Goal: Improve the health of low income infants and children participating in the Kenosha WIC Program through the support and engagement of fathers.
Why fatherhood?

- Kenosha Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families
- Dr. Michael Lu: Where is the F in MCH?
- Benefits of father involvement

Where Is the F in MCH? Father Involvement in African American Families

Michael C. Lu, MD, MPH; Loreta Jones, MA; Melton J. Bond, PhD; Kynna Wright, PhD, MPH; Maitseney Pumptyang, MPH; Molly Maidenberg, MSW, MPH; Drew Jones, MPH; Craig Garfield, MD, MAPP; Diane L. Rowley, MD, MPH

Objective: To: 1) review the historical context and current profiles of father involvement in African American families; 2) identify barriers to, and supports of, involvement; 3) evaluate the effectiveness of father involvement programs; and 4) recommend directions for future research, programs, and policies.

Methods: Review of observational and intervention studies on father involvement.

Results: Several historical developments in slavery, declining employment for black men and increasing womanhood participation for black women, and welfare policies that favored single mothers led to father absence from African American families. Today, more than two thirds of Black infants are born to unmarried mothers. Even if unmarried fathers are actively involved initially, their involvement over time declines. We identified multiple barriers to, and supports of, father involvement at multiple levels. These levels include structural (e.g., human capital, attitudes and beliefs about parenting), interpersonal (e.g., the father’s relationships with the mother and maternal grandmother), neighborhoods and communities, high unemployment, and incarceration rates, cultural or societal (e.g., popular cultural perceptions of black fathers as unfavorable, stable, and institutionalized gender role), policy (e.g., Earned Income Tax Credit, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, child support enforcement), and life-course factors (e.g., father involvement in the child's childhood). We found strong evidence for success in several intervention programs (e.g., Reducing the Risk, Teen Outreach Program, and Children’s Aid Society - Gaines Program) designed to prevent formation of father-absent families, but less is known about the effectiveness of programs in encouraging greater father involvement because of a lack of rigorous research design and evaluation for most programs.

Conclusion: A multi-level, life-course approach is needed to strengthen the capacity of African American men to promote greater involvement in pregnancy and parenting as they become fathers.

Keywords: African American Fathers, Maternal Health, Child Health, Family

Historical Contexts and Current Profiles of Black Father Involvement

Father absence in Black families can be traced to several historical developments. The legacy of slavery played a
Wisconsin Partnership Planning & Program Development grant recipient

1. Tracking father involvement
2. Needs Assessment/focus groups
3. FL opportunities at WIC clinic
4. Research models
5. Mapping project
WIC Father Contacts: Time Period: 7/1/13 – 12/31/13
Number of visits = 1,386    Unduplicated: 993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of visit</th>
<th>FID</th>
<th>Dad by self or with mom</th>
<th>Schedule Appt only</th>
<th>Pick up only</th>
<th>Pick up and Contact</th>
<th>WIC appt (Preg)</th>
<th>WIC appt (Infant/Child)</th>
<th>Dad waits in waiting room</th>
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</table>
WIC Father Contact

Overview: 993 fathers visited the office 1,386 times (on average 1.4 visits)

Reason for WIC office Visit
• 37% Appointment for Infant or child
• 27% Check pick-up and Nutrition Session
• 21% Check pick-up only
• 7% waited in waiting room
• 6% WIC pregnancy apt
Data collection instrument: A 35-item pencil survey. All questions were closed ended.

Survey captured demographic information (e.g. race, age, marital status, employment status) family characteristics (e.g. number and age of children and living arrangements) fathering/parenting activities, information and service needs related to parenting and other areas (e.g. employment and health), and perceptions of the WIC program.

Survey data collection: February 14, 2014 to April 14, 2014
Number of completed and accepted surveys: N = 166
Eligibility: Fathers 18 years and older receiving services onsite

* adopted from a project sponsored by The Fatherhood Collaborative of San Mateo County.
Respondent Educational Status

- College degree or Associates degree: 14, 8.4%
- Some college, technical school, certificate program: 58, 34.9%
- High school diploma or GED: 68, 41%
- No high school diploma or equivalent: 25, 15.1%
**Respondent Employment Status**

- **Have a full-time job**: 72, 43.4%
- **Have a part-time job**: 18, 10.8%
- **Have more than one paid job**: 5, 3%
- **Have seasonal or temporary employment**: 11, 6.6%
- **Currently unemployed and not looking for work**: 9, 5.4%
- **Currently unemployed and looking for work**: 45, 27.1%
Do you have any of the following needs at this time? (Check all that apply)

- Food: 55, 33.1%
- Financial: 52, 31.3%
- Employment: 46, 27.7%
- Transportation: 29, 17.5%
- Health or medical care: 26, 15.7%
- Shelter/Housing: 17, 10.2%
- Child support assistance: 13, 7.8%
- Employment training: 11, 6.6%
- Smoking cessation program or classes: 9, 5.4%
- Family planning: 9, 5.4%
- Child custody assistance: 6, 3.6%
- Legal assistance: 5, 3%
- Other: 2, 1.2%
- Alcohol or drug abuse counseling: 1, 0.6%
What kind of support services do you need to help you become a better father?

- Jobs: 58, 34.9%
- Father-child activities: 49, 29.5%
- Job training: 32, 19.3%
- Parks and recreational activities: 31, 18.7%
- Role models: 27, 16.3%
- Parenting classes for fathers: 25, 15.1%
- Healthy meals/cooking classes: 22, 13.3%
- Health or medical care: 22, 13.3%
- Support groups for fathers: 18, 10.8%
- Better schools: 17, 10.2%
- Leaders: 15, 9%
- Churches: 14, 8.4%
- Shelter/housing: 14, 8.4%
- Less violence: 11, 6.6%
- Transportation: 11, 6.6%
- Legal assistance: 9, 5.4%
- Other: 9, 5.4%
- Anger management classes: 6, 3.6%
- Substance abuse services: 2, 1.2%
Focus Groups

David J. Pate, Jr.
Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

David J. Pate, Jr. is an Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Helen Bader School of Social Welfare. His fields of special interest are welfare reform policy; child support enforcement policy; fatherhood; domestic violence; and the intersection of race, gender, and poverty.

3. **Provide educational materials and services to fathers**

Many focus group participants wanted to learn more about infant needs, childrearing, child development, and father roles - "I wanna find out what I can do to become a good father" and "...I never had a father in my life at all. I never met him, never seen him. But, I want to be different with my kids. I want to be there for them. I want to be connected more. I don't want to be apart." While the needs assessment survey suggested that WIC fathers take on many roles and responsibilities in their families, focus group participants expressed interest in receiving information to take on more parental roles in their families. Creating YouTube videos for changing diapers and materials on what to read to your children were some examples.
Findings

• 100% of focus group participants and 98% of survey respondents identified multiple roles for themselves as fathers and are engaged with their children (e.g., spend time with children, play games, and talk).

• 78% of survey respondents live with at least one child.
Thirty-four respondents (20.5%) reported attending a support group, class or other program for parents; 129 (77.7%) did not.

The top three activities needing information:
- disciplining (49, 29.5%)
- taking care of a sick infant or child (48, 28.9%)
- handling temper tantrums (46, 27.7%)
FUN WITH FLAP JACKS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5TH
8:15-4:00PM

Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency
Upstairs in the Kitchen

HOW DOES YOUR DAD MAKE PANCAKES?

Join us for a day of pancake possibilities!

Our very own WIC dads will be flipping flapjacks upstairs in our kitchen.

Come sample the dads’ pancake creations & take home new ideas for a nutritious breakfast!

This institution is an equal opportunity employer & provider.
Based on needs assessment findings and literature reviews, the team developed a two-pronged approach for engaging fathers at the RKCAA.

**Increased Father Involvement at WIC Appointments & Activities**
- Encourage father/male role model attendance at WIC appointments & activities
- Develop positive relationships with fathers at WIC appointments

**Father Specific Education & Support**
- Provide connections to peers and community
- Increase funding for father specific programming and services
- Implement the Nurturing Father’s Program at the RKCAA
- Provide wraparound services to fathers involved in RKCAA programming
Baby steps to implementation

• WPP grant ends 12/2014
• Sharmain volunteers, trained as a facilitator
• United Way grant
• Hire Father Involvement Specialist (10 hrs/wk)
• Wisconsin DHS: Minority Health grant
• Integrate position to include some WIC responsibilities: FT position 10/2015– WIC & Community Liaison
Father Involvement: Recruitment

Attention ALL Kenosha WIC Dads!!

Join us for weekly discussions using the Nurturing Fathers Program

Are you looking to be more involved in a positive and consistent way?

Do you need information on father involvement with your children?

Are you struggling to find resources to better support you as a father?

Are you having child support or custody issues?

Are you expecting a child or are you a new dad?

Contact: Sharmain Harris, WIC & Community Liaison
RKCAA-Kenosha WIC Office: 2000 – 63rd Street
Telephone: (262) 657.0840 Ext. 229
E-mail: sharris@rkcaa.org

Building & Strengthening Families through Father Involvement.
This institution is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider.
What is the Nurturing Fathers Program

It is a 13 week evidence based curriculum created to cultivate and support the attitudes and skills for male nurturance, hoping to benefit men, woman and children in family relationships.

We currently have 2 ½ hour sessions twice a week.
# Nurturing Fathers

- Grant expectations
- Class descriptions
- Daddy Day Out events

## Table of Contents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>The Roots of Fathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Self-Nurturing Skills I: Fathering “The Little Boy Within”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Self-Nurturing Skills II: The Power To Meet My Own Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>The World of Feelings and Male Nurturance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>The Power To Nurture: Fathering without Violence or Fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>Overcoming Barriers to Nurturing Fathering: Anger, Alcohol/Other Substances, and Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>Discipline and Fun &amp; Games</td>
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<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>Playshop: Fun &amp; Games for Fathers and Their Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>Nurturing Relationships I: Fathering Sons / Fathering Daughters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>Nurturing Relationships II: Teamwork between Father and Spouse/Co-parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>A Time and Place for Fathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>Healing the Father Wound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>Graduation Ceremony and Closing Activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Added Incentives for fathers

- Gift Cards
- Free occasional meals
- Child Support Services
- Employment assistance
- Referrals to other Social Services agencies
- Volunteer opportunities
- Free admission to Community Events
- Peer support

YMCA-MILWAUKEE BUCKS GAME- ZOO-MUSEUM-WATERPARKS-PARKS
Community Linkages & Support

- The local Newspaper
- Child Support Services
- Employment support
- Referrals to other Social Services agencies
- Volunteer opportunities
- Probation and Parole & Criminal Court Judges
- Kenosha Unified School District
# Father engagement in WIC

## Strategy: Develop positive relationships with fathers/male role models at WIC appointments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>Anticipated Success</th>
<th>Measure of Success</th>
<th>Source of Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue to encourage male role model attendance at appointments (father, step father, grandpa, uncle)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>WIC staff</td>
<td>Increased father/male role model attendance at WIC appointments</td>
<td># fathers that attend WIC appointments</td>
<td>ROSIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ask father to help check the child's weight and height and hold the child for iron (Hemoglobin) and blood lead testing.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Health Screener</td>
<td>Fathers report feeling engaged at WIC appointments and activities</td>
<td># fathers completing annual survey</td>
<td>Annual survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Actively engage father by speaking directly to him. Ask him if he has any questions or concerns. Actively engage father in health and diet assessment questions/conversation.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Nutrition staff</td>
<td>Fathers report feeling respected at WIC appointments and activities</td>
<td># fathers completing annual survey</td>
<td>Annual survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve father in setting a goal for next visit</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Nutrition staff</td>
<td>Fathers report feeling engaged at WIC appointments and activities</td>
<td># fathers completing annual survey</td>
<td>Annual survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Strategy: Provide father/male role model connections to peers and community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>Anticipated Success</th>
<th>Measure of Success</th>
<th>Source of Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host family events (with focus on recruiting fathers) – Open House, Healthy eating, etc.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>WIC staff, WIC father(s)</td>
<td>Increased father/male role model attendance at WIC appointments and activities</td>
<td># fathers/male role models attending club/ advisory groups</td>
<td>Attendance sheets/ registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify local father(s) to help recruit other fathers to attend WIC-hosted activities</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>WIC staff, WIC father(s)</td>
<td>Increased father/male role model attendance at WIC appointments and activities</td>
<td># male role models attending WIC activities</td>
<td>ROSIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a Dad’s Club or Father Advisory group – Fathers can assist with outreach and recruitment</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>WIC staff</td>
<td>Increased father/male role model attendance at WIC appointments and activities</td>
<td># fathers that attend WIC appointments</td>
<td>ROSIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redesign magnetic wall to include section targeting fathers</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>WIC Director</td>
<td>Increased father/male role model attendance at WIC appointments and activities</td>
<td># fathers that attend WIC appointments</td>
<td>ROSIE</td>
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</table>
Father Involvement at WIC appointments
Father friendly environment

- Posters
- Brochures through the State WIC office
Next steps

Nurturing Fathers classes continue

1:1 monthly coaching for 1st time dads (modeled after our Fit Families program)

2016 - 2017 trainings/classes & events
ROSIE – WI WIC

• Tracking & Nurturing Fathers participation

• fiy = yes / fin = no
Kenosha WIC Father Involvement Initiative:

1. Strengthen families through father engagement and involvement
2. Improve the health and well-being of WIC women, infants, children and families.

• What will the data show?