



U.S. Department of Health  
and Human Services  
Administration for Children  
and Families  
Office of Family Assistance

[www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)

# Responsible Fatherhood Spotlight

February 2010



## Father Involvement and Social Support

Fathers who report having high levels of social support experience better psychological well-being and demonstrate more positive patterns of father involvement and coparenting. The benefits of fathers' social support may also have important implications for child well-being.

### Definitions

*Father involvement* refers to the type and level of a father's involvement with his children. The concept encompasses three main dimensions: *engagement* (a father's involvement in activities with his child), *accessibility* (a father's availability to his child), and *responsibility* (the extent to which a father provides his child with resources, including financial support).<sup>36,37</sup>

*Social support* refers to the interpersonal relationships and social interactions that individuals have with family members, extended kin, friends, and co-workers who make up the community and other social networks that help to protect individual well-being.<sup>31, 38, 47</sup> Research has identified different types of social support.<sup>15, 18, 33</sup> These types include *spousal/partner* support (help, advice and understanding received from a partner, including both emotional and practical aspects); *instrumental* support (tangible assistance, including child care, money, and other forms of in-kind assistance); and *program* support (assistance and advice received from direct participation in a program to help an individual meet family responsibilities).<sup>6, 27</sup>

### Importance and Implications of Social Support for Father Involvement

Research has found that parents' levels of social support have important implications for fathers' well-being, father involvement with their children, the coparental relationship, and child outcomes.

#### *Implications for Fathers*

Social support has been found to play a vital role in the lives of parents. Indeed, both the availability and the quality of social support are important social assets for individual adjustment and well-being.<sup>25, 30, 32, 34</sup>

- Social support networks may buffer fathers from the demands and conflicts associated with parenting, as well as help to alleviate the strains on energy and time experienced by parents of preschool-age children. In addition, for men who often lack role models of how to be a father, social support networks may help buffer men's sense of competence in parenting.<sup>6</sup>
- Spousal/partner support is positively associated with fathers' well-being.
  - Resident fathers in two-parent families receive a substantial amount of spousal/partner support, which helps them cope with the stress of parenting and improve their effectiveness as parents and their psychological well-being.<sup>6</sup>
  - Spousal/partner support helps buffer against feelings of distress and dissatisfaction in the fathering role.<sup>48</sup>
  - High rates of partner support have been found to be linked to lower rates of father depression.<sup>10, 11</sup>
  - Increased levels of spousal/partner support are associated with lower levels of aggravation in parenting.<sup>11</sup>

*Take Time to Be a Dad Today*

- Social support from partners has been found to be associated with fathers' effectiveness in the parental role.<sup>11, 43</sup>
- Findings suggest that partner support has the strongest influence on men's well-being and parenting, relative to other forms of social support.<sup>11</sup>
- Research suggests that program support has positive benefits for fathers' well-being.
  - Program support has been found to play a role in fathers' abilities to balance and manage family responsibilities.<sup>7</sup>
  - High levels of program support are associated with higher reports of fathers' parenting skills.<sup>11, 16, 20</sup> However, some sources of social support may decrease fathers' feelings of being good parents if they perceive their need for support and services as an inability to provide for their families.<sup>5, 23, 56</sup>
  - Some studies suggest that parenting programs may provide fathers with the parenting skills necessary to minimize parenting stress.<sup>43</sup>
- Studies show that fathers who report high levels of tangible—or instrumental—support also report better well-being.
  - Instrumental support in prior studies has been found to be positively associated with well-being and reductions in stress associated with family demands.<sup>6, 28</sup>
  - High levels of instrumental support are associated with lower rates of paternal depression.<sup>11</sup>
  - Some research based on small-scale studies of mothers suggests that social support in the form of financial resources from family and friends may relieve parenting stress.<sup>14, 57</sup>
  - Gender differences exist in the availability of instrumental support, in that resident fathers tend to provide more instrumental support than do resident mothers.<sup>59</sup> Thus, although men provide more instrumental support, resident fathers are less likely to be the recipients of instrumental support, compared with resident mothers.<sup>42</sup>
- The availability and influence of social support have been found to vary according to a number of characteristics.
  - Older fathers report receiving more social support than do younger fathers.<sup>60</sup>
  - The types of social support available and the benefits of such support may vary by fathers' racial and ethnic group.<sup>40, 53</sup>
  - Fathers with higher educational attainment report better, more supportive coparenting relationships,<sup>4</sup> and individuals' perceptions of support may also increase with years of education.<sup>60</sup>
  - A drop in income may also affect social support. Research has shown that certain types of social support have less of an impact on families who are experiencing economic stress compared with families who are more financially stable.<sup>52</sup>
  - Married parents have been found to engage in more positive coparenting than unmarried parents, suggesting that marital status is also important.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, being involved in an intimate relationship has been found to be associated with higher levels of perceived support.<sup>38</sup>

#### *Implications for Father Involvement*

Levels of social support have been found to have both direct and indirect links to parenting and father involvement.

- Throughout the life course, families are embedded in networks of relatives, neighbors, and friends that may serve as sources of support.<sup>30</sup> These networks may directly or indirectly influence childrearing and the coparenting relationship (i.e., the interaction between parents who share decision making about the well-being of a child).<sup>58</sup>
- Spousal/partner support is positively associated with father involvement and coparenting.
  - The effects of spousal/partner support on individual parenting have been examined extensively and has been found to have positive effects.<sup>6, 29, 55</sup>
  - Studies specifically examining fathers have found that, for them, spousal/partner support has a positive influence on individual parenting (i.e., involvement).<sup>2, 26</sup>

- Fathers who report receiving spousal/partner support are more likely to consider their role as fathers a high priority.<sup>50</sup>
- Partner support is directly and indirectly related to fathers' coparenting skills, with men who report higher partner support acknowledging better coparenting than men who do not.<sup>9, 11, 41, 45, 54</sup>
- Program support is positively related to father involvement and may have a positive association with coparenting.
  - Program support has been found to positively influence fathers' individual parenting and involvement with their children.<sup>3, 12, 44</sup>
  - It also has been found to be linked directly and indirectly to increases in fathers' coparenting skills.<sup>11</sup>
  - Program participation may provide a process that allows parents to adopt or modify parenting behaviors as a consequence of watching the behaviors of other parents and modeling such behaviors in their interactions with their partners.
  - Program support may act to reduce the demands on fathers and provide assistance with coping strategies and valuable resources that enhance the capacity of fathers to perform in the coparental role.<sup>11</sup>
  - For some fathers, however, the need for program support may be perceived as an inability to provide for their families. This perception may cause these fathers to have a more negative assessment of their parenting abilities. It may also spur them to reevaluate their own parenting abilities after learning about more positive behaviors through program participation.<sup>5, 23, 56</sup>
  - However, some studies have found that, for men, program support has no significant effect on the coparenting relationship.<sup>21, 46</sup> For example, in a randomized trial test of the Dads for Life intervention for divorced parents, results showed that fathers participating in the program did not report improved coparenting.<sup>19</sup>
- Fathers' levels of instrumental support have also been associated with their coparenting abilities.
  - One study of rural, African-American families found that greater instrumental (specifically, financial) support for parents predicted greater co-caregiving support and less coparental conflict.<sup>10</sup>
  - Instrumental support has been found to be linked indirectly to coparenting through its influence on paternal depression.<sup>11</sup>

### *Implications for Children*

Few studies have examined the effects of parental social support on child well-being, but the handful of studies that do exist suggest that children may benefit indirectly when their parents receive high levels of social support.

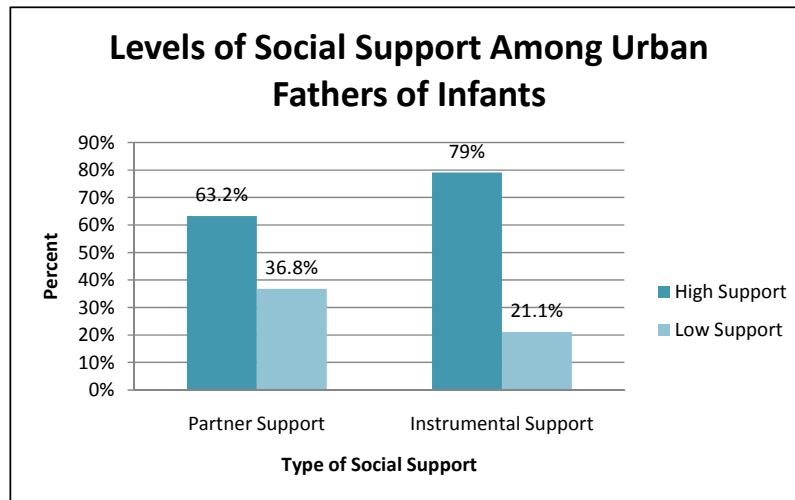
- Parents' social support networks can influence child development either directly or indirectly by providing children with direct stimulation, emotional and material support, access to opportunities, and models and sanctions for behavior. Furthermore, parental social support networks may influence child development either negatively or positively, in that they may bring children into contact with persons or resources that can be either beneficial or harmful.<sup>16</sup>
- Parents' social support networks may influence children's intellectual and social development by exposing children to cognitively stimulating situations or by positively influencing the cognitive setting of the home, as well as through exposure to and interaction with individuals outside of the family.<sup>16</sup>
- More supportive parental social networks have been found to be associated with better parental ratings of child behavior and development.<sup>24</sup>
- Strong social support networks have been linked to better health outcomes among children in U.S. immigrant families.<sup>22</sup>
- Finally, parental social support may indirectly influence children by having an impact on the level and quality of father involvement and the coparental relationship, both of which have been found to be associated with child well-being in a number of studies.<sup>49, 51</sup>

## Social Support and Father Involvement in Early Childhood

The following estimates are for fathers of infants (12-month-old children).

**Figure 1** and **Table 1** show that most urban fathers of infants reported that they experienced high levels of both partner support (63.2 percent) and instrumental support (79 percent). Slightly more than one-third (36.8 percent) of fathers reported low levels of partner support, and only about one-fifth reported low levels of instrumental support (21.1 percent).

**Figure 1. Levels of Social Support Among Urban Fathers of Infants**



Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

**Table 1. Levels of Social Support Among Urban Fathers of Infants**

<b>Partner Support</b>	63.2%	36.8%	7.8	0-10
<b>Instrumental Support</b>	79.0%	21.1%	2.6	0-3

Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

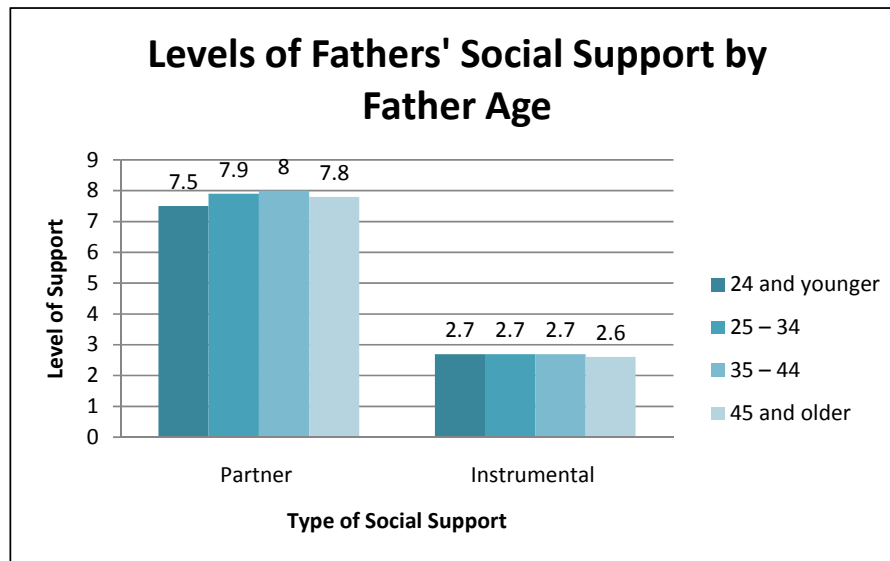
## Differences in Social Support and Father Involvement by Subgroup

### Differences in Fathers' Social Support by Father Age

**Figure 2** and **Table 2** show that although levels of instrumental support did not vary by father age, there were significant variations in levels of partner support among fathers of different age groups.

- Fathers aged 24 or younger reported significantly lower levels of partner support than did fathers between the ages of 25 and 35 and between the ages of 35 and 44.

**Figure 2. Father Social Support by Father Age**



Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

**Table 2. Father Social Support by Father Age**

Type of Social Support	24 and younger	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 and older	Significance
Partner	7.5 <sup>b,c</sup>	7.9 <sup>a</sup>	8.0 <sup>a</sup>	7.8	0-10
Instrumental	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	0-3

a = significantly different from fathers 24 and younger,

b = significantly different from fathers 25-34,

c = significantly different from fathers 35-44,

d = significantly different from fathers 45 and older

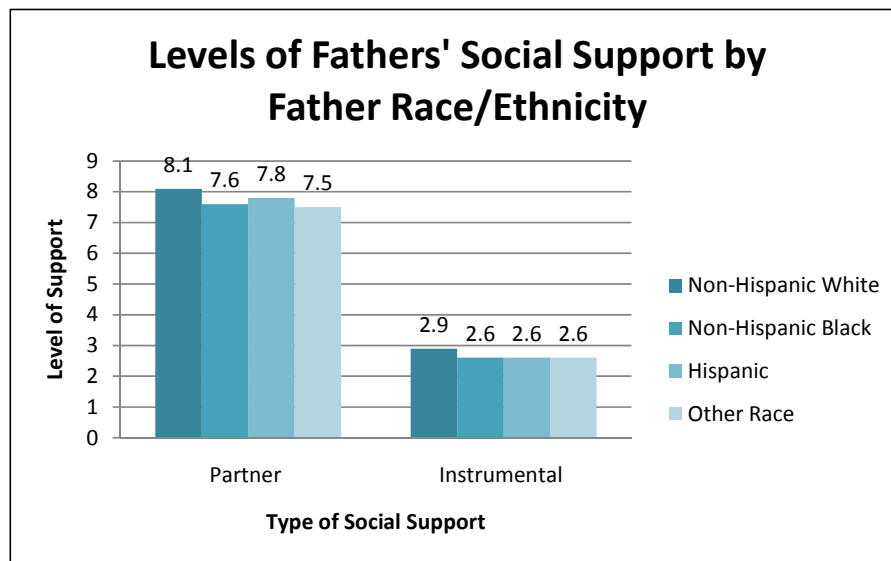
Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

*Differences in Fathers' Social Support by Father Race/Ethnicity*

**Figure 3** and **Table 3** show that there were significant differences in both partner support and instrumental support among fathers of different races/ethnicities.

- Non-Hispanic white fathers reported significantly higher levels of both partner and instrumental support than did fathers of any other racial group.
- Non-Hispanic black fathers reported levels of partner support that were significantly lower than that of white fathers and of Hispanic fathers.
- Hispanic fathers reported levels of partner support that were significantly lower than that of white fathers but were higher than that of non-Hispanic black fathers.

**Figure 3. Father Social Support by Father Race**



Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

**Table 3. Father Social Support by Father Race**

<b>Partner</b>	8.1 <sup>b,c,d</sup>	7.6 <sup>a,c</sup>	7.8 <sup>a,b</sup>	7.5 <sup>a</sup>	0-10
<b>Instrumental</b>	2.9 <sup>b,c,d</sup>	2.6 <sup>a</sup>	2.6 <sup>a</sup>	2.6 <sup>a</sup>	0-3

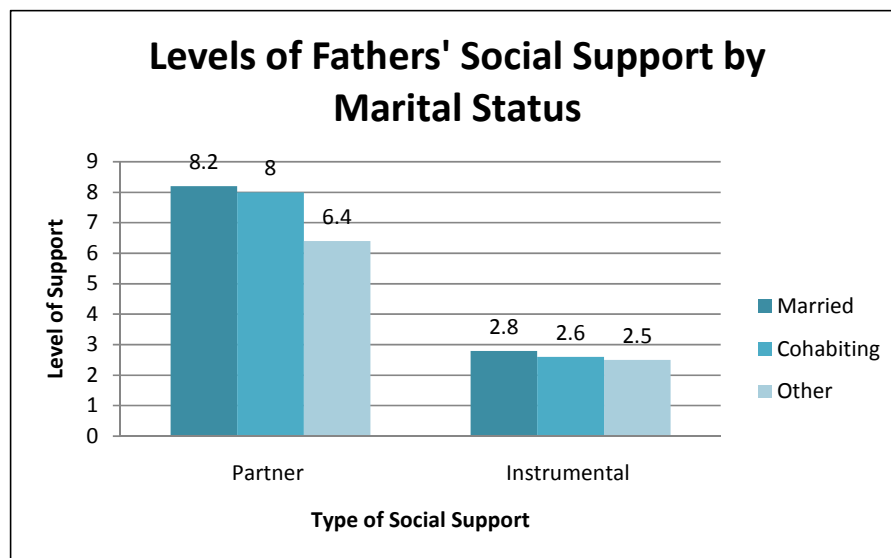
a = significantly different from non-Hispanic white fathers,  
 b = significantly different from non-Hispanic black fathers,  
 c = significantly different from Hispanic fathers,  
 d = significantly different from other race fathers  
 Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

*Differences in Fathers' Social Support by Fathers' Marital Status*

**Figure 4** and **Table 4** show that there were significant differences in fathers' reports of both partner and instrumental support by marital status.

- o Married fathers reported significantly higher levels of both partner and instrumental support than did both cohabiting and "other" fathers.
- o Cohabiting fathers reported significantly higher levels of partner support than did fathers who were not married or cohabiting.
- o Cohabiting fathers reported significantly higher levels of instrumental support than did fathers who were not married or cohabiting.

**Figure 4. Father Social Support by Fathers' Marital Status**



Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

**Table 4. Father Social Support by Fathers' Marital Status**

<b>Partner</b>	8.2 <sup>b,c</sup>	8.0 <sup>a,c</sup>	6.4 <sup>a,b</sup>	0-10
<b>Instrumental</b>	2.8 <sup>b,c</sup>	2.6 <sup>a,c</sup>	2.5 <sup>a,b</sup>	0-3

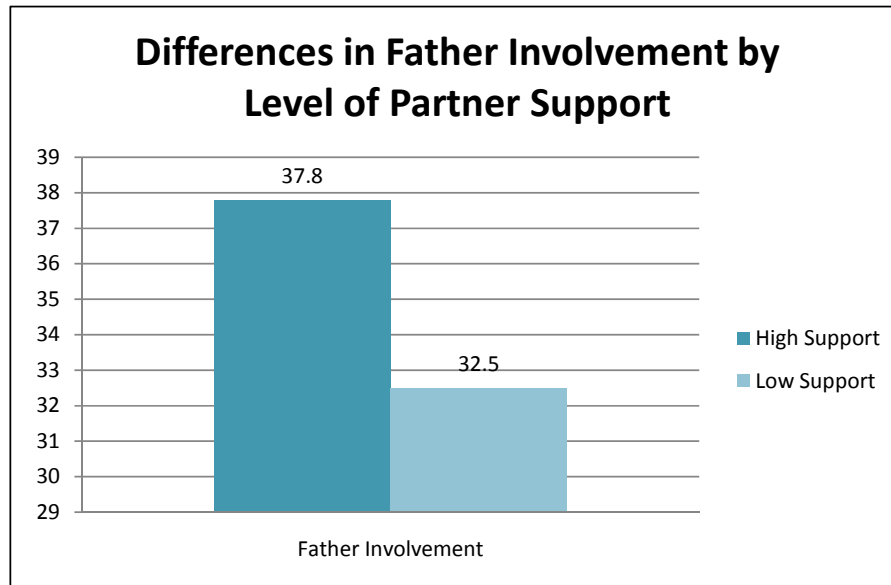
a = significantly different from married fathers,  
 b = significantly different from cohabiting fathers,  
 c = significantly different from other fathers

Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

*Differences in Father Involvement by Level of Social Support*

**Figure 5** and **Table 5** show that fathers who reported high levels of partner support exhibited significantly higher levels of father involvement, compared with fathers who reported lower levels of partner support.

**Figure 5: Differences in Father Involvement by Level of Partner Support**



Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

**Table 5: Differences in Father Involvement by Level of Partner Support**

<b>Father Involvement</b>	37.8	32.5 <sup>a</sup>	0-56

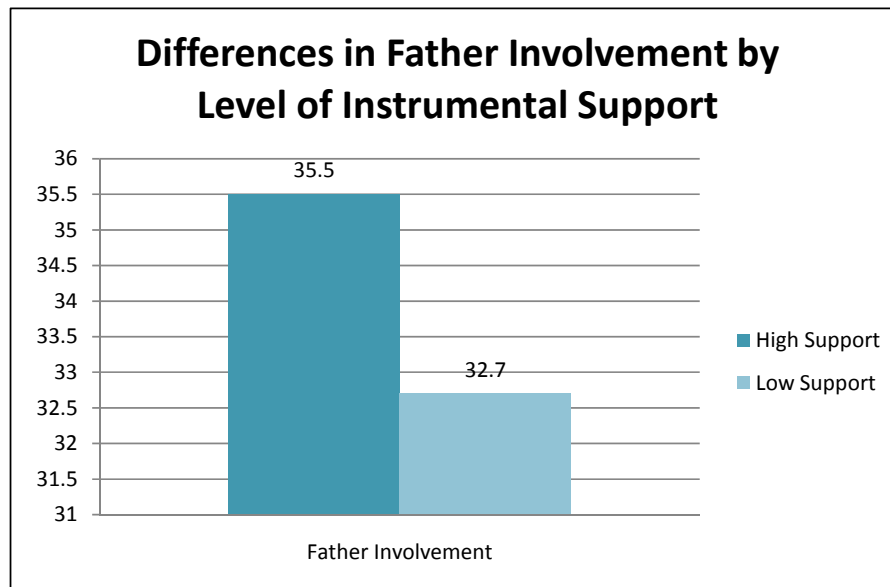
a = significantly different from high support fathers

Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data



**Figure 6** and **Table 6** show that fathers who reported high levels of instrumental support also exhibited significantly higher levels of father involvement, compared with fathers who reported lower levels of instrumental support.

**Figure 6: Differences in Father Involvement by Level of Instrumental Support**



Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

**Table 6: Differences in Father Involvement by Level of Instrumental Support**

	High Support	Low Support	Significance
<b>Involvement</b>	35.5	32.7 <sup>a</sup>	0-56

a = significantly different from high support fathers

Source: Child Trends' analysis of Fragile Families Baseline and 12-month data

### Definitions and Measurement

Father involvement (father-child activities) was measured using an eight-item summative index that assesses, at the 12-month follow-up, how many times per week (0-7) the father reports participating in a number of activities with the focal child. These activities included singing songs, hugging or showing physical affection, telling the child that he loves him/her, letting the child help with household chores, playing imaginary games, reading and telling stories, playing inside with toys, telling the child something s/he did is appreciated, taking the child to visit relatives, going out to eat with the child, assisting the child with eating, and putting the child to bed. A higher score indicates fathers being more engaged in activities with the focal child.

Social support was measured by two composites capturing spousal/partner support and instrumental support:

- Spousal/partner support (emotional dimension) was measured at the 12-month follow-up using a latent variable comprised of five items relating to: 1) partner conflict, 2) compromise, 3) affection, 4) encouragement, and 5) criticism. These concepts were adapted from the Multi-Dimensional Support Scale (MMSD) and Lloyd's Effects of Violence on Work and Family Scale. Conflict was measured using fathers' reports of how often they argued with their partner about things that

fathers considered important. The responses were measured on a five-point scale ranging from 1-always to 5-never. Compromise was measured using father reports of how often their partner was fair and willing to compromise when they have a disagreement. Affection was measured by father reports of how often their partner expresses love or affection towards them.

Encouragement was measured using father reports of how often their partner helps or encourages them to do things that are important to them. Criticism was measured using father reports of how often their partner insults or criticizes them or their ideas. Compromise, affection, and encouragement were measured on a three-point scale ranging from 1-never to 3-often.

Responses were reverse coded for criticism so that higher values represent low levels of partner criticism ranging from 1-often to 3-never.

- Instrumental support was measured as a latent variable consisting of three items from the 12-month follow-up survey relating to fathers' perceptions of whether or not they could count on someone to provide them with 1) financial help, 2) a place to live, or 3) emergency child care if they needed it in the next year. Respondents answered no (0) or yes (1) to each of the three instrumental support items.

### Data Sources

The tables and charts in this brief documenting fathers' social support and father involvement among resident fathers are based on Child Trends' analyses of data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study baseline and 12-month surveys. Fragile Families is a national, longitudinal survey that provides information on the characteristics of fathers and mothers, on their relationships with one another at the time of their child's birth, and on the influence of public policies, such as welfare reform on parents' behaviors and living arrangements. As part of the study, mothers were interviewed in person in the hospital within two days of giving birth, and fathers were interviewed following the birth, either in the hospital or elsewhere. Baseline survey data were collected between 1998 and 2000 for 4,898 families in 20 cities in the United States. The study includes 3,712 unmarried couples and 1,186 married couples who were interviewed at the birth of their child; further interviews with parents, including nonresident fathers, have been completed or are scheduled for when the child is one, three, and five years old. These data are representative of births in U.S. cities with populations of more than 200,000.

### Data Limitations

The sample used in these analyses, as noted, is based primarily on responses from parents who live in larger urban communities. Thus, the generalizability of findings to resident fathers in small cities and in rural contexts should not be made. In addition, some of the measures of spousal/partner support available in the Fragile Families data may reflect to some extent relationship quality rather than direct support provided by men's spouses or partners. However, the items that comprise the spousal/partner support concept reflect an emotional component of social support that is transmitted through interpersonal relationships. Finally, the sample used here is limited to fathers who live with their children and, thus, the findings may not apply to nonresident fathers.

### Resources

- The **U. S. Department of Health and Human Services** funds programs and research about fatherhood development and the importance of fathers for children: <http://fatherhood.hhs.gov/>
- The **National Center on Fathers and Families** provides research-based information about father involvement and child well-being aimed at improving children's lives through the positive participation of their fathers: <http://www.ncoff.gse.upenn.edu/>
- The **National Center for Fathering** conducts research and provides resources to increase involvement of fathers in the lives of children: <http://www.fathers.com>

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Adams, G. A., King, L. A., & King, D. W. (1996). Relationships of job and family involvement, family social support, and work-family conflict with job and life satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 81*, 411-420.
- <sup>2</sup> Ahmeduzzaman, M. E., & Roopnarine, J. L. (1992). Sociodemographic factors, functioning style, social support, and fathers' involvement with preschoolers in African-American families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 54*, 699-707.
- <sup>3</sup> Anderson, E., Kohler, J. K., & Letiecq, B. L. (2002). Low-income fathers and "Responsible Fatherhood" programs: A qualitative investigation of participants' experiences. *Family Relations, 51*(2), 148-155.
- <sup>4</sup> Ardititi, J. A., & Kelly, M. (1994). Fathers' perspectives of their co-parental relationship postdivorce: Implications for family practice and legal reform. *Family Relations, 43*(1), 61-67
- <sup>5</sup> Assemany, A. E., & McIntosh, D. E. (2002). Negative treatment outcomes of behavioral parent training programs. *Psychology in the Schools, 39*(2), 209.
- <sup>6</sup> Aycan, Z., & Eskin, M. (2005). Relative contributions of childcare, spousal support, and organizational support in reducing work-family conflict for men and women: The case of Turkey. *Sex Roles, 53*(7/8), 453-471.
- <sup>7</sup> Behson, S. J. (2002). Which dominates? The relative importance of work-family organizational support and general organizational context on employee outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 61*(1), 53-72.
- <sup>8</sup> Beitel, A., & Parke, R. D. (1998). Maternal and paternal attitudes as determinants of father involvement. *Journal of Family Psychology, 12*, 268-288.
- <sup>9</sup> Belsky, J., & Hsieh, K.-H. (1998). Patterns of marital change during the early childhood years: Parent personality, coparenting, and division-of-labor correlates. *Journal of Family Psychology, 12*(4), 511-528.
- <sup>10</sup> Brody, G. H., Stoneman, Z., Flor, D., McCrary, C., Hastings, L., & Conyers, O. (1994). Financial resources, parent psychological functioning, parent co-caregiving, and early adolescent competence in rural two-parent African American families. *Child Development, 65*(2), 590-605.
- <sup>11</sup> Bronte-Tinkew et al., (Under Review). Social support and links to co-parenting among urban resident fathers of young children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*.
- <sup>12</sup> Bronte-Tinkew, J., Carrano, J., & Guzman, L. (2006). Resident fathers' perceptions of their roles and links to involvement with infants. *Fathering, 4*(3), 254-285.
- <sup>13</sup> Bronte-Tinkew, J., Moore, K. A., Matthews, G., & Carrano, J. (2007). Symptoms of major depression in a sample of fathers of infants: Sociodemographic correlates and links to father involvement. *Journal of Family Issues, 28*(1), 61-99.
- <sup>14</sup> Butler, F. R., & Zakari, N. (2005). Grandparents parenting grandchildren: Assessing health status, parental stress, and social supports. *Journal of Gerontological Nursing 31*(3).
- <sup>15</sup> Cobb, S. (1982). Social support and health through the life course. In A. C. H. McCubbin & J. Patterson (Eds.), *Family stress, coping and social support* (pp. 175-193). Springfield, IL: C.C. Thomas.
- <sup>16</sup> Cochran, M. M., & Brassard, J. A. (1979). Child development and personal social networks. *Child Development, 50*(3), 601.
- <sup>17</sup> Cohen, S., & Wills, T. A. (1985). Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin, 98*, 310-357.
- <sup>18</sup> Cooke, B. D., Rossmann, M. M., & McCubbin, H. I. (1988). Examining the definition and assessment of social support: A resource for individuals and families. *Family Relations, 37*, 211-216.
- <sup>19</sup> Cookston, J. T., Braver, S. L., Griffin, W. A., De Luse, S. R., & Miles, J. C. (2007). Effects of the Dads for Life intervention on interparental conflict and coparenting in the two years after divorce. *Family Process, 46*(1), 123-137.
- <sup>20</sup> Cordell, A. S., Parke, R. D., & Sawin, D. B. (1980). Fathers' views on fatherhood with special reference to infancy. *Family Relations, 29*(3), 331-338.
- <sup>21</sup> Dail, P. W., & Thieman, A. A. (1996). Improving parental partnerships in low-income families as a means for increasing noncustodial parental compliance with child support orders: A research report. *Journal of Family Issues, 17*, 688-703.
- <sup>22</sup> Donato, K. M., Kanaiaupuni, S. M., & Stainback, M. (2003). Sex differences in child health: Effects of Mexico-US migration. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 34*(3), 455-477.
- <sup>23</sup> Dore, M. M., & Lee, J. M. (1999). The role of parent training with abusive and neglectful parents. *Family Relations, 48*(3), 313-325.
- <sup>24</sup> Dunst, C. J., Trivette, C. M., & Cross, A. H. (1986). Mediating influences of social support: Personal, family, and child outcomes. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 90*(4), 403-417.
- <sup>25</sup> Eggebeen, D. J., & Hogan, D. P. (1990). Giving between generations in American families. *Human Nature, 1*(3), 211-232.
- <sup>26</sup> Fagan, J., Bernd, E., & Whiteman, V. (2007). Adolescent fathers' parenting stress, social support, and involvement with infants. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 17*(1), 1-22.
- <sup>27</sup> Frone, M. R., & Rice, R. W. (1987). Work-family conflict: The effect of job and family involvement. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour, 8*(1), 45-53.
- <sup>28</sup> Frone, M. R., Russell, M., & Cooper, M. L. (1992). Antecedents and outcomes of work-family conflict: Testing a model of the work-family interface. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 77*, 65-78.
- <sup>29</sup> Frone, M. R., Yardley, J. K., & Markel, K. S. (1997). Developing and testing an integrative model of the work-family interface. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 50*(2), 145-167.
- <sup>30</sup> Harknett, K., & Knab, J. (2007). More kin, less support: Multipartnered fertility and perceived support among mothers. *Journal of Marriage & Family, 69*(1), 237-253.
- <sup>31</sup> Hirsch, B. J. (1981). Coping and adaptation in high-risk populations: Toward an integrative model. *Schizophrenia Bulletin, 7*(1), 164-172.
- <sup>32</sup> Hogan, D. P., Eggebeen, D. J., & Clogg, C. C. (1993). The structure of intergenerational exchanges in American families. *American Journal of Sociology, 98*, 1428-1458.
- <sup>33</sup> House, J. S. (1987). Social support and social structure. *Sociological Forum, 2*(1), 135-146.
- <sup>34</sup> House, J. S., Landis, K. R., & Umberson, D. (1988). Social relationships and health. *Science, 241*(4865), 540-545.
- <sup>35</sup> Kessler, R. C., Price, R. H., & Wortman, C. B. (1985). Social factors in psychopathology: Stress, social support, and coping processes. *Annual Review of Psychology, 36*, 531.

- <sup>36</sup> Lamb, M. E., Pleck, J. H., Charnov, E. L., & Levine, J. A. (1985). The role of the father in child development: The effects of increased paternal involvement. In B. B. Lahey and A. E. Kazdin (Eds.), *Advances in clinical child psychology* (Vol. 8, pp. 229-266). New York: Plenum.
- <sup>37</sup> Lamb, M. E., Pleck, J. H., Charnov, E. L., & Levine, J. A. (1987). A biosocial perspective on paternal behavior and involvement. In J. B. Lancaster, J. Altman, S. Rossi, and L. R. Sherrod (Eds.), *Parenting across the lifespan: Biosocial dimensions* (pp. 111-142). New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- <sup>38</sup> Lin, N., Ye, X., & Ensel, W. M. (1999). Social support and depressed mood: A structural analysis. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 40*(4), 344-359.
- <sup>39</sup> Lindsey, E. W., Caldera, Y., & Colwell, M. (2005). Correlates of coparenting during infancy. *Family Relations, 54*(3), 346-359.
- <sup>40</sup> MacPhee, D., Fritz, J., & Miller-Heyl, J. (1996). Ethnic variations in personal social networks and parenting. *Child Development, 67*, 3278-3295.
- <sup>41</sup> Margolin, G., Gordis, E. B., & John, R. S. (2001). Coparenting: A link between marital conflict and parenting in two-parent families. *Journal of Family Psychology, 15*(1), 3-21.
- <sup>42</sup> Marks, N. F., & McLanahan, S. (1993). Gender, family structure, and social support among parents. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 55*, 481-493.
- <sup>43</sup> McBride, B. A. (1989). Stress and father's parental competence: Implications for family life and parent educators. *Family Relations, 38*, 385-389.
- <sup>44</sup> McBride, B. A. (1990). The effects of a parent education/play group program on father involvement in child rearing. *Family Relations, 39*, 250-256.
- <sup>45</sup> McHale, J. P. (1995). Coparenting and triadic interactions during infancy: The roles of marital distress and child gender. *Developmental Psychology, 31*(6), 985-996.
- <sup>46</sup> McKenry, P. C., Clark, K. A., & Stone, G. (1999). Evaluation of a parent education program for divorcing parents. *Family Relations, 48*(2), 129-137.
- <sup>47</sup> Nielson, T. R., Carlson, D. S., & Lankau, M. J. (2001). Supportive mentor as a means of reducing work-family conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 59*, 362-381.
- <sup>48</sup> Parasuraman, S., Greenhaus, J. H., & Granrose, C. S. (1992). Role stressors, social support, and well-being among two-career couples. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 13*(4), 339-356.
- <sup>49</sup> Parke, R. (2002). Fathers and families. In M. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting: Status and social conditions of parenting* (Vol. 3, pp. 27-63). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- <sup>50</sup> Pasley, K., Futris, T. G., & Skinner, M. L. (2002). Effects of commitment and psychological centrality on fathering. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 64*(1), 130-138.
- <sup>51</sup> Pleck, J. H. (1997). Paternal involvement: Levels, sources, and consequences. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), *The role of the father in child development* (pp. 66-103). New York: Wiley.
- <sup>52</sup> Robertson, E. B., Elder, G. H., Jr., & Skinner, M. L. (1991). The costs and benefits of social support in families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53*, 403-416.
- <sup>53</sup> Stevens, J. H. (1988). Social support, locus of control, and parenting in three low-income groups of mothers: Black teenagers, black adults, and white adults. *Child Development, 59*(635-642).
- <sup>54</sup> Talbot, J. A., & McHale, J. P. (2004). Individual parental adjustment moderates the relationship between marital and coparenting quality. *Journal of Adult Development, 11*(3), 191-205.
- <sup>55</sup> Thomas, L. T., & Ganster, D. C. (1995). Impact of family-supportive work variables on work-family conflict and strain: A control perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 80*, 6-15.
- <sup>56</sup> Thompson, R. W., Grow, C. R., & Ruma, P. R. (1993). Evaluation of a practical parenting program with middle- and low-income families. *Family Relations, 42*, 21-25.
- <sup>57</sup> Tran, T. V., & McInnis-Dittrich, K. (2000). Social support, stress, and psychological distress among single mothers. *Race Gender and Class, 7*(4), 121-138.
- <sup>58</sup> Van Egeren, L. A. (2004). The development of the coparenting relationship over the transition to parenthood. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 25*(5), 453-477.
- <sup>59</sup> Wellman, B., & Wortley, S. (1990). Different strokes from different folks: Community ties and social support. *American Journal of Sociology, 96*, 558-588.
- <sup>60</sup> Wethington, E. & Kessler, R. C. (1986). Perceived support, received support, and adjustment to stressful life events. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 27*, 78-89.