Promoting Positive Father Engagement through an Innovative Parenting Program for Nonresident African American Fathers & Sons

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Background

• About 27% of all fathers (15-44) reported having at least one biological, nonresident child under age 18.

• 24% of African American men reported at least one nonresident child compared to 8% of White men.

• 67% of African American children will live apart from their biological father at some point in their life.

• An increase in nonresident father involvement with their children is evident in current family trends.

• White nonresident fathers more likely to provide economically than other racial/ethnic groups. African American nonresident fathers engage in different ways.

• African American fathers likely to stay involved with children with no romantic relationship with mom.

(Amato et al, 2009; CDC, 2013; Edin et al., 2010; King & Sobolewski, 2006; NCFMR, 2014)
**Evidence-Based Strategies**

- **Final Level of Evidence:** Well-designed and implemented intervention programs in randomized controlled trials, preferably conducted in community settings, which produce sizable, sustained benefits to participants or society.

- **Promising Level:** The Fathers and Sons Program
  - Single community site vs. multiple site implementation
  - Quasi-experimental vs. experimental design
  - Replication needed to confirm successful findings
  - Long-term outcomes needed
  - Findings must be generalized in effectiveness tests
  - New 5-year funding from NICHD/NIH
  - Implementation effectiveness tests
Fathers and Sons CBPR Input Chart

Steering Committee: CBOs, Health Dept., UM-SPH

- Literature Review & Community Expertise
- Intervention Groups
  - N = 5
- Focus Groups
  - N = 8
Theory of Reason Action: Elicitation Interviews

Focus Group Composition

- 2 Nonresident Father
- 2 Nonresident Son
- 2 Mother Groups
- 2 Family Groups

A total of 77 participants
Intervention Content Areas

- Diversity among families
- Personal relationships & responsibilities
  - parental monitoring, role modeling, racial socialization, culture & history, culture & health
- Parent-child communication
  - general & risky behaviors
- Social support – within & outside family
- Enhance parenting & refusal skills

Intervention Curriculum

- 15 sessions over 2-months
- 2 times per week
  - Total 45 total contact hours
    - Intervention sessions (32h)
    - Homework (9h)
    - Community events (4h)
  - One 4-month booster session
Be Proud of You!

Think about your Strengths

Recognize your contributions to society!

Learn about your culture
Know your cultural roots. . .

Learn from the past to build for the future
Recruitment Goal & Participation Rate

- Recruitment goal = 300 families
- 287 families participated
  - 158 Intervention families
    - Response rate = 85.4%
    - 77.2% of fathers and 79.6% of sons attended 11+ sessions
  - 129 Comparison group families
    - Response rate = 69.4%
- Overall response rate = 77.4%
Recruitment & Retention Strategies
Defining Nonresident Fathers

- *Father: Self-identified* African American / Black, biological fathers of 8-12 year old boys in intervention.

- *Nonresident*: sons did not sleep-over at fathers’ home more than half the time.

- *Nonresident fathers’ characteristics:*
  - Nonresident to some children
  - Resident to other children
  - Marital status
  - Living arrangements with sons
Recruitment Strategies

- Schools best recruitment resource
- Recruited through mothers
  - Mothers must consent for sons as custodial parent
  - Mothers identified nonresident biological fathers
- Invited fathers to participate separately
- Held family orientation meetings before program
- Engaged community partners working with families
- Implemented at convenient locations and times
- Used brochures, flyers, media, word of mouth
- Provided financial incentives
Retention Strategies

• Provided meals for evening programming.
• Provided transportation when needed.
• Encouraged sons to assume program leadership roles.
• Sent weekly reminder notices of meetings.
• Made follow-up calls for missed meetings.
• Sent birthday and holiday cards from project.
• Provided $5 incremental increases for completing each evaluation questionnaire + bonus for all questionnaires.
• Maintained memory books throughout program.
• Collected feedback forms at end of every session.
• Session 6 is a focus group to obtain input for adjustments.
• Received graduation certificate at end of program.
• Intervention Replication Studies
  • CDC YVPC Fathers & Sons Study
  • Ruth Mott Foundation Fathers & Sons Physical Activity & Nutrition Study
  ❑ RCT Chicago Replication Study

❑ The Fathers & Sons Policy Study
❑ The Fathers & Sons Clinical Translation Study
❑ Evidence-Based National Model
Thank You