The Social Physics of Responsible Fatherhood: Metrics and Myths

Part I

The National Partnership for Community Leadership
http://www.npclstrongfamilies.com
Objectives:

1. To describe the social physics of responsible fatherhood [Presentation]

2. To provide direction on implementing fatherhood development programs; [Presentation]
The Social Physics of Responsible Fatherhood: Metrics and Myths

**Metrics:** Asking fundamental questions about responsible fatherhood interventions and trying to answer them by observation and experimentation.

**Myths:** Subjecting fatherhood interventions to rigorous evaluations.
What are the fundamentals for working with fathers?

- Structured Curriculum
- Training on Curriculum
- Fidelity of Implementation
- Management Information System
- System of Care/Collaborative Case Management
- Personalized Approach
- Peer-to-Peer Learning and Sharing
- Debunking Myths About Fathers
- How best to deliver services to fathers, mothers and others
- How programs can better recruit and retain fathers
Table 1 Social Welfare & Health Care Spending 1940-2010 (billions)
Table 2 Child Poverty Rates 1960-2010 (%)
Table 3 Welfare Caseloads 1960-2010
Table 5 Marriage and Divorce Rates 1940-2010 (per 1,000)
## Table 6 BIRTHS TO SINGLE WOMEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White Births</th>
<th>Black Births</th>
<th>Racial Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>6.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>40%*</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>.55</td>
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*Source: National Center for Health Statistics*
Fatherless Homes Create a Negative Cycle [2009 stats.]

- 24 million children in America live apart from their fathers.

- Boys who grow up without fathers are more likely to become unmarried fathers themselves at a young age, perpetuating the cycle of absentee fatherhood.

- Girls growing up without fathers are more likely to fall victim to early sexual involvement and teenage pregnancy, perpetuating the cycle of single-parenthood.
Children from Fatherless Homes are:

- 5 times more likely to commit suicide.
- 32 times more likely to run away.
- 20 times more likely to have behavioral disorders.
- 14 times more likely to commit rape.
- 9 times more likely to drop out of school.
- 10 times more likely to abuse chemical substances.
- 9 times more likely to end up in a state operated institution.
- 20 times more likely to end up in prison.
Responsible Fatherhood Makes A Difference For Children

- Emotional security, curiosity, and enhanced math and verbal skills;
- Fewer behavioral problems, higher levels of sociability; improved school performance and reduced involvement with the criminal justice system.
- Higher school grades, greater school enjoyment, and lower chances of suspension, expulsion, and dropping out of school.
- Girls with a positive father/daughter relationship do better academically, and are less likely to engage in early sexual involvement and in the use of alcohol and drugs.
OUTCOME METRICS
What are the outcome metrics of responsible fatherhood interventions?

- **Policy relevant**
  - Employment
  - Child support

- **Psycho-social**
  - Fatherhood outcomes
  - Child outcomes
  - Relationship outcomes, parent/child, parent/parent et. al.

- **Economic**
  - Employment
  - Financial stability

- **Child Support**
  - Paternity establishment
  - Regular payment of child support
What are the basic building blocks for responsible fatherhood interventions?

- Solid Curriculum
- Well trained staff
- MIS [Management Information Systems]
- Targeted marketing strategy
- Solid referral network
- Father friendly agency
- Adequate resources
- Credibility in the community served
- Shared vision of fatherhood work as transformational
How and where did the responsible fatherhood work originate?

- Some unlikely places
  - Pre-natal clinics
  - Women and infants programs
  - Men’s health services
  - Child support court
  - Rites of passages programs
  - Male involvement programs
  - Head Start
  - Role modeling
  - Mentoring
  - Faith institutions “men’s ministries” [churches]

- Fatherhood demonstrations
How has the work with fathers changed and what will it look like in the future?

- **Outcome metrics**
  - Level of effort (LOE) - support-type project activity that must be done to support other work activities or the entire project effort. It usually consists of short amounts of work that must be repeated periodically.
  - Level of effect - pre/post, assessments monitoring project activities effect.

- **Evidence-based: research and evidence on interventions as important factors in awards of competitive grants,**
  - Reward projects that already have established a research-based track record
  - Encourage grant winners to produce rigorous evidence detailing the extent to which their project (work) — or does not — (work)

- **More rigorous evaluations**

- **Greater ties to family strengthening and servicing agencies**
THEORY OF CHANGE
Needs Assessment

What are the needs of fathers in the communities you serve?
What are some of the factors affecting fathers we should pay attention to and try to change?

- Knowledge of child development
- Parenting skills
- Mother/father relationships
- Father/child relationships
- Child support
- Workforce
- Education
- Legal
- Health
Fatherhood Theory of Change

Fatherhood Development → System of Care

System of Care → Feedback

Feedback → Child Well-being

Child Well-being → Fatherhood Development
Responsible Fatherhood Theory of Change

Key Features of Intervention
- Fatherhood education
- Workforce development
- Intensive case management
- Peer support

Child Outcomes
- Educational achievement
- Behavioral development
- Physical & mental health
- Substitute systems of care

Fathers
- 32 hrs fatherhood education & training
- 6 hrs parenting education
- Workforce referrals
- 2 hrs anger management
- Personal development
- Physical & mental health

Intervention used with fidelity; accessed via observation checklists and periodic post-tests

- Increased child motivation
- Use of educational enhancement strategies;

- Fathers knowledge & practice of parenting & relationship skills;
  - not directly measured; growth in practical intelligence

Educational Achievement; Cognitive development

Neighborhoods:
- Impoverished; Single parent headed households; socially and economically challenged

Child Characteristics
- 0-3 years old

Father Characteristics
- Low-income; limited education; unemployed; low or no labor market skills; CS issues

*Keep in mind: We are not working with fathers, we are educating fathers*
**Fatherhood Development Program: A Logic Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Long</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPCL Fatherhood Development Curriculum</td>
<td>System of Care Approach for Parents with an Emphasis on Connecting Fathers: Fatherhood Development Curriculum Peer Support Groups Intensive Case Management Legal Assistance Housing Physical &amp; Mental Health Recreation Child Support Access &amp; Visitation Healthy Relationship &amp; Marriage Education Home-based Services Parental Cooperation</td>
<td># Of intakes &amp; assessments # Of fatherhood development classes # Of support groups (Peer) # Of fathers served # Of parenting education classes # Of relationship &amp; marriage education classes # Of father/child events</td>
<td>Increased knowledge of the role of fathers in early child development Increased knowledge of what is good parenting Employed</td>
<td>Increased relationship satisfaction Responsible parenting Financial stability Regular payment of child support</td>
<td>School Readiness: The child is able to: Recognize authority Manage bathroom needs Button shirts, pants, coats Separate from parents without being upset Speak understandably Talk in complete sentences Look at pictures then tell stories Identify rhyming words Identify the beginning sound of some words Identify some alphabet letters Recognize some common sight words Sort similar objects by color, size and shape Recognize groups of objects Bounce a ball Math skills, count to ten The child has: Access to healthcare Good health, physical &amp; mental Nurturing home environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Staff</td>
<td>Employment Job Training Job Placement Adult Basic Education Financial Literacy</td>
<td>GED Educational Enhancement EITC</td>
<td># Of job training classes (soft skills &amp; hard skills) # Of GED or ABE participants # Of workforce referrals # Of parenting education classes</td>
<td>Intimately engaged in child’s life Regular visits with child Anger management under control</td>
<td>Increased relationship satisfaction Responsible parenting Financial stability Regular payment of child support</td>
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<td>Staff training &amp; Professional Development</td>
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<td>Staff time</td>
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<td>Funding Support</td>
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<td>Research</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnerships</td>
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<td>Volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td></td>
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**Assumptions:** Responsible parenting is a community concern and agencies that serve impoverished communities are well aware of the importance of good parenting skills and strong positive relationships between parents, mothers and fathers, and are prepared to partner to enhance the skills and knowledge, and change the attitudes and behaviors of parents.

**External Factors:** Nonresident father; father figure; low demand for low-skilled and semi-skilled participants in the labor market; high child support arrearages; returning citizens; spatial mismatches; health issues....

*Rev. 7/09*
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Part II

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BUILDING PROGRAM: IDENTIFICATIONS
Identify Program Sites

- Are they [program sites] in the community or the neighborhood you propose to serve?
- Are they [program sites] father-friendly?
- Are there any transportation issues or other barriers?
Example of Identification process:
Specific focus study site demographics

- Philadelphia communities:
  - Spring Garden
  - West Philadelphia
  - Frankford
  - Point Breeze
  - East Germantown
Age

- 16-21: 10%
- 22-27: 20%
- 28-33: 30%
- 34-40: 25%
- 41-46: 15%
- 47+: 15%
### Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>78.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>8.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>6.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Not Specified)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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</table>
Lives with Significant Other (S.O.)

- Lives with S.O.: 29%
- Does not live with a S.O.: 71%
Employment

- 13%
- 87%

Employed
Number of Women with whom Men have had Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Women</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Custody Arrangement

- Sole Custody: 5%
- Joint Custody: 24%
- Non Custody: 71%
Interaction with Children

- Daily: 44%
- Weekly: 26%
- Monthly: 17%
- Some: 11%
- None: 2%
Highest Grade Level Completed

- Elementary (K-5): 1.4
- Middle School (9-11): 9.0
- High School (9-12): 25.6
- GED: 37.5
- Associate Degree: 14.1
- Bachelor Degree: 1.8
- Trade School: 1.4
BUILDING PROGRAM: IMPLEMENTATION
Core Lessons Learned Fatherhood Demonstrations

- The “needs of fathers varies”. It’s important to customize and personalize services. There is no “one size fits all” approach to working with fathers.
- You can not provide all the services fathers need. Develop collaborative partnerships with other human service providers.
- Case management capacity is fundamental to a solid fatherhood development program, low-income fathers are high maintenance.
- Peer support groups are the “glue” of responsible fatherhood programs.
- When working with low-income, low-skilled, under-educated fathers, including those who have had contact with the criminal justice system, there are no quick fixes.
- It is possible to recruit and retain fathers in programs if the efforts are linked to wage growth job opportunities, however, there opportunities are hard to find. Be prepare to try various strategies to get them through your doors.
Core Lessons Learned Programs continued…

- Recruitment and retention of fathers is a full time responsibility.
- Fatherhood programs need committed, supportive, and experienced staff and leadership.
- Programs may benefit from post-fatherhood program options such as alumni associations and leadership development activities.
- Reach out and work with local child support agencies. They need you as much as you and your clients need to work with them.
- Programs need dedicated and energetic staff who know the community and can readily identify resources.
- Assess your program activities often. Your assessment should serve as a continuous feedback loop to keep your program relevant to the customers you serve. Embrace evaluation efforts. The results of a quality evaluation can help you to better understand what’s working, why it’s working, how its working and improve your program performance.
Core Lessons Learned Policy

- Responsible fatherhood education programs need more father friendly policy environments at the national, state and local levels. Funding in support of fatherhood program activity should be sustainable across administrations and not subjected to external contingencies.

- Government procurement systems must be more responsive to the concerns of community-based responsible fatherhood programs, including limited cash flow, insecure funding bases, and the threat that partnering with child support raises for program integrity.
Select a Fatherhood Curriculum

- Identify and select a fatherhood curriculum that is appropriate for the customers you will serve.

- Select a curriculum that has demonstrated some level of effectiveness:
  - One that has been around a while and has been or is broadly used by many other community-based or social service agencies; or
  - Evidence-based, best evidence available.

- Receive training on the curriculum, ideally from the developer or a representative of the developer of the curriculum to ensure fidelity of implementation.
What is fidelity of implementation?

According to many researchers, it is “The extent to which the delivery of an intervention adheres to the protocol or program model as intended by the developers of the intervention,” (Dane & Schneider, 1998; Domitrovich & Greenberg, 2000; Mowbray, Holter, Teague, & Bybee, 2003).
Fidelity of implementation

- Historically, researchers have critically appraised and described fidelity of implementation across five dimensions:
  - Adherence [observation, fidelity];
  - Exposure;
  - Quality of delivery;
  - Participant responsiveness; and
  - Program differentiation.

(Dane & Schneider, 1998; Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Dusenberg, et al., 2003; Fagan, Hanson, Hawkins, & Arthur, 2008.)
Fidelity of implementation: Adherence

- **Adherence**: the extent to which program components are delivered as prescribed by the model. Indicators of adherence can include program content, methods and activities.

  - Data on adherence are usually reported out as the percentage of program components that were delivered compared to the number prescribed by program model developers. In the NPCL Fatherhood Development Curriculum, for example, practitioners might cover exercises in only 3 of the 5 modules. The content adherence score would be 60%.
Fidelity of implementation: *Exposure*

- **Exposure**: Often referred to as dosage, exposure is the amount of program content delivered relative to the amount prescribed by the program developers. It could include the number of sessions, frequency and duration of the session, contacts with program staff, and program attendance.

- While there is no definitive statement or universal standards on length of program in responsible fatherhood, there is some preliminary anecdotal evidence that participants in these programs are better served with at least 32 *hours* of support group work along with referrals through a “system of care.”
Fidelity of implementation: Quality of Delivery

- **Quality of Delivery**: The way in which a program is delivered; theory-based ideal in terms of processes and content. It could include practitioner preparation, use of relevant examples, style of interaction, passion for the work, respectfulness, clear communications, responses to questions.
**Fidelity of implementation: Participant Responsiveness**

- **Participant responsiveness:** The way participants respond or react to the program. Participant responsiveness can include:
  - Participant’s level of interest in the program
  - Perceptions and usefulness of a program
  - Their level of engagement
  - Enthusiasm
  - Willingness to engage in discussions or activities
Fidelity of implementation: 
*Program differentiation*

- **Program differentiation**: The degree to which critical components of the program model are distinguishable from each other. The process for identifying critical components of a program that is essential for producing positive outcomes, the unique features of intervention components as well as any counterfactual as appropriate.
Fidelity of Implementation

- Fidelity of Implementations provide:
  - A descriptive Model
    - A statement of what transpired as the program was implemented
  - An intervention model, with explicit expectations about implementation of program components
    - The extent to which the intervention aligns with a clearly articulated pre-intervention model
Why fidelity of implementation?

- Increases program credibility

- Ensures that both the implementation process and the group sessions instructions are implemented and delivered as intended

- Maximizes program effectiveness
  - To attribute program outcomes to the program model
You Can't Do it Alone

- Develop and sustain relationships with other agencies in the community that provide these services.
- Often times you're serving the same customers.
- Your agency would be able to access services in support of your customers.
- Share resources.
Identify resources that can help implement the program model. Develop a System of Care perspective in addressing the broad range of father needs. The father, mother, and child should be the unit of Intervention.
Services

- **Education**
  - High Schools
  - Alternative Schools
  - Adult Basic Education
  - GED
  - Community Colleges
  - 4-Year Colleges
  - Technical Schools
  - Vocational Schools
  - Boards of Education

- **Housing**
  - Transitional Housing
  - Affordable Housing
  - Housing Authorities
  - Community Development Agencies
  - Cuff's
  - Faith Institutions
  - Halfway Houses
  - Shelters
Services cont'd

- Access & Visitation Services
- State and Local CSE Agencies
- Family Rights Organization
- State & Local Bar Associations
- Legal Aid Societies
- Prepaid Legal Services

Employment Services
- Unions and Trade Associations
- WIA Boards
- Employer Associations
- Boards of Trade
- Apprenticeship Programs
- CDEs, PHAs ...
- Community colleges
- Workforce Agencies
Services cont’d

- **Health Services**
  - State & Local Departments of Human and Health Services
  - Community Clinics
  - University Hospitals
  - City & County Hospitals
  - Wellness Centers
  - Community Mental Health Agencies

- **Substance Abuse Services**
  - Substance Counseling & Treatment Agencies
  - Community Mental Health Services
  - Wellness Centers
Services cont’d:
Domestic Violence & Batterer Services

- State commissions on domestic violence
- Local batterer agencies
- Domestic violence service providers
BUILDING PROGRAM: EVALUATION
Fatherhood Program Evaluation – Questions to consider

- How will you evaluate your fatherhood program activities to demonstrate to your stakeholders your program model works?

- You should always include an evaluation component in your program model.

- Are there any key features of your program model that must be closely adhered to and monitored (FOI)?

- How will you monitor and track customer participation in your program?
Outcome metrics

- Outcomes that are of policy and practical importance
  - Child support
  - Employment
  - Parenting
  - Personal development
  - Relationships (Father/Child, Mother/Father)
Shift in measurements

- **Level of effort**
  - # of participants enrolled
  - # of classes held

- **Level effect**
  - Impact of intervention on target population, particularly well being of children
Assessment tools

- Additional tools to consider:
  - Community Life Skills Scale (CLS)
  - Individual service plan [case management]
  - Inventory of Fatherhood Involvement (IFI)
  - Attitude & Knowledge Assessments [Fatherhood Development Curriculum]
Management Information System [MIS]

- You should have an electronic database in place to collect data on participants in your program, when and how they present to your program, what services they request, what services they receive while in the program, when they complete the program, and where they are 1-5 years after completion of your program.

- DHHS has one that was developed in 2003, has a manual and is user friendly: The Responsible Fatherhood Management Information System.
## In Summary: Core Elements of Fatherhood Programs Should Include:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Linked to Employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verifiable Management Information System</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting and Couples Relationship Education components</td>
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<tr>
<td>Father Friendly Relationship with CSE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborative Case Management—e.g., DV, Health, Housing, Workforce, Child Support, Community Colleges, Technical and Alternative Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on Providing Opportunities for Knowledge Transfer, Tools, Skills, Attitude and Supporting and Encouraging Behavioral Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well Trained Committed and Dedicated Staff</td>
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<td>Follow-up/After care</td>
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