

FINDING FATHERHOOD 2.0

The Official Hip Hop & Empowerment Toolkit

THE
BETTER
PRINCIPLE
Fatherhood

FlowStory
ALL MUSIC IS CONSCIOUS

PROGRESSIVE
#HipHopEd
EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

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FINDING FATHERHOOD 2.0: THE HIP-HOP & EMPOWERMENT-BASED TOOLKIT
FOR FATHERS, SOON TO BE FATHERS, AND THOSE WORKING WITH FATHERS!

Finding Fatherhood 2.0



Based on Elements of the **The Better Principle "Toolkit" 3.0** written by Dr. Raphael Travis Jr., LCSW
June 2013

BETTER ATX

tumblr.
drraptjr.tumblr.com



@FlowStoryATX #betterdad

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FlowStory, PLLC through innovative practice and expert consulting helps young people reach their potential. The goal is simple, to help create safe, youth-friendly spaces where young people have opportunities to make themselves and their communities better. BETTER ATX, LLC provides the research informed tips and tools to put strategies into action. The combination of consulting and hands-on resources is to help YOU... professionally, personally, or both! You choose. FlowStory/BETTER ATX reports or recommendations do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the client/partner seeking services.

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Just the Two of Us

*From the first time the doctor placed you in my arms
I knew I'd meet death before I'd let you meet harm
Although questions arose in my mind, would I be man enough
Against wrong, choose right and be standing up*

*From the hospital that first night
Took a hour just to get the car seat in right
People driving all fast, got me kinda upset
Got you home safe, placed you in your bassinette*

*That night I don't think one wink I slept
As I slipped out my bed, to your crib I crept
Touched your head gently, felt my heart melt
Because I knew I loved you more than life itself*

*Then to my knees, and I begged the Lord please
Let me be a good daddy, all he needs
Love, knowledge, discipline too
I pledge my life to you*

-Will Smith

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From the Doctor

Page

The attached toolkit is to inspire reflection and action by young and older fathers alike... soon to be fathers... and those with the potential to be fathers at some point in their life. This is also for people in a position to be a positive support to potential, expectant or current fathers. The goal is to encourage greater attention to the importance of fatherhood. It is meant to allow us to reflect upon how we see ourselves as fathers, and how we envision our role in the lives of our children and partners in parenting. As stated by a father whom I respect greatly, we are all “still learning and adjusting.”

Original inspiration for this toolkit came from **#HipHopEd's** 2012 Twitter chat “*Constructive Analysis and Evaluation of Hip-Hop Fatherhood*” (Chirpstory at: <http://chirpstory.com/li/10252>) and **Amil Cook's** suggestion to “build” on the great exchanges. The current Toolkit emerged from both the overwhelmingly positive response to 2012's Toolkit and the increased role taken by **FlowStory, PLLC/BETTER ATX** in providing resources to the public.

This year's Toolkit enjoys contributions from several new voices that share personal and professional experiences that highlight the extraordinary importance of fatherhood. Inside you will find:

1. **MORE!** Meaningful quotes from Hip-Hop's most respected artists, meant to touch on important themes of fatherhood... with links to YouTube videos of the full songs
2. **NEW!** Links to **the lyrics** for each song
3. **MORE!** Thoughtful words and insights to help you **reflect and act** in your own life
4. **MORE!** Vibrant and colorful images that speak to these themes
5. **MORE!** Detailed suggestions & resources to help take action in areas you feel are important
6. **NEW! 20** in-depth reflection and discussion questions that can be used with one or a group of current or soon-to-be fathers **and now 20 separate questions for youth with whom you would like to explore fatherhood issues**; guaranteed to move us forward on these issues
7. **MORE!** A list of **over 60 powerful songs & videos** to help you explore these areas in more detail

WHAT TO DO?

Please take your time as you go through this Toolkit.

- **First**, enjoy the amazing artistry of these emcees.
- **Next**, reflect on what these lyrics mean for you.
- **Then**, ask yourself or the youth you are working with the 20 Dashboard questions.
- **Finally**, as you draw conclusions and insights, determine which next steps you should take to allow your insights to make the lives of you and those you care for **BETTER**.

REMEMBER... LISTEN... THINK... & ACT!

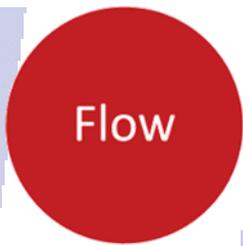


THANK YOU TO SUPPORTERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

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Flow

(Psychology) A state of optimal experience. Attention is freely invested and centered on achieving goals. Flow activities are done for their own sake and not for extrinsic rewards.

(Hip Hop) How an emcee or rapper rides the beat; the rhyme style and cadence as it relates to delivery of lyrics

Story

(noun)

A narrative, either true or fictitious, in prose or verse, designed to interest, amuse, or instruct the hearer or reader; a tale.

FlowStory, PLLC

Strategies and resources to support young people's natural instincts to better their lives.

All work uses an empowerment-based model of positive youth development connecting youth and communities.

We unpack the role of music in people's lives and reintroduce Hip Hop as a tool for growth.

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Background:

The themes you find in this toolkit draw from research and practice strategies known as **The Better Principle** and the accompanying **Toolkits (now at version 3.0) that put these principles into action for positive change**. Both stem from five years of research and with **Dr. Scott Bowman and Dr. Anne Deepak** on the intersection of Hip-Hop culture and youth development, but over 15 years of research and practice experience in areas of empowerment and positive youth development. All this exists with a true appreciation for the deep and meaningful life narratives found within much of Hip Hop culture.

The basic idea is that no matter the circumstances, all **people are generally working to better their lives in some way**... to feel better, do better, be better, and have a better sense of belonging while making the communities *they value* better. It is just that people choose different tools to make these things happen (often due to access and experience).

The **Me to We** concept is a focused and coordinated framework for understanding **Hip Hop's connection to improving healthy development** over the life-course.

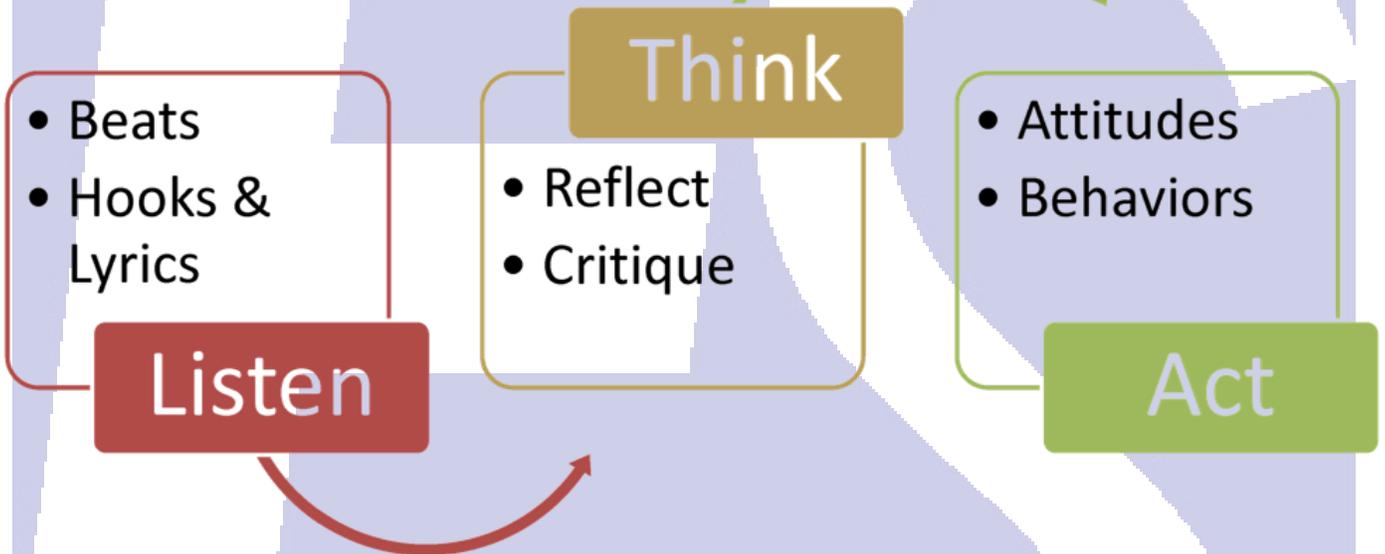
When we take all that we know about positive youth development and combine it with our understanding of Hip Hop's connection to healthy development, we proactively use these energies for **BETTER**. The theory-based objectives are to build even stronger people and stronger communities with the help of the empowering aspects of Hip-Hop culture while minimizing Hip-Hop's risky elements. **The Toolkit uses these energies toward fatherhood.**

As a result, the hope is that you will:

- **Re-commit yourself** to being the best father possible,
- **Identify ways to improve as a father**, and
- **Celebrate fatherhood** with the things that are going well

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Listen... Think... Act! The Steps



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Listen... Think... Act!

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GLORY – Jay Z @s_c_

Listen:

*The most amazing feeling I feel
Words can't describe the feeling, for real
Baby, I paint the sky blue
My greatest creation was you, you: Glory*

*“False alarms and false starts
All made better by the sound of your heart
All the pain of the last time
I prayed so hard it was the last time...”*

*Everybody go through stuff
Life is a gift, love, open it up”*



Think:

Being a father can be at once terrifying and then a split second later a level of joy, anticipation, hope and connectedness that defies explanation. People often talk about the idea of an all-forgiving God that never loses the capacity to love. I never truly understood the depth of this statement until I embraced my feelings at the time of the birth of my daughter. It is not possible to quantify or measure.

I can remember the pain and sinking feeling of our miscarriage. Both the true sorrow for what my wife had to experience as well as the general “loss” of all that was expected for our first child. I can also remember that utter euphoria in seeing and hearing the first heartbeat in the doctor’s office.

The engine of life, growth and long-term development is connection. The positive and supportive relationship between people helps drive all the other important areas of well-being. For youth, this connection is of utmost important because it anchors their confidence and what and how they learn. It also helps shape their moral identity. Finally, these connections are often the entryway to the communities that they are a part of.

The intense feeling of connection at the onset of birth is there for a reason. The hope is that this instigates a bond that will be matched by no other, and impervious to outside threats. This connection is the heart of healthy development, and it is the core of a cultural armor that promotes health amidst difficult societal challenges.

Act:

Connection is Key

Stay connected. That means your relationship will be positive, supportive and ongoing. It is always, it is active and authentic. There are no shortcuts to connection.

Resilience overcomes adversity

Whether individually or as a family, the experience of challenges should inspire reflection and identification of opportunities to overcome and move forward in as healthy a way as possible. How will I move forward? How should we move forward and what role do I play in this? Are we just trying to get by or is there some bigger vision we aspire to?

Growth moves from where you were to where you wanna be.

The ability to overcome challenges is important. Coping allows functioning amidst stressors. But the ability to adopt a growth orientation as opposed to merely surviving allows full engagement of the wonders of life. For Jay, Bey and Blue Ivy, they know all too well that life is a gift. The first time around, they were not so fortunate.

Jay gets Blue Ivy off to an early start on the idea of moving beyond the immediate, the surface, and the easy interpretations of experiences. Instead, he suggests opting for active and engaged living. This is advice we all can benefit from as both fathers and children... “Life is a gift, love, open it up.”

Let people know: “I Am Changing the Story on Fatherhood” on Facebook (image) >>> [CLICK](#)

Share your story on being a [#betterdad](#) on Twitter

Consider the following commitment to your child or children:

“I am committed to being the best father I can be... I will end each day saying that I did the best I could do today as a father. I will let go of past missteps, but will repair the damage that has been done if possible. I will let my child know as often as possible how much I care about them. I will start these changes today!”

Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rn_3Wf2q8jE

HE SAY, SHE SAY – LUPE FIASCO @LupeFiasco

Listen:

*So he said to him
"I want you to be a father
I'm your little boy and you don't even bother
Like 'brother' without the R

And I'm starting to harbor
Cool and food for thought
But for you I'm a starver

Starting to use red markers on my work
My teacher say they know I'm much smarter
But I'm hurt
I used to hand my homework in first
Like I was the classroom starter"*

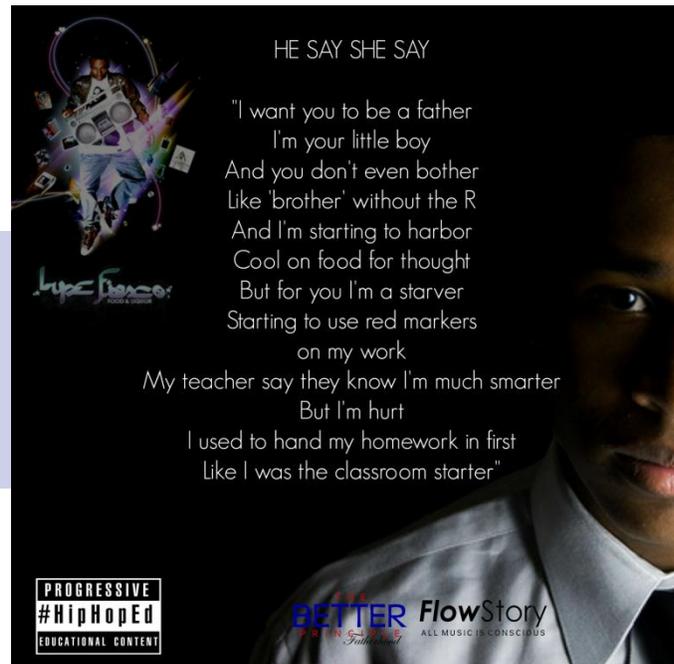
Think:

Connection, Confidence and Competence = Mastery

- (1) His relationship to his father – connection
- (2) His feelings and emotions – confidence
- (3) His classroom performance – competence

These three things are related. They work together and reinforce each other. At their best, they arm youth with a powerful sense of mastery. A strong connection often propels confidence. A high level of confidence often propels competence. Increased positive support from caregivers and peers is often linked to increased skill-building. However, most important is the relationship among the three areas. For example, two young people with the same intelligence level and skills can perform dramatically different if one does not feel welcome in a classroom or lacks confidence in their ability to meet classroom standards.

These three areas are important in the moment, for homework, and for grades. However, for many youth, this mastery at an early age can greatly help in the transition to a stable and secure adulthood of continued mastery in and outside of education. For many youth, this early mastery starts an accumulation of social capital that is critical for combating the many social and economic challenges facing our communities.



Act:

Your involvement matters. The type of involvement also matters. Be present and be a positive influence. Lupe offers a glimpse into one type of result for a young person reflecting on his father's absence... a 180 degree turn from being LeBron in the classroom to well... uh, let's just say someone no longer in the league. He went from doing well in school to not very well despite his teacher knowing that he has much greater potential.

Positive Support

We do not know how he interprets his father "not bothering" but often for youth it is "I am not worthwhile" or "I am not important enough to care about" which can slowly erode confidence. Be present in any way you can so that this doubt never enters the equation. Do not allow them the opportunity to question your concern or caring. Be a positive influence. Do not misunderstand... present and toxic is worse than absent.

You Can Do It

Sometimes it is simply a gentle encouragement when the road gets tough in the classroom, on the sports team, within friendships, or other areas of life that kids feel is important. Show your concern for their experiences when they see the situation as difficult – even if it seems like they are making a mountain out of a molehill. You are validating their experience and offering support and strength.

The Little Stuff

Other times it can also simply be practical support in and outside of the classroom. Someone needs to be the extra set of eyes on homework, the story reader, the practice-spelling-test giver, the contact-the-teacher person to clarify school expectations, the math-question helper, the fill-in-the-blanks-for-stuff-they-don't-teach-you-about-history person, and even the person who helps keep tab of when big assignments are due. Being involved in your child's learning can add greatly to their potential for lifelong learning success.

For you I'm a starver

Nourish your child's growth and development. Be a source of sustenance for your child's body and mind, as both are experience driven. Finally, check-in with them and ask what their experience is of you. Even amidst good intentions, sometimes we do not have an accurate picture of how youth experience us.

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Consider the following commitment to your child or children: "I am committed to being the best father I can be... I will end each day saying that I did the best I could do today as a father. I will let go of past missteps, but will repair the damage that has been done if possible. I will let my child know as often as possible how much I care about them. I will start these changes today!"

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byV0GUg7w4U>

DAUGHTERS – NAS @Nas

Listen:

At this point I realized I ain't the strictest parent

I'm too loose, I'm too cool with her

Shoulda drove on time to school with her

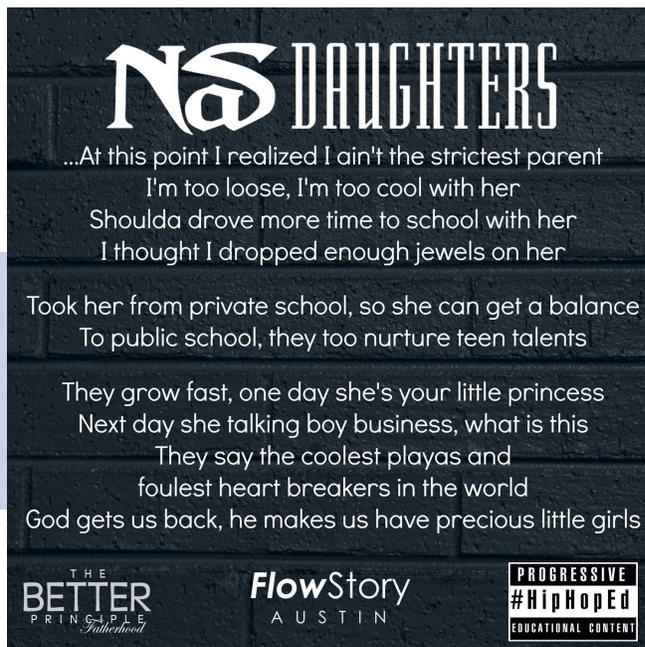
I thought I dropped enough jewels on her

They grow fast, one day she's your little princess

Next day she talking boy business, what is this?

*They say the coolest playas and foulest heart
breakers in the world*

*God gets us back, he makes us have precious little
girls*



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Think:

Balance

Me: So when do you think you are going to start driving?

Daughter: In about 7 years

Me: What type of vehicle do you think you want?

Daughter: The kind with the peace sign

Me: A beetle? The bug? Volkswagen?

Daughter: No the peace sign on the front.

Me: A Mercedes!

Me: Shoot... I want one of those. At 16?! [Thinking: She'll get a peace sign alright trying to figure out how to save/pay for a Mercedes at 16]

Me: No, I mean a car... an SUV... a pickup

Daughter: A minivan because I want to have three kids

Me: You want to have three kids at 16!

Daughter: No, not at 16. I'm just saying later on. I want my first vehicle to be a regular car.

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Me: Remember... education first... kids second... [and in a trailing voice]... but ultimately it is up to you.

Son: [Mr. I will not let anything slide... I have to know exactly what is going on at all times] What did you say dad?

Daughter: Education first... [and in a trailing off (now laughing)] but ultimately it is up to you.

Me: There is nothing wrong with becoming a mother at an early age, however it often makes it much more challenging to do the things that you would like to do as a young family. Think about doing your schoolwork today without your glasses. You can get it done, however it would likely take a lot longer to get what you need to get done and have some very frustrating moments along the way.

This is a snippet of a conversation this morning with my daughter, and one of many small opportunities to discuss what is ultimately “her” life. It is my effort to offer guidance but not squash her sense of self and agency in growing up. At once I want guidance to be firm and clear, yet not oppressive. There will be hundreds if not thousands of such conversations throughout the course of her life.

Between Firm and Flexible Boundaries. Overprotection of youth minimizes risk to an extreme and itself prompts the potential for later overcompensation in social situations. Too much leniency can ignore real issues and indirectly support higher risk attitudes and behaviors during the early years of life that set the table for later life.

You often see the situation created where someone very sheltered becomes extra careless with decision-making when they finally have some independence... putting themselves at excess risk for some unpleasant outcomes. The lack of balance earlier in life often gets them off to a later start in learning the lessons about the consequences of risky attitudes and behaviors.

Between Words and Actions. Saying the “right” thing and advice without putting enough time into the relationship also misses the target. Connection helps build trust, which reinforces many other aspects of healthy well-being, including a young person’s moral identity. Youth need a balance between talking the talk and walking the walk; a balance of words and actions.

Respect

Definition:

- An act of giving particular attention: consideration.
- To avoid violation of or interference with.

We often hear about the importance of respecting the woman. It is also two parts, one part undivided attention, focus and recognition of value and meaning, and one part appreciation of the inherent strength, talent and unique giftedness. This is essential and it starts from birth.

Between Little Princess and Boy Business. Growth and maturity is normal for any girl, as is the eventual desire for romantic connection. The classic line for fathers, especially fathers of “pretty” girls is “you better get a shotgun” to deal with the assumed parade of suitors (I have mine). Thus, how do you create a balance that allows you to preserve her honor as “princess” while respecting her autonomy and transition to being a young woman?

The young woman and the life-course

The interesting thing about health and well-being is that it is never too early to invest in a child’s health. The potential for girls to have children in later life adds even more weight to the value of ensuring positive experiences of mental and physical health. We must respect the fact that girls can be (should they choose to...) at least three generations in one from a life-course perspective: inheriting all that her parents contributed through helping shape her lived experience from birth, as well as creating the architecture for the lived experience of the next generation if she chooses to have children.

Act:

At once we are both fathers and alumni to the little boys club remembering well what little boys are like – Yikes! So what do we do? Strive for balance, and operate from a position of respect.

How? Be Proactive

Create opportunities to connect and create memories together. Time together can short-circuit the potential pitfalls of both overprotection and excess leniency. Being available, staying positive, showing support during times that matter to them is the glue that helps shape caring, and healthy decision-making.

How Else? Be a Positive Role Model

What are you modeling? How to be a partner in a relationship; what a partner should aspire to in knowledge, attitudes and behavior; how to be a parent... with an infant, a toddler, a tween, a teen; how a child, girl/boy deserves to be treated on a regular basis; what happens when conflict and stress arises? You are also showing other practical things like what learning and work looks like to you; what communities you value; what it means to contribute, give and be of service to others. In other words, whether you agree with it or not, you are an everyday role model... “all day every day.”

She’s Your... Queen to Be!

One of my favorite movie scenes is the stirring virtuoso performance in “Coming to America” with Eddie Murphy when his future queen is announced. As a proactive role model you have to decide where you stand on messages of being in Nas’ words “a playa and heartbreaker.” What do you want to model as an adult? What messages do you want to send? What is the image that you portray? And, more importantly what would you like to portray? How does your daughter see you? Have you asked?

Balance means that there is no switch from princess to queen... it is the same daughter. We at once **respect** their innocence and ability to learn on their own, as well as the awesomeness meaning of girlhood and womanhood. This “princess” is a queen in the making. That is our role to treat them as such and make sure that they know every day.

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Consider the following commitment to your child or children:

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Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xP4_0z2M85Q

FLASHBACK:

**Still Got Love For You:
A Celebratory & Introspective Look at
Fatherhood In The Hood #BetterDad**



Tonight 9-10 EST

#HipHopEd

CHECK ONLINE FOR THE 6-11-13 CHIRPSTORY

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STAY – FABOLOUS @myfabolouslife

Listen:

*“My daddy left me and he ain't even die
So when he did go, I ain't even cry
I had reason but that ain't even why
How could he have failed, if he ain't even try?
I ask no questions, I ain't even pry
Truthfully I wanted to, I can't even lie
Like a canceled flight, that ain't even fly

He left me without saying what he was leaving for
And that's when I became a man
And that's the day he stopped being one
This year I became a father
And I'm a die being one” – Fabolous “Stay”*

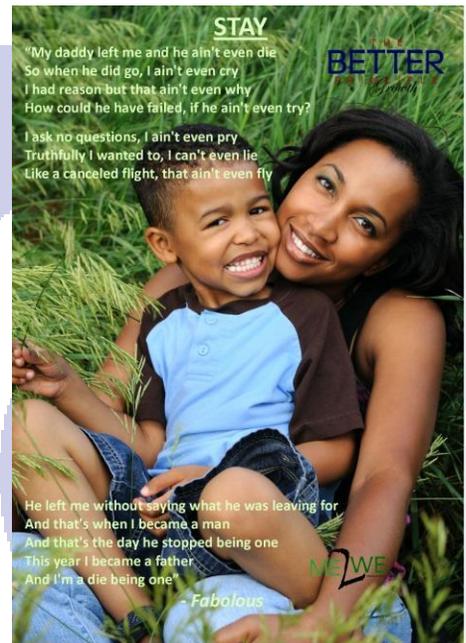
Think:

Absence of fathers has the potential to contribute to a range of undesirable outcomes... poverty, mental health problems for youth and the mother, and youth risk behavior. However, it also has the potential to contribute to an unquenchable commitment to being the best father possible to one's own child. The challenges and missteps of your own father do not have to be your blueprint. In fact, these challenges may be used as signals to think more critically about how you would like to be remembered in the life of your own child.

Act:

There are many tips and tools out there to be a “good dad”. However, consider a “commitment to your child” as step 1. Consider the following: I am committed to being the best father I can be... I will end each day saying that I did the best I could do today as a father. I will let go of past missteps, but will repair the damage that has been done if possible. I will let my child know as often as possible how much I care about them. I will start these changes today! ([Tip: 5 Ways To Be a Great Dad](#))

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QaPmLzJGiM>



FATHERHOOD – SAIGON @therealsaigon

Listen:

*“You’ll see some things that’s real. Life it could be so cruel,
But, I’ll be right there every step of the way yes baby I promise you...”*

*Its fatherhood, do everything that a father should
Promise to raise you well from K through 12 ‘til you run off to college
good” – Saigon “Fatherhood”*



Think:

One of the interesting things about relationships and eventual families is that commitments are often more explicitly verbal between parents, but not between parent and child. Does that play a role in how parenting and commitments play out over time? Is it easier for certain actions **or inactions** because intentions have not been made explicit and clear between parents and children?

Act:

There are many tips and tools out there to be a “good dad”. However, consider a “commitment to your child” as step 1. Consider the following: I am committed to being the best father I can be... I will end each day saying that I did the best I could do today as a father. I will let go of past missteps, but will repair the damage that has been done if possible. I will let my child know as often as possible how much I care about them. I will start these changes today! ([Tips: “Stay Connected” by Fatherhood Buzz](#))

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bzddxzkh500>

GHETTO STORY – LUPE FIASCO @LupeFiasco

Listen:

*Thinking about the Black Panthers and the babies
that were born in the late '80s
that now have babies that lack Pampers
No Kwanzaa's and they lack Santa's
And the father who thinks shoe shopping is the
answer.*

*Skipped out on parenthood classes
so she don't know how to handle her
And never learned from her grandmother.*

- Lupe Fiasco "Ghetto Story"



Think:

"Father = Provider" often dominates our thoughts and the headlines for what it means to be a father (note: crappydads.com). This can even lead to fathers (and mothers) overemphasizing the value of money in parenting, which can take away from what are equally important ingredients for raising a healthy and whole child. In our communities, it has often been a village raising our children (note: the Black Panther Party sponsored [over 60 youth and community programs](#)). In addition, today many [grandparents are taking on the role of parents](#). However, these noble efforts should merely be support for parents, not in place of parents. With a focus on Father's Day, think about the potential value of fatherhood through consistent involvement, a willingness to learn and an investment in the whole child... things money cannot buy.

Act:

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Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIK0DLemYR4>

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LIKE FATHER LIKE SON – THE GAME @thegame

Listen:

*“I hope you grow up to become that everything you can be
That's all I wanted for you young'n, like Father, like Son
But in the end I hope you only turn out better than me
I hope you know I love you young'n, like Father, like Son*

*My little man, your day is coming, coming,
your day is coming, I tell you
And when it comes, just keep it running, running,
just keep it running, I tell you”*

- The Game “Like Father Like Son”

Think:

Fathers want to instill wisdom in their children so that they can learn from their experiences as opposed to their children having to experience everything they have endured through life. At a minimum, a father wants their child to grow up and live better than they are living. Many times a father has to teach from the viewpoint of the consequences of their actions, as opposed to having their children replicate many of the choices they have made. For many young fathers in Hip-Hop, having a child is an opportunity to make amends for their life's choices by raising a child to be everything that they believe they could and should have been.

Act:

There are many tips and tools out there to be a “good dad”. But, consider a “commitment to your child” as step 1. Consider the following: I am committed to being the best father I can be... I will end each day saying that I did the best I could do today as a father. I will let go of past missteps, but will repair the damage that has been done if possible. I will let my child know as often as possible how much I care about them. I will start these changes today! ([Tips: “Stay Connected” by Fatherhood Buzz](#))

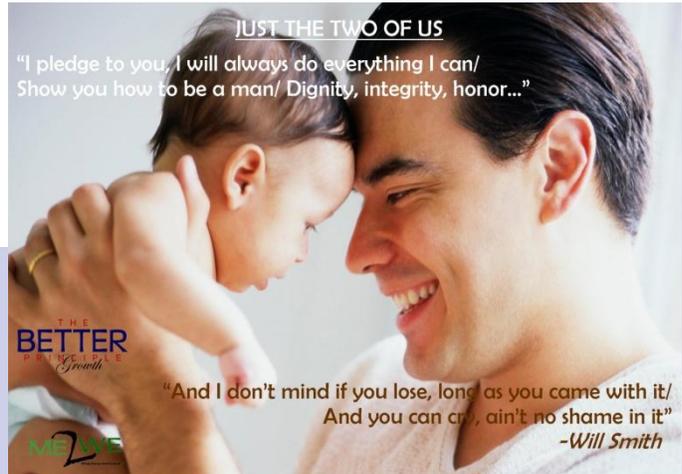
Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvZzl3hflvw>



JUST THE TWO OF US – WILL SMITH @WillSmithNews

Listen:

*"I pledge to you, I will always do
Everything I can
Show you how to be a man
Dignity, integrity, honor
And, I don't mind if you lose, long as you came with
it
And, you can cry, ain't no shame in it
It didn't work out with me an your mom
But yo, push come to shove
You was conceived in love"*



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– Will Smith “Just the Two of Us”

Think:

These words are the mantra of the man that plans on living-the-example of the man that he wants his son to become. This father is challenging one of the strongholds that entrap many of us men who believe that the only acceptable emotion to show is anger. Manhood is based on effort and not the result because we can always control the effort we expend, but we cannot control the results between winning and losing. The attributes of dignity, integrity, and honor are ones that can be shown in victory and defeat. The modeling of these behaviors will last with our children longer than our words, especially if our words are not supported by our actions.

Act:

There are many tips and tools out there to be a “good dad”. However, consider a “commitment to your child” as step 1. Consider the following: I am committed to being the best father I can be... I will end each day saying that I did the best I could do today as a father. I will let go of past missteps, but will repair the damage that has been done if possible. I will let my child know as often as possible how much I care about them. I will start these changes today! ([Tips: “Stay Connected” by Fatherhood Buzz](#))

Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WamkRSDeD8>

A FEW WORDS...

The Life-Sustaining Journey

One Saturday afternoon in the middle of January, my three-year-old daughter was playing across the room. Her laughter enticed me to put down my computer to play with the cool little girl who calls me dad. In the midst of our playing, I stopped the game and told my daughter to be still for a moment. Without a clear reason or explanation, I laid my head on my little girl's chest and time seemed to stop. The life-sustaining rhythmic vibrations that filled my ear somehow seemed to defy the space-time continuum. In that moment, I was sitting in my apartment holding my daughter and simultaneously standing next to my wife in the doctor's office as we heard her heart beat for the very first time.

Back then, I had no idea what lied ahead of me. I had little understanding of how her existence would change my behavior, philosophies and perspectives on just about everything. I knew as much about her first three years of life then as I know about her next fifteen now. But, for all that I know (or don't know) one thing is sure; her presence in my life determines the man I will be almost as much as my presence in her life determines the woman she will become.

This is the dance called fatherhood, a journey of symbiotic growth, learning and development. But without moments where you stop and play it is easy to miss the heartbeat that sustains the child as much as it sustains the dad.

By Cory Charles Gooding (Follow on Twitter: @BajanakademiK)

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I AM CHANGING THE STORY

FS

ON FATHERHOOD

HOW?

Use the following Dashboard questions & use the 60+ Hip Hop tracks

- to start a conversation,
- to run a group for adults or youth,
- to guide a structured individual intervention,
- to critically reflect on your own life

It is up to you how you CHANGE THE STORY!

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THE 20 STEPS DASHBOARD FOR FATHERS

Father's Day Edition 2013

[Note: Fathers-to be should answer how things “will be” in the future]

ESTEEM

1. Who am I (or will I be) as a father?
2. How do (will) others see me in my role as father? Who do I sometimes pretend to be?
3. What types of fathers do I surround myself with?
4. What brings me “joy” in my role as father? What is an activity I enjoy with my kid(s) so much that I tend to lose track of time?
5. What things do I do in my role as father that I am proud of (that make me feel good)?

RESILIENCE

6. What stories about my experiences as a father would I like to be able to tell others, but have not had the opportunity to?
7. What should people know about my life and reality to know the real “me” and how that may play a role in the type of father I am?
8. What are my best strategies for coping with stressful situations that come up for me as a father?

GROWTH

9. In what ways can I be better about...?
 - What I know and what I can do in my role as father (e.g., relationships, discipline, and activities)?

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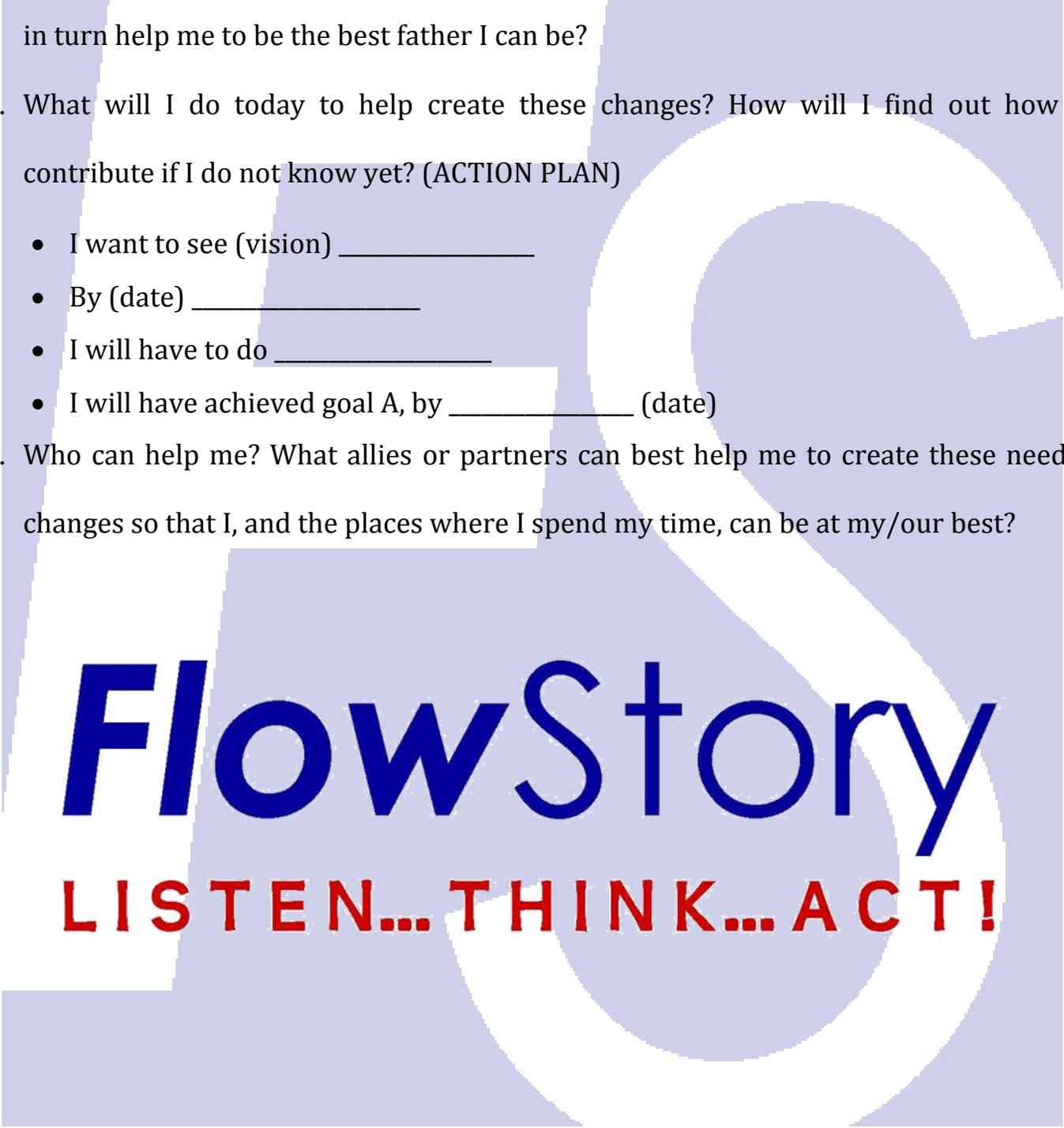
- Being supportive and positive with my child?
 - Caring about the experiences of my child?
 - Feeling confident about my abilities as a father?
 - Making healthy and positive decisions as a father?
 - Being a mentor, role model or general support to other new fathers?
10. What do I want to become HIGHLY SKILLED AT, to be an even **#betterdad** in the future? What am I doing to make this happen? How can I improve at these efforts?
11. What strategies do I use to help keep me “on the right track?”
12. What messages would I like to give fathers newer to parenting than me to help them get through fatherhood in the best way possible?

COMMUNITY

13. What groups with other fathers do I have a strong connection to, or “belong” to?
e.g., work, club, neighborhood, faith-based, interest group
14. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being highest, how satisfied am I in these communities (my level of involvement, quality of experiences, ability to connect with others in similar roles as me)?
15. When do I feel the most alive and engaged in the communities around me?
16. When do I feel the least alive (out of place)?
17. How does being a part of this community (one or more) help me overcome some of the challenges of being a father?

CHANGE

18. What changes need to happen for this community to be “the best it can be”, which can in turn help me to be the best father I can be?
19. What will I do today to help create these changes? How will I find out how to contribute if I do not know yet? (ACTION PLAN)
- I want to see (vision) _____
 - By (date) _____
 - I will have to do _____
 - I will have achieved goal A, by _____ (date)
20. Who can help me? What allies or partners can best help me to create these needed changes so that I, and the places where I spend my time, can be at my/our best?



FlowStory
LISTEN... THINK... ACT!

SPECIAL FEATURE TRACK AND PROFILE

Recognizing the valuable role of youth workers in the positive development of youth... often being father figures in the process

Recognizing Hip Hop culture as a meaningful pathway for positive youth development as a tool of understanding and expression

“Appreciation”

PROGRESSIVE
#HipHopEd
EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

<https://soundcloud.com/amilcook/appreciation>



NOW IT IS YOUR TURN...

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THE 20 STEPS DASHBOARD FOR YOUTH ON FATHERHOOD

Father's Day Edition 2013

[Note: Each of these questions applies even if father is absent or has limited presence. For example, “how does a father’s absence play a role in who I am?” You can also use “father figure” when applicable. Consider the unique life experiences of the young person you are working with to determine what is most appropriate]

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ESTEEM

1. In what ways has my father played a role in who I am?
2. How do others see me because of my father?
3. What types of fathers have I seen around in my life? Which fathers have I interacted with or seen that stand out to me or have made an impression on my life?
4. What joyful experiences have I had with my father? What activities do I/did I enjoy with my father so much that I tend to lose track of time? (Which joyful experiences would I like to have with a father? What activities do I enjoy the most that I wish I could share with a father.
5. What things have my father done that I am proud of (that make me feel good)?

RESILIENCE

6. What stories about my experiences with my father would I like to be able to tell others, but have not had the opportunity to? (...my experiences without a father present...)
7. What should people know about my life experiences and day-to-day reality, with or without my father, to know **the real “me?”** What should people know about how these

experiences play a role in the type of person that I am?

8. What strategies have I learned from my father (on purpose or not!) for how to handle stressful situations? (What are my best strategies for coping with stressful thoughts or situations that result from my relationship or lack of relationship with my father?)

GROWTH

9. In what ways can I be better about...?
- How I interact as a son or daughter with my father (e.g., thoughts, attitudes and behaviors)?
 - Being supportive and positive with my father?
 - Caring about the experiences of my father?
 - Feeling confident about my father's ability to get better as a father?
 - Making healthier and more positive decisions?
 - Being a mentor, role model or general support to others having a difficult time coping with issues related to their father?
10. What do I want to become HIGHLY SKILLED AT, to be a greater father or father figure to someone else in the future? What am I doing to make this happen? How can I improve at these efforts?
11. What strategies do I use to help keep me "on the right track" for my life goals?
12. What messages would I like to give other youth newer to coping with challenging relationships with their fathers to help them get through in the best way possible?

COMMUNITY

13. What groups do I have a strong connection to, or “belong” to that relate to things that my father is interested in? (e.g., sports team, faith-based group, academic team, neighborhood group, other special interest group)
14. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being highest, how satisfied am I in these communities (my level of involvement, quality of experiences, ability to connect with others like me)?
15. When do I feel the most alive and engaged in the communities around me?
16. When do I feel the least alive (out of place)?
17. How does being a part of this community (one or more) help me in my relationships with my father?

CHANGE

18. What changes need to happen for this community (one or more) to be “the best it can be?” How might it then help me be a better person, son or daughter?
19. What will I do today to help create these community changes? How will I find out how to contribute if I do not know yet? CREATE ACTION PLAN BELOW...
- I want to see (vision) _____
 - By (date) _____
 - I will have to do _____
 - I will have achieved goal A, by _____ (date)
20. Who can help me? How might my father or a father figure in my life help me? What other allies or partners can best help me to create these needed changes?

MORE ACTIVITIES: BEATS & PIX

BETTER AT HOME:

- Make your own music mix that combines songs that remind you of **all the different ways you can GET BETTER**
- Think of these songs as theme music
- They should be motivating... The Soundtrack to your Future. Give the mix a name. Give it a cover... think about your new answers to “Who Am I?”

SEEING BETTER:

PHOTOVOICE EXTENSION

- Take pictures (or video) of anything in your home or in your community that help you think about being better as a person
- Take pictures (or video) of things that you actually motivate you into action to make things BETTER for you, for your family, or your groups/communities
- Take pictures (or video) of anything that you think fits with the songs you chose above that help bring the ideas in the songs to life.
 - *Edit pictures & make a collage with www.picmonkey.com*
 - *If you capture video, **create a movie with www.magisto.com or the Magisto app** (download on your phone) – use songs inspired from today!*

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THE TRACKS! FATHERHOOD & HIP HOP

Remember... Listen, Think and Act!

Sources: Raphael Travis, Tim Jones, #HipHopEd, Henry Adoso, Complex Mag

[NOTE: SOME SONGS ARE EXPLICIT. PLEASE REVIEW BEFORE PUBLIC PLAY]



1. All for You – Little Brother	Lyrics
2. Amir's Song – Jean P	Lyrics
3. Be a Father to Your Child – Ed O.G. & Da Bulldogs*	Lyrics
4. Biological Didn't Bother – Shaquille O'Neal	Lyrics
5. Black Girl Pain – Talib Kweli (ft. Jean Grae)*	Lyrics
6. Bridging the Gap – Nas	Lyrics
7. Brenda's Got a Baby – Tupac	Lyrics
8. California Dream - Game	Lyrics
9. Champion – Kanye West	Lyrics
10. Daddy – Juelz Santana	Lyrics
11. Daddy's Little Baby – Ja Rule	Lyrics
12. Daughters – Nas*	Lyrics
13. Dear Mama – Tupac	Lyrics
14. Dedicated Father (Fatherhood Part 2) – Tray Chaney	Lyrics

15.	Father – LL Cool J*	Lyrics
16.	Father Father – NY Oil*	Lyrics
17.	Fatherhood – Saigon	Lyrics
18.	Fatherhood – Tray Chaney	Lyrics
19.	Fly Away – Talib Kweli	Lyrics
20.	Glory – Jay Z*	Lyrics
21.	Haile’s Song – Eminem	Lyrics
22.	He Say She Say – Lupe Fiasco*	Lyrics
23.	His Dream – Asher Roth*	Lyrics
24.	How to Love – Lil’ Wayne	Lyrics
25.	I Apologize – Saul Paul	Lyrics
26.	It’s A Boy – Slick Rick	Lyrics
27.	Joy – Talib Kweli (featuring Mos Def/Yasiin Bey)	Lyrics
28.	Just the Two of Us – Will Smith*	Lyrics
29.	Letter to My Son, RMX – Don Trip*	Lyrics , RMX
30.	Letter to My Son (Response to Don Trip) – Driicky Graham*	Lyrics
31.	Letter to My Unborn Child – Dizzy Wright	Lyrics
32.	Letter to My Unborn Child – Tupac	Lyrics

33.	Life – Royce da 5'9" (featuring Amerie)	Lyrics
34.	Like Father Like Son – The Game (featuring Busta Rhymes)	Lyrics
35.	Lost Ones – J. Cole*	Lyrics
36.	Mama Proud – Tito Lopez	Lyrics
37.	Meet the Parents – Jay Z	Lyrics
38.	Mockingbird – Eminem	Lyrics
39.	Moment of Clarity – Jay Z	Lyrics
40.	My Story – Jean Grae	Lyrics
41.	New Day – Jay – Z & Kanye West	Lyrics
42.	Oh My Stars – Talib Kweli	Lyrics
43.	Our Father – Saul Williams*	Lyrics
44.	Papa Crazy – Run DMC	Lyrics
45.	Papa's Song – Tupac*	Lyrics
46.	Poppa Was a Player – Nas	Lyrics
47.	Pop's Rap Series part 1 – Common and Lonnie Lynn; part 2 ; part 3 ; Pop's belief	Lyrics, part 2 , part 3 , belief
48.	Retrospect for Life – Common (featuring Lauryn Hill)	Lyrics
49.	Rich Dad, Poor Dad – Big K.R.I.T.*	Lyrics

50.	Seven Months – Bambu*	Lyrics
51.	Show Me the Good Life – Blu and Exile	Lyrics
52.	Song Cry – Jay Z	Lyrics
53.	Stay – Fabolous	Lyrics
54.	Tears in Your Eyes – Anthony Shears	Lyrics
55.	The Foundation – Xzibit	Lyrics
56.	They Reminisce Over You (T.R.O.Y.) – Pete Rock & CL Smooth	Lyrics
57.	Time Machine – Big K.R.I.T.	Lyrics
58.	Tremendous Damage – Big Boi	Lyrics
59.	When I'm Gone – Eminem	Lyrics
60.	Where Have You Been – Jay Z and Beanie Sigel*	Lyrics
61.	Yesterday – Atmosphere	Lyrics

See most of these songs on the YouTube Fatherhood Playlist (click icon):



SOURCES:

- <http://www.complex.com/music/2012/06/the-20-realest-rap-songs-about-fathers/>
- <http://rap.about.com/od/songs/tp/FathersDayHipHopSongs.htm>
- <http://rollingout.com/music/10-coolest-rap-songs-dedicated-to-fatherhood/6/>
- http://www.digitaldreamdoor.com/pages/best_songs-father.html (all music)

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#daddysgirl Campaign

GrassROOTS Community Foundation

DADDY'S Little Girl HEALTH CHALLENGE

Begins Father's Day June 14, 2013

No matter how old, she is always daddy's little girl .

JOIN DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL HEALTH CHALLENGE

ASKING ALL *Fathers of Daughters* TO COMMIT TO :

- ★ ONE HEALTH ACTIVITY ★
- ★ ONE DAY A WEEK ★
- ★ ONE HOUR A DAY ★

CONTEST BEGINS FATHERS DAY JUNE 16TH
REGISTER JUNE 1-14

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 973.736.4475

REGISTER AT
WWW.GRASS-ROOTSFOUNDATION.ORG
& ENTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A TRIP TO DISNEY WORLD.

Play catch, take a long walk, dance, make a healthy meal - Log on for more ideas and to register!

GET THE WHOLE FAMILY INVOLVED!

#daddysgirl

Join us at flowstory.org in the Challenge!
We will be doing periodic updates of our activities all year!



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The **MUSCLE & Flow**... Story



We will feature exciting activities from amazing partner from @MUSCLEandFlow



<https://www.facebook.com/MuscleandFlow>

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Awareness Posters/Images

Web Resources



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JAY-Z GLORY

FEATURING IVY BLUE CARTER

*The most amazing feeling I feel
Words can't describe the feeling, for real
Baby, I paint the sky blue
My greatest creation was you,
you:
Glory*

PROGRESSIVE
#HipHopEd
EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

THE
BETTER
PRINCIPLE
Fatherhood

ME2WE
#betterdad

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HE SAY SHE SAY

"I want you to be a father
I'm your little boy
And you don't even bother
Like 'brother' without the R
And I'm starting to harbor
Cool on food for thought
But for you I'm a starver
Starting to use red markers
on my work
My teacher say they know I'm much smarter
But I'm hurt
I used to hand my homework in first
Like I was the classroom starter"

PROGRESSIVE
#HipHopEd
EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

THE BETTER PRINCIPLE *Fatherhood* **FlowStory**
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Na DAUGHTERS

...At this point I realized I ain't the strictest parent
I'm too loose, I'm too cool with her
Shoulda drove more time to school with her
I thought I dropped enough jewels on her

Took her from private school, so she can get a balance
To public school, they too nurture teen talents

They grow fast, one day she's your little princess
Next day she talking boy business, what is this
They say the coolest playas and
foulest heart breakers in the world

God gets us back, he makes us have precious little girls

THE
BETTER
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Fatherhood

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STAY

“My daddy left me and he ain't even die, so when he did go, I ain't even cry; I had reason but that ain't even why. How could he have failed, if he ain't even try? I ask no questions, I ain't even pry. Truthfully I wanted to, I can't even lie. Like a canceled flight, that ain't even fly.”

THE
BETTER
PRINCIPLE
Growth

“He left me without saying what he was leaving for
And that's when I became a man, and that's the day he stopped
being one. This year I became a father and I'm a die being one”

- *Fabolous*

ME/WE

FATHERHOOD

“You’ll see some things that’s real
Life it could be so cruel
But I’ll be right there every step of the way
Yes baby, I promise you...”



THE
BETTER
PRINCIPLE
Growth

“Its fatherhood
I’ll do everything that a father should
Promise to raise you well from K - 12
‘til you run off to college good”

-Saigon



“Thinking about the Black Panthers and the babies that were born in the late '80s that now have babies that lack Pampers... No Kwaanzas, and they lack Santas... and the father who thinks shoe-shopping is the answer.”

THE
BETTER
PRINCIPLE
Growth

ME2WE
#hiphopmetowe

“Skipped out on parenthood classes so she don't know how to handle her and never learned from her grandmother.”

-Lupe Fiasco

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

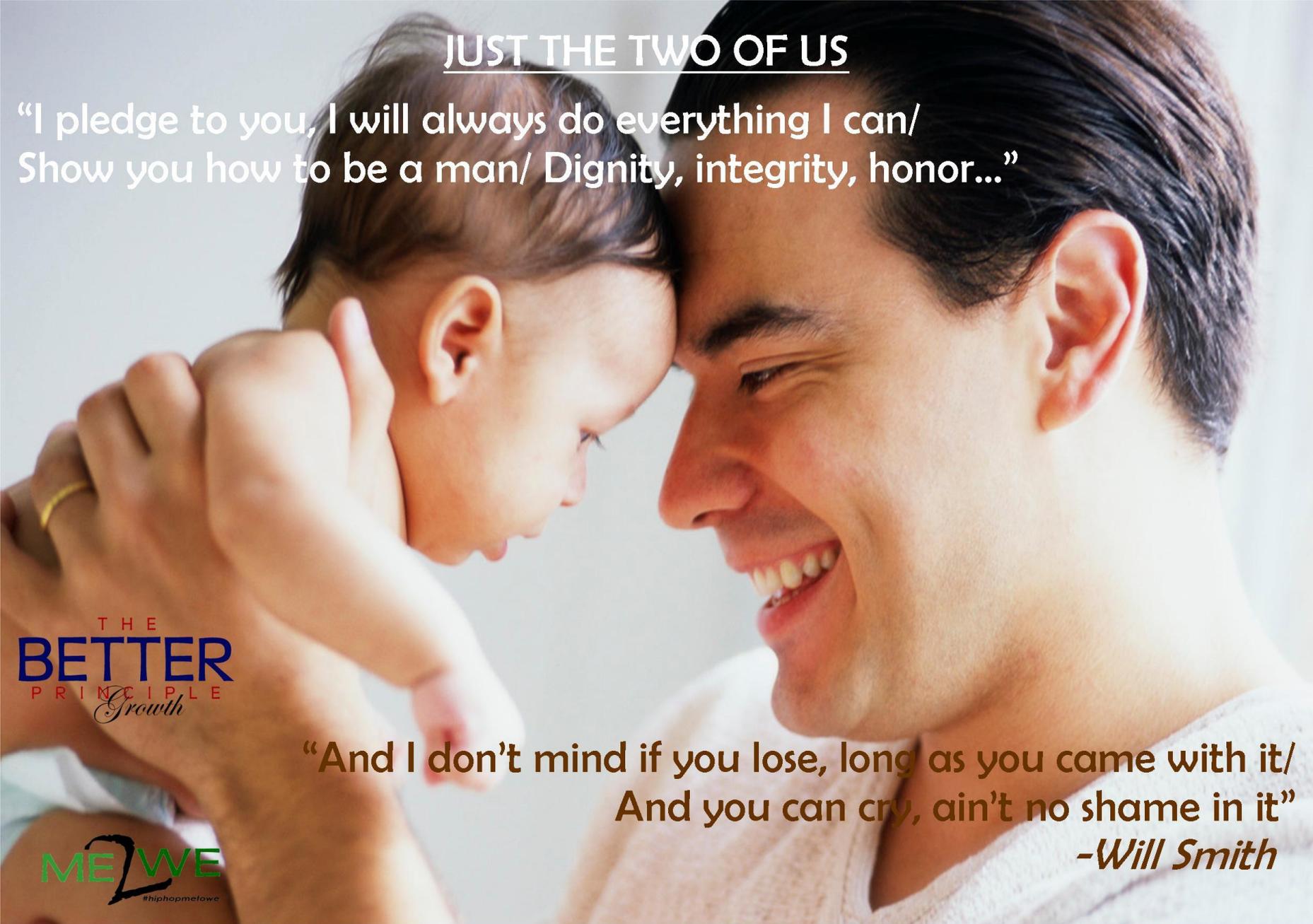
“In the end I only hope that you turn out better than me”

THE
BETTER
PRINCIPLE
Growth

ME2WE
#hiphopetowe

“I hope you know I love you young’n,
like father, like son”

-The Game



JUST THE TWO OF US

“I pledge to you, I will always do everything I can/
Show you how to be a man/ Dignity, integrity, honor...”

THE
BETTER
PRINCIPLE
Growth

“And I don’t mind if you lose, long as you came with it/
And you can cry, ain’t no shame in it”

-Will Smith

ME2WE
#hiphopmelowe

WEB RESOURCES

National Fatherhood Initiative - <http://www.fatherhood.org/>

National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse - <http://www.fatherhood.gov/>

Fatherhood Buzz - <http://www.fatherhood.gov/fatherhood-buzz>

Black Fathers - <http://blackfathers.org/>

Responsible Fatherhood - <http://www.responsiblefatherhood.org/>

The Dovetail Project - <http://thedovetailproject.org/>

American Humane Association -

<http://www.americanhumane.org/children/programs/fatherhood-initiative/>

National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute - <http://www.nlffi.org/>

Find out more about research contributing to the FlowStory model:

- Travis, R., & Maston, A.** (forthcoming 2013). Hip Hop and pedagogy, more than meets the eye: What do we expect, what will we measure? In B. Porfilio, D. Roychoudhury, & Gardner, L. (Eds.). *See you at the crossroads: Hip hop scholarship at the intersections: Dialectical harmony, ethics, aesthetics, and panoply of voices*. Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishing.
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- Travis, R., & Ausbrooks, A.** (2012). EMPOWERMENTODAY: A high school – university partnership model for positive youth development and empowerment among African American males. *Communities and Schools*, 34(3), 186-189.
- Travis, R., & Bowman, S.** (2012). Ethnic identity, self-esteem, depression and variability in rap music's influence on empowering and risky behaviors. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 15(4), 455-478.
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- Travis, R., & Deepak, A.** (2011). Empowerment in context: lessons from Hip hop culture for social work practice. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 20(3), 203-222.
- Travis, R.** (2010). What they think: How youth worker attributions about adolescent circumstances play a role in service delivery. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 39(6), 443-464.

For additional information or to schedule consultation contact: raphael@flowstory.org

NOTES:



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Dr. Raphael Travis Jr., LCSW - *Founder, Member*

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