

PARENTING

(Josh McDowell research 2006 to present)

“ESSAY: A DAD’S (AND MOM’S) HISTORY OF HIP-HOP”

“...there are more than 24 million American children growing up without their fathers.”

“Between 1960 and 1970, the percentage of children living in a household without a father increased by 40%; in the following decade, it increased by the same percentage. By 2004, two-thirds (65.8%) of all black children were being raised in the absence of their biological father. More than any other cultural expression, hip-hop communicates that experience.”

(Martha Bayles and Jamin Warren, “Essay: A Dad’s (and Mom’s) History of Hip-Hop,” Father Facts, 5th Edition, National Fatherhood Initiative, 2007, p14)

“FAMILY STRUCTURE”

“Following decades of decline, the proportion of children living with both parents has remained relatively stable over the last decade, dropping modestly from 69 percent in 1995 to 67 percent in 2006.”

(“Family Structure,” Child Trends Data Bank,
<http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/whatsNew.cfm>)

“A DOWNSIDE TO DAY CARE?”

“A new study, published in the March/April 2007 issue of Child Development, has concluded that kids who spend more than two years regularly attending day-care centers show slightly more behavioral problems in kindergarten through sixth grade than those that do not. Are There Long-Term Effects of Early Child Care? is drawn from data collected by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development, which includes 1,364 children at 10 sites around the country who have been tracked since birth (and are now aged between 15 and 16). NEWSWEEK’s Julie Scelfo spoke with Margaret Burchinal, a psychologist at the University of North Carolina and a co-author of the study about what these finds mean for parents of young children.”

“ Excerpts:

- The more time in day care, the more likely these kids showed problem behaviors.”

“And you found that kids who never go to day care are the most well-behaved?”

“Yes, they show the fewest problem behaviors.”

“How did children with nannies fare?”

“We saw no relationship between the amount of child care—whether by a nanny, a family member, or a babysitter—to how the child behaved in kindergarten through 6th grade. Interestingly, we also found that staying home with mom was statistically neither an asset nor a detriment in terms of academic outcomes and behaviors.”

“But your findings say high-quality parenting is an even better predictor of a child’s behavior and academic performance than their child-care setting. What makes parenting high quality?”

“The degree to which parents enjoy being with children, are responsive and sensitive to children, talk to their children, and expose their children to ideas is the strongest predictor of children’s academic success as well as their behavior at school.”

- “Parenting matters far more than any single decision about child care—or all the decisions put together. Quality parenting predicts school success.”

(Julie Scelfo, “A Downside to Day Care?” Newsweek, March 26, 2007;
www.msnbc.msn.com/id/17805282/site/newsweek)

“CNN NEWS”

“1950 39% of American women unmarried
2005 51% of American women unmarried”

(CNN News, January 16, 2007; 11:56 a.m. MST)

“ESSAY: MEDIA & THE STATE OF FATHERHOOD”

“We’ve entered a post-abandonment generation; the initial shock of father absence that dawned during the out-of-wedlock bonanza of the 90s has dulled.”

“After NFI’s discovery that dads were 8 times more likely to be shown in a negative light when compared to moms, critics have pointed to the loss of dad as a respectable television icon.”

(Jamin Warren, “Essay: Media & The State of Fatherhood,” Father Facts, 5th Edition, National Fatherhood Initiative, 2007, p11)

“EXCERPTS FROM REVOLUTIONARY PARENTING”

“There is rarely any recognition of the fact that the child is a special gift, and that raising children is a responsibility assigned to parents by God. Thus parenting bears an innate importance and an irrefutable connection to parenting principles furnished by God.”

“God has designed every human being as a unique individual, thereby eliminating the possibility of effective one-size-fits-all parenting strategies.”

“God’s Word provides the perspective and the marching orders on how to raise a young person. The goal of such child-rearing is to raise children who make their faith in, and relationship with God their highest priority in life, and proceed to live as intentional and devoted servants of God.”

“Spiritual champions... individuals who have embraced Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord; accept the Bible as truth and as the guide for life; and seek to live in obedience to its principles and in search of ways to ever deepen their relationships with God.”

“Churches alone do not and cannot have much influence on children. The greatest influence a church may have in affecting children is by impacting their parents.”

“In assessing the impact of churches, schools, and parents, it is the latter that have the most dramatic personal influence on a child. We also learned that most parents are not prepared to be effective in their role... They seek individuals and organizations to help them handle the burden of shaping their child’s life in positive ways.”

“They are all too happy to pass off their kids to paid professionals – teachers, pastors, babysitters, coaches.”

“Help the average parent make the most of their window of opportunity...”

“First, it is important to raise a child to know, love, and serve God with all his or her heart, mind strength, and soul. We are spiritual people and must be raised with our spiritual needs and potential in mind.”

“Second, a parent does not have complete control of the shaping of their child, but they do have substantial influence on who the child becomes.”

“There was tremendous consistency between what the parents said they did and what their spiritually transformed children remembered experiencing.”

“Parenting is the front lines of the spiritual battle that defines our daily existence and purpose.”

“I [George Barna] have become convinced that the spiritual war occurring in individual lives is pretty much won or lost by the age of thirteen.”

“This crisis is seriously undermining the potential of our next generation to become spiritual champions.”

(George Barna, “Excerpt from *Revolutionary Parenting*,” BarnaBooks, an imprint of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2007, www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=Excerpt&ProductID=272)

“FATHERHOOD”

“Men today are far more involved with their families than they have been at virtually any other time in the last century,’ says Michael Kimmel, author of *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*. In the late ‘70s, sociologists found the average dad spent about a third as much time with his kids as the average mom did. By ‘00, that was up to three-fourths. The number of stay-at-home fathers has tripled in the past 10 years. The Census counts less than 200,000, but those studying the phenomenon say it’s probably 10 times that number. Fathers’ style of parenting has changed, too. Men hug their kids more, help with homework more, tell kids they love them more. Or, as sociologist Scott Coltrane of the University of California, Riverside, says, “Fathers are beginning to look more like mothers.’ (Time 10/4/07)”

(Gary Foster, “The New Golden Rule,” *Religious Market Update*, (2007): 3)

“FATHERLESS HOMES NO LONGER ON RISE”

“The decades-long rise in father absence has stopped, the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) says in its fourth edition of “Father Facts,” which is being released today. From 1960 to 1996, the number of children who lived in homes without a father or a stepfather rose steadily, from 7 million to 20 million, the 182-page report said.”

“Since the mid-1990s, though, the number and proportion of children in father-absent homes has leveled off, while the number of children living with both parents has remained fairly constant.”

“Still, ‘there will be little reason to celebrate if fatherlessness merely levels off at historically high levels,’ wrote Mr. Horn, who is now assistant secretary for children and families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.”

“Among the findings in ‘Father Facts’:”

- “Thirty-four percent of children, or 24 million, live in homes without their biological fathers. This includes 66 percent of black children, 35 percent of Hispanic children and 27 percent of white children.”
- “A record 1.35 million unwed births were reported in 2000.”
- “Children who live apart from their biological fathers are, on average, at least two to three times more likely to be poor, suffer abuse, engage in criminal behavior and have emotional, health and behavioral problems compared with peers in married, biological or adoptive homes.”
- “Father love is as important as mother love in predicting the overall development of children and young adults, according to an analysis of 100 studies on parent-child relationships.”

- “The number of cohabiting partners with children has doubled, from 891,000 in 1990 to 1.7 million in 2000. Some 3.3 million children live in cohabiting households.”
- “Children who live with their mothers and boyfriends often experience behavioral problems and do worse in school than children who live with their married, biological parents.”
- “Twenty years after divorce, fewer than a third of sons and a fourth of daughters are close to their fathers, compared with 70 percent of children in intact families, according to a longitudinal study of 2,500 children by E. Mavis Hetherington.”
- “The best predictor of father presence is marriage.”
(Cheryl Wetzstein, “Fatherless homes no longer on rise.” The Washington Times. April 9,2002. <http://www.washtimes.com/culture/20020409-15728760.htm>)

“FATHERS: KEY TO THEIR CHILDREN’S FAITH”

“A rather obscure but important study conducted by the Swiss government in 1994 and published in 2000 revealed some astonishing facts with regard to the generational transmission of faith and religious values.”

“In short the study reveals that ‘It is the religious practice of the father of the family that, above all, determines the future attendance at or absence from church of the children.’”

“The study reported:”

“If both father and mother attend regularly, 33 percent of their children will end up as regular churchgoers, and 41 percent will end up attending irregularly. Only a quarter of their children will end up not practicing at all”

“If the father is irregular and mother regular, only 3 percent of the children will subsequently become regulars themselves, while a further 59 percent will become irregulars. Thirty-eight percent will be lost.”

“If the father is non-practicing and mother regular, only 2 percent of children will become regular worshippers, and 37 percent will attend irregularly. Over 60 percent of their children will be lost completely to the church!”

“Let us look at the figures the other way round. What happens if the father is regular but the mother irregular or non-practicing? Extraordinarily, the percentage of children becoming regular goes up from 33 percent to 38 percent with the irregular mother and to 44 percent with the non-practicing, as if loyalty to father’s commitment grows in proportion to mother’s laxity or indifference to religion.”

“In short, if a father does not go to church, no matter how faithful his wife’s devotions, only one child in 50 will become a regular worshipper. If a father does go regularly, regardless of the

practice of the mother, between two-thirds and three-quarters of their children will become churchgoers (regular and irregular).”

(S. Michael Craven, “Fathers: The Greatest Influence,” © 2007, <http://www.crosswalk.com/spirituallife/men/1402532/page1>)

“FOSTER-PARENT ABUSE”

“A study based on Illinois Department of Children & Family Services and Minnesota Department of Human Services data shows a third of foster-parent molestation perpetrators engaged in homosexuality with their foster-children. Both states permit homosexual foster-parents.”

(*The Foster Letter*: Religious Market Update, Gary D. Foster Consulting, September 10, 2006 [Christian Post 9/3/06]: 4).

“IN EUROPE, UNMARRIED PARENTS ON RISE”

“Reflecting different social, religious, and economic traditions that have shaped the 25 countries in the European Union (EU), the number of births outside marriage varies widely from one end of the Continent to the other. In Sweden, the figure is 56 percent. In Greece it is 4 percent. In between come France with 48 percent, Britain at 42 percent and Germany at 28 percent, according to EU’s official statistics branch, Eurostat.”

(Peter Ford, “In Europe, Unmarried Parents on Rise,” Christian Science Monitor, April 17, 2006, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0417/p01s03-woeu.html>)

“PARENTS’ FIGHTING HAS LONG-TERM IMPACT ON KIDS”

“Two new studies suggest that even moderate amounts of parental conflict can wreak havoc on the lives of children, disrupting their sleep and causing negative feelings in their day-to-day lives.”

“Kids even feel distressed when the parents give each other the ‘silent treatment’ in the hope their children won’t notice they’re angry, said Patrick T. Davies, a professor of psychology at the University of Rochester and lead researcher on one of the studies.”

“‘These kids are still able to pick up on the fact that their parents are unhappy with each other,’ Davies said, ‘and it comes through when you ask them questions about how they feel: they report feeling more fearful, more angry, more sad.’”

“In recent years, researchers have been studying how parental interaction affects children, with an eye toward finding the tipping point where problems in a marriage begin to disrupt the emotional lives of children.”

“One of the new studies looked at sleep. Researchers at Auburn University in Alabama and Brown University in Providence, R.I., studied 54 healthy 8- and 9-year-old children, interviewing both them and their parents about their family lives. The children also wore a watch-like device called an Actigraph, which tracks their sleep patterns by monitoring their movements.”

“The findings appear in the January/February issue of *Child Development*.”

(Randy Dotinga, “Parents’ Fighting Has Long-Term Impact on Kids,” Yahoo News, February 2006, www.news.yahoo.com)

“PARENTS”

“Parents are taking a more active role in the lives of their children than they did 10 years ago, reports the Census Bureau. In ’04, 47% of teens had restrictions on TV viewing, up from 40% in ’94. 68% of 3-5 year-olds had TV viewing limits in ’04 vs. 54% in ’94. Kids’ 6-11 viewing restrictions grew from 60% to 71%. In ’04 74% of kids younger than 6 were praised by their mother or father 3 or more times a day. The same was true for 54% of children 6-11 and 40% of 12-17-year-olds. Children 1-2 were read to an average of 7.8 times in the previous week, while those 3-5 were read to an average of 6.8 times. The percentage of children participating in lessons, such as music, dance, language, computers, or religion, went up for 6-11-year olds, from 24% in ’94 to 33% in ’04. (Census Bureau News 10/31/07)”

(Gary Foster, “Parents,” *Religious Market Update*, (2007): 1)

“SURVEY REVEALS CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUNG PEOPLE”

“When asked to identify the most significant or challenging issues facing their teenagers, parents listed peer pressure (42%), performance in school (16%), substance abuse (16%), and behavioral issues (15%). The only other issues mentioned by at least 5% of teenagers’ parents were values development (6%), college choices and acceptance (5%), attitude (5%), and media use (5%). Challenges related to their teen’s faith were listed by only 3% parents.”

“When asked to identify the most significant or challenging issues facing their children under the age of 13, school performance topped the list (26%) along with peer pressure (24%). The other most common issues were behavioral challenges (10%), media use (6%), attitudes (6%), family-related struggles (5%), health-related struggles (5%), and issues related to their maturation (5%). Challenges pertaining to their faith were mentioned by only 3% of parents.”

“Parents were then given a list of possible challenges their children might face, and asked to indicate how significant that issue is for their children. Of the 13 issues posed to parents, the most pressing issues for teenagers were deemed to be not having enough money (45% of parents said that was a ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ significant issue to their teenager); feeling misunderstood by their family (43%); struggling with their self-image (40%); not owning the latest technology (37%); not wearing the ‘right’ clothing (33%); and not feeling accepted by their peers (32%).”

“Among the parents of children younger than 13, by far the most serious issues were feeling misunderstood by their family (listed by 41% of pre-teen parents as a significant issue in the minds of their children); being made fun of by their peers (32%); struggling with their self-image (26%); and not feeling accepted by their peers (26%).”

“The percentage of young people plagued by peer pressure issues more than doubles once a child reaches high school.”

(“Survey Reveals Challenges Faced by Young People,” Barna Update, September 10, 2007; barna.org)

“SURVEY: TEENS LOOK TO PARENTS FOR SEX INFORMATION”

“The online survey included more than 1,100 teens aged 14-17 and more than 1,100 moms of teens in the same age range. Participants live in Canada, and the survey comes from the nonprofit Canadian Association for Adolescent Health.”

“Among the findings:”

“—Nearly three in 10 teens age 14-17 report being sexually active.”

“—At age 15, one in five was sexually active.”

“—Nearly half (45 percent) were sexually active by 17.”

“—Teens have had three partners, on average, since becoming sexually active.”

“Most teens regard parents as role models and sources of information on sexual health, the survey shows.”

“— 63 percent of teens called their parents a major source of information on sex and sexual health.”

“— 43 percent of teens said their parents are their most useful and valuable source of information.”

“— 45 percent of teens called their parents their role models. Fewer teens said their role models were starts (about 15 percent) or friends (32 percent).”

“A quarter of teens said they didn’t know how to talk about sexual health issues with their parents. Half of teens said they haven’t talked about sexual health with their parents.”

“Nearly all teens surveyed (90 percent) claimed to be ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ knowledgeable about sex and sexual health. But they didn’t necessarily know much about sexually transmitted diseases.”

“— One in 20 teens had been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection.”

“—A quarter didn’t use any protection against STDs the last time they had sex.”

“— Half of those who used condoms the last time they had sex didn’t check to see if the condom was still intact after use.”

“—Only one in five had heard of human papillomavirus (HPV), the most common sexually transmitted infection, and few knew that HPV can (but doesn’t always) lead to cervical cancer.”

“—More than half of sexually active female teens hadn’t gotten a Pap test in the last three years.”

(Miranda Hitti, ‘Survey: Teens Look to Parents for Sex Information,’ Fox News.com, February 24, 2006, www.foxnews.com/printer_friendly_story/0,3566,185952,00.html)

“WHAT IS AMERICA’S MOST SERIOUS SOCIAL PROBLEM?”

“America faces many urgent challenges. Crime. Poverty. Education. And many others. Each is important. But many leading scholars now conclude that our nation’s single most important problem is the weakening of marriage.”

- “Today, more than one of every three children is born to a never-married mother.”
- “About 45 percent of marriages today end in divorce.”
- “Only about 60 percent of U.S. children are living with their own biological (or adoptive) married parents.”

“A large body of social science research indicates that healthy, married-parent families are an optimal environment for promoting the well-being of children. Children raised by both biological parents are less likely than children raised in single- or step-parent families to be poor, to drop out of school, to have difficulty finding a job, to become teen parents or to experience emotional or behavioral problems.”

*National Council
on Family Relations, the nation’s largest organization of family therapists*

“Children in two-parent families generally had access to more financial resources and greater amounts of parental time. They also were more likely to participate in extracurricular activities, progress more steadily at school, and have more supervision over their activities such as television watching. The presence of two parents continues to be one of the most important factors in children’s lives.”

U.S. Census Bureau

(Institute for American Values, Center for Marriage and Families, Fact Sheet No 1, February, 2006)
