 1) services as usual (i.e., case management and counseling), 2) services plus mentoring, 3) services plus educational stipends, or 4) services plus mentoring and educational stipends. Participants who wanted mentoring but who were randomly assigned to a non-mentored group were matched with a mentor and removed from the study. Outcomes achieved by mentored fathers were compared to outcomes achieved by non-mentored fathers. Additionally, outcomes experienced by fathers with mentoring relationships rated “good” or “fair” were compared to outcomes achieved by non-mentored fathers.
- **Sample:** 120 young fathers who met specified selection criteria and were stratified by age, education level, and ethnicity.
- **Measures:**
 - Researchers used the “A.I.M.” rating of a client’s Appreciation, Interest, and Motivation to measure the inclination to progress in education, income, and family relationships.

- Researchers used the “K.S.C.” rating of a client’s Knowledge, Skills, and Capabilities to measure his ability in each of these goal areas.
- A pre/post survey measured risk indicators of substance abuse.
- **Statistical Analyses:** Descriptive analyses were conducted. Statistical significance was not reported.
- **Attrition:** Not currently available.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Three STEP-UP case workers provided counseling and case management services. One case manager was responsible for the mentoring component of the program.
 - **Staff Education:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Experience:**
 - Counselors had had experience with the practice of assessing current needs and problems, helping clients develop action plans for growth, making referrals to educational and job training/vocational programs, and providing advice about the job search process and managing financial affairs.
 - Valley Big Brothers/Big Sisters provided extensive experience in matching mentors with young people.
 - **Staff Training:** Six months of start-up time was required to recruit and train mentors.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff wages:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Recruitment:** STEP-UP counselors recruited participants from private agencies, and also partnered with The Valley Big Brothers/Big Sisters agency to recruit potential mentors for young fathers.
- **Space:** College courses were held at GateWay Community College. Educational workshops were provided off-site.
- **Materials:** Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:**
 - Valley Big Brothers/Big Sisters was responsible for designing and managing the mentoring component of the program.
 - GateWay Community College was responsible for planning and delivering the educational component of the program.
 - The Parks and Recreation Department of Phoenix was responsible for planning and managing group and recognition events.
 - The Phoenix Job Training Partnership participated in the project by helping to identify job training opportunities and making available appropriate funded training slots.
 - STEP-UP involved evaluation specialists to assist in strengthening program plans.
- **Community Organizations:** STEP-UP counselors applied to city and private agencies in order to recruit young fathers to participate in the program.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model:**

- **Counseling:** Counselors attempted to 1) deal with the client’s immediate problems, 2) help stabilize the client’s situation, 3) help the client develop realistic job and career expectations, and 4) identify and capitalize on the resources needed for growth and development. Counseling was balanced with referrals to other resources.
- **Case Management:** Case workers integrated program resources (e.g., counseling, mentoring, and educational supports) as well as determined objectives and incentives for participants as they took steps toward achieving their goals. Changes in client motivation were tracked.
- **Mentoring:** Participating fathers were mentored by empathetic, successful fathers and businessmen. Valley Big Brothers/Big Sisters adapted their “well-developed” mentoring model to better fit the needs of young, disadvantaged fathers. A Valley Big Brothers/Big Sisters case worker recruited, orientated, and matched volunteer mentors with new clients and monitored these matches for “fit.” Mentors helped their mentees better understand their new father and provider roles and the dynamics of their new family relationships.
- **Educational Support:** Financial stipends to subsidize some post-secondary education were made available to receptive clients. Over the life course of the project, the focus of this piece shifted from post-secondary coursework (e.g., courses at GateWay Community College on money-management and communication) toward topical workshops and job-related training (e.g., off-campus workshops on planning a child’s future, avoiding legal hassles, and anger and stress management) because young fathers were not utilizing the college courses. Many of the topical workshops had family unity and harmony themes.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group size:** Mentors worked one-on-one with young fathers. Some effective mentors mentored more than one young father.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** Not currently available.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Not currently available.
- **Diversity of activities:** The STEP-UP program offered counseling, case management, mentoring, and educational supports to participants. Additionally, participants and their families were invited to attend STEP-UP recreation, recognition, and other group events (e.g., a Family Camp Event).
- **Incentives for participation:** Child care was provided during some evening workshops and other events. Transportation funding was also provided.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Employment/Occupation Improvements

- 44% of mentored fathers and 32% of non-mentored fathers obtained jobs sometime during the project period. Only 9% of the clients in each group lost jobs.
- 73% of successfully mentored fathers were employed at the end of the project period compared with 48% of the non-mentored control group.
- Young fathers reported that STEP-UP was helpful to them in obtaining jobs.

Income Improvements

- The average hourly income of the mentored fathers rose by \$2.67. The average hourly income of the non-mentored fathers rose by \$2.36.

Educational Improvements

- Few young fathers completed job training courses, additional schooling, or GED courses during the project period. For this reason, data on attendance, grades, and material learned was not collected. The average grade level completed by all young fathers increased by one-tenth of a year. Mentored fathers did only marginally better than non-mentored fathers.

- Successfully mentored fathers gained one-half of a grade level compared with no growth in the non-mentored control group.

Family Relationship Improvements

- Case workers and mentors reported that 53% of the mentored fathers and 42% of the non-mentored fathers strengthened family relationships with their spouse or significant other. Roughly 11% of mentored fathers became engaged or married during the project period as well as 2% of non-mentored fathers.
- Young fathers reported that the mentors were most helpful in resolving family problems.

SOURCES:

STEP-UP with Mentoring for Young Fathers. Retrieved May 20, 2008, from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/rpt/fth/fth_b.htm

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Appendix 3:

“Emerging” Fatherhood Programs

CONNECTICUT’S FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE
The John S. Martinez Fatherhood Initiative

OVERVIEW: Connecticut’s Fatherhood Initiative targets non-custodial fathers of children who are or have been eligible for assistance through Connecticut’s TANF block grant. Programs operate at three sites throughout the state, with the goals of increasing fathers’ involvement with their children, improving parenting skills, and helping fathers meet the financial and medical needs of their children by assisting with employment and child support.

PROGRAM GOALS: The goals of the Initiative are:

- To promote public education concerning the financial and emotional responsibilities of fatherhood;
- To assist men in preparing for the legal, financial, and emotional responsibilities of fatherhood;
- To promote paternity establishment at the time of a child’s birth;
- To encourage all fathers (married or unmarried) to develop and maintain emotional connections to and financial support of their children;
- To establish support mechanisms for all fathers (regardless of marital or financial status) to assist with their relationships with their children; and
- To integrate state and local services available for families.

LOCATION: The Initiative operates separate programs that are implemented at three different sites in the state of Connecticut: 1) Madonna Place in Norwich, CT; 2) The Career Resources program in Bridgeport, CT; and 3) Families in Crisis at the Manson Youth Institution in Cheshire, CT.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: This program primarily targets low-income nonresident fathers of children who are eligible or formerly eligible for services funded by the state’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant. The characteristics of the fathers involved varied across program sites, but generally fell into one of two categories: 1) mostly White, working class men who report strained relationships with the mothers of their children and, sometimes, histories of domestic violence and substance abuse; 2) young racial minority men who have limited ties to the labor force, low levels of education, and are involved in street activity and/or the criminal justice system.

- Fathers in the Madonna Place program were more likely than fathers at the other sites to be employed, to have work histories, to have completed high school, to be older, to be White, and to have been married. However, most experienced a number of barriers to healthy father involvement, including:
 - 35% had a history of arrest for domestic violence;
 - 17% had a protective order that prevented them from seeing their children; and
 - 52% reported having strained relationships with the mothers of their children.
- Fathers enrolled in the Families in Crisis program were incarcerated at the Manson Youth Institution in Cheshire, a prison for young adults. Fathers here were, on average, younger than fathers at the other sites and had the least amount of work experience.

EVALUATION DESIGN: OUTCOMES MONITORING (PRE/POST TEST DESIGN); QUALITATIVE ETHNOGRAPHY

- **Outcomes:** The Initiative focuses on the following outcome areas:
 - Increasing fathers’ financial responsibility for children
 - Increasing fathers’ levels of involvement with children
 - Improving fathers’ parenting skills
- **Method:**
 - *Quantitative evaluation:* Each participant completed an intake assessment to collect baseline measures at enrollment. After six months, data were collected from the subset of fathers who

completed six months of services to measure changes in outcomes. Additional outcome data were collected from 26 fathers who completed one year of services (not reported here).

- **Qualitative evaluation:** Each of the three sites participated in a qualitative study. At each site, an ethnographer observed and recorded social processes in their natural settings for a period of six months. The ethnographer observed program services and spoke with staff about program practices and rationales. He also met with fathers while services were being administered, during breaks, or off-site to learn more about why they participated and what their perceptions of services were. All notes were systematically recorded and analyzed and were subsequently used to create an open-ended life history questionnaire that was administered to a subset of fathers in an attempt to learn more about specific issues. These interviews were transcribed and coded for the purpose of analysis.
- **Sample:** The sample used in six-month outcome evaluation consisted of 104 non-custodial fathers who were enrolled in program services between September 2000 and December 2002. Fathers who entered the program while incarcerated at the Manson Youth Institution were excluded from analyses of employment and child support data. Sixty-one of these fathers also participated in an open-ended life history questionnaire as part of the ethnographic study.
- **Measures:** Baseline and follow-up questionnaires and three standardized assessments were conducted with participants. An open-ended life history questionnaire was also used as part of the ethnographic study.
- **Statistical Analyses:** Not currently available.
- **Attrition:** Attrition rates in the Initiative’s programs are high. Of the 328 non-custodial fathers who were enrolled in program services between September 2000 and December 2002, 46 percent completed six months of services and 32 percent, or 104 fathers, provided outcome data at six-months. At the one-year follow-up, only 14 percent of fathers were still receiving services and only 8 percent (26 fathers) provided 12-month data.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Education:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Experience:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Training:** Not currently available.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff wages:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Recruitment:** The program utilized outreach strategies and referral networks to recruit eligible fathers.
- **Space:** Not currently available.
- **Materials:** Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** This program is implemented through the Connecticut Department of Social Services and operates with collaboration between several government agencies, community organizations, and foundations. Employment services offered through the Career Resources Program are offered in collaboration with the state’s Connecticut Works program.

- **Community Organizations:** Multiple community organizations and foundations collaborated with Connecticut’s Fatherhood Initiative.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model:** The content of the programs varied greatly according to the needs of fathers being served at each of the three sites:
 - **Career Resources:** The Career Resources program focuses primarily on job assistance, offering employment services through the Connecticut Works program. Participants can receive help with developing resumes, assistance with job searches, and workshops related to building independent living skills and computer-skills.
 - **Madonna place:** The program offered at Madonna Place primarily focused on advocacy for court-related and legal issues, such as child custody and visitation services, child support modification orders, and divorce cases. A weekly support group is offered for fathers, and referrals are made to local agencies for additional services, including mental health services, transportation services, and job assistance programs.
 - **Families in Crisis:** This program focuses on preparing incarcerated fathers for reentry into their families and communities and also provides follow-up services after fathers have been released. Fathers participate in a weekly support group that focuses on parenting issues and transitioning from prison back into the community, followed by community-based services after their release.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group size:** Not currently available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** Varies by service offered and location; weekly support groups are offered at the Madonna Place and Families in Crisis sites. The duration of services varied by participant; more than half of all participants received services for fewer than six months.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Varies by service offered and location; weekly support groups are offered at the Madonna Place and Families in Crisis sites.
- **Diversity of activities:** Activities vary by program site and participant need, and include things such as weekly support groups, life-skills building, computer training, job search assistance, and referrals for additional services (e.g., mental health services).
- **Incentives for participation:** Not currently available.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Employment/Economic Outcomes: Among fathers who received six months of employment services at Madonna Place or Career Resources, the following employment outcomes were reported at the six-month assessment:

- The percentage of fathers who had full-time employment increased from 26 percent to 57 percent.
- Income increased, especially at Madonna Place, where there was an increase in the number of fathers who held jobs that paid between \$15,000 and \$35,000. At Career Resources, the increase was concentrated in jobs paying below \$15,000 a year.
- The percentage of fathers who had health insurance increased from 37 to 60 percent.
- The percentage of fathers who made formal child support payments increased from 27 to 42 percent.
- Despite these improvements, 65 percent of fathers still reported having either no income or incomes below \$15,000 after six months of services

Father Involvement Outcomes: Outcomes related to father involvement were more modest than employment/economic outcomes. Specifically:

- The percentage of fathers who reported establishing paternity increased from 60 to 73 percent.
- The percentage of fathers who had custody of their children increased from 5 to 20 percent.
- The percentage of fathers reporting that they made weekly decisions related to their children increased from 45 to 62 percent.
- The percentage of fathers reporting that they had contact with their children at least weekly rose slightly, from 62 to 67 percent.
- The percentage of fathers who had no contact with their children decreased from 18 to 15 percent.
- Fathers reports of a strained relationship with their child’s mother was the most commonly reported barrier to having contact with children; reports of a strained relationship were slightly higher at the six-month follow-up than at baseline. The percentage of fathers reporting that they had no barriers to contact with their children decreased by 2 percent between baseline and the six-month follow-up.
- Statistically significant changes in fathers’ parenting attitudes were found at the six-month follow-up: fathers’ attitudes toward the use of corporal punishment improved, as did their understanding of children’s needs for power and independence.

Fathers’ Mental Health Outcomes: Outcomes related to fathers’ mental health were also assessed. The study revealed that at the six-month follow-up:

- There was a statistically significant decline in reports of depressive symptoms at the Madonna Place and Career Resources sites.
- No changes occurred in fathers’ reports of self-efficacy.

SOURCES:

- Website of The John S. Martinez Fatherhood Initiative of Connecticut:
<http://www.fatherhoodinitiative.state.ct.us/index2.htm>
- (No author). (2003, December). *Final Evaluation Report on Connecticut’s Fatherhood Initiative Executive Summary*. Available at: <http://www.fatherhoodinitiative.state.ct.us/PDFs/FinalEvaluation.pdf>

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DETROIT ONE-STOP FATHERHOOD PROJECT

OVERVIEW: The One Stop Fatherhood Program was launched in 2006 through the City of Detroit’s Workforce Development Division (DWDD) in the city of Detroit. The program seeks to encourage work and self-sufficiency with the final goal of improving fathers’ involvement with their children.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- To improve the economic stability and status of low income, unemployed fathers by providing job search, job training, subsidized employment and career advancement supports.

LOCATION: Detroit, Michigan.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED:

- Close to 97% of the fathers enrolled in the study were African American/Non-Hispanic, with the other 3% being White/Non-Hispanic.
- Fathers ranged from 23 to 57 years of age, with an average age of 38.
- Most of the fathers in the study had never been married (59.4%)
- Close to one half (45.9%) of the fathers had only one child.
- Over 46% of the fathers had at least a high school diploma, 24.4% had no degree, and the rest had either a GED or a technical/AA degree.
- Two percent had never been employed full-time and 9-.6% were unemployed when they entered the program.
- Almost all (98.8%) of the participants were looking for a job when they entered the program.
- Most participants reported good health (90%) and low levels of substance abuse
- Participants tended to have high levels of depressive symptoms
- Participants reported generally positive co-parenting relationships, but also reported high levels of co-parental conflict.

- **EVALUATION DESIGN: DESCRIPTIVE STUDY WITH IMPLEMENTATION COMPONENT**

- **Method:** The implementation evaluation includes data from focus groups conducted with fathers recruited through outreach efforts, analyses of program data, attendance records, interviews with project staff and interviews with non-participating fathers.
- **Sample:** Sixty-five fathers who enrolled in the program between March and August of 2007.
- **Attrition:** Not currently available.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Education:** All staff members had completed or were completing their college degrees but most of the staff had graduate degrees.
 - **Staff Experience:** Staff members experience working with similar populations ranged from less than two years to 20 years. All staff members had worked less than one year with the program.
 - **Staff Training:** All staff had completed various certifications related to their roles at the program including literacy, substance abuse, and logistical training.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff wages:** Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION

- **Recruitment:** Recruitment information was posted in community gathering places in areas with high proportions of minority and low-income residents as well as throughout the city of Detroit. Staff also contacted public housing facilities and churches and other programs serving low income families to recruit participants. Participants enrolled in the program were encouraged to refer others.
- **Space:** Not currently available
- **Materials:** Not currently available
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** Not currently available
- **Community Organizations:** Not currently available

PROGRAM CONTENT

- **Curriculum or Program Model:** Once participants were enrolled in the program they had a comprehensive intake interview and staff developed an individual plan and a referral plan for outside services were created. Based on the results of this interview the case manager worked individually with fathers to focus on areas that needed improvement. The program included two sets of curricula:
 - **CICC’s Effective Black Parenting Program (EBPP):** The EBPP was developed to provide a culturally-sensitive parenting program. The curriculum includes lectures, role playing, a parent handbook and a graduation ceremony. Participants were encouraged to participate in booster sessions after completing the program.
 - **Responsible Fatherhood Curriculum:** The Responsible Fatherhood Curriculum addressed paternal roles, romantic relationships, conflict resolution, anger management, race, and racism. The curriculum used group discussions and peer interactions intended to help fathers recognize and overcome obstacles to leading responsible lives.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Group size:** Not currently available, but the suggested range in group size for the two curricula combined is 8-20 individuals.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration) :** The EBPP involves 15 three-hour sessions, and The Responsible Fatherhood Curriculum involves 20 sessions.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Sessions occurred weekly.
- **Diversity of activities:** Activities ranged from case management, employment training, legal assistance, transportation assistance, counseling, fatherhood education and support groups, life skills training, substance abuse referrals, domestic violence workshops, anger management, financial support, post-employment follow-up, and father-child activities.
- **Incentives for participation:** Fathers were provided with transportation and meals and were allowed to bring their children to the program sessions with them. They also received a certificate of completion after completing the program.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

- **Participation:**
 - High attending fathers and their youngest children tended to be older than low-attending fathers and their youngest child.
 - High-attending fathers tended to have more education than low-attending fathers.
 - High attending fathers were more likely to be separated or divorced than never married.
 - All high-attending fathers were unemployed, and most had been unemployed for at least a year before entering the program.
 - Low-attending fathers tended to be employed at the time or in the twelve months before the program.

- Six months into the program, high-attending fathers were more likely to have modified a child support order than low-attending fathers
- **Employment and Service Needs and Receipt:**
 - Almost all fathers reported at least one barrier to employment with, the lack of a valid drivers license being the most commonly cited barrier.
 - Low-attending fathers tended to cite barriers related to the criminal justice system, whereas high-attending fathers tended to cite other barriers, such as issues with transportation or problems with health, alcohol or drugs.
 - Over half of the fathers enrolled in the program reported receiving at least one service, the majority of which were job-related.
- **Findings from Focus Groups:**
 - All fathers reported positive relationships with program staff.
 - Fathers expressed the program increased their understanding of how to gain employment.
 - Fathers voiced frustration with regard to the need for more career development opportunities and activities within the program.
 - Fathers suggested additional personnel with a counseling background would be helpful.
 - Fathers suggested evening and weekend program sessions.
- **Interviews with participants who stopped attending:**
 - Fathers generally reported enjoying and profiting from the sessions.
 - Fathers appreciated the opportunities to connect with other participants
 - Some fathers expressed confusion about the purpose of the program.
 - Fathers cited the following reasons for discontinuing the program:
 - Lack of transportation
 - Lack of communication or follow-up between staff and fathers.
 - Timing of sessions conflicted with work schedules

SOURCES

Bronte-Tinkew, J., Burkhauser, M., Bowie, L., Mbwana, K., Lilja, E., Collins, A., & Horowitz, A. (2007). *Detroit workforce development department (DWDD) and the Detroit workforce development board (DWDB) promoting responsible fatherhood initiative: Detroit one stop fatherhood project*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

The Responsible Fatherhood Curriculum can be found at: <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/40/abstract.html>.

More information on the Effective Black Parenting Program can be found at:
http://www.ciccparenting.org/cicc_ebpp_1112.asp#2

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FATHERS AT WORK

OVERVIEW: Fathers at Work is a program run out of six organizations in six different cities. The program is designed to help low-income, noncustodial fathers secure living-wage jobs, improve parenting skills and increase involvement with their children, and enable improved management of child support obligations. Twenty seven fathers were selected from three programs to complete four in-depth interviews to enhance a pre-post-test evaluation of fathers in all programs. Researchers established that most fathers involved with Fathers at Work had depended on earning income from illegal means at some points in their lives for numerous reasons including an inability to support themselves otherwise. At the 12-month follow-up interviews and post-test surveys, participation in Fathers at Work was associated with increased participation in the legitimate labor market for some but not all fathers.

PROGRAM GOALS: Fathers at Work is a program designed to help low-income, noncustodial fathers:

- Secure a living-wage job;
- Improve and increase their involvement with their children; and
- Manage their child support obligations.

Many of the fathers served by Fathers at Work had a history of earning incomes using illegal means hence posing a unique challenge for the programs ability to be effective. The goal of the in-depth interviews with fathers (all who had earned or supplemented their incomes using illegal means in their past) was to learn more about their behavior and motivations so that more effective ways of helping them gain a stable foothold in the legitimate labor market could be applied to the program.

LOCATION: Twenty-seven fathers were recruited from three Fathers at Work sites: Vocational Foundation, Inc. (VFI), in New York. NY- 8 fathers; Impact services in Philadelphia, PA- 12 fathers; and STRIVE in Chicago, IL- 7 fathers.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED:

- Approximately 20% of 1,222 men enrolled in all six Fathers at Work sites reported earning money through illegal means in the month prior to enrollment. All 27 fathers that were part of the in-depth interviews had earned income using illegal means.
- All 12 fathers from Impact Services were ex-offenders. Nine of these fathers were about to be released from a community correctional facility (halfway house), two were in prison work-release program and one was on house arrest. Eighty-five percent of the 27 fathers interviewed had been convicted of crimes from misdemeanor drug possessions to felony assault, robbery and burglary.
- Fathers were aged from 19-30 years old.
- Twenty-one fathers are African American (78%); six (22%) are Hispanic.
- All fathers are noncustodial parents of at least one child; ten have fathered children with more than one woman.
- Only one father had been married.
- Most of the men faced unstable living arrangements. One father lived in a homeless shelter during the course of the interviews. Most of the fathers had moved in and out of homes of friends, relatives and girlfriends.
- Approximately 52% of fathers admitted to long-term heavy use of recreational drugs, mostly marijuana.
- Six of the fathers had serious anger management problems while three fathers had been arrested or incarcerated for domestic abuse.
- Three out of 27 fathers were employed in part-time jobs at the time the interviews.
- Eleven fathers were referred to Fathers at Work by their parole officers. Another 5 fathers were referred by the court systems while the remaining 11 came to the program because they had been unsuccessful in finding jobs.

- Almost two thirds (17) of fathers did not have a high-school diploma or GED. Four fathers had postsecondary education.

EVALUATION DESIGN: OUTCOMES MONITORING/IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (NON-EXPERIMENTAL PRE/POST TEST DESIGN)

- **Outcomes:**

In-depth interviews were conducted covering four topic areas:

- Life history and employment;
- Fatherhood;
- Child support; and
- Fathers at Work program.

These fathers were also part of a larger evaluation of all six sites of Fathers at Work program and completed pre- and post-test surveys that assessed employment status, wages, job satisfaction and their hustling status. Post-test surveys were completed 12-18 months after starting Fathers at Work. The larger evaluation is not yet available.

- **Method:**

The principal investigator chose three sites out of a possible six Fathers at Work sites to conduct in-depth interviews based on the availability of experienced researchers to conduct the interviews. The sites selected were *Impact Services, Inc.*, *Support and Training Result in Valuable Employees (STRIVE)*, and *Vocational Foundation, Inc. (VFI)*.

Researchers collaborated with the Principal investigator and staff at the sites to select 27 men to interview. Only men who had completed an initial survey as part of Public/Private venture overall evaluation of Fathers at Work were allowed to participate in the interviews. All fathers asked to participate in the study had participated in Fathers at Work for at least three weeks.

In order to familiarize themselves with the program and acquaint themselves with the fathers, the researchers attended the Fatherhood Development workshops at each of the respective sites. Interviewers also frequented activities such as family outings and alumni meetings. Additionally, they regularly spoke to program staff to enhance their interview context. Once recruited, fathers were interviewed at four different times over a 2-4 month period covering specific topics. Each interview took about 90 minutes. Interviewees received \$25 at each interview. The four interview topics were:

- *Life History and Employment Interview:* This interview collected information pertaining to the men’s formative years and relationships with their families, schooling, employment in both formal and informal labor markets, and involvement (if any) income generating activities.
- *Fatherhood Interview:* This interview focused on men’s experiences of fatherhood, conditions surrounding the birth of children, current and past relationships with their child and child’s mother, and how their employment status affected their relationships.
- *Child Support Interview:* Fathers were asked about formal and informal child support. The interviews explored father’s views about financial responsibility for their children, determinants of the level, type and frequency of support they provided, and their experiences with the formal child support system.
- *Program Interview:* This interview explored the father’s perceptions about various components of the Fathers at Work program. Fathers were asked how the program had helped them find jobs, manage their child support, sustain or improve their relationships with their child, and lead them towards living a more legitimate lifestyle.

Eighteen out of the 27 fathers completed pre- and post-test surveys as part of the overall evaluation of all six sites of Fathers at Work programs. Two groups emerged for analysis: fathers oriented towards legitimate work and those oriented towards hustling. Post-test data were supplemented with information collect

- **Sample:** A total of 41 fathers from three different Fathers at Work sites were selected for in-depth interviews. Of these 41, four did not complete all four interviews. Another 10 fathers did not acknowledge earnings or supplementing their income through criminal activities and were dropped from the study sample. Thus the study sample consisted of 27 fathers who completed in-depth interviews. Of these 27, only 18 fathers completed the post-test surveys as part of the overall Fathers at Work Evaluation.
- **Measures:** In-depth interviews were used to assess fathers’ attitudes, motivations, and perceptions about employment, positive involvement in their children’s lives, and meeting their child support obligations. This information was gleaned from a series of four interviews.
- **Attrition:** An initial sample of 41 fathers was enrolled into the in-depth interview evaluation. Three of these fathers were dropped because they could not complete all four interviews. A fourth father’s interviews were dropped due inaudible interview tapes hindering transcription. Thirty-seven men completed at least 3 of 4 interviews. Of these, 27 men admitted to earning or supplementing their income using illegal means and thus constituted the study sample.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Varied by site.
 - **Staff Education:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Experience:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Training:** Staff at the STRIVE site are trained and authorized by the Illinois Department of Public Aid to establish paternity for participants who wish to do so.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Information not available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION

- **Space:** Varied by site and service.
- **Materials:** Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** Fathers at Work formed partnerships with local child support understanding in order to assist in helping men understand the system.
- **Community Organizations:** Information not available.

PROGRAM CONTENT

- **Curriculum or Program Model**

Each of the three study sites vary somewhat in the design, length, and content of their programs but they all offer *employment strategies, fatherhood services, and child support services*

Impact Services, Inc.: The Fathers at Work program administered by Impact Services, Inc. was known as Step-Up and served ex-convicts.

- *Employment Strategies:* Individualized job development and job placement and van services for transportation to jobs in outlying areas.

- *Fatherhood Services:* A 12-week parenting class and a program alumni group that plans and implements family outings and leadership development activities.
- *Child Support Services:* Worked with fathers and the Pennsylvania Family Court to streamline and adjudicate child support issues.

Support and Training Result in Valuable Employees (STRIVE): STRIVE is a job training and placement program intended for low-income residents of Chicago.

- *Employment Strategies:* Four weeks of attitudinal and job-readiness training, followed by job placement and two years of follow-up services.
- *Fatherhood Services:* Active alumni group, parenting support groups, and family activities.
- *Child Support Services:* Case managers accompany participants to court and assist with providing general information and filing petitions. Participants attend monthly information sessions and are required to meet with staff if they have an open child support case.

Vocational Foundation, Inc. (VFI):

- *Employment Strategies:* Career advisors are available 24 hours a day to provide career counseling and resource referral. Fathers have three employment program options: Direct Placement, a program with individualized job search and job development; a full-time Day program in computer technical training over a 5-month period; and an Evening Program for 3 hours per night over four nights per week for nine months.
- *Fatherhood Services:* The program at this location also provides fatherhood workshops based on the National Partnership for Community Leadership. Career advisors also provide some mediation support for mother-father conflict and crisis intervention.
- *Child Support Services:* Career advisors provide individualized child support services.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Group size:** Varied by site. Program included individual and group services.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** Varied by site
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Varied by site
- **Diversity of activities:** Depending on their needs, fathers participated in a variety of activities, including parenting classes, counseling, job-skills training, support groups, and job placements.
- **Incentives for participation:** Participants enrolled at the suggestion of parole officers, were referred by family or other courts due to lack of child support payments or as a means to regain custody of their children.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

In-depth Interviews (27 fathers):

- More than half the fathers were selling drugs by age 16. Reasons for selling drugs include a desire to participate in mainstream America’s material wealth and a lack of legitimate means to do so, coupled with the pervasiveness and acceptance of drug trade in their neighborhoods and among peers.
- Most of the men moved between working and hustling; one third relied solely on hustling. Fathers reported earning \$150-\$400 on slow nights to \$1500-\$3000 per night on good nights. About half the men used drugs and hustling enabled them to support their habits. Hustling also offered social benefits by raising their status among peers.
- Fathers cited three main reasons they wanted to stop hustling; a desire to avoid risks such as violence and incarceration; among those with children (two-thirds of the sample), a desire to be more responsible fathers; and a desire to lead legitimate lives.
- Fathers worked in low-skill, low-wage jobs in the formal or informal labor market. Job choices were dictated by immediate economic needs and opportunities rather than career goals. Employment was

intermittent with less than one third of the fathers holding jobs longer than a year. Employment options were typically short-term or temporary jobs. Other reasons for short job tenures include fathers quitting or being fired (9 reported being fired)

- Fathers could be divided into four categories based on their hustling and employment habits: the reluctant hustler, ambitious workers, reluctant workers, and committed hustlers.

The reluctant hustler (6 men): These men strongly preferred legitimate work and only hustled when they could not find a job or make ends meet. They would stop hustling when they found work. They were disinclined to quit jobs.

The ambitious worker (5 men): These men engaged in sustained hustling alongside legitimate jobs so that they could buy the expensive items they wanted. They were generally more educated than all other groups with 3 having completed high school or earned a GED and one some college. All these men had never been fired from a job.

The reluctant worker (6 men): These men also engaged in legitimate work and hustling- however, they placed an emphasis on hustling. These men had periods when hustling had been their only primary activity. The decision to work was driven by the opportunities and hazards on the streets. These men readily quit their jobs when convenient.

The committed hustler (8 men): These men had predominantly earned their income from hustling. On average, they started hustling at a much earlier age than the other men; most started at about 15 years and had hustled for 7-10 years by the time they joined the program. When they held jobs, these men were more likely to be fired. Four men had been fired from at least one job.

Pre- Post-test Surveys (18 fathers):

Given the smaller sample size for analysis, the four groups of fathers were collapsed into two- hustling oriented fathers (9 men) and legitimate work oriented fathers (8 men). Findings for these fathers at the 12-month post-test follow-up period are outlined.

- On average, fathers worked at least 20 hours a week for four weeks for 9 of the 12 months following their Fathers at Work enrollment. Seventy-eight percent (14 men) of the men were employed fulltime at their 12 month anniversary.
- Most of the 14 employed men held jobs in the formal labor market with approximately 43% holding jobs that offered health insurance.
- Seventy-five percent of all fathers who were not employed (3 out of 4 fathers) at the 12-month point were from the hustling oriented group. Additionally, 5 of the 9 men who could not be located for post-test follow-up were from the hustling oriented group.
- Average monthly income for fathers in the hustling oriented group lagged wages of fathers in the legitimate work oriented group by about \$400 (\$1, 142 versus \$1,542).
- Of the five fathers in the work oriented group whose pre- and post-test wage information was available, wages had improved by an average of \$1.70. Among four fathers from the hustling oriented group, wages had increased an average of \$3.00.

SOURCES

Kotloff, Lauren J., (2005). Leaving the street: Young fathers move from hustling to legitimate work. Public Private Ventures: Philadelphia, PA. www.ppv.org

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FATHERS FOR LIFE

OVERVIEW: Fathers for Life is a program implemented at 10 Head Start programs and two correctional facilities across Missouri that aims to strengthen low income families with children that have an incarcerated father or father under probation or parole supervision. Fathers are engaged in numerous programs including *Focus on Fathering* and *Parenting Apart* where they learn improved parenting skills and ways for parents to work together even when they are living apart. Fathers, their children, teachers, and facilitators are also involved in *Using Special Topic Books with Children* program where they learn strategies for working with children. An evaluation of the first two years finds that fathers’ basic assistance needs overtime improved while some aspects of their relationships with their children and mothers of their children improved.

PROGRAM GOALS: The program aims to strengthen low income families with children that have an incarcerated father or a father under supervision of the probation or parole system. By providing these families with specialized services like case management, parenting skills training, couples skills support, employment training and other employment support services, families will be strengthened and children will have a reduced risk of experiencing emotional, social, or educational problems.

LOCATION: During the first two phases of implementation, Tier 1 and Tier 2, five Head Start programs in Missouri’s Head Start Program participated in Fathers for Life, two in the first year and three in the second year of implementation. An additional five Head Start Programs and two State correctional facilities participated in the third year, Tier 3, of the implementation process. This report evaluates the first five programs.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED:

The first five programs enrolled 230 fathers and referred them to a variety of services including: employment services; mediation; and relationship skills training. Seventy-six of these fathers enrolled in the research study, completing pre- and post-test instruments. Fathers were predominantly informed about the program from their probation or parole officers. Characteristics of these fathers are outlined:

- Approximately 55% of the fathers were white, 42% African-American, 1% American Indian, and 1% bi-racial (white and African-American);
- Approximately 3% of the fathers were aged less than 20 years old. While ages ranged up to 49 years old, 77% of the fathers were aged between 20-30 years between;
- Sixty-five percent of the fathers had never been married, 18% were married, and 16% were separated;
- Sixty percent had graduated from high school or completed a GED program. Approximately 16% had received additional vocational or college education;
- Approximately 47% rented their house or apartment, 36% lived with relatives, 10% lived with friends, 4% owned their home, and 3% lived in transition housing. Most (90%) considered their housing to be permanent;
- Forty percent of fathers were employed, with 63% describing their work as full-time, 23% as part-time, 3% as seasonal, and 10% as sporadic. Seventy-one percent were actively seeking jobs as they navigated several constraints: being on probation or parole (56%); accessing transportation (54%); limited education (16%); limited job skills (15%); child care (9%); and disability (8%);
- Sixty-five percent of fathers were currently paying child support with only 495 of them making regular payments;
- Thirty-eight percent of fathers had 1 child, 24% had 2 children, 17% with three children, and 9% with 4 or more children. On average these children were 5 years old. Thirty percent of the children lived with their fathers most of the time while 70% lived with someone else most of the time;
- At intake fathers identified the following as areas where they had difficulty meeting their needs: transportation (33%), legal assistance (32%), health insurance (18%), substance abuse treatment (10%), child care (7%), seeing their child more often (64%), paying child support (63%), improving parenting skills (52%), and improving relationships with the child’s mother (43%).

EVALUATION DESIGN: PRE-POST TEST DESIGN (NON-EXPERIMENTAL)

• **Outcomes:**

The Fathers for Life research study was designed to assess outcomes at pre- and post-test. The time between pre- and post-tests varied from 0 days to 20 months for fathers. The outcome areas assessed include:

- Employment
- Basic assistance needs over time;
- Fathers for Life Services desired over time;
- Perceived employment issues over time;
- Child support;
- Child custody status;
- Father’s perceived relationship with the youngest child;
- Time father’s spent in person with the youngest child;
- Contact with the youngest child
- Father’s perceived relationship with youngest child’s mother;
- Needs for support in fathering;
- Fathering attitudes;
- Parenting attributes; and
- Parental stress.

• **Method:**

Tier 1(Year 1) programs:

Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation (DAEOC), also know as Bootheel, served fathers in Portageville Missouri. Facilitators initially attended training sessions for *Focus on Fathering*, *Parenting Apart*, *Relationship Enrichment Skills*, and *Sharing Special Topics Books with Children*. A total of 136 fathers were recruited for the program. The Fathers for Life coordinator conducted intake interviews and administered pre-test surveys with fathers. Data collected at intake were used to identify fathers eligible for the study. Fathers were also referred to appropriate services for their needs. *24/7 Dad™* and *Proud Parents* training sessions were also held in the Bootheel programs. Parents as Teachers conducted *Focus on Fathering* sessions at these programs. A similar model was also applied with the Missouri Valley Community Acton Agency (MVCAA), the second Tier 1 program.

Tier 2 (Year 2) programs:

These programs built on the Tier 1 models using a similar implementation process. An additional recruitment method was the use of list of potential participants from the Presiding Judge at the local drug court as well as lists available from Probation and Parole sources. Fathers also completed *Dads Matter* in addition to *24/7 Dad™* at one of the Tier 2 sites.

• **Sample:**

Five programs enrolled 230 fathers into Fathers for Life. Seventy-six fathers were enrolled into the Fathers for Life pre- post-test evaluation. At post-test, the number of respondents completing numerous surveys ranged from 29 to 32.

• **Measures:**

Outcomes were assessed using pre- and post-test surveys. Each outcome was assessed using several items, with three of the outcomes assessed using psychometrics instruments. Key items for each outcome are outlined below:

- Perceived employment issues over time: Fathers were asked if they were currently employed or seeking jobs. They were also asked if transportation, child care, disability, education, job skills, and probation affect their employability.
- Basic assistance needs over time: Fathers were asked whether they needed help preparing for or finding a job, additional training or education, assistance with substance abuse, or assistance getting on the right track.
- Fathers for Life Services desired over time: Fathers were asked whether they were interested in an employment support program (Parent’s Fair Share/Workforce Development), a 12-week father support group (24/7 Dad™), special father topic classes, family mediation, or home visits (Parents as Teachers individual sessions).
- Child support: Fathers were asked whether they were paying child support, had child support debts, and whether they were paying child support debts.
- Custody status: Fathers were asked whether they were on probation, parole or incarcerated.
- Father’s perceived relationship with the youngest child: Fathers responded to how much they liked being parent of their youngest child, how close they felt to the child, their satisfaction with the way their child was turning out, and satisfaction with the amount of contact they had with the youngest child.
- Time father’s spent in person with the youngest child: Fathers were asked about face-to-face time they spent with their youngest child.
- Contact with the youngest child: Fathers were asked whether they maintained contact with their youngest child by phone, letters, or email.
- Father’s perceived relationship with youngest child’s mother: Fathers were asked several questions about their relationship with their youngest child’s mother, including: how effective they thought their communication was; how easy it was for them to solve problems; and how much conflict exists between them .
- Needs for support in fathering: Fathers were asked if they needed help with several fathering activities including: seeing their child more often; paying child support; improving parenting skills; learning more about child development; and doing father/child activities with other fathers and their children.
- Fathering attitudes: *The Fathering Inventory*, was used to assess fathering attitudes. Among the key items in the scale that fathers were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with on a 5-point Likert scale are: the self-aware man is one who takes responsibility for his own behavior; spirituality and masculinity do not mix well; what parents expect of their children plays a big role in developing children’s self worth; a son is better off being raised by his father than by his mother; men need to be strong no matter what happens; and fathers who ‘lay down the law’ get the respect of their children.
- Parenting attributes: *The Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2)* was used to assess parenting attributes. *AAPI-2* assesses five constructs: Inappropriate expectations (of the child); Empathy; Corporal punishment; Role reversal; and Power/Independence.

- ***Parental stress:*** *The Parenting Stress Index-Short Form (PSI-SF)* assessed three constructs pertaining to parental stress: Parental distress; Child-Parent Dysfunctional Interaction; and Difficult child.

In addition to these measures, analyses were supplemented with qualitative data collected during focus groups and program staff interviews.

- **Statistical Analyses:** A non-experimental pre- post- design was used to assess the research group of 76 fathers. Variables were examined for change over time, from pre- to post survey. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Tests were conducted to describe these changes.
- **Attrition:** While the study reports 76 fathers enrolled in the research group for evaluation, outcomes measured at time two, the post-test, range from 29 to 32 fathers.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Education:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Experience:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Training:** Comprehensive training materials were developed by a State Steering Committee and Local Stakeholder teams. These two groups helped in the development of a *Technical Assistance Manual*, *Professional Development Manual*, and *Interventions Manuals* used at various stages of implementation for staff training and development. In addition to the availability of these manuals, several comprehensive training workshops were held for facilitators of the different programmatic components of Fathers for Life.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** The planning phase for the program took 9 months while implementation was completed in 3 stages which built upon lessons learned at each phase over a three-year period.
 - **Staff wages:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Information not available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION

- **Space:** Information not available.
- **Materials:** *Using Special Topics Books with Children* curriculum called for placement of books and reading material for parents and staff at participating Head Start programs. Additional information for other components of Fathers for Life is not available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** The State Steering Committee brought together 18 agencies and organizations representing government entities, statewide professional associations, Head Start agencies, correctional centers, university programs, a statewide faith-based organization, and private service delivery organizations. This Committee was largely responsible for the planning phase of Fathers for Life.
- **Community Organizations:** Each of the five program sites participating in Fathers for Life during the first two years brought together a Local Stakeholders team representing Head Start agencies, regional or local offices of state government offices, Parents as Teachers personnel from school districts, universities, faith-based organizations, and business leaders. These stakeholders played a key role in implementation of Fathers for Life at the local level.

PROGRAM CONTENT

- **Curriculum or Program Model**

Focus on Fathering.: This comprised of 1-hour group sessions of fathers over 12 sessions covering the following topics on children and parenting:

- Child development;
- Reading with your child;
- Parenting apart;
- Connecting with your child;
- Discipline;
- Places to go;
- Ways to play;
- Healthy relationships;
- Helping your child deal with feelings;
- Siblings and friendships;
- Choosing childcare; and
- Self-esteem.

Parenting Apart. This was developed for parents who do not share the same household. It is a 3-session program where parents learn ways to work together to do what is best for the child. Sessions include: Partnering to parent; Helping your child grow and develop together; and Choices for the road ahead.

Using Special Topic Books with Children. This curriculum was designed for professional development training of Head Start staff and other personnel working directly with children and their families. The training compliments a series of books and other materials for children, families, and staff placed in Head Start classrooms. Among the topics covered in the curriculum are:

- Encouraging children to talk about their concerns;
- Identifying issues children may be experiencing including social/emotional development and mental health and ultimately providing access or referrals to resources available to address these issues;
- How to provide and document on-going assessment of children in the classroom to determine how they are progressing, both developmentally and socially/emotionally;
- Identifying strategies for working with children identified as having special needs, including behavioral and discipline issues;
- Identifying warning signs of abuse or neglect and an appropriate response;
- How to communicate with fathers about their children in a positive manner; and
- How to ensure males have positive role models.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Group size:** Information not available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration) :** *Focus on Fathering* sessions are 1-hour group sessions over 12 units. *Parenting Apart* is a 3-session program. Information is not available for *24/7 Dad™*.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** See previous.
- **Diversity of activities:** Information not available for all sites, but one site offered additional activities such as field trips.
- **Incentives for participation:** Information not available.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

- *Basic assistance needs over time.* The following changes from pre- to post-test were significant:
 - Assistance in preparing or finding a job changed dropped 61% of fathers to 29%, $p=0.001$;
 - Need for education or training dropped from 45% of fathers to 29%, $p=0.10$; and
 - Assistance getting on the right track changed from 58% to 42%, $p=0.10$.

- *Fathers for Life Services desired over time.* The following changes from pre- to post-test were significant:
 - Interest in the employment support programs, *Parents Fair Share/Workforce Development* changed from 71% of fathers to 45%, $p=0.011$;
 - Interest in special father topic classes changed from 26% of fathers to 3%, $p=0.008$; and
 - Interest in family mediation changed from 42% of fathers to 6%, $p=0.005$.

- *Father’s perceived relationship with the youngest child.* The only significant pre- to post-test change experienced:
 - Father’s satisfaction with how their child is turning out changed from a mean of 3.5 to 3.7 ($p=0.10$) on a scale ranging from 1(Not at all) to 4 (A lot).

- *Father’s perceived relationship with youngest child’s mother.* All three items on this measure changed significantly from pre- to post-test.
 - The mean score on how effect communication between the father and mother of the youngest child improved from 2.4 to 3.3 ($p= 0.001$) where 1 = Not at all and 4 = A lot.
 - The mean score on how easy it is for the father and mother of the youngest child to solve problems improved from 2.2 to 2.9 ($p=0.007$) where 1 = Not at all easy and 4 = Very easy.
 - The mean score on how much conflict exists between the father and mother of the youngest child improved from 2.7 to 2.1 ($p=0.009$) where 1 = No conflict and 4 = A lot of conflict.

- *Needs for support in fathering.* The following changes in fathers’ needs from pre- to post-test were significant:
 - Fathers needing help in paying child support dropped from 71% to 42%, $p= 0.003$;
 - Fathers needing help in improving parenting skills dropped from 48% to 26%, $p=0.007$.
 - Fathers needing additional help learning more about child development dropped from 39% to 16%, $p= 0.008$.

- *Fathering attitude.* Seven item means on *The Fathering Inventory* changed significantly from pre-test to post-test. Items were rated on 4-point Likert scales with 1= Strongly disagree and 4 = Strongly Agree:
 - “The self-aware man is one who takes responsibility for his own behavior” increased from 3.3 to 3.5, $p= 0.07$;
 - “Spirituality and masculinity do not mix well” dropped from 2.4 to 2.1, $p= 0.06$;
 - “Men are better off being married” increased from 2.0 to 2.3, $p=0.07$;
 - “What parents expect from their children plays a big role in developing children’s self-worth” increased from 3.0 to 3.2;
 - “A son is better of being raised by his father than by his mother” dropped from 2.4 to 1.9, $p= 0.021$;
 - “Men need to be strong no matter what happens” dropped from 3.1 to 2.6, $p= 0.001$; and
 - “Fathers who ‘lay down the law’ get the respect of their children” dropped from 2.7 to 2.2, $p=0.017$.

- *Parenting attributes.* Only one construct on *The Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2)* showed significant changes from pre- to post-test.
 - On a scale from 1 to 10 with 10 being the most desirable, the Power/Independence construct which measures a father’s tendency to view children’s self-expression and independence as a threat and their expectations of unquestioning obedience improved from 3.7 to 4.9, $F(1,31)= 13.5$, $p= 0.001$.

SOURCES

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EVALUATOR(S) AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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THE FOREVER FATHERS PROGRAM (FFP)

OVERVIEW: The Forever Fathers Program (FFP), was administered through the Office of Special Programs at Erie Community College—City Campus, was designed to address the educational, employment, and psychosocial needs of young, mostly unwed, fathers in Buffalo, New York. Depending on their needs, teen fathers in this program participated in a variety of activities, including education classes, life and fatherhood studies, job-skills training, computer literacy training, life-skills training, paid internships, and informal counseling. The average father successfully completing the program had an 83% probability of either working or being in school after 90 days compared to a 30% probability for fathers not completing the program.

PROGRAM GOALS: The goals of FFP are:

- To improve academic preparedness for career development;
- To train young fathers in job search and job retention skills; and
- To assist participants in becoming socialized to the work contract and facilitating permanent part-time or full-time placement
- To promote the formation of a two-parent network around the children of enrolled fathers;

LOCATION: This program was implemented at Erie Community College in Buffalo, New York.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: In order to qualify for this program, fathers had to be:

- Between 16 and 21 years old;
- Have a child or be an expectant father;
- Meet the federal guidelines for poverty.

Fathers included in the sample had the following characteristics:

- 19.3 years of age, on average;
- 88.5% African-American;
- 92.9% never married;
- 1.2 children, on average;
- 28.1% high school graduate of GED;
- 10.7 school years completed, on average;
- 7.9% employed;
- 56% reside in high poverty area.

EVALUATION DESIGN: OUTCOMES MONITORING (NON-EXPERIMENTAL PRE/POST TEST DESIGN)

- **Outcomes:**
 - Employment
 - Successful completion of the FFP program (i.e., full attainment of individual service plan goal)
 - In school
- **Method:** Administrative data were collected and analyzed for all fathers who completed the FFP program between September 1990 and June 1995, including fathers who left the program before fully achieving the goal(s) laid out in their individual service plans. Such fathers were considered “unsuccessful” in completing the program. Fathers were considered to have “successfully” completed the program if they achieved the goal(s) laid out in their individual service plans (e.g., attained full-time employment).

- **Sample:** The sample consisted of the 127 men who completed the FFP program between September 1990 and June 1995.
- **Measures:** The following administrative data were collected for all participants in the sample: basic demographic characteristics, services utilized, successful/unsuccessful completion of the individual service plan, and employment and school status at 30, 60, and 90 days after program completion.
- **Statistical Analyses:**
 - Descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis were used to assess differences in demographics and use of program-components between fathers who successfully completed the program and fathers who did not.
 - Logistic regression was used to assess the relationship between demographics and program-components and the likelihood of successfully completing the program.
 - Logistic regression was used to assess the relationship between demographics, program-components, and successful program completion and the likelihood of working or being in school after 90 days.
 - Maximum log likelihood estimates and variable means were used to evaluate probabilities for the average participant on his likelihood of completing the program and having a positive economic outcome
- **Attrition:** There was no attrition from the program.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** FFP has one staff member who is both the program director and the case manager. There are two educational instructors who also serve as informal counselors to participants.
 - **Staff Education:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Experience:** The program director/case manager and both of the educational instructors have extensive experience working with and providing counseling, education, and job training and placement to this population.
 - **Staff Training:** The program director/case manager and both of the educational instructors have extensive training working with and providing counseling, education, and job training and placement to this population.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff wages:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Recruitment:** Not currently available.
- **Recruitment:** The program accepts walk-ins as well as referrals from agencies outside the Erie Community College, including the Erie County Department of Social Services and the state Division of Probation.
- **Space:** Not currently available.
- **Materials:** Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** Some participants were referred to the program through outside agencies (e.g., the local department of social services and the state Division of Probation).
- **Community Organizations:** Not currently available.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model:** Each participant completed an intake assessment at enrollment. The Test for Adult Basic Education and the Nelson-Denehy test were used to place participants into one of 3 educational classes: basic skills, GED preparation, or college preparation. Taking into account each participant’s educational and service needs (e.g., transportation, child care) as well as his “dreams for the future” (e.g., educational and employment goals), an individual service plan was created. Each individual plan has a timeline as well as one or multiple goals. In order to be fully enrolled in the program, participants had to complete one week of classes. The first 7 weeks of the program are the “preinternship phase,” during which fathers participated in the following:
 - **Educational Classes**
 - *Basic skills:* This class was for men who had neither a high school diploma nor a GED. Classes focused on remedial reading and math skills. The goal of this class was to complete the GED.
 - *GED preparation:* This class was for men who had neither a high school diploma nor a GED. Classes focused on remedial reading and math skills. The goal of this class was to complete the GED.
 - *College preparation:* This class focused on college-level coursework and requirements.
 - **Life and Fatherhood Studies**
 - *Course 1:* The first course focused on the roles of manhood and self-development.
 - *Course 2:* This second course focused on developing health family-oriented relationships, including resolving conflicts over parenting issues such as visitation.
 - *Course 3:* This third course provided instruction on parenting skills and the development of a positive relationship with the child through adolescence.
 - **Job-Skill Training:** Participants received training in interviews, applications, and follow-up techniques.
 - **Computer Literacy Training:** Participants received training in the basics of microcomputer use.
 - **Life-Skill Training:** Participants received training in critical thinking, personal budgeting, motivation, self-esteem building, and setting priorities.

Once participants successfully completed the preinternship phase, they were able to participate in a paid internship.

- **Paid Internships:** Participants worked with local employers.

Informal counseling and advocacy were also available to participants.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group size:** Not currently available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** The preinternship phase is 7 weeks long. Upon successful completion of this phase, participants were placed in a paid internship.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Walk-ins and referrals were accepted on a rolling basis.
- **Diversity of activities:** Depending on their needs, teen fathers participated in a variety of activities, including education classes, life and fatherhood studies, job-skills training, computer literacy training, life-skills training, paid internships, and informal counseling.
- **Incentives for participation:** Upon successful completion of the preinternship phase, participants were placed in a paid internship.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Differences in use of program-components by program outcomes

- Fathers who successfully completed FFP were more likely to participate in employment training ($p < .05$) or internship activities ($p < .01$). These fathers were also more likely to be working or in school after 30, 60, and 90 days of completing the program ($p < .01$). Additionally, work and school outcomes tended to remain stable across the 90 days.

Relationship between demographics and program-components and the likelihood of successfully completing the program

- Older fathers with a high school diploma/GED at enrollment who participated in an internship were more likely to be successful (i.e., meet their program goals) than younger fathers without a diploma or GED who did not have an internship ($p < .01$).

Relationship between demographics, program-components, and successful program completion and the likelihood of working or being in school after 90 days

- Older fathers who had an internship and successfully completed FFP were more likely to have a positive economic outcome (be working or in school) than younger fathers who did not have an internship or complete the program ($p < .01$).

Probabilities for the average participant on his likelihood of completing the program and having a positive economic outcome

- An average participant had a 47% probability of successfully completing the program.
- An average participant completing an internship had a 73% probability of successfully completing the program. An average participant not completing an internship had a 39% probability of successfully completing the program.
- An average participant who successfully completed the program had an 83% probability of either working or being in school 90 days after completion of the program. An average participant who did not successfully complete the program had a 30% probability of either working or being in school after 90 days.

SOURCES:

Kost, K. A. (1997). The Effects of Support on the Economic Well-being of Young Fathers. *Families in Society* 78(4), 370-382.

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MARYLAND RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD (RF) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

OVERVIEW: The Maryland Responsible Fatherhood (RF) Demonstration project was one of several projects funded by the federal Office of Child Support (OCSE) in late 1997. The Maryland Department of Human Resources used the OCSE grant to fund two Responsible Fatherhood Demonstration Programs: the Baltimore Responsible Fatherhood Program (Baltimore RFP) in Baltimore City and a second responsible fatherhood program in suburban Charles County. The purpose of the OCSE grant was to test comprehensive approaches to promoting responsible fathering among nonresident fathers.

LOCATION: The Maryland Responsible Fatherhood Demonstration Program was implemented in two Maryland locations: Baltimore City and Charles County. The Charles County program, however, was only operational between March of 1999 and the end of that year, when the program became inactive following the resignation of the sole staff member. Twenty-three fathers were served in Charles County during the program’s operation there.

PROGRAM GOALS: The Baltimore RFP sought to help noncustodial fathers:

- Establish paternity
- Improve fathers’ ability to make child support payments
- Increase fathers’ access to their children
- Increase parental involvement and improve parenting behavior
- Help fathers attain adequate employment

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: The Baltimore RFP served low-income non-custodial and custodial fathers (or men who may become fathers) in Baltimore City and Charles County, Maryland. Many of the fathers were referred to the program because they were delinquent or at risk of becoming delinquent in their child support orders, unemployed or underemployed, in need of establishing paternity, and/or had a child that was receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds. Some fathers were referred by the courts, whereas others participated voluntarily in response to word-of-mouth and community organization-based referrals. More specific information about the demographic characteristics of all fathers served is not available; however, the demographic characteristics of the sample selected to participate in the descriptive evaluation are reported below in the “Key Evaluation Findings” section.

EVALUATION DESIGN:

- **QUALITATIVE FOCUS GROUP DESIGN**
- **NON-EXPERIMENTAL DESCRIPTIVE INTERVIEW DESIGN**
- **NON-EXPERIMENTAL PRE-/POST-TEST DESIGN**

Outcomes:

Process evaluation: The process evaluation was designed to document participants’ perceptions of program benefits and barriers to involvement. Specifically, it examined fathers’ beliefs about how the program benefited their relationships with their children and their ability to overcome challenges and barriers (e.g., economic hardship). The evaluation also asked fathers how the program might be changed to better meet their needs.

Descriptive evaluation: The second component of the evaluation was designed to examine the characteristics and life circumstances of fathers in the programs. Individual characteristics included employment status, highest level of education, race/ethnicity, marital status, and number of children. Life circumstances included measures of things such as paternity establishment, child support and custody arrangements, ability to pay child support, income level, father involvement and attitudes toward fathering, fathers’ relationships with the child’s mother, fathers’ mental health, sources of social support, and other resources available to fathers.

Outcomes evaluation: Finally, the third component of the evaluation looked at changes in participants’ demographic, psychological, and relational characteristics between the time they entered the program and one year following their completion of the program. Specifically, the evaluation examined changes in fathers’ employment characteristics, paternity establishment, child support payments, levels of and barriers to involvement with children, co-parental relationships, mental health, social support, and personal challenges. The evaluation also examined the nature of the services that the fathers received from the program.

Method: The evaluation of the Maryland RFP took place in three separate components:

Process evaluation: In this component of the evaluation, four separate focus groups were held, each run by three facilitators. Focus groups lasted for two hours and were audio taped and later transcribed. Fathers’ responses and nonverbal cues were also recorded by research assistants. Fathers received a stipend of \$40 for participating.

Descriptive evaluation: In the descriptive component of the evaluation, individual interviews with fathers were conducted by male African American social services staff members who worked for the Maryland fatherhood programs. Interviews lasted approximately one and a half hours, and data were stored in locked filing cabinets.

Outcomes evaluation: Finally, the third component of the evaluation looked at changes in participants’ characteristics over time. Five fathers were interviewed by two African-American graduate students in human services at two points in time (when they first entered the program and one year later, following their completion of the program).

Sample:

Process evaluation: Twenty fathers participated in the focus group component of the process evaluation. Eight of those were new to the program, whereas five were already enrolled at the time of the evaluation and seven had completed the program. These fathers ranged in age from 17 to 48 years, with a mean age of 31.2. Most (72%) were in their 20s or 30s. The majority were African American (95%) and never-married (75%). All reported that they had established legal paternity or were named as the child’s father on the birth certificate. Half had custody of their children and 60 percent were employed at the time of the evaluation. Sixty-five percent had completed high school or obtained a GED, with their total years of education ranging from 9 to 15.

Descriptive evaluation: A total of 127 nonresidential fathers participated in the descriptive evaluation. Ninety-six were participants in the Baltimore RFP and 31 were part of the Charles County Dad Power Demonstration Program. There were no significant differences between Baltimore City and Charles County fathers in regards to race, age, marital status, level of education, or number of children. Fathers were identified as having risk factors related to their ability to meet child support payments, establish paternity, or cooperate with Child Support Enforcement services. The majority of fathers in the sample were unmarried African-Americans. Their average age was 32.1 years and they had an average of two children each. Most of the fathers lived near their children, with a median reported distance of one mile between their residences and their children’s homes. Fathers’ average number of years of education was 10.7, with nearly half having completed high school or earned a GED, and approximately 45% having received no degrees.

Outcomes evaluation: Five non-residential fathers from the Baltimore RFP participated in the outcomes component of the evaluation. Their mean age was 41.5 when they entered the program. Three were African-American and two were non-Hispanic White. None were married at either the time they entered the program or one year later when the follow-up evaluation occurred. The fathers had an average of three children each

when they entered the program and only one had had an additional child by the time of follow-up. They lived an average of four miles away from their children. Two fathers reported that their children had moved in with them by the time of follow-up. Sixty percent of the fathers had completed high school or earned a GED at the beginning of the evaluation and 100% had done so by the follow-up.

Measures:

Process evaluation: Fathers were asked about their attitudes toward and experiences of becoming fathers, their program involvement, the financial and emotional support they provided for children, and their perceptions of the program. Questions were based on a focus group guide developed by the evaluation team, a father advocate, and the Baltimore RFP’s program supervisor.

Descriptive evaluation: Fathers were interviewed about a number of topics related to their employment characteristics, income, paternity establishment, child custody arrangements, child support payments, relationship with the child’s mother, and father involvement. In addition, the following scales were used to measure variables that might mediate their involvement with children:

- Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D): This 20-item scale was used to measure fathers’ depressive symptoms. Scores of 16 or higher on the scale indicate symptoms of clinical depression.
- Family Support Scale (FSS): This 18-item scale was used to measure fathers’ levels of social support related to child-rearing. Scores on the FSS can range from 0 to 96, with higher scores indicating higher perceived social support.

Outcomes evaluation: The outcomes evaluation utilized the same measures used in the descriptive evaluation (described above).

Statistical Analyses: Data gathered from the descriptive evaluation were analyzed using SPSS for Windows. More detailed information about the specific analyses conducted is not currently available.

Attrition: Not currently available.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES

- **Staff Qualifications and Support:** The Baltimore RFP staff consisted of a program manager, two program administrators, an assessment coordinator, and six outreach workers. The Charles County program consisted of only one full-time staff member.
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Not available.
 - **Staff Education:** Not available.
 - **Staff Experience:** Not available.
 - **Staff Training:** All Baltimore RFP case managers were trained by the National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL) in the responsible fatherhood curriculum.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not available.
 - **Staff wages:** Not available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Not available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION

- **Space:** Not currently available.
- **Materials:** Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** The Maryland RFPs are jointly administered by the Maryland Department of Human Resources and the Community Services Administration Office of Community Initiatives and Child Support Enforcement.

- **Community Organizations:** The Baltimore RFP developed collaborations with a number of community partners, including: Harbor Hospital in south Baltimore, which housed the project office and whose staff assisted with the recruitment of new participants; The Southern Neighborhood Service Center, which had established links to multiple neighborhood associations and community groups; The Baltimore Urban League, which offered employment services and classes; and the Baltimore Employment Exchange, which also offered employment-related services. The Charles County program was administered by the Charles County Department of Social Services.

PROGRAM CONTENT

- **Curriculum or Program Model:** The Baltimore RFP utilized the Responsible Fatherhood Program curriculum developed by the National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL). The six-month curriculum includes weekly educational and group support sessions focused on parenting, life skills, and relationship components.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Group size:** Not currently available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** In Baltimore, participants in the Responsible Fatherhood Program attended six months of weekly, two-hour parenting/peer support sessions. If they attended at least 80 percent of these sessions, they were awarded a program certificate of graduation. Other services, such as individual meetings, were provided on an as-needed basis. Some participants subsequently participated in an “After Care Program” that offered ongoing support sessions following the completion of the main program.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** The Baltimore RFP offered weekly support sessions.
- **Diversity of activities:** Participants in the Baltimore RFP participated in peer support programs and classes focused on parenting, life skills, and relationship training through the Responsible Fatherhood Program curriculum. When appropriate, participants also received job search and employment skills training, substance abuse treatment, and/or domestic abuse treatment. Each participant received individual case management services to target individual needs.
- **Incentives for participation:** Participants in the Baltimore RFP received two free bus tokens and a \$4 MacDonal'd's gift certificate each time they attended a session or met with a case manager. Fifty dollar stipends were also awarded to participants if they attended sessions regularly for the first four months and upon their successful completion of the program.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Process Evaluation

Reported Program Benefits:

- Perceived individual benefits included: 1) helping fathers learn about themselves and about being a parent; 2) providing fathers with emotional support and giving them an outlet to discuss their experiences; and 3) getting help and assistance with personal issues such as substance abuse, legal troubles, and employment problems.
- Perceived relational benefits included: 1) improved father-child relationships; and 2) improved father-mother relationships.
- Perceived contextual benefits included: 1) an improved ability to navigate larger social systems, which helped fathers manage issues of child custody, visitation, and child support; and 2) increased levels of community involvement among fathers (e.g., participation in volunteer work).
- The individual, relational, and contextual benefits fathers reported varied in nature. Fathers reported cognitive benefits (e.g., increased knowledge of resources and more insight into their own and their children’s behavior), emotional benefits (e.g., increased emotional support and the development of

emotional skills such as listening and empathy), and behavioral benefits (e.g., higher levels of community involvement).

Reported Barriers to Program Involvement:

- Perceived individual barriers to program involvement included: 1) fathers’ own egos or fear and reluctance at opening up and sharing emotion with other participants; 2) preconceived negative notions of fathering programs; and 3) the lure of street life (i.e., competition between the desire to participate in and buy into the program and the desire to achieve the instant gratification and financial rewards that can be gained more quickly through hustling and other street activities).
- Perceived contextual barriers to program involvement included: 1) job-related conflicts (e.g., having to work during program hours); and 2) fear and concern regarding the program’s association with the child support agency.

Reported Suggestions for Program Improvement:

- Fathers reported that the program could be improved in the following ways: 1) conducting more outreach with fathers on the streets; 2) promoting the program in a more visible way; 3) clarifying the requirements for program compliance; 4) reassessing the linkage between program compliance and incentive payments; 5) having program graduates conduct initial assessments; 6) better addressing the multiple needs of participants simultaneously; 7) identifying and addressing specific individual needs (e.g., issues regarding child support) when participants first become involved in the program; 8) holding groups for men of similar ages and then sharing information across age groups; and 9) holding meetings at least 5 days per week.

Descriptive Evaluation

- Employment Characteristics:
 - 45% of the Baltimore City fathers and 36% of the Charles County fathers were employed.
- Income:
 - 50% of Baltimore City fathers and none of the Charles County fathers reported that their income levels covered their household and family financial obligations fairly well or very well.
- Paternity Establishment, Child Custody, and Child Support:
 - 85% of the fathers in Baltimore City and 93% of the fathers in Charles County reported that they had established paternity for at least one child.
 - 56% of the Baltimore fathers and 84% of the Charles County fathers had joint or sole physical custody of their children
 - 40% of the Baltimore fathers and 86% of the Charles County fathers had a legal order requiring them to pay child support
 - In Baltimore City, 41% of the fathers with a child support order reported that they were able to pay the full amount in the last six months; in Charles County, only 16% reported having been able to do so.
- Father Involvement:
 - In Baltimore, 80% of the fathers reported that they saw their child at least once a month and 59% saw their children at least once a week; in Charles County, 56% of the fathers saw their children at least once a month and 37% saw them weekly.
 - 78% of the Baltimore fathers and 11% of the Charles County fathers did **not** have a court order mandating that they could spend time with their children; 93% of the Baltimore fathers and 86% of the Charles County fathers did **not** have a court order restricting their contact with their children.
 - 77% of Baltimore fathers and 39% of Charles County fathers reported that they had some or a great deal of influence in making major decisions related to their child (e.g., regarding education, child care, religion, health).

- Nearly all of the fathers reported that they held more “child-oriented” attitudes toward fathering, versus more traditional attitudes (99% in Baltimore City and 97% in Charles County)
- Co-parental Relationship & Conflict with the Child’s Mother:
 - 12% of the Baltimore City fathers and 23% of the Charles County fathers lived with the mother of their child
 - 38% of the Baltimore fathers and 30% of the Charles County fathers reported that they experienced conflict with the child’s mother regarding custody.
 - 35% of the Baltimore fathers and 20% of the Charles County fathers reported that they experienced conflict with the child’s mother regarding their child’s living arrangements.
 - 51% of the Baltimore fathers and 43% of the Charles County fathers reported that they experienced conflict with the child’s mother regarding how children are being raised.
 - 44% of the Baltimore fathers and 38% of the Charles County fathers reported that they experienced conflict with the child’s mother regarding child support payments.
 - 48% of the Baltimore fathers and 40% of the Charles County fathers reported that they experienced conflict with the child’s mother regarding visitation (i.e., when and how often they visit children).
 - 28% of the Baltimore fathers and 40% of the Charles County fathers reported that they experienced conflict with the child’s mother regarding what they do during visits with their children.
 - 35% of the Baltimore fathers and 40% of the Charles County fathers reported that they experienced conflict with the child’s mother regarding the children’s health and education.
 - 59% of the Baltimore fathers and 63% of the Charles County fathers reported that they argued, yelled, or shouted at the child’s mother when serious disagreements arose.
 - 13% of the Baltimore fathers and 3% of the Charles County fathers reported that they hit or threw things at the child’s mother when serious disagreements arose.
- Mental Health, Social Support, and Other Resource Challenges
 - Social Support and Resource Challenges:
 - 40.5% of fathers had a criminal record (38% in Baltimore and 47% in Charles County).
 - 22.1% had problems with alcohol or drugs (28% in Baltimore and 7% in Charles County). The difference in substance use problems differed significantly between the two sites ($t = -2.48; p < .05$).
 - 42.2% of fathers reported having limited access to transportation (43.8% in Baltimore and 32.3% in Charles County)
 - 24.2% of fathers reported that they did not have a permanent place to live (26.9% in Baltimore and 16.1% in Charles County)
 - 11.9% of fathers had health problems or disabilities (9.5% in Baltimore and 19.4% in Charles County)
 - Overall, fathers reported an average of 2.1 resource challenges each.
 - Mental Health:
 - 56% of the fathers reported depressive symptoms indicative of clinical levels (i.e., scores of 16 or higher on the CES-D).
 - Fathers in both samples had a mean score of 16.3 on the CES-D ($M = 14.5$ in Baltimore; $M = 21.7$ in Charles County), indicating that fathers in the sample had higher levels of depressive symptomatology compared with the general population ($M = 8.7$).
 - As levels of social support increased, depressive symptoms decreased ($r = .30; p < .01$).
 - Fathers’ resource challenges, social support, and county of residence (i.e., Baltimore or Charles) all contributed significantly to depressive symptoms ($R^2 = 25.8\%$ of the variance).
 - Resource challenges (i.e., unemployment, health/disability, inability to pay child support, criminality, substance abuse, and lack of housing) were the strongest predictors

of depressive symptoms, accounting for 8.5% of the variance in scores on the CES-D (with more resource challenges being related to higher scores on the CES-D). Fathers’ place of residence in either Baltimore or Charles County accounted for 8.2% of the variance in depressive symptoms, with fathers from Charles County being more likely to have higher CES-D scores. Finally, fathers’ reports of available sources of social support accounted for 8% of the variance in depression scores; surprisingly, as higher reported levels of social support were associated with higher levels of depression.

Outcomes Evaluation

- Employment Characteristics:
 - At Time I and Time II, three fathers (60%) were employed and at Time II one additional father reported engaging in occasional or temporary work.
- Income:
 - At both the pre- and post-test interviews, two fathers (40%) reported having incomes that covered their financial needs fairly well and three fathers (60%) reported having incomes that did not adequately meet their needs.
- Paternity Establishment, Child Custody, and Child Support:
 - At Time I, all five fathers had established paternity for their children; at Time II, one father had done so for an additional child.
 - At Time I, one father lived with his child and four fathers had children who lived with their other parent or a relative; at Time II, two fathers reported living with their children. Three fathers at Time II reported that the program had been helpful in assisting them in changing their custody arrangements. Two fathers reported that the program had been helpful in assisting them in changing or setting up visitation arrangements.
 - Two fathers (40%) at each time of the evaluation had court orders requiring them to pay child support. At the follow-up two fathers reported that the program had been helpful in assisting them in changing or setting up their child support order and in getting help with their child support debts. Two other fathers reported feeling that they were getting their support situations “under control.”
 - At Time I, one father reported that he was able to pay the full amount of child support; at Time II this increased to two fathers who were able to do so.
- Father Involvement:
 - At Time I, 100% of the fathers reported that they saw their child at least once a month and 80% saw their children at least once a week. At Time II, two fathers reported that they saw their children more often than they did at Time I. They attributed this increase to improved relationships with their children and their children’s mothers, having more time, making more of an effort, and increased determination to be a good father. One father reported that he saw his child less often at Time II than at Time I, which he attributed to transportation difficulties and being denied access to his child by the other parent.
 - 80% of fathers at Time I reported that they had some or a great deal of influence in making major decisions related to their child (e.g., regarding education, child care, religion, health). At Time II, one father reported no change in his level of influence and two fathers reported having less influence than they did at Time I.
 - All of the fathers at Time II reported that the program had helped them build better relationships with their children.
- Co-parental Relationship & Conflict with the Child’s Mother:
 - At Time I, three fathers (60%) reported that they had a very friendly relationship with their child’s mother, whereas one reported having a neutral relationship and one reported having a somewhat hostile relationship. By Time II, four fathers reported no change in their relationships with their children’s mothers and one reported that he got along better with his child’s mother

- after completing the program. Four fathers reported that the program had given them help in developing better relationships with their children’s mother.
- Sixty percent of the fathers at Time I reported that they argued, yelled, or shouted at the child’s mother when serious disagreements arose and none of the fathers reported that they hit or threw things at the child’s mother when serious disagreements arose. At the follow-up, two fathers reported that they had received domestic abuse services and one reported that he had received anger management services. One father reported that a restraining order had been taken out against him since the time of the first interview.
 - Mental Health, Social Support, and Other Resource Challenges
 - Fathers’ scores on the CES-D measure of depressive symptoms rose between Time I and Time II, from 14.4 to 17.2. The national average on the CES-D is 8.7 and the clinical cut-point is 16, indicating that at both times, fathers had higher levels of depressive symptoms than the general population and that at Time II, their levels were of clinical significance.
 - At Time I, fathers had an average score of 24.6 on the FSS, which increased to a mean score of 44.4 at the time of the follow-up interviews, indicating that perceptions of social support were higher following completion of the program.
 - At Time I, one father had a criminal record. At the follow-up none of the fathers reported having been arrested, having gone to jail, or having gone to court since the time of the first interview.
 - One father at Time I and no fathers at Time II reported having problems with alcohol or drugs. One father had undergone drug or alcohol treatment in the time between the two interviews.
 - One father at Time I and two fathers at Time II reported having limited access to transportation.
 - At Time I, one father reported that he did not have a permanent place to live. At Time II, one father reported having spent time in some sort of temporary housing (e.g., a shelter or rooming house) in the past year and one father reported having moved three or four times since the first interview.
 - One father at Time I reported having a serious health problem or disability. At the follow-up one father reported that he had had a serious health problem, injury, or disability during the time between the interviews.

SOURCES

- The evaluation reports and other information about the Maryland RFP and other responsible fatherhood programs funded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services can be found here: <http://fatherhood.hhs.gov/Evaluation/index.shtml>.
- The Responsible Fatherhood Curriculum can be found here: <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/40/abstract.html>.

PATERNAL INVOLVEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

OVERVIEW: The Paternal Involvement Demonstration Project (PIDP) was designed with the belief that non-custodial, welfare-dependent fathers would be better able to help themselves, their children and their children’s mothers improve their financial standing if they were assisted with becoming employed, responsible parents. PIDP was a public-private partnership program and provided job training, job placement and paternal involvement services. The current evaluation found that the program succeeded in placing a high number of participants in employment, though the participants struggled somewhat with job retention. Participants of the program also increased the frequency with which they saw their children and changed their perceptions of the paternal role.

PROGRAM GOALS: The Paternal Involvement Demonstration Project (PIDP) had three policy goals:

- Assisting fathers who had been receiving state public aid to become economically self sufficient and be able to provide financial support to their children, through placement in good, well paying jobs;
- Strengthening the ability of disadvantaged fathers to provide and maintain positive relationships with their children; and
- Modifying public welfare policy to eliminate disincentives to paternal economic and social self-sufficiency while establishing the value of ongoing federal and state funding for paternal self-sufficiency programs.

LOCATION: Three organizations in Chicago, Illinois piloted and ran three separate PIDPs over three years: The Chicago Commons, The Chicago Institute for Economic Development, and the Neighborhood Institute (this site was reestablished and managed by Kennedy-King College after the Neighborhood Institute pulled out during the third year).

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: Intake characteristics of 86 fathers enrolled across the three sites of PIDP were:

- Participants ranged from 18 to 35 years of age.
- Approximately 92% of the fathers were Black while Latinos and Whites each comprised 3.5% of the sample;
- Each father had an average of 2.33 children with 38% of fathers having 1 child, 26% having two children, and 16% having three children;
- Over 60% of fathers reported seeing their child weekly or more frequently- 29% daily and 34% weekly;
- Approximately 47% of fathers had less than high school education, 17 % were graduates of high school, and 36% had some post-secondary education;
- Almost half (46.5%) of fathers grew up in single-parent mom households. Approximately 38% grew up in two-parent households, and 10% grew up with their grandparents;
- Three out of four (76%) fathers grew up in households with working parents;
- Fifty-eight percent of fathers were receiving food stamps; and
- Approximately 28% of fathers lived in a household with at least one person employed.

EVALUATION DESIGN: QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL NON-EQUIVALENT GROUPS PRE/POST TEST DESIGN

- **Outcomes:**

Paternal Involvement Demonstration Project set out to quantitatively assess the following outcomes at three sites:

- Employment and income;
- Educational attainment;
- Child support;

- Father-child interaction;
- Self-esteem; and
- Locus of control.

Program sites faced challenges in recruiting enough fathers within a short span of time to allow for their proposed random assignment evaluation. The programs were thus evaluated using qualitative methods and comparing participants to a comparison group. The outcomes evaluated were thus condensed to employment and parenting (father-child interaction, adjudicating paternity, and self-reports of cash contributions towards child support).

- **Method:** Data collected for this study were predominantly qualitative. Participants completed intake questionnaires and follow up questionnaires every six months and participated in focus groups. Researchers conducted interviews with participants, PIDP staff and comparison group men. Researchers also visited sites during special events attended by the men and their families. Participant outcomes were compared to a comparison group of men who were recruited from the Illinois Department of Public Aid’s weekly orientations for men applying for food stamps.
- **Sample:** A total of 86 fathers participated from all three sites. The comparison group was made up of 65 fathers.
- **Measures:**
 - **Employment:** Participants filled out an intake form that asked for their employment and income data.
 - **Parenting:** Participants filled out self-report measures pertaining to parental responsibility, answering question related to financial and other types of support provided to their children and the frequency of contact with their children.
 - **Impact:** PIDP’s impact, costs, and process were compared to non-PIDP projects with similar goals.
- **Attrition:** While the transient nature of participants in PIDP programs was noted, attrition rates were not reported. It was noted that some participants did not continue participation once they found employment, especially due to competing time commitments of participating in PIDP and working.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Education:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Experience:** Information not available.
 - **Staff Training:** Information not available.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Developing the programs took considerable time. The researchers initially planned to keep the program details consistent over the course of the three years in order to increase the ability to reliably test for the effectiveness of the program. It was expected that modifications would be kept to a minimum. However, this was not possible and the program needed to be changed repeatedly to be responsive to the needs of the participants.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Information not available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION

- **Recruitment:** Varied by site, ranged from recruitment from food stamp orientations to flyers in neighborhood locations.
- **Space:** Varied by site.
- **Materials:** Varied by site.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** The PIDP program at Kennedy Community College paired with other programs within the college, offering formal education opportunities to participants. All three PIDP programs consulted with the Illinois Department of Employment Security to find out about possible job openings.
- **Community Organizations:**

PROGRAM CONTENT

- **Curriculum or Program Model:** The program was administered through three separate neighborhood-based agencies in Chicago. The programs were all required to provide three core services: case management; job training or employment placement; and parenting education focused on the family. The programs had freedom to decide which methods to use for providing these services.

Chicago Commons: Participants took part in weekly small group sessions focused on developing personal skills, improving self-esteem and solving personal problems. The sessions also focused on issues related to both establishing paternity and the father-child relationship. Case managers assisted participants with developing an employment plan and provided job-placement assistance.

Chicago Institute for Economic Development: The program at CIED was based on another program already operating at this location called “Choices for Young Mothers”. This program included three phases. The first phase involved assessments and job-readiness workshops and the start of the weekly meetings. The men then started to search for a job and were contacted by staff weekly, with the goal of employment by the beginning of phase two. During phase two, paternity adjudication began and fathers attended workshops, counseling, and father-child activities. During phase 3 the focus was on maintaining employment and developing relationships with their children.

Neighborhood Institute: The PIDP program at TNI consisted of five main activities: 1) case management; 2) parent and family education; 3) employment preparation; 4) education and training, and 5) personal skill building. The first year of this program focused on employment training and placement. During the second year, the program shifted focus toward parenting, social services and case management and began to experience success, especially with family activities and parenting sessions. Despite its success, the program began to suffer from staffing problems and ended up first putting the program on hold, then discontinuing it. The evaluation notes that the PIDP program was a very different program from all of TNI’s other programs, and served needier clients. The program was managed temporarily by the Chicago Commons, before permanently residing at Kennedy-King College.

Kennedy-King College: Kennedy-King Community College took over the program from the Neighborhood Institute and called it “Fishers of Men”. This program differs from the other two in its focus on community development and organization. The Fishers of Men program included a community service component and a mentoring component, and collaborated with other programs at the college. The parenting aspect was adapted from programs at the Parenting Institute and involved parenting and life skills classes twice a month. Few of the original clients remained with the program through the transition from The Neighborhood Institute to the Chicago Commons to the Kennedy-King College.

PROGRAM DESIGN

- **Group size:** Varied by site.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration) :** Varied by site.

- **Frequency of program offerings:** Varied by site.
- **Diversity of activities:** Varied by site.
- **Incentives for participation:** Participants recruited for the comparison group were given the option of taking part in the program, and if they chose to be in the comparison group were paid \$20 for their participation. Participants who took part in the program received a variety of benefits, depending on the location of the program. These ranged from health expenses to transportation expenses to stipends intended for monthly educational programs.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

- **Employment**
 - *Placement:* By the end of year three, Kennedy-King placed 11% of participants in employment, whereas CIED placed 63% and Commons placed 69%.
 - *Retention:* Although job retention rates are not specified, it is noted that retention rates were low. These low rates were attributed to the discouragement participants felt at their low wages, depression, emotional unpreparedness, low self-esteem, and the participants’ substance abuse problems which worsened returned for some participants after receiving their paychecks.
 - *Wages:* Hourly earnings tended to be low, with the average hourly income for participants at CIED at \$5.41, \$5.50 at Commons, and \$5.75 at Kennedy-King.
- **Parenting**
 - *Frequency:* Fathers’ interaction with children increased.
 - *Responsibility:* Fathers increased their willingness to adjudicate paternity and reported higher levels of monetary contributions made toward their children.
 - *Attitude:* Men reported a new sense of empowerment and entitlement to paternal rights and roles, and no longer felt that a job was a requirement for them to see their children.
- **Impact**
 - *Effectiveness:* The placement rates of PIDP were higher than other job placement programs looked at for comparison in this study.
 - *Cost:* The cost of the program compared favorably to similar programs with the same overall goals.

SOURCES

Howard, W. D., Mathews-Rasheed, J., Fitzgerald, J., (1996). An evaluation of the Paternal Involvement Demonstration. University of Illinois at Chicago Center for Urban Economic Development.

EVALUATOR(S) AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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THE TEEN FATHER COLLABORATIVE

OVERVIEW: In 1983, the Ford Foundation along with eight community foundations launched the Teen Father Collaboration, a two-year national demonstration and research effort designed to encourage agencies working with teenage mothers and their children to extend their services to meet the needs of teenage fathers. Each agency designed and developed its own program, including services such as vocational training and job placement, parenting skills, classes, counseling services, educational programs, and family planning services. Over the two years, the Collaborative served 395 teenage fathers and prospective fathers explored what program development might look like for teen fathers. An implementation and outcomes monitoring evaluation reported on what they found to be the essential components of successful programs for teenage fathers as well as highlights of program impact.

PROGRAM GOALS: Although each local agency designed and developed its own program, all of the agencies involved in the Collaborative agreed to the following program goals:

- To develop effective strategies for reaching young fathers and prospective fathers;
- To provide these young men with services appropriate to their needs, with particular emphasis on their responsibilities as fathers;
- To document and describe the development of agency services, and the impact these services had on their lives;
- To draw attention locally and nationally to the need for programs for this previously neglected population; and
- To continue successful Collaboration programs beyond the duration of the demonstration.

LOCATION: Eight program sites participated in the Teen Fathers Collaborative. Programs were implemented in the following cities across the country: Bridgeport, CT; Louisville, KY; Minneapolis, MN; Philadelphia, PA; Portland, OR; Poughkeepsie, NY; St. Paul, MN; and San Francisco, CA.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: Teenage fathers and prospective fathers participating in the Collaborative had the following characteristics:

- The majority of participants were between 17 and 19, ranging from 15 to 19.5 years of age;
- 54.7% of participants were expectant fathers, and 45.3% were fathers already;
- 35% of participants were employed, and half of those employed were working part-time;
- 75% of participants were not enrolled in any type of school program;
- 59% of participants dropped out of school between the ninth and eleventh grade;
- Participants were Black (37.7%), White (25.2%), Hispanic (24%), Native American, and Asian (5.1%)²;
- Participants were from Protestant backgrounds (43.7%), Catholic backgrounds (~33%), no religious background (12%), and a small percentages were from other religious backgrounds;
- 50.7% of participants received all of their financial support from their families, 20% relied on public assistance, and 10% relied on a combination of family support, personal earnings and public assistance;
- 10% of participants were married, 75% considered their partner to be their “girlfriend,” and 10% said they were “just friends” with their partner;
- Around 75% of participants said that their relationship with their partner had lasted at least 2 years.

² The race/ethnicity of the fathers served varied greatly by program site. Fathers at one program site were primarily Native American, while fathers at another site were primarily Hispanic. Several sites served either primarily White or primarily Black fathers.

EVALUATION DESIGN: IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES MONITORING

- **Outcomes:** Based on their work with the eight agencies participating in the Teen Father Collaborative, Bank Street College reported on 1) the characteristics of fathers served, 2) the essential components of successful programs for teenage fathers, and 3) highlights of program impact.
- **Method:** Bank Street collected a variety of information concerning both program implementation and the characteristics of and outcomes for fathers who participated in the program.
 - With respect to implementation, data on agency characteristics was collected at the beginning of the Collaborative. Data on agency services was collected quarterly. Site visits were conducted annually, and telephone interviews with administrators and staff were conducted as needed.
 - With respect to participants, background information was collected during the participant’s initial visit. Baseline information was collected during a subsequent visit, usually the second visit. Ongoing logs on participants were completed on a quarterly basis, and outcome data was collected at the participant’s exit from the program.
- **Sample:** Over the two years, background data were collected from 395 fathers who made contact with their local program. Baseline data was collected from 204 fathers who made a subsequent visit.
- **Measures:** Agency staff collected data using forms developed in partnership with Bank Street College. The following measures were used:
 - At the beginning of the Collaborative, administrators at each site completed the Characteristics, Resources, and Operation of Agency form, documenting the structure, size, staffing patterns, range of services, etc.;
 - Agency staff completed a Quarterly Summary of Agency Services form, covering detailed activities on the recruitment of teen fathers, client referrals, direct provision of services, and community development activities;
 - Agency staff administered the Background Information form to all young men who made contact with the program, collecting information on age, educational and job status, etc.;
 - Agency staff administered the Baseline Data form to all young men who indicated that they wished to participate in the program on a regular basis, including information on naturally occurring support networks, knowledge about contraception, methods of birth control, use of contraception;
 - Agency staff recorded each participant’s attendance and progress in on Ongoing Log;
 - Agency staff completed an Outcome Data form, paralleling the Baseline Data form and the Background Information form, with fathers whose participation with the program was ending;
 - Additionally, Bank Street staff conducted on-site interviews with key administrators and service delivery personnel as well as teenage fathers and prospective fathers.
- **Statistical Analyses:** Descriptive statistics and chi-square analyses were used.
- **Attrition:** There was a high rate of program attrition among participants, and agency staff were rarely able to complete the Outcome Data form with participants before they left the program. For this reason, program effects were mostly assessed using the other measures (e.g., Quarterly Summary of Agency Services forms and Ongoing Logs).

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**

- **Staff-participant ratio:** Although a few of the program sites had a large staff, several sites had only one or two staff members. Some sites were able to target a large number of fathers, while other sites targeted only a small number.
- **Staff Education:** The groups were led by the program developer, a Mexican male marriage and family therapy graduate student, and one of two parent educators.
- **Staff Experience:** Frontline staff, program administrators, and participants stressed how important having a male staff member was to the success of the program. This person should be skilled in counseling, outreach, community networking, and referral. He should be dedicated to the population being served. He should be able to connect with his clients (i.e., young, informal, and committed to fathering in his own life). Ideally, he should come from a similar background as the fathers he is serving.
- **Staff Training:** Bank Street staff provided encouragement and some technical assistance to frontline staff. Additionally, several agencies stressed the importance of staff development. Some frontline staff, used to working with teenage mothers, were resistant to working with teenage fathers.
- **Planning Time and Coordination:** It took time for agencies to develop their full complement of services. In many cases, services were added on one-at-a-time during the first year of the Collaborative. Additionally, a large amount of staff time was spent in data collecting activities. Staff sometimes had to work evenings and on Saturdays in order to get everything done, and this extra work limited the number of fathers they could work with.
- **Staff wages:** Not currently available.
- **Staff Satisfaction:** Not all staff were excited at first to be working with teenage fathers.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Recruitment:** Some agencies for teenage mothers and their children reached young men through their female partner who was being served by the agency; others reached their clientele through aggressive outreach activities in the community. Still others found that a combination of these strategies worked best.
- **Space:** Two local agencies set their programs in a school. One agency set its program in a hospital. The other 5 programs set their programs in social service agencies.
- **Materials:** Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:**
 - The Ford Foundation brought Bank Street into the Collaborative to do the following:
 - Provide technical assistance in program development and implementation to the participating agencies;
 - Disseminate information on issues related to teen fathers to both the participating agencies and other agencies and organizations interested in beginning their own programs;
 - Coordinate the collection and analysis of research data for use in documentation of the Collaboration;
 - Develop effective models and guidelines for serving teenage fathers; and
 - Convene national conferences for participants.
 - Frontline staff recruited participants through teen mothers/perspective mothers as well as contacts at schools, hospitals, pre-natal clinics, churches, and teenage hang-outs throughout the community (e.g., recreational centers, bars, basketball courts). Additionally, staff recruited through the media and by word-of-mouth.
 - Communication between the eight participating agencies was conducted through regular telephone conferences, a newsletter, and an annual conference.
- **Community Organizations:** The Ford Foundation along with eight community foundations launched the Teen Father Collaboration. The community foundations were responsible for funding the service delivery component of their chosen agency, while the Ford Foundation was responsible for funding data

collection and the efforts of Bank Street College. Community foundations also played a public advocacy role in an effort to extend the impact of their teen father programs beyond the two-year demonstration.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model:** Each agency designed and developed its own program, and while some agencies offered services on-site, others mostly referred fathers to services offered in the community. An assessment of services revealed the following:
 - All agencies offered some form of vocational skills training and/or job placement services (e.g., resume writing, assessing want ads, role playing interviews with potential employers);
 - All agencies offered some form of parenting skills classes (e.g., feeding, bathing, early childhood development);
 - Some form of counseling services were available to all participants (e.g., individual counseling, support groups, couples counseling) and dealt with issues such as responsibilities as fathers, relationship to partner, and attitudes and behavior toward family planning;
 - Some agencies offered perspective fathers the opportunity to participate in pre-natal activities (e.g., listening to the baby’s heartbeat, participating in labor classes);
 - Some agencies offered participants the opportunity to participate in family planning education, assistance in completing high school diploma requirements, and legal advocacy work.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group size:** Not currently available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** On average, fathers remained in the program for 6.6 months.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Services were offered on a rolling basis.
- **Diversity of activities:** Each agency designed and developed its own program, including services such as vocational training and job placement, parenting skills, classes, counseling services, educational programs, and family planning services. As time went on, many agencies were able to increase the number of services offered to fathers.
- **Incentives for participation:** Transportation money or transportation services were often provided.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Characteristics of Fathers Served

- Although participating fathers were fairly knowledgeable about sex and contraception, there was a “tremendous gap” between their knowledge and their behavior.
- In general, participating fathers were supported by their families and committed to their partners.
- Although their children typically lived with their mothers and/or their maternal grandparents, the majority of participating fathers reported that they maintained daily contact with their children and 75% said that they or their parents contributed to the child’s financial support. Staff reported that many fathers wanted “something better” for their children.
- Although recruitment of participants was not easy, most program sites found that their “intense, aggressive, and creative outreach strategies” paid off. Fathers wanted to participate, and most sites ended up having too few staff members to service participants as they would want to. Flexible styles of delivery were also necessary. For example, offering services between 9 and 5 presented difficulties for many fathers.

Essential Components of Successful Programs

- *Essential Outreach Strategies:*
 - Inform the mother or perspective mother about services available to her partner.

- Establish referral linkages throughout the community with staff at other youth-serving agencies.
- Hire an outreach worker who is comfortable with and willing to actively approach teenage males in settings throughout the community.
- Inform the public-at-large about the availability of services for teen fathers.

- *Essential Components of Successful Programs for Teenage Fathers*
 - A top-level commitment by an organization to serving teen fathers and prospective fathers, including a commitment to fund raising as well as supervising and supporting staff.
 - At least one full-time staff person, preferably a male, who is hired solely to reach and serve teenage fathers and perspective fathers. This person should be skilled in counseling, outreach, community networking, and referral. He should be dedicated to the population being served. He should be able to connect with his clients (i.e., young, informal, and committed to fathering in his own life). Ideally, he should come from a similar background as the fathers he is serving.
 - An aggressive, “street-smart” outreach worker who knows the community well, can establish a referral network for recruitment purposes, and can “sell” the program.
 - A comprehensive array of services, including: counseling, job-related services, educational services, parenting skills classes, pre-natal classes, and legal advocacy.
 - A realistic number of clients, depending on the number of program staff and the range of their responsibilities.

Highlights of Program Impact

- The majority of fathers who participated in the Collaborative were interested in multiple services, and 85% of participants participated in at least 2 service components. Over 75% participated in 3 or more service components.
- Counseling was the most sought out service (in 382 of 395 cases). Counseling assisted fathers in 1) coping with the demands of early parenthood, 2) building stronger ties with their children, 3) working on their ongoing relationship to their partner, and 4) reducing their sense of isolation from other young men under similar, stressful situations.
- Almost half of the 155 non-graduates who were also not enrolled in school either returned to high school (28 participants) or enrolled in and/or obtained their GED (43 participants).
- Almost two-thirds of participants were unemployed and seeking employment when they entered their local program. Of these fathers, 148 had a positive employment outcome (61.2% of those unemployed at program entry), obtaining either a part-time job (56 participants) or a full-time job (92 participants).
- All but one of the original 8 program sites were able to get funding to continue individual programs after the end of the demonstration.

SOURCES:

Klinman, D.G., Sander, J.H., Rosen, J.L., Longo, K.R., & Martinez, L.P. (1985). *The teen parent collaboration: Reaching and serving the teenage father*. New York, NY: Bank Street College of Education.

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WORK AND FAMILY CENTER

OVERVIEW: The Work and Family Center (WFC) is a multi-agency program aimed at enabling successful reintegration of offenders into the community upon their release from prisons in Denver Colorado. Although most clients requested and received assistance with child support issues upon their release from prison, little change was recorded in their child support status. Employment rates and earnings for clients six months after completing WFC programs improved.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Reintegration of offenders upon their release from Colorado prisons.
- To provide services related to child support

LOCATION: Denver, Colorado

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED:

There were 350 ex-offenders in the study.

- Clients in the study had been out of prison ranging from days to 12 years. More than half had been out of prison less than 3.3 months with 39 % seen within one month of leaving prison. Sixty four percent (64%) were seen within 6 months of leaving prison.
- Clients were an average of 35 years old.
- Most of the clients served, 86%, were male.
- Approximately 35% of the clients were African American, 38% Hispanic, and 24% White.
- Nearly two thirds of the clients (61%) reported having a GED. Approximately 18% had less than a GED level of education and 21% reported completing high school or higher level of education.
- Approximately 82% of all clients were fully employed before their incarceration.
- Many (39%) of clients reported their marital status as never married. Another 32% reported being separated, divorced, or widowed with approximately 17% reporting being married.
- Clients had an average of 2.6 children with an average age of 9.7 years. Nearly two thirds (62%) reported having a child out of wedlock.
- Approximately 46% of clients reported seeing one child “often” before incarceration. Another 27% reported never seeing any child before incarceration.
- Nearly three quarters (70%) of clients were required to pay restitution following their release from prison with an average amount owed being \$3, 144.
- Approximately 27% of clients faced driving restrictions upon release from prison.

EVALUATION DESIGN: OUTCOMES MONITORING (PRE- & POST-TEST DESIGN)

- **Outcomes**
 - Types of help wanted at the beginning of the program and the type of help received;
 - Changes in employment and earnings;
 - Changes in child support payments; and
 - Recidivism.
- **Method**

Client intake forms: This form detailed the clients’ demographics and the types of services they wished to receive.

Six-Month follow-up interviews: Six months after being seen at the WFC, clients were interviewed by telephone about their employment and child support status. Clients also responded about the types of services they received.

Follow-up review of agency records: Evaluators reviewed several types of agency records:

- Automated child support records to track changes in child support payments;
 - Colorado Department of Labor and Employment records of earnings to assess changes in earnings; and
 - Department of Corrections records to assess client’s prison status.
- **Sample:** The report focuses on 350 clients served at the WFC.
 - **Measures:**
 - Employment earnings
 - Child support payments
 - Recidivism
 - **Statistical Analyses**

Client intake forms were used to assess proportions of clients requesting and receiving services. Descriptive statistics about the services requested and received were reported. Agency records were used to assess pre- and post WFC employment earnings, child support payments and recidivism rates. The differences in means at pre- and post-test were assessed for statistical significance.
 - **Attrition**

Information currently not available.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualification and Support**
 - **Staff-participation ratio:** The WFC started out with 2 full-time staff, four part-time staff and a director. Over one year the program grew to 9 full-time staff and 4 part-time staff/consultants. The staff included a director, five case managers, one full-time and one part-time employment specialist, a child support specialist, a receptionist, and a part-time analyst. A lawyer and mental health specialist consulted for the WFC.
 - **Staff Education:** Information currently not available.
 - **Staff Experience:** Information currently not available.
 - **Staff Training:** Information currently not available.
 - **Planning Time and Coordination:** Information currently not available.
 - **Staff Wages:** Information currently not available.
 - **Staff Satisfaction:** Information currently not available.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Recruitment:** During its first two years, WFC clients were recruited to the program from a variety of sources. About half the clients were referred by parole officers or community corrections agents. Another 17% heard about the program from reintegration staff at the Department of Corrections before being released from prison. A similar proportion heard about the program from friends while 26% heard about WFC from community organizations.
- **Space:** During its first two years, WFC was housed in a partially donated church space. It then moved into an office place with close proximity to the Denver Department of Human Services which housed many relevant agencies.
- **Materials:** Information currently not available.

- **Partnerships and Linkages:** During its first two years, WFC was jointly administered, funded and staffed by the Division of Community Reintegration of the Denver Department of Corrections; the Denver Department of Human Services, Division of Child Support Enforcement, and the Community Reintegration Project of Colorado AFL/CIO. Other collaborators included the Colorado Judicial Department and the Mayor’s Office of Employment and Development.
- **Community Organizations:** The Parents Legal Resource Center, Real Life Ministries, and the Rose Community Foundation.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model**

The Work and Family Center provided multiple services to clients who were primarily referred to the program by parole officers, and community corrections agents. Ex-offenders were offered assistance with:

Employment Services:

Paroled and released offenders had ten working days after which they were required to do day labor a few times each week as they continued to search for employment. Many paroled clients in the study were able to find employment before seeking WFC services.

Child Support Services:

WFC staff assisted clients to coordinate child support cases across the different counties in Colorado. They helped clients:

- File requests to review child support orders to reflect changed financial circumstances;
- Reduce monthly payments for arrears owed to the state;
- Re-instate drivers licenses suspended for non-payment of support; and
- Suspend or setup automated enforcement remedies.

Reintegration Services:

WFC offered three types of services to help clients reestablish contact with their children:

- Mediation services with a professional mediator from the Office of Dispute Resolution of the Colorado Judicial Department;
- Private meetings with family law attorneys to assist with measures such as filing for and setting up child visitation; and
- Supervised visitation.

Therapist Intervention:

WFC clients were offered counseling in individual, couple, family and group formats to work through reintegration issues.

Low-income clients who met Department of Labor’s lower-living standard and qualified for Welfare-to-Work received:

- Transportation assistance;
- Clothing vouchers; and
- Tools for work.

Other clients who did not meet these eligibility requirements could receive similar services from the Division of Community Reintegration of the Department of Corrections and the Community Reintegration Project of the AFL/CIO.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group Size:** Information currently not available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** Information currently not available.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Information currently not available.
- **Diversity of activities:** Clients received assistance with finding and retaining employment and child support services.
- **Incentives for participation:** Eligible clients received transport and clothing assistance. Clients completing the six-month follow-up interview received \$20.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Services requested and received:

- The most requested types of services were help with child support (69%), transportation assistance (57%), clothing assistance (50%), finding a better job (47%), and tools for work (44%).
- Interviews with 100 clients revealed:
 - About 55% requested child support assistance and approximately 49% received it;
 - About 34% requested transportation assistance and approximately 31% received it;
 - About 32% requested clothing and food assistance and approximately 30% received it;
 - About 45% requested help with employment and approximately 40% received it; and
 - About 15% requested tools for work and approximately 11% received it.

Employment:

Fifty-four (54) clients employed were assessed before they received WFC services and six months after the initial employment.

- The percentage reporting full-time employment rose from 47% to 65%;
- Average earnings for full-time workers rose from an average of \$7.39 to \$9.22;
- Wage reports filed by employers showed quarterly earnings rise from \$2,850 to \$3,746, statistically significant at $p < .05$.

Child Support:

Despite reviews and remedial actions taken by WFC staff to assist clients with child support issues, little change was achieved for client's child support status from the initial contact with WFC to the six month follow-up interview.

- At both point in time clients had an average of 1.9 child support cases and owed approximately \$200-\$300 monthly;
- Average child support arrearages increased from \$16,651 to \$17,183.

Recidivism:

- Among 133 newly released WFC clients who had been out of prison at least one year, 29% were back in prison. More than half (55%) of these returnees were re-incarcerated for parole violation. Among the 29% re-incarcerated, only 11% had committed new crimes.
- Among all WFC clients the re-incarceration rate was 25% with 53% returning due to parole violation. Approximately 13% committed new crimes. On average WFC clients were out of prison for 5.6 months before re-incarceration.

SOURCES:

Pearson, Jessica, Davis, Lanae, (2001). Serving parents who leave prison: Final report on the Work and Family Center. Denver, CO: Center for Policy Research.

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THE YOUNG UNWED FATHERS PILOT PROJECT

OVERVIEW: In the early 1990s, Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), with the support of six foundations, launched the Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project in an attempt to compare the service delivery approaches of various sites to determine which approaches would produce the best outcomes for young fathers between the ages of 16 and 25³. P/PV required each participating agency to include certain program components, but each agency was given flexibility in the design and delivery of its program. An initial implementation evaluation was conducted after the first year, updating each site’s progress and providing important insights into recruitment, retention, and service delivery. An outcomes study and an ethnographic study, both completed after the second year, provide additional information on the status of the programs as well as the impact of the program on the educational, employment, and parenting outcomes for participating fathers.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- P/PV launched the Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project in order to:
 - Test the capacity of local agencies to provide these fathers with employment training, basic education, more effective parenting skills, and personal counseling;
 - Collect information on the problems of young fathers and their potential as responsible parents;
 - Determine which models and/or program elements appear to be most feasible and produce the best outcomes of this population, and whether an impact analysis of any model would be useful.

- The project hoped to:
 - Improve or reinforce the parenting skills of young fathers;
 - Increase the employment and earnings potential of young fathers; and
 - Motivate young father to declare legal paternity for their children and pay child support.

LOCATION: The following six agencies participated in the Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project:

- Cleveland Works in Cleveland, Ohio;
- Goodwill Industries in Racine, Wisconsin;
- The Fresno Private Industry Council (PIC) in Fresno, California;
- The Pinellas County PIC in St. Petersburg, Florida;
- Friends of the Family and the Department of Social Services in Annapolis, Maryland;
- And the Philadelphia Children’s Network in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHERS SERVED: Teenage fathers participating in the Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project across its six sites during the first 10 to 12 months of the pilot phase had the following characteristics:

Demographic Characteristics

- Participants were between 16 and 25 years old and 20.9 years old on average;
- Participants were African-American (73.3%), Hispanic (13.6%), white (9.2%), and other (4.0%)⁴;
- 61.5% of participants were on Welfare, 50.9% were receiving food stamps, and 35.4% were receiving AFDC;
- 55% of participants lived with at least one of their parents or other relatives, 28% lived in households with at least one of their children, and 23% lived with their girlfriend and child(ren)⁵;

³ Fathers older than 19 were included in the project because the fathers of teenage mothers are often a few years older.

⁴ The race/ethnicity of the fathers served varied somewhat by program site. At the Fresno site, 12.8% of participants were African-American, and 71.8% were Hispanic.

- 33.5% of participants were either still in high school, in a GED program, in college, or in another educational program;
- 23.7% of participants had a high school diploma and 11.0% had their GED;
- 23.1% of participants were employed at entry, working an average of 27 hours per week and earning an average of \$5.36 per hour (employed fathers reported being dissatisfied with their pay, benefits, and opportunities for advancement);
- 39% of participants had been in jail, 50% had been on probation or parole;
- 52.8% of participants reported incomes below \$10,000;
- 63% of participants had only one child, 82% had children by only one mother, 30% were currently in a serious relationship with the mother.

Indicators of Father Involvement

- Fathers reported visiting their child at the hospital (75%) and being listed on the birth certificate (85%), taking their child to the doctor (50%), bathing (46%), feeding (81%), dressing (73%), and playing with their child (87%);
- Fathers not living with their child reported seeing their child “almost every day” during the last month (39%), 70% reported seeing their child at least once a week;

Financial Support

- 30% of fathers reported having child support orders, and 71% of these fathers reported being behind in their payments;
- Father reported paying for food (74%), clothing (84%), diapers (68%), and medicine (42%) as well as giving additional money (49%) for the child.
- The median amount of money fathers reported spending on their child each month was \$100.

Sexual Practices

- 65% of participants reported engaging in intercourse at least twice a week, 42% reported using birth control every time, 26% reported not using it at all.

EVALUATION DESIGN: IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES MONITORING (PRE/POST DESIGN) AND AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

- **Outcomes:** Based on their work with the six agencies participating in the Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project, P/PV reported on the following:
 - Employment
 - Recruitment
 - Retention
 - Service Delivery
 - Community Partnerships
 - Education
 - Parenting
- **Method:** The following quantitative and qualitative data were collected at various time-points throughout the life of the project:
 - *Quantitative Data:* Intake assessment and telephone interviews were used to collect information on the characteristics of all enrollees. During the telephone interview, participants answered questions about their demographic characteristics, relationships with their children and the mothers of their children, receipt of food stamps, knowledge and use of birth control methods,

⁵ White fathers were less likely to report living with their parents, and Latino fathers were more likely to report living with at least one of their children.

neighborhood characteristics, and interactions with the legal system. Baseline telephone interviews were conducted with two cohorts. Follow-up interviews were conducted 12 months after baseline. Participants were asked the same questions in addition to questions about the usefulness of key program components and their current involvement in school and the labor market. Finally, a management information system (MIS) was used to track the activities each father participated in.

- **Qualitative Data:** P/PV staff conducted semi-structured telephone interviews with key staff from the leading and collaborating agencies 7 to 10 months after sites became operational. Additionally, site visits were conducted every 6 to 8 weeks. Staff observed curriculum sessions and other program activities and attended meetings of the agencies collaborating on the project. Ethnographers were sent to 3 program sites. Life history interviews were conducted with 47 participants before, during, and after participation in the project. Field notes were kept by the ethnographers as they attended fatherhood curriculum sessions, peer support meetings, field trips, birthday parties, etc.
- **Sample:** Each agency was instructed to provide services to at least 50 fathers for at least 18 months. A total of 228 young fathers enrolled in the program by the end of February 1992, 10 to 12 months after launch. After the project’s second year, a total of 459 fathers had enrolled. Intake, baseline, and follow-up information was collected from 155 fathers. Forty-seven fathers across 3 program sites were included in the ethnographic study.
- **Measures:**
 - Intake forms conducted with all men who enrolled in the program by the end of February 1992.
 - Baseline and follow-up telephone interviews conducted by the Social Science Research Center at California State University, Fullerton.
 - Site project directors or case managers documented fathers’ participation in education, pre-employment, and skills training classes, fatherhood development activities, employment and counseling in an MIS.
 - P/PV staff conducted semi-structured telephone interviews with key staff from the leading and collaborating agencies as well as regular site visits.
 - Ethnographers used life history notes to collect information on participants’ motivations, attitudes, behaviors and life circumstances. Most of the interviews were between 2 and 3 hours in length. In total, 172 interviews were conducted.
 - Ethnographer’s field notes were submitted monthly and coded.
- **Statistical Analyses:** Descriptive analyses were used. Significance test were conducted to make comparisons between some of the outcomes between baseline and follow-up. Quantitative and qualitative data were merged when appropriate.
- **Attrition:** In its first year, the project had a retention rate of 81%, and 41% of project participants had been active for longer than 6 months. After two years, 51% of terminated fathers and *at least* 68% of non-terminated fathers had been enrolled for at least a year.

STRUCTURAL/INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES:

- **Staff Qualifications and Support**
 - **Staff-participant ratio:** Programs that were rich in resources, including staff and administrative support, had the most success in providing services to participants.
 - **Staff Education:** Not currently available.
 - **Staff Experience:** The most successful site operators were established in their communities and had experience working with high-risk populations as well as with the JTPA (Job Training

Partnership Act) system. Successful site operators were also frequently African-American men. One site hired an African-American father to help with recruitment. His “credible voice” and ability to relate to participants was appreciated by the men.

- **Staff Training:** All project staff attended two days of training for P/PV’s *Fatherhood Development Curriculum* held by the curriculum developers. Staff participated in a series of workshops, and a panel of young fathers provided feedback on the lessons and the exercises. Follow-up trainings were held centrally and on-site throughout the first year of program implementation.
- **Planning Time and Coordination:** Not currently available.
- **Staff wages:** Not currently available.
- **Staff Satisfaction:** Staff were uncomfortable asking father to establish paternity and commit to paying child support at entry.

PROGRAM CONFIGURATION:

- **Recruitment:** Participating programs recruited a minimum for 50 young fathers, using one of three strategies:
 - mandatory referrals from the Child Support Enforcement (CSE) agency (Racine),
 - voluntary referrals from CSE (Fresno and St. Petersburg), and
 - community outreach (Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Annapolis)
- **Space:** Not currently available.
- **Materials:** Not currently available.
- **Partnerships and Linkages:** Participating agencies sometimes partnered with the following for recruitment purposes as well as in an effort to provide participants with a wide range of services:
 - The employer community;
 - The local child support enforcement (CSE) agency;
 - The local community college;
 - Local youth service providers (e.g., the Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission);
 - The JTPA system (JTPA funding supported the majority of project costs in some sites in addition to providing employment and education-related services).
- **Community Organizations:** With the support of 6 foundations, P/PV launched the Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project in 6 sites around the country. Two of the sites were community-based organizations (CBOs), 2 were JTPA Private Industry Councils (PICs), and 2 were community managing agents. While the CBOs offered most of their services on-site, the other agencies either had contractors deliver the services or referred enrollees to established community programs.

PROGRAM CONTENT:

- **Curriculum or Program Model:** Each local agency designed and delivered its own program, however, P/PV required programs to incorporate the following 5 program components, which they felt would be most likely to produce positive outcomes for young fathers:
 - Use of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) system (one of the only publicly funded employment training programs available at the time) to provide young fathers with training services that would lead to good jobs (i.e., jobs with standard fringe benefits and the potential to enable fathers to support themselves and their children). Job-readiness or pre-employment classes were offered at four of the six sites. On-the-job-training was offered at two sites.
 - The delivery of education services designed to improve the earning capacity of young fathers.
 - The delivery of “fatherhood development” activities that encourage parental values, capabilities, and behavior in young men, including a *Fatherhood Development Curriculum* developed by P/PV, “leadership” activities, and work with fathers to establish paternity and pay formal child support. The fatherhood curriculum was designed to cover issues related to parenting,

fatherhood values, relationships with significant others, sexuality and health, and personal responsibility. In addition, some sites brought in outside speakers while other sites organized activities that included fathers and their families.

- The provision of counseling (career, personal, and legal) and other ongoing support designed to help fathers achieve employment, parenting, and personal goals (e.g., resume writing, telephone and interviewing skills, positive work habits, verbal communication skills).
- The establishment of an 18-month connection with fathers so that services and support continue after job placement.

PROGRAM DESIGN:

- **Group size:** Not currently available.
- **Number of program hours (dosage and duration):** The length of “up-front” program components (e.g., assessment, life-skills training, job-skills training, and basic skills/GED preparation) varied by site. In 3 sites, services were scheduled everyday during this period. Additionally, all sites were required to hold curriculum sessions at least once a week for 60 to 90 minutes. In all sites, staff attempted to establish an 18-month connection with all participants.
- **Frequency of program offerings:** Services were offered on a rolling basis with the exception of one site which stopped enrolling new participants after the first group matriculated.
- **Diversity of activities:** Within the guidelines set out by P/PV, each agency designed and delivered its own program, including services such assessments, job-search services, placement assistance, job-skills training, literacy services, support groups, basic skills/GED preparation, and life-skills training.
- **Incentives for participation:** One site offered participants a substantial stipend during training (up to \$90 per week). Another site gave participants a \$6 per day educational incentive. One other site gave participants a \$15 per week educational incentive.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS:

Recruitment

- All six agencies found attracting and enrolling young fathers to be difficult and resource-intensive. Only one site reached its enrollment goal of 50 fathers by the end of the first year.
- Major barriers to attracting and enrolling participants were:
 - Young unwed fathers, who were primarily African-American and poor, distrust of public systems, especially the CSE system with whom the some of the agencies worked closely;
 - The program requirement that paternity be legally acknowledged;
 - Strict eligibility requirements to participate in the JTPA system (e.g., income eligibility based on household income, reading-level disqualifiers);
 - Lack of financial support during job-training or education classes.
- The following agency characteristic facilitated recruitment:
 - Established “credibility” with the population being served;
 - A reputation for generating good jobs;
 - Well-established and mutually-beneficial partnerships with CSE and JTPA agencies;
 - Organizational resources (e.g., staff).
- Fathers reported hearing about the program through the following:
 - Referrals by other institutions (e.g., local child support offices, juvenile court, probation officer, teacher) (46.3%);
 - Personal contacts (e.g., another fathers, friend, relative) (22.5%);
 - Program staff and fliers (22%);
 - The media (7%);
 - Their girlfriends (2.2%).
- At one site, fathers were mandated to come by the local CSE agency.

- Participants reported that jobs were the main incentive for program entry (62.7%), followed by parenting skills (45.6%) and improving relationships with children (38.2%). All recruitment messages emphasized the job component, but project staff reported that the “fatherhood focus” of the programs helped retain participants.

Retention

- After its first year, the project had an initial retention rate of 81% across sites. Staff attributed this to the “fatherhood focus” of the project.
- After two years, 51% of terminated fathers and *at least* 68% of non-terminated fathers had been enrolled for at least a year. (Because the projects continued to run after the end of the evaluation, it is not known how long non-terminated fathers stayed involved with their program.)
- 71% of fathers were active in at least one program component for at least 75% of the months in which they were enrolled.

Service Delivery

- *Job Placement*
 - Agencies that were able to effectively “package” JTPA services for participants had the best records in job placement; however, job retention rates were low.
 - Pressure to get a job as quickly as possible (as was the case at the site where fathers were mandated to attend by the local child support system) negatively affected the intensity with which fathers participated in employment and education services.
- *Fatherhood Development*
 - The *Fatherhood Development Curriculum* was well-received by staff and participants, and 99% of participants took part in curriculum sessions during the first year.
- *Paternity Establishment and Paying Child Support*
 - Staff did not feel comfortable asking father to establish paternity at entry and commit to child support. They agreed to work with fathers to gain their trust and encourage them to take this step over time.
- *Counseling and Ongoing Support*
 - Participation in counseling ranged from 59% to 100%.

Community Partnerships

- Sites were required to use the JTPA system to provide young fathers with training services. The usefulness of this systems was limited by the following:
 - Local eligibility criteria (e.g., income eligibility based on household income, reading-level disqualifiers) that screened out some of the most needy participants;
 - Lack of skills training options;
 - Lack of in-program financial support during job-training and educational classes (e.g., stipends);
 - The CSE agency practice of pressing young men to pay child support which caused them to leave the program in order to get a job immediately.

Education

- 75% of fathers participated in some type of education component while in the program. GED classes (53%) and basic skills classes (47%) were the most common.
- At follow-up, 22% of participants were without a high school diploma or GED and not enrolled in education classes, compared with 42% of participants at intake; however, 64% of fathers who entered the program without a diploma or GED did not earn one.

- Staff reported that fathers dropped out of education classes because they got frustrated or lost focus in the face of other difficulties (e.g., need for income, child care).
- 93% of fathers enrolled in education classes said the services they received were either very useful (72%) or somewhat useful (21%).

Employment

- At follow-up, 54% of participants were working compared to 23% of participants at enrollment. Additionally, 47% of participants had jobs with health benefits at follow-up compared to 17% at enrollment. The average hours worked per week were 40 at follow-up compared to 27 at enrollment, and the average hourly wage was \$6.21 compared to \$5.19 at enrollment.
- Fathers who enrolled in on-the-job-training were more likely to be employed at follow-up ($p \leq .01$).
- Only 29% of fathers who obtained employment while in the program found their jobs through program referrals. Job placement was a challenge for all participating agencies. There were difficulties in finding job developers and in finding jobs that paid more than \$5 an hour.
- Of fathers who were employed at enrollment and at follow-up, significantly more were satisfied with their health benefits, the type of work, and their opportunities for advancement in their current job ($p \leq .05$). They were not, however, more satisfied with their wages.
- 93% of fathers enrolled in job-readiness classes said they found them very useful (64%) or somewhat useful (29%).

Parenting

- The frequency of contact between fathers and their children fell between baseline and follow-up ($p \leq .001$). This decrease was mediated by the status of the father’s relationship with the child’s mother. When asked, 75% of non-custodial fathers said that they wanted to see their child more often but were not able to because of time constraints (28%), problems in their relationship with the mother (21%), and geographical distance (18%).
- Participants reported that the curriculum sessions (92%), peer support group (91%), and the relationships they developed with staff (93%) and other young fathers (92%) were useful. 95% would recommend the program to a friend.
- Thirty-one fathers declared legal paternity for their child while in the program or after. Fathers did this because it was the right thing to do (29%), they wanted to (27%), it was their responsibility (16%), and the program encouraged it (12%). Only 8% were required to do so by the courts. At follow-up, 52 fathers had support orders compared to 44 at baseline.
- At follow-up, fathers answered an average of 7.9 questions about child support laws and procedures correctly compared to 6.5 questions at baseline.

SOURCES:

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