



Engaging Fathers Suggested Resources



ARTICLES

Bouchard, G., Lee, C., Asgary, V., & Pelletier, L. (2007). Fathers' motivation for involvement with their children: A self-determination theory perspective. *Fathering: A Journal of Theory, Research, and Practice about Men as Fathers*, 5(1), 25-41.

https://selfdeterminationtheory.org/SDT/documents/2007_BouchardLeeAsgaryPelletier_F.pdf

This study examined the involvement of 205 French-speaking fathers with their preschool children. Findings include that fathers who perceived that their partners had confidence in their parenting abilities were more motivated and confident in their parenting and more involved with their children.

Im, J., Parlakian, R., & Sanchez, S. (2007). Understanding the influence of culture on caregiving practices . . . from the inside out. *Young Children*, 62(5), 65-67.

Caregivers of young children make choices about everything from feeding children to behavioral expectations based on cultural beliefs. This article proposes that caregivers would benefit from discussing the beliefs that underlie their approaches to reach a shared understanding and, eventually, an appreciation for different perspectives.

Kaiser, B., & Rasminsky, J. S. (2003). Opening the culture door. *Young Children*, 58(4), 53-56.

Collaborating with families to understand their culture and children is important for early childhood educators. This article defines culture and discusses aspects related to it that are relevant for early learning professionals.

Miller, W., & Maiter, S. (2008, October). Fatherhood and culture: Moving beyond stereotypical understandings. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 17, 279-300.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233135976_Fatherhood_and_Culture_Moving_Beyond_Stereotypical_Understandingsh

This article addresses the need for an expanded understanding of the roles of fathers from different cultures as Western countries become more diverse.

Suggested Resources

Palkovitz, R. (2007). Challenges to modeling dynamics in a developmental understanding of father-child relationships. *Journal of Applied Developmental Science*, 11, 190-195.

This article identifies factors that are always important in father-child relationships, such as relationship harmony and emotional climate, and the challenges of creating theories about father involvement.

Roggman, L. A., Boyce, L. K., Cook, G. A., & Cook, J. (2002). Getting dads involved: Predictors of father involvement in Early Head Start and with their children. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 23(1-2), 62-78.

Research from this study shows that fathers who most need support to become involved with their children also are the most challenging for Early Head Start staff to engage. Identifying possible predictors of father involvement when children enroll in early learning programs may enhance efforts to individualize ways to promote fathers' engagement.

U.S. Cooperative Extension Service, eXtension Foundation. (2015, September). *Supporting dads in child care: Let's play!* <http://articles.extension.org/pages/66930/supporting-dads-in-child-care:-lets-play>

This article shares ways that early childhood educators can help strengthen the bond between fathers and their young children, especially by encouraging father-child play. The article emphasizes the needs of fathers who are new to parenting or who serve in the military and may spend significant time away from their children.

GUIDES AND REPORTS

Doherty, W. J., Kouneski, E. F., & Erickson, M. F. (1998). *Responsible fathering: An overview and conceptual framework*. Report prepared for Administration for Children and Families and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
<https://www.webharvest.gov/peth04/20041015182929/http://www.fatherhood.hhs.gov/concept.htm>

This report looks at what *responsible fathering* means and arrives at the conclusion that fathers are influenced more than mothers by factors in the family and community. This has implications for interventions proposed by fathering programs.

Suggested Resources

Spielberger, J., Gouvea, M., Dinata, E., & Fleischman, L. (2015). *Father involvement in early childhood development: A brief report from the Palm Beach County Family Study*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Father%20Involvement%20in%20Early%20Childhood%20Development_final.pdf

Results from this study strengthen the view that fathers in low-income families are involved in their young children's lives. These fathers and other male caregivers also showed interest in programs and services that would expand their parenting skills and knowledge of child development.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2013). *Head Start father engagement birth to five programming guide*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/docs/seven-step-father-engagement-guide.pdf>

This 66-page guide on engaging fathers in Head Start focuses on making father engagement an integral part of programs' parent, family, and community work. The guide includes research on the importance of fathers for child development and family well-being, alignment with the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework, and a toolkit with activities and questionnaires to help programs with father engagement practices.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2011). *The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting family engagement and school readiness, from prenatal to age 8*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/policy-im/pfce-framework.pdf>

This guide for staff and families in Head Start and Early Head Start programs outlines ways to promote parent and family engagement throughout programs to lead to positive outcomes for children and families. Uses of the guide include program-wide planning, continuous improvement efforts, professional development, program design and management, and program approaches to providing services.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. (2006, December 15). "Friendly FACES"—FACES findings: New research on Head Start outcomes and program quality. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/friendly-faces-faces-findings-new-research-on-head-start-outcomes-and>

This report gives a snapshot of Head Start outcomes and program quality based on results of the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES), which collected data on a nationally representative sample of Head Start programs during three different years, including 2003.

Suggested Resources

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families Head Start Bureau. (2004, June). *Building blocks for father involvement: Building block 1: Appreciating how fathers give children a head start*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/building-blocks-01-appreciating-how-fathers-give-children.pdf>

Part of five *Building Blocks for Father Involvement*, this document explores the unique contributions that fathers make to child development and supports Head Start efforts to engage fathers. Topics include: The impact of father involvement on child well-being and the challenge of fatherlessness.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (n.d.). *Fatherhood connection resource flash*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-engagement/article/fatherhood-connection-resource-flash>

This web page has quarterly newsletters suggesting ways for early childhood educators to apply father engagement practices. These resources are developed by the Office of Head Start's National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement.

BOOKS

Cowan, P., Cowan, C., Cohen, N., Pruett, M., & Pruett, K. (2008). Supporting fathers' engagement with their kids. In J. D. Berrick (Ed.), *Raising children: Emerging needs, modern risks, and social responses* (pp. 45-80). New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc.

This chapter in a book on policies to improve families' lives focuses on how fathers' positive relationships with their children enhances the well-being of their children and what factors impact those relationships. A recommendation for a program approach is based on a family systems model and places the couple's relationship in the middle of the intervention.

Pruett, K. D. (2000). *Fatherneed: Why father care is as essential as mother care for your child*. New York, NY: Free Press.

The author of this book shows why the different ways that fathers parent, as compared to mothers, are essential for children's physical, cognitive, and emotional development. This book draws on more than two decades of research and stories from families and recommends steps for engaged fathering.

Suggested Resources

Smith, J. A. (2009, June). *The daddy brain*. Berkeley, CA: The Greater Good.

http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/the_daddy_brain

This article presents scientists' findings that fatherhood changes men at the cellular level. It also highlights that fathers are key to children's well-being and provide specific care and play experiences that mothers typically do not.

VIDEOS

EarlyEdU. (2017). *Arrival at family child care* [Video file]. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/engaging-fathers-arrival-family-child-care>

An early childhood educator greets a father and child as they arrive at a family child care program. The educator asks the father and child questions, encourages their relationship, and listens to what they have to share.

EarlyEdU. (2017). *Volunteers in the classroom* [Video file].

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/engaging-fathers-volunteers-classroom>

A father volunteers in a Head Start classroom and interacts with his daughter. They explore the uses of pipe cleaner glasses and together put the child's art on a drying rack.

University of Washington, College of Education. (2016, September). *Helping fathers FIND their strengths* [Video file]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYdMGnBnR8k&feature=youtu.be>

A partnership between the University of Washington and Children's Home Society of Washington is the focus of this video. Their pilot study helps fathers in low-income families identify their strengths as parents through a video-coaching program called Filming Interactions to Nurture Development (FIND).

University of Washington, College of Education. (2016, September). *EDU Talks: Holly Schindler & Do Dads Matter?* [Video file]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QuNTp6RaRIM>

This presentation by Dr. Holly Schindler, assistant professor in early childhood and family studies at the University of Washington, highlights the important and changing roles of fathers and the historical lack of focus on fathers by those in the field of early learning. She describes a research project with Children's Home Society of Washington that encourages the parenting skills of fathers in low-income families.

Suggested Resources

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (n.d.). *Engaging fathers*. In Best Practices in Family and Community Engagement Video Series.
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/engaging-fathers>

This video focuses on the strategies that staff at Early Education Services in Brattleboro, Vermont, use to engage fathers in their children’s learning and development. In this Head Start program, fathers learn from one another and connect with each other.

For more information about this resource, please contact us:
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Parent, Family and Community Engagement

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