



Welcome to the NRFC Webinar

The Intersection of Parenting and Relationship Skills: Fathers as Teachers and Role Models for their Children

12:30pm EDT | July 18th 2018

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National
Responsible
Fatherhood Clearinghouse



NRFC WEBINAR

The Intersection of Parenting and Relationship Skills:

Fathers as Teachers and Role Models for their Children

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DHHS/ACF Office of Family Assistance funded national resource to support fathers and families.

Resources are available for dads, fatherhood programs, researchers, and policy makers.



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Today's webinar will provide

- Overview of ways in which responsible fatherhood programs are working to improve child well-being by helping fathers enhance their parenting, relationship, and co-parenting skills.
- Information and tips from:
 - **Elizabeth (Liz) Karberg**
Child Trends, Bethesda, MD.
 - **Carter Patterson**
UIH Family Partners, Trenton, NJ.
 - **Shawndi Johnson**
Children's Bureau of Southern California, Anaheim, CA.
- List of helpful resources available for download during the webinar.
- “Question and Answer” session with the presenters at the end of the webinar.



The Intersection of Parenting and Relationship Skills: Fathers as Teachers and Role Models for their Children



Liz Karberg, Ph.D.

Research Scientist
Child Trends

July 18th, 2018





Essential Services of a Federally-Funded Fatherhood Program

- OFA requires that their responsible fatherhood (RF) grantees provide **parenting, healthy relationship, and workforce development** services.
 - An evaluation of 4 OFA-funded RF programs found that healthy relationship services are least utilized by fatherhood program participants.



Why Focus on Parenting and Relationship Skills in RF Programming?

- When parents have good parenting and relationship skills, plus a supportive co-parenting relationship:
 - Children benefit socially, academically, and in terms of general well being.
 - Fathers benefit too.
They are:
 - More (and better) involved with their children.
 - More likely to pay child support.
 - Less likely to be stressed and depressed.





Challenges to Building Relationship Skills

- Certain characteristics are associated with poorer quality romantic and co-parenting relationships:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Growing up without two married parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Intimate partner violence.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Unmarried family structure.○ Family complexity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Other things that contribute to stress<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ e.g., unemployment, low income.

- Men in RF programs are more likely to have these characteristics than fathers who do not participate in these programs.



Lessons Learned

Skills to Improve Parenting and Relationships

- Intervention research tells us what skills impact the ability to:
 - Parent your children effectively
 - Work effectively with your co-parent
 - Maintain a healthy romantic relationship
- These skills include the ability to:
 - Communicate effectively
 - Self-regulate
 - Manage conflict
 - Problem solve



Evaluation of Family Foundations (FF) Program*

Approach

- Four-year evaluation project, looking at services for expectant couples (mostly white, middle class).
 - 4 prenatal sessions and 4 postnatal sessions (two hours each)
- Theoretically driven by co-parenting research.
- Focus on relationship skills, including:
 - Emotional self-management
 - Conflict management
 - Problem solving
 - Communication
 - Mutual support strategies to foster joint parenting

*See Feinberg et al, *Effects of Family Foundations on Parents and Children* (2010)



FF Evaluation Results

- Between pre-test and post-test, the intervention group (compared to control) reported:
 - More positive co-parenting.
 - Lower levels of maternal depression and anxiety.
 - Lower levels of negative father-child interaction.
 - Infants were more easily soothed.
 - These effects were stronger for parents with less education.



Parents & Children Together (PACT) Evaluation*

Approach

- Evaluation study
 - 4 federally-funded Responsible Fatherhood programs.
 - 2 federally-funded Healthy Marriage programs.
- Some programs provided services once a week, others in more intensive daily format.
- Healthy relationship curricula focused on education and communication skill building.
- Parenting curricula focused on the role of fathers, child development, nurturing parenting, and communication skills.

*See US DHHS/ACF/OPRE, *Parents and Children Together (PACT) Evaluation (2011-2019)*



PACT Results

- Services **did** affect
(based on self-reports):
 - Fathers' engagement in age appropriate activities with their children.
 - Fathers' nurturing behavior with their children.
- Services **did not** affect:
 - Co-parenting.
 - Father non-residence may have come into play.
 - Fathers' mental health/well-being.
 - Fathers' contact with their children.



Recommendations from: FF and PACT Evaluations

- Fatherhood programs could:
 - Integrate relationship skill building into parenting and workforce development services.
 - Focus on the Family Foundations skills (famfound.net).
 - Include “soft skills” training.*
 - ❖ E.g., communication, dependability, self-control
 - Add or expand legal and mediation services.
 - Help fathers with custody.
 - Help fathers co-parent more effectively.
 - Include mothers in more program activities.

*See NRFC, *Preparing Fathers for Workforce Success* (2017)



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The Intersection of Parenting and Relationship Skills: Fathers as Teachers and Role Models for their Children



Shawndi Johnson

Program Manager Dads Matter
Children's Bureau of Southern California

July 18th, 2018





Children's Bureau of Southern California: Dads Matter Program

- Since 1904, Children's Bureau of Southern California has been a major player in the fight to protect vulnerable children.
- Mission:
 - Protecting vulnerable children through **prevention, treatment, and advocacy.**
- In 2015, received a federal responsible fatherhood grant from OFA to serve at-risk fathers in Orange County.
- The Dads Matter program serves fathers and father figures by providing parenting workshops, financial/economic stability, job training, case management, and other support services.





Supporting Father Involvement Intervention (SFI)

- Children's Bureau of Southern California utilizes the evidence-based curriculum SFI as the foundation of their Dads Matter program services.
- SFI was developed and tested by Drs. Carolyn and Philip Cowan, Drs. Kyle and Marsha Pruett, and distributed in California by Dept. of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention.
- Facilitators are generally mental health professionals.



Supporting Father Involvement Intervention (SFI)

“A father’s involvement does not operate to the exclusion of a mother’s relationship with the child. Fathering is uniquely different from mothering and equally beneficial to the child’s development.”

The Supporting Father Involvement Program
supportingfatherinvolvementsfi.com



SFI Focuses on Five Family Domains

1. Individual characteristics of the parents
2. Parent-child relationship quality
3. Couple or co-parenting relationship quality
4. Generational expectations and family patterns
5. Balance between social support for family and external influences



SFI's Approach To Co-Parenting

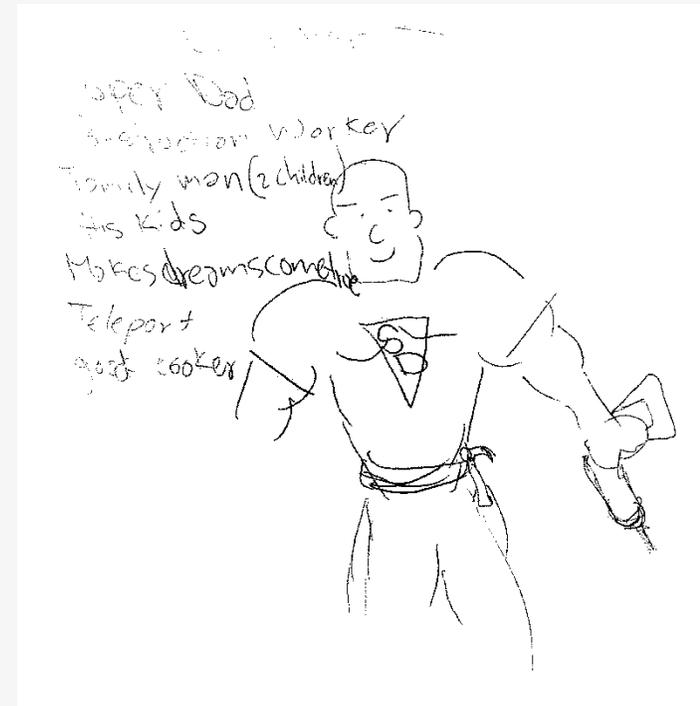
- Use of 2 group facilitators
- Couples/co-parent classes with specific activities
- Dads only classes with specific activities
- Integration weeks to practice hands-on skills





Parenting Skills: Because They (Dads) Matter

- Whatever stage they are at on their fatherhood journey, fathers need to know that they matter - and also why they matter.
- Parenting skill activities:
 - Superhero Dad (see image)
 - Show Your Love video & discussion
 - Quality vs. Quantity
 - Parenting differences
 - Parenting styles
 - How well do you know your kids?





Relationship Skills: What's at Stake?



- Relationship quality can predict father involvement.
- May need to provide different information for different types of fathers.
- Relationship skill activities:
 - Practicing “I” statements
 - Through Our Eyes video & discussion
 - Non-sexual ways of touching
 - Positive approaches to communication
- Why it matters:
 - Reduce stress and conflict
 - Improve communication
 - Increase overall involvement



Building Bridges

- We don't ask our fathers and participants to go outside of their strengths.
- We do ask them to look at situations from other angles, remain focused on the destination and, whenever possible, take a breath.
- We talk with them about how parenting and relationship skills are different, but also have common factors.
 - For example:
 - Not blaming
 - Creating structure
 - Focusing on healthy life habits
 - Choosing roles based on strengths not gender
 - Communicating positively

Big Chuck

- Big Chuck is a father in Dads Matter and custodial parent to his two kids. His goal is to one day have his family back together.
 - His wife may want the same thing, but is in a different state of readiness.
- At SFI group, he mentioned that he invited his wife to attend church as a family. She arrived late, talking loud, calling him names.
 - He began to fall into the same old patterns - breathing faster, ready to start yelling too - he was in reaction mode.



Big Chuck cont.



- Instead of reacting, he happened to glance at his daughter. He stopped, took a breath, and didn't go with his first impulse.
 - Was it easy, no.
 - Was it worth it? Yes, the look on his daughters face was priceless.
- They made it to the service that morning, a little late, but they made it. It wasn't a perfect day, but it sure was better than the alternative.
 - Chuck and his wife have planned another family outing.
 - We hope they continue to take steps in the right direction.



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The Intersection of Parenting and Relationship Skills: Fathers as Teachers and Role Models for their Children



Carter Patterson

Program Manager
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UIH Family Partners, NJ

July 18th, 2018





UIH Family Partners

Operation Fatherhood

- We help fathers find jobs, gain independence, improve skills, and become better fathers.
- State funded program through New Jersey Office of Child Support Services for 20+ years.
- We provide services for 500+ fathers a year:
 - Workforce development
 - Parenting and relationship skills education
 - Child support modification
 - Family reunification
 - Wrap around case management

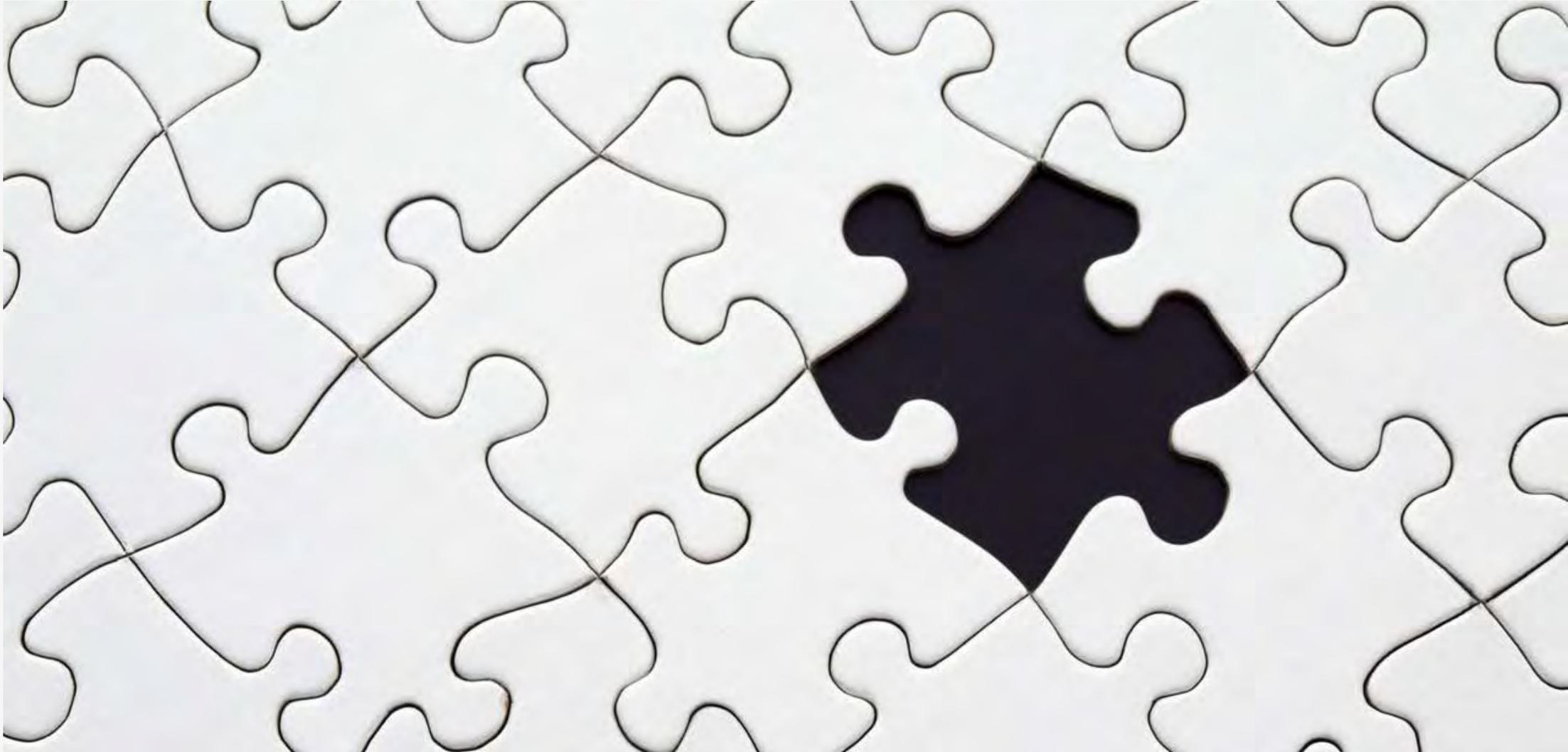


"Empowering men, fathers and families to achieve self-sufficiency"



Increased Father Involvement: A Key Component to Child/Family Outcomes

The Missing Piece





Famous Quote



“The primary task of every civilization is to teach the young men to be fathers.”

Margaret Mead



Foundation Moments and Positive Outcomes for Children

Memories that last a lifetime can be priceless gifts for our children, from the innocence of childhood through the challenges of becoming responsible adults.



- Help dads understand ways to create family memories and foundation moments for their children.
- Stress the importance of creating positive moments and long-term parental bonds.



Curriculum Groups

24/7 Dad (NFI)

We help fathers learn to be nurturing, involved, responsible fathers with a focus on:

- Self-awareness
- Caring for self
- Fathering knowledge and skills
- Parenting skills
- Relationship skills

Topics discussed include:

- Family history
- Meaning of being a man
- Child development stages
- Communication skills
- Father's role





Addressing Parenting and Relationship Skills: Bringing It All Together



- Showing and Handling Feelings
- Communication Skills
- The Father's Role
- Discipline
- Children's Growth
- Working with Mom and Co-Parenting
- Dealing with Anger
- Sex, Love and Relationships
- Fun with the Kids



Program Outcomes

Pre- and post-test responses during six-week program for young fathers at New Jersey Training School for Boys showed increases in fathers' awareness and understanding of:



- Relationship skills
- Fathering knowledge and skills
- Parenting skills
- Caring for self



Changed Fathers = Changed Families





Celebrating and Enhancing Fatherhood





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Q&A



Please enter any questions in the Q&A box at the bottom-right of your screen.



Contact Us

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- Help@FatherhoodGov.Info
- Comments, questions, suggestions for future webinar topics, information or resources that you recommend.

NRFCC



Today's Presenters



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Thank you for attending today's webinar

The Intersection of Parenting and Relationship Skills

Please provide your feedback through our [Survey Monkey Evaluation Form](#)

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