

“*H*ELP THE  
CHILDREN.  
FIX THE  
SYSTEM.”

REPRINT  
FROM

*Penn  
Law  
Journal*

February,  
1992

Volume  
XXVII

Number  
One

*by Ralph Smith*

PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S NETWORK

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## "HELP THE CHILDREN. FIX THE SYSTEM."

Ralph Smith



Ralph Smith

*Ralph Smith's involvement with the children of Philadelphia has a history — through his service as chief of staff in the School District and most recently as special advisor to the Mayor of Philadelphia on children's issues. Out of this service, Professor Smith identified the need for a system-wide examination of how, societally, we care for our young people.*

*Thus was born the Philadelphia Children's Network. Working as Executive Director of the Children's Network, Professor Smith continues his groundbreaking work encouraging this system-wide audit, analysis, and redesign of the supports we provide to children.*

*Last semester, Professor Smith received a three-year grant from Warren V. Musser and the Warren V. Musser Foundation to continue his efforts. At a lunch in honor of his generous recognition of Professor Smith's work, Mr. Musser praised the novel endeavors of the Philadelphia Children's Network, noting: "The future of our city depends on efforts like these."*

*Here, in a rewrite of his remarks in acceptance of Mr. Musser's gift, Professor Smith describes the Philadelphia Children's Network, its goals, and its aspirations.*

I.  
"Help the children. Fix the system." This slogan captures the mission and spirit of the Philadelphia Children's Network, a non-profit organization started in the spring of 1990. The "children" are the preschool children in Philadelphia and cities like Philadelphia across the nation. The "system" is that crazy quilt of agencies and organizations, programs and policies which purport to serve those children.

That this nation's children need help becomes increasingly clear as each new report comes replete with the grim statistics on teen pregnancy and parenting (a fifteen-year high in 1990), infant mortality (worse in urban America than in many of the so-called developing countries), early school failure (one out of four first graders being failed), and school dropouts (more than 50 percent for urban youth). At the same time, the experts confirm that more is known now than ever before about what works. Successful programs, they tell us, must be preventative, comprehensive, community-based, family-focused, child-centered, empowering and culturally sensitive. And, while not nearly as much as it should, this nation is spending billions of dollars on these child-serving agencies and programs. Moreover, every survey disputes the notion that Americans have grown callous and indifferent to children. We do care.

So this question arises: *How can we care so much, know so much, spend so much and, yet, accomplish so little, leaving so many children in such dire straits for so long as to compromise their chances to develop into fully functional and productive adults, parents and citizens?*

Seeking the answers to that question has propelled the Philadelphia Children's Network's work and agenda.

Children are in trouble because their families are in trouble. And the

systems put in place to support families and to protect children when families fail do not work and cannot work. Contrary to the clear evidence of research, experience and intuition, today's child-serving systems are fragmented and not holistic, crisis-driven not pro-active, and child centered instead of being family-focused. Not surprisingly, these systems are ill-suited for the challenges posed by dysfunctional families and deteriorating communities. The inability of these systems to achieve their goals is "neither temporary nor aberrant, but chronic and structurally determined." *Permanently Failing Organizations*, Marshall W. Meyer and Lynne G. Tucker (Sage Publications, 1989). What is presented, in brief, is a state of "permanent failure" — persistence without performance.

Faced with system failure, some yearn for divine intervention or charismatic leadership. Others become converts to a secular religion called privatization and still others place their faith in inter-sector "collaboratives" seeming to hope that whether by osmosis or contagion, mere association with the private sector or the universities will transform today's failures into tomorrow's successes.

By eschewing these strategies and opting to "fix the system", the Children's Network travels the path less chosen and thus still upon uncharted terrain. Along the way, much has been learned. Not all of that learning can be translated into cognizable lessons. And even those lessons when distilled often prove to be ephemeral, illusive, contingent and conditional. And, yet, there is enough there to commend the enterprise — enough of a trail to justify continued pursuit.

## II.

The Children's Network's public sector system change agenda is organized around three focus objectives (two "substantive" and one "strategic") geared to improving the lot and life chances of young children. The substantive objectives are: promoting school readiness and re-engaging young fathers with their children. The strategic objective is that of fostering coordination within and among the child-serving systems. All three objectives are sought to be advanced by developing local capacity, insisting upon stake-holder involvement, ensuring accountability, and promoting collaboration (another of the "C" words now very much in vogue).

### *School Readiness*

School-ready children is the first of the national education goals. According to President Bush and the nation's governors, the nation's children should be school-ready by the year 2000. *America 2000: The President's Education Summit with Governors, Joint Statement* (1989). Getting there from where we are today will be no small task. In schools across the nation, far too many children come to school weary survivors of the journey from birth to school, bringing with them undetected, undiagnosed and untreated physical ailments, vision and hearing impairments, developmental delays and emotional scars. It is true that schools and teachers must be held accountable for teaching the students they have and not just those they would like to have. Nevertheless, their jobs could be eased significantly if the primary health care, day care, early education, parent training and family support systems worked to ensure a child ready to learn and caregivers prepared to support that learning.

### *Father Re-engagement*

All available evidence suggests that children in single-parent mother-only families are at considerable risk of poverty and the consequent diminution of life chances. And yet, a review of existing family policies and programs would reveal an operating assumption

that fathers who are unwilling or unable to provide financial support for their children are worthless and dispensable. Having yielded successive generations of father-free families, this assumption is being re-visited. Without disputing the potential and viability of any of the other interventions being explored, the Philadelphia Children's Network has committed to a strategy of seeking to afford young children the benefit of both parents. How to encourage, support and enable fathers to become and remain engaged in caring about and for their children is a worthy challenge for an enlightened public policy.

### *Coordination of Systems*

Services for children and families are either claim-based, shame-based, or both. What's more, once the claim is made and the shame endured, service delivery mechanisms constitute a maze to be negotiated by the astute, the persistent, and the lucky. This is no accident. Service delivery is fragmented because the systems are fragmented. The major programs are run by different federal agencies and state departments and financed by different funding streams and operationalized by different, inconsistent and sometimes conflicting regulatory regimes. Like the myth of the General Strike, "system integration" may be the ideal never to be achieved (and perhaps far more attractive as aspiration than as reality). However, it should be possible to promote coherence by designing child-serving systems characterized by a high degree of coordination, meaning that all the various services are included (comprehensive), properly sequenced (compatible), and delivered with persistent high quality (cooperative) relationships. *Coordinating Human Services*, Michael Aiken et al. (Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1975). Accomplishing this as part of an overall transformation of a public housing agency is a task as daunting as it is essential.

## III.

The early returns are coming in. Progress is being made in all three areas. As importantly there are concrete examples of collaborative work among agencies previously estranged or simply indifferent to each other's mission and concerns.

The Children's Network is actively involved in building local capacity to expand Headstart and Headstart-type early education programs with "wrap-around" services such as day care and family literacy; in connecting newborns to primary health care providers and health insurance options; and in enabling family day care homes to provide developmentally appropriate care for children and training and support to parents and other primary care-givers. The peer support group, intensive case management, and "fatherhood" curriculum with its values clarification activities are contributing demonstrably to "developing" young fathers into caring parents. And a consensus has emerged around a conceptual design for a coordinated family support system — a design which provides both a comprehensive service delivery model and a structure sufficiently formal, durable, and pervasive as to move inter-agency and inter-sector collaboration beyond adhocery.

As noted above, while it is far too early to offer definitive "findings" there have been learnings, some of which have found expression in the tenets comprising the "philosophy" of the Children's Network.

- The system is part of the problem; therefore, changing the system must be part of the solution.

- All aspects of the child and youth-serving system should be accountable for making measurable progress toward the twin goals of improving service quality and accessibility and of producing healthy, school-ready children.

- Children and youth exist within their families and communities. Dysfunctional families and communities produce dysfunctional children. Therefore, development of healthy children

requires improved family functioning, promotion of family self-sufficiency, and nurturing of supportive neighborhoods.

- Successful programs require stakeholder involvement and support. By bringing these individuals together for consideration and resolution of specific issues, a much needed process of education, information exchange, and mutual understanding to improve effectiveness and efficiency is put in motion.

- Viable strategies for system change are best developed in the crucible of practice, where the issues of scale, appropriateness, centrality to mission, and replicability may be addressed and resolved.

- Public-sector system change is difficult but by no means impossible. Absence of traditional incentives, highly delineated agency boundaries, and other conditions common to the public sector are challenges to be confronted and overcome.

#### IV.

A closing note on what was really the first of all lessons. Conceptually as well as programmatically, system change is hard work. Public sector system change is harder still. These systems are like elephants — slow to change.

Trainers shackle young elephants with heavy chains to deeply imbedded stakes. In that way the elephant learns to stay in its place. Older elephants never try to leave even though they have the strength to pull the stake and move beyond. Their conditioning limits their movement with only a small metal bracelet around their foot — attached to nothing.

*Teaching the Elephant to Dance, The Manager's Guide to Empowering Change*, p. 2, James Belasco (Plume Books 1989).

A few years ago I had a vivid recollection of watching a childhood favorite, a television series on submarine

warfare. I recall wondering why, having seen the oncoming torpedo, the captain simply did not turn the battleship out of its path. I learned the answer in due course. But it was not until I started working to promote system change that I *understood* just how difficult it would have been to turn that battleship out of harm's way.

Purporting to seek (and even more impertinently, to promote and facilitate) public sector system change as a non-profit, non-government agency is to adopt a strategy having far more skeptics than supporters. There are certainly enough weeks of frustration and days of despair to confirm the skeptics' worst prognostications. But there are also the moments when progress though slow is discernible, when cynics are exposed as recovering believers willing to suspend disbelief "just one more time." These are the moments when the mind's eye can see the battleship slowly turning and, on its deck, elephants poised to dance.



*At a luncheon in honor of his three-year gift of \$50,000 a year to the Law School in support of Ralph Smith's work, Warren V. Musser, left, joins Professor Smith and Dean Diver.*

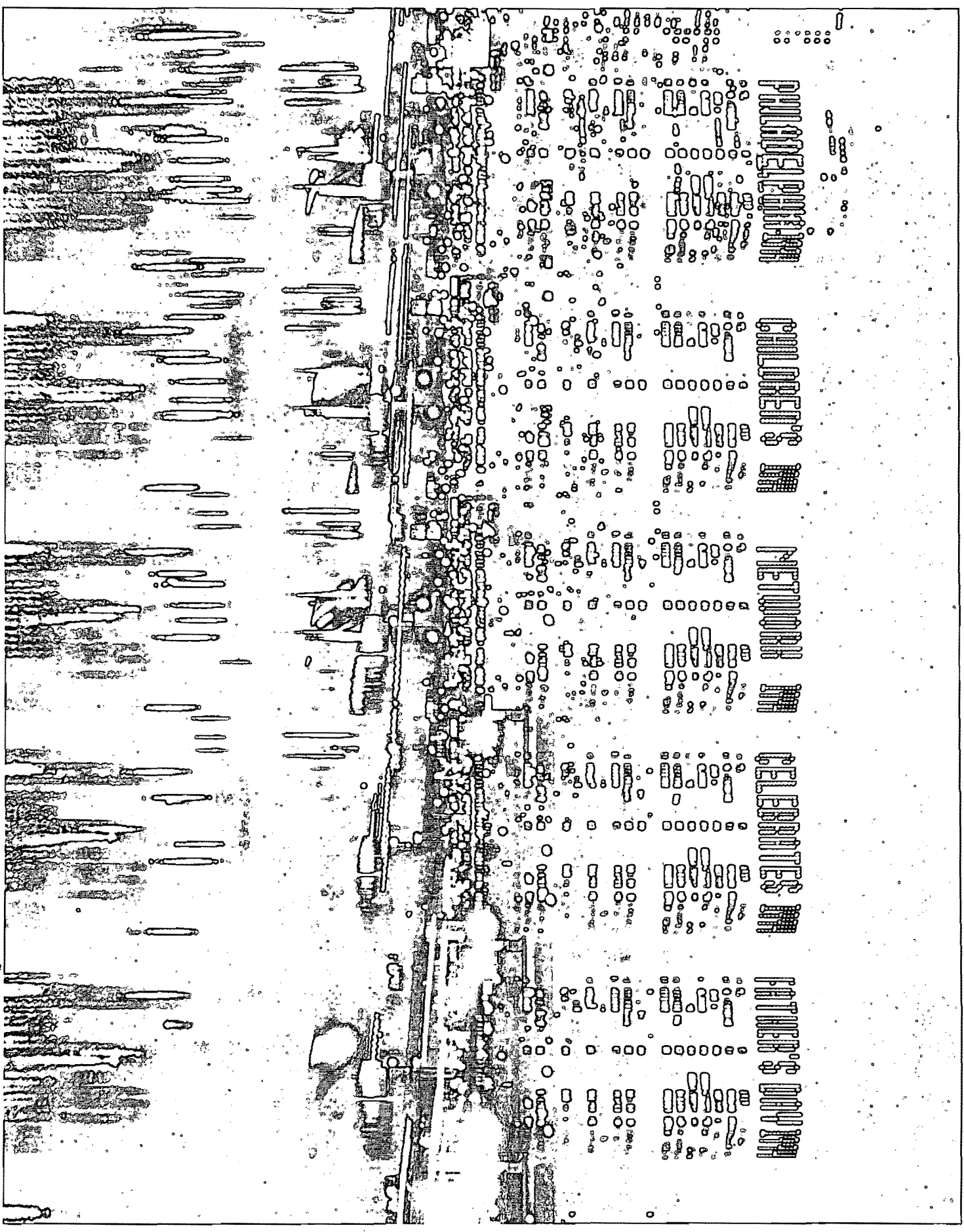
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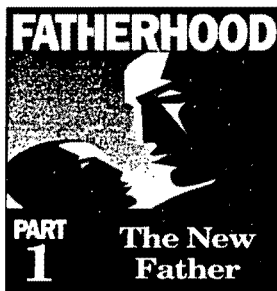
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 1994

PHILADELPHIA DAILY  
**NEWS**  
THE PEOPLE PAPER

'90s  
**CRISIS**



*Facing up to fatherhood: Pages 8-9*



# Father figures in: Reclaiming the loss

by Leigh Jackson

Daily News Staff Writer

## About the series

For years, the unwritten role of a father seemed simple: Be strong, be silent, work hard, protect your family.

Things changed. Women started bringing home the bacon themselves. Married couples struggled with anger and unhappiness — then found quick resolution through divorce or abandonment. Single-parenthood became less stigmatized — and in some cases was encouraged.

In some neighborhoods, fathering a child out of wedlock became a badge of honor — living proof you were a man, even though you were just 15.

Society is paying the price — with fatherless homes, where poverty and troubled children are more likely to exist.

Now experts, organizations and men themselves are re-examining the importance of responsible fathering.

In a three-part series beginning today, the Daily News looks at initiatives that encourage better fathering. The series, part of the Philadelphia Fathers Day campaign spearheaded by Philadelphia Children's Network, also looks at a few good men — struggling against circumstances to be good fathers.

**TODAY:** The New Father. More men are taking an active role in raising their kids, and mainstream society has recognized the importance of having fathers in the house.

**TOMORROW:** Learning To Be a Parent. The Philadelphia Children's Network is helping couples to parent, even though they no longer have an intimate relationship.

**FRIDAY:** The Economic Impact of Fathering. Having a job doesn't necessarily make you a better father, the experts say, but it helps. And for many men, finding and keeping a job is very difficult. We're also devoting One of Us, the daily feature that highlights individual achievement, to outstanding dads. See Page 12. ■

There were times in Thomas Henry's life when he would rather run some ball under a late-afternoon sun than stay at home and change his daughter's diapers.

As a 19-year-old in tiny Georgetown, Del., Henry took reluctantly to his responsibilities as an unwed father.

Just graduated from high school, he panicked when his girlfriend of three years told him she was pregnant.

"My way of dealing with it was just to run away," he recalls now.

So Henry joined the Army in 1964. He married his girlfriend a year later and left the Army in 1966. He moved to Philadelphia, got a job and learned how to be a family man.

The lessons did not come easily. Henry struggled to get to know his baby daughter, to balance a family budget and to juggle family, classes and work.

"It was overwhelming," he recalled. "I was spending more time on the corner and playing basketball than at home."

After marriage counseling, some soul-searching and hard work, Henry found success. He and his wife, Beverly, have been married 28 years, and he enjoys close relationships with his daughter Tracie, 29, and son Tashi, 23.

### A national movement

Talking to the neighborhood guys as he struggled, Henry realized his problems were shared by other men.

He began counseling his friends informally and has turned his street-wise advice into a career.

Henry, 48, runs the Responsive Fathers Project of the Philadelphia Children's Network, which is helping 47 young unwed African-American men learn to be effective, involved fathers.

His work mirrors a national movement to reclaim fathers lost, according to experts, by the unraveling of family commitments in the sexual revolution of the 1960s, by social scientists' emphasis on women alone and by public policies that, for example, discourage fathers from marrying their girlfriends on public assistance.

Programs like Henry's have sprouted around the country to help fathers find meaningful

## Across U.S., groups spring up to help Dad stay close to home



BOB LARAMIE/DAILY NEWS

Program director Thomas Henry (center left), with daughter Tracie (left), son Tashi and niece Sherkia Dean: "What we want to see are loving, involved fathers."

roles in their families' lives.

Early studies suggest these programs have helped increase fathers' involvement. But it is too soon to tell whether that has yielded benefits like improved academic achievement for children.

Many programs focus on young, urban fathers. But nationally, the

movement crosses racial, ethnic and economic lines, as psychologists and social scientists who work with fathers say the similarities often outnumber the differences.

For example, programs exist in San Antonio, Texas, for Latino men; in Minneapolis for Hmong

men; and in Columbia, Md., for men who range widely in age, race and income. In Cleveland, Charles A. Ballard runs a program for primarily African-American fathers, with plans to expand to eight cities.

The new fathers' movement is not just grass-roots. Policy wonks are on board, too.

Next month, Vice President Al Gore will moderate a conference on fathers' roles in Nashville, Tenn. The Baltimore-based National Fatherhood Initiative, a new program to improve the public image of fathers, also plans a summit.

In Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania plans a National Center on Fathers and Families, a policy development and research program to work with the Philadelphia Children's Network.

"People are finally recognizing the importance of families," says Ballard, of the Cleveland program. "And you can't recognize the importance of families without talking about fathers."

### Fathers are missing

The interest in fathers arises from what experts call a national family crisis.

About half of all children today and about 60 percent of children born this decade will not spend their childhoods with their fathers, according to Wade F. Horn, the director of the National Fatherhood Initiative. "That is unprecedented in the history of civilization," he said.

For African-American children, See **FATHERS** Next Page

## Man to man: Be there for

**A** part of me really believes that we make too much of the traditional fathering role.

I get tired of hearing about how unbalanced and warped we can become as individuals and as a society when we don't have a "right relationship" with our fathers.

I want to scoff at psychologists like John Bradshaw who reduce grown men to tears with all this mythic crap about how we'll never be able to get on with our lives until we can resolve our father/child conflicts.

All that psychobabble sounds bogus to me. I don't buy that business about how our fathers' failure to protect us in childhood leaves gaping wounds we can never heal unless we forgive and are forgiven by them.

As far as I'm concerned, the best thing we can do for our "inner child" is to keep those fad psychologists away from him.

And this new school of psychotherapy that

helps people recall under hypnosis how their fathers abused them 30 years ago has more to do with building beach houses for therapists than building self-esteem for clients.

Even the "crisis" of female-headed households seems grossly overdone to me.

We make it sound like the very fabric of our society is coming unraveled because so many so-called dads are just sperm donors.

Everything from a rash of random violence to a rise in homosexuality gets blamed on the fathers who weren't there when we needed them or the ones who were when we wish they weren't.

I don't doubt for an instant that we will ultimately pay dearly for these missing men.

But I keep coming back to this question:

If bad fathers deserve so much blame for what's wrong with America, why don't good fathers get more credit for what's right.

I'm not just saying this. It's what I really think. But what I really feel is not nearly so clear.

I'm much more conflicted and confused in my gut than I am in my head.

I find myself wondering what might have been if I had had a more "traditional" relationship with my own father.

I can't recall spending a night under the same







**Dennis Robinson of West Philadelphia with 2½-month-old daughter Qwaya: "I knew I had to be strong and not run away from the situation."**

Daily News photo by Yong Kim

## FATHERS

Continued from Previous Page  
the numbers are grimmest: About 66 percent of black children do not live with their fathers.

But the situation for other groups is also bad: About 29 percent of white children do not live with their dads. For Latino children, it's 25.9 percent, and for Asian American children 10.6 percent.

The effects of fatherlessness,

combined with poverty, may be devastating, experts say.

Children of fatherless families are more likely to wind up poor than children in two-parent families. And the poor are more likely to suffer emotional and developmental problems, to drop out of high school, abuse alcohol or drugs, and perpetuate the cycle by having children as teen-agers.

Better-off families aren't immune. About as many children lose their fathers through di-

orce or separation as children born out of wedlock, says Horn.

Increasingly, Horn also sees evidence of the psychologically absent father, the wealthier dad who forgoes time with his children for, say, a squash game and a Scotch with friends.

Says Horn: "There has been a separation between the idea of manhood and the ideal of responsible and committed fatherhood. Today to be a man, to be a good man, doesn't necessarily translate

into being a good father."

### How society hurt

In few eras did the chasm between manhood and involved fathering yawn widest than during the 1950s: Men earned the income, women reared the children.

With the 1960s and 1970s, say experts, other developments further complicated men's roles.

Among the poor, public policies gave conflicting signals — helping single women to keep their financial independence and inadvertently discouraging legal bonds with their boyfriends.

These policies effectively drove fathers underground, says Ralph Smith, who heads the Philadelphia Children's Network.

"A lot of men are not absent," he says. "They're very present in the lives of their children, but because of the way we've arranged social service systems, their presence cannot be acknowledged."

The women's movement also emphasized independence — sometimes to the exclusion of men. And the sexual revolution saw men — and women — further loosen family bonds.

As the women's movement prompted women to redefine their family roles, men have done so, too.

But the fatherhood movement does not intend to undermine single women who successfully raise their children. Indeed, evidence suggests that children with one competent parent are less likely to exhibit criminal behavior than children with two parents in conflict, says Joan McCord, a Temple University Professor of Criminal Justice.

# them for your sake, too

roof with him. Except for Sunday dinners after church and a few Phillies games, we did very little together.

This is not a sad story. My "mom" stepped right in and took over when her sister died 48 years ago. We never missed a beat.

It was like hitting the lottery. We had everything. My father always worked and always helped out financially.

I've still never met another child who was loved as lavishly as my mom loved us.

And there was something about having a father, even one who lived eight blocks away, that made me feel even more special.

He was a good man and, from a distance, a good role model. A wild night for him was to have a second beer before the Phillies game ended.

I never knew him to go away on a long vacation when we were growing up, even though he had the money. And when he retired to the seashore after climbing ladders for 40 years at the Navy Yard, I was thrilled for him.

But I never wanted to be like him. Because he cheated himself out of something that seems so basic to me.

I never had to be an absentee father. I was

blessed to live with my daughter and even my granddaughter.

I can't imagine having the option of living with my children and deciding not to.

So even though I loved him and feel he loved me, I know I'll never understand how my father did it.

My wife says I should have asked him. And I know I had the right to.

I just never figured out how to do that without sounding like I was accusing him of abandoning me. I've never felt that way.

In fact, I've always felt he was there for me even though he wasn't there with me.

It's just that so much happens in the life of a child and when you miss a little, you miss a lot.

I never knew how much he missed until I got to be a father. It's the most important title I've ever held.

That's why I felt such an overwhelming sadness for him when he died.

I'm not trying to make "traditional" fatherhood to be more than it is.

It's a role that needs redefining at a time when

See SMITH Page 21

## MORE INFO FOR DADS

For more information on fathering and fatherhood programs, contact:

**Philadelphia Children's Network**  
Box 59119  
Philadelphia, Pa., 19102  
215-686-3910

**The National Fatherhood Initiative**  
600 Eden Road, Building E  
Lancaster, Pa., 17601  
717-581-8860  
or 1-800-790-DADS

**Father's Day Rally Committee**  
2221 N. Broad St.  
Philadelphia, Pa., 19122  
215-978-1411

**Concerned Black Men**  
7200 N. 21st St.  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19138  
215-276-2260



## FATHERS

Continued from Page 9

not run away from the situation," he said. He and his fiancée Veronica Jenkins, 21, plan to return to school next year. "I'm going to finish school and take care of her and my daughter."

Studies suggest that fathers make a difference in children's lives whether or not they are in the home. So Avance, like other programs throughout the country, places little emphasis on whether couples get married.

"That's frosting on the cake," said Henry. "What we want to see are loving, involved fathers."

Ballard's National Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Development in Cleveland may be the exception.

For Ballard, who himself became a father in his teens, marriage is the goal for his charges. Or if not marriage, abstinence.

According to a recent study, his approach has its successes. Less than 25 percent of the men in his

program between 1982 and 1990 had second children.

### Mixed messages to men

While the effort to include men, particularly young men, in their children's lives seems universally applauded, psychologist and writer Brad Sachs says men still get "tremendously mixed messages" about being child-oriented.

Programs like the Marriott International Corp.'s family medical leave policy for both fathers and mothers are still rare.

And men who participate in such programs or take nontraditional, nurturing roles are looked at askance, says Sachs, who runs the Father Center, a counseling program in Columbia, Md.

"It's very threatening," he said. "Men tend to pay for their decisions in other ways, like career advancement."

Nevertheless, Sachs, like other experts, remains "cautiously optimistic."

"The barriers to paternal intimacy are much bigger than we imagine, but men are working on them." ■

## SMITH

Continued from Page 9

more and more of our children are growing up in non-traditional homes.

The real world ain't "Leave it to Beaver" with June in her freshly starched house dress setting Ward's dinner on the table just as he comes up the walk.

More and more men are going to have to be father figures to their grandchildren, nieces, nephews and even neighbors.

More mothers and aunts and big sisters will have to fill in the gaps the way my mom always did.

There's nothing new about the concept of the extended family. More than ever before, we're going to have to step up and keep this next generation of our children from being raised in institutions or on the street.

But it's a blessing to be involved in the life of a child. Any man who gets a chance to raise his own children and doesn't miss more than he'll ever know. ■

## ONE OF US

### To be best father he can be, he goes by the Book



E.W. FAIRCLOTH/DAILY NEWS

**ELLIOTT H. CURTIS**

**Age:** 44

**Lives:** Native of Brooklyn, now lives in Ambler, Montgomery County.

**Family:** Married 20 years to wife, Celeste; sons Jason, 15, and Jonathan, 5; daughter Lauren, 12.

**Job:** Sales consultant with The Institute of Scientific Information.

**Spiritual Job:** Member and deacon at Christian Stronghold Baptist Church, 46th Street and Lancaster Avenue, West Philadelphia.

**Secret to being a good father:** He lives by "the biblical principles I've been taught."

He tries to meet spiritual needs and emotional needs of his family.

"You can always feed a child and clothe them, but if they don't have the right morals, what good is it?"

**So what's his father, Clifford, like?** Quiet, introverted, but "very caring, loving and sensitive. He was always there for me." He was a deacon, as was his father.

**Advice to other fathers:** "I don't know any other way to breed success," than to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal savior. "I wasn't always a good father," but with biblical principles, "I have a better direction of where I'm going."

— Al Hunter

# PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

THE PEOPLE PAPER

## Upfront

# Society's woes multiply as dads vanish

**T**he invisible disaster of the disappearing dad has slowly taken a grip on America. Unlike a hurricane or a homeless person, the press can't interview him because he isn't there and doesn't care.

In today's image-driven world, therefore, it's a problem that doesn't exist. Thanks to a relatively new organization called the National Fatherhood Initiative, that may soon change.

In devastating detail, the organization documents the depth and scope of the problem. Everything in our society — not just the immediate family deprived of a father and husband — is affected by these invidious, invisible guys.

The increases in crime rates, academic failures, welfare case-loads, teen pregnancy, poverty, drug abuse, health costs and even tomorrow's divorce rates can all be traced, at least in part, to this national disaster. NFI challenges us all to ask one simple question: "What reduces crime, child poverty, teen pregnancy AND requires no new taxes?" Their simple answer — good fathers — sounds simplistic, but NFI is absolutely serious.

As NFI chairman Don Eberly says, "Committed fatherhood would do more to restore a normal childhood to every child, and dramatically reduce our nation's most costly social problems, than all of the pending legislation in America combined."

This faith in a simple solution to

inherently complex societal problems stems from NFI's detailed review of sociological data. That review tells us, for instance, that:

- The United States is the world's leader in fatherless families.
- Almost 40 percent of America's children will sleep in a house where their biological father does not live; more than half of all children who don't live with their father have never been in his home.

■ Almost 75 percent of American children living in single-parent families will experience poverty before they're teen-agers, compared with only 20 percent of two-parent kids.

■ Of 10 million women with children in father-absent homes, 67 percent get no child support.

■ Of the \$48 billion in court-ordered child-support payments, \$14 billion is paid. The difference — \$34 billion — is more than twice the cost of the federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children program.

Disappearing dads obviously help create child poverty. As NFI reports, the disaster merely starts there. Their absence also affects their children's performance and societal costs for:

### SCHOOLS

When compared with children living with both biological parents, twice as many children who

live with never-married or divorced mothers repeat grades, are expelled or suspended far more frequently and are chronic truants or dropouts.

■ Of college-age students from disrupted families, only 67 percent attended college as compared with 85 percent from intact families.

### HEALTH CARE

Children not living with both biological parents have two or three times the incidence of emotional or behavioral problems and experience more accidents and injuries.

■ Divorcé, the California Children of Divorce Study says, also leads to significant increases in depression within five years, produces achievement far below expectations 10 years later and within 15 years it causes difficulty in establishing future love relationships.

### CRIME

Violent criminals overwhelmingly are males who grew up without fathers and represent 60 percent of America's rapists, 72 percent of adolescent murderers, 70 percent of long-term prisoners.

■ Some 70 percent of juveniles in state reform institutions come from homes without both parents living together.

■ Girls also pay a heavy price as a result of disappearing dads. NFI

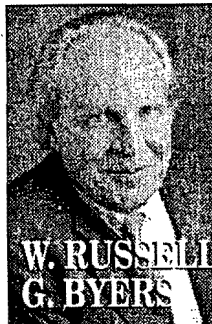
reports that girls who live in single-parent households will experience 53 percent more teen-age marriages; 111 percent more teen-age births, 164 percent more premarital births and 92 percent more marital breakups. Some will suggest these problems affect only minorities. That's a convenient excuse for ignoring reality and is dead wrong.

As NFI points out, "over the past three decades, the percentage of white children living with one parent almost tripled. Among blacks, it more than doubled."

Respected social researchers have also documented that the relationship between family structure and crime is so strong that controlling for family configuration erases the relationship between race and crime and between low income and crime.

"It's the disappearing daddies, stupid" must become the primary rallying cry for reform programs. Engaging the disappearing daddies, rather than the government, will control costs of health and welfare programs while reducing crime, divorce, depression and teen pregnancy.

As America plans its Father's Day celebrations, it seems timely to urge all those absent fathers to just come home, or at least visit your kids. You count. Your presence is vital to the future success of your children, their children, and your country. You must be there. You must care. ■



W. RUSSELL G. BYERS

# Unwed dads commit to the kids

## They get help from Responsive Fathers Program

by Leon Taylor

Daily News Staff Writer

With no job, no high school diploma and a baby on the way, Brian Thompson, 20, was faced with some frightening responsibilities when he first heard about the Responsive Fathers Program.

Yet, even with his bleak prospects, Thompson remained leery of joining a discussion group for young, unwed fathers.

"I didn't know what to expect," Thompson said of the program he now credits with helping him find new direction and improve his outlook.

"At first, I thought it would be just a bunch of nerdy guys sitting around talking about nerdy things. I didn't see how I was going to fit in — how this was going to benefit me."

But two things prompted Thompson to try the program.

One was the birth four months ago of his daughter, Shanae. The other was Thompson's deepening desire to provide a better life for his daughter than his own father had provided for him.

"I didn't have a Pop when I was coming up," Thompson explained. "He just left. . . . I just knew I had to find a way to be there for her."

Thompson, of School House Lane near Stokley Street in East Falls, is one of 47 young, unwed fathers who have joined Responsive Fathers, operated by the Philadelphia Children's Network. They meet every Monday night in the network's office at 16th and Arch streets to talk about the problems, successes and failures they encounter during the week.

But, as Thompson quickly discovered, this is far more than a pity party for nerds. "We're all learning how to deal with our problems," he said.

"Everybody pretty much goes through the same things. Somebody will bring up a problem they're having at home or on the job and we'll brainstorm and try to come up with ways to find a solution."

"The guys here will talk to you straight up. When you're wrong, they'll tell you you're wrong and then you have to deal with that," he said.



YONG KIM/DAILY NEWS

Brian Thompson with daughter Shanae, 4 months: "Learning the steps to be a responsible man"

Thompson said he was surprised at how much he had in common with others in the program.

"All the guys here, they're just regular guys. They're just trying to better themselves, like me."

The program offers services to help young fathers maintain or re-establish relationships with their children and their children's mothers. Those services include job training, counseling and placement; educational advancement opportunities; and co-parenting counseling sessions with the mothers.

The Philadelphia Children's Network is dedicated to improving the chances that today's at-risk children will grow to be responsible and productive adults and parents. The nonprofit network, founded in 1990, first tackled the problem by working with teen-age mothers — offering counseling, parenting and nutritional classes, and helping them negotiate the bureaucratic maze of city, state and federal assistance

programs.

But network staffers soon realized there were practically no programs for the unwed fathers.

In 1991, Philadelphia became one of six cities to pilot the national Young Unwed Fathers Project, designed and funded by Public/Private Ventures — a nonprofit, Philadelphia-based firm. Thus, the Responsive Fathers Program was born.

The program is a perfect fit for the children's network, said Responsive Fathers director Thomas Henry.

"It's a proven fact that children who grow up in single-parent households without stable contact with their fathers or other positive male role models are more susceptible to poverty, crime and failure within the system," Henry said.

"It's not enough just to make child-support payments. Fathers have to be role models for their children."

In many ways, Henry and case manager Greg L. Patton Sr. are role models for the

young fathers. Both Henry and Patton are former teen-age fathers who eventually married the mothers of their children.

An important aspect of the program is the co-parenting counseling, Henry said. The sessions are designed to improve communication between the parents so they can share the responsibility of raising their children — whether the father is in the household or not.

Thompson said he and his daughter's mother, Chrissy, 19, broke off their relationship two months ago — shortly after Shanae was born. Still, he sees Shanae several times a week and takes her home with him some weekends.

See DADS Page 12

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RALPH SMITH: Page 12

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## FATHERHOOD



### PART 2 Learning to be a Parent

For years, the unwritten role of a father seemed simple: Be strong, be silent, work hard, protect your family.

Things changed. Women started bringing home the bacon themselves. Married couples struggled with anger and unhappiness — then found quick resolution through divorce or abandonment. Single-parenthood became less stigmatized — and in some cases was encouraged.

In some neighborhoods, fathering a child out of wedlock became a badge of honor — living proof you were a man, even though you were just 15.

Society is paying the price — with father-

## About the series

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**TOMORROW:** The Economic Impact of Fathering. Having a job doesn't necessarily make you a better father, the experts say, but it helps. And for many men, finding and keeping a job is very difficult.

He gets dads involved

# Fathers are parents, too

by Rose DeWolf

Daily News Staff Writer

Ralph Smith hates talking about himself. He wants to talk about fathers ... not about his own father, not about his relationship with his 13-year-old son ... but about the issue of fathers.

Ralph Smith is a policy wonk. "When we talk about a national policy on children and families, we are usually talking about mothers and babies," says Smith. "I want to put fathers back on the radar screen."

As romantic as it might be to claim that Smith founded the Philadelphia Children's Network — which focuses on involving unmarried fathers in their children's lives — because his own parents divorced when he was 8, or because he so values family time with his wife and son in University City, that's not how it happened.

Smith, 45, did not find the issue of fathers. The issue found him.

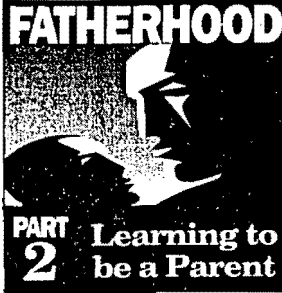
Smith says that he, his sister and two brothers grew up in California and the Virgin Islands with their mother, a school lunch cook, and their grandmother, an herbalist "with a bush tea for every ailment."

The Smith children were taught that community means helping. He recalls a "Sunday ritual" of bringing dinner to three elderly neighbors and helping them with such tasks as unsticking a drawer.

Smith grew up to go to Harvard Law School and came to Philadelphia in 1975 to teach corporate and securities law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

To be helpful to his new community, he also took on affirmative action cases for free.

In 1981, he recounts, "I felt I needed direct involvement with a



law firm to keep with all its complicated changes in securities law. So I looked for a law firm to work with one day a week."

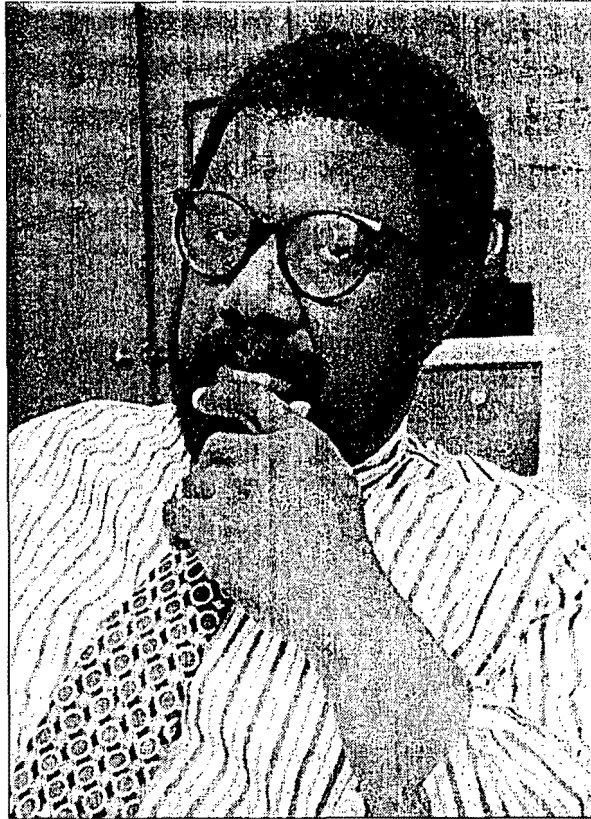
Tom Gilhool, then chief counsel of the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia, which was then involved in pushing for desegregation in Philadelphia schools, persuaded him to devote that one day to PILCOP instead. Smith was interested in desegregation. At Harvard, he'd written a paper opposing the most common deseg technique — busing black children to white neighborhoods.

"The only ones who benefit from that are transportation companies," he says. "I believe solutions have to focus on improving teaching."

So he gave up his securities law course, but to this day, continues to teach corporate law.

In 1987, Smith became chief of staff for Constance Clayton, Philadelphia superintendent of schools.

"The School District bought a piece of my contract with Penn," he explains, just as a foundation grant now pays Penn for the time he spends as executive director of the Children's Network. The



YONG KIM/DAILY NEWS

Ralph Smith: "I want to put fathers back on the radar screen"

School District also paid him a direct consulting fee.

Smith broke with Clayton and the School District in 1989 in a highly publicized flap over whether Smith's ally, Gilhool, whom Clayton disliked, should become a Philadelphia teacher.

Smith then transferred his non-Penn time to Mayor Wilson Goode, who asked him to get involved with children's issues.

That led to founding the non-profit Children's Network with staff that had left the School District with him.

"I knew that one out of four children in Philadelphia schools fails first grade — or first grade fails them," he says. And these children are most likely to later drop out.

A study showed that these

"early failures" tended to be those who start school with health or other problems, who live in public housing and who come from single-parent homes. "We ambitiously thought we'd work on all three problems," he recalls. "But we ended up concentrating on the last — and found that meant getting fathers involved."

And that's how Ralph Smith became an advocate for fathering, talking up the issue at Governors conferences, Foundation meetings and the like. He's also an adviser to a July conference on "The Role of Men in Children's Lives" that Vice President Al Gore is moderating. ■

## MORE INFO FOR DADS

For more information on fathering and fatherhood programs, contact:

**Philadelphia Children's Network**  
Box 59119

Philadelphia, Pa., 19102  
215-686-3910

**The National Fatherhood Initiative**  
600 Eden Road, Building E  
Lancaster, Pa., 17601  
717-581-8860  
or 1-800-790-DADS

**Father's Day Rally Committee**  
2221 N. Broad St.  
Philadelphia, Pa., 19122  
215-978-1411

**Concerned Black Men**  
7200 N. 21st St.  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19138  
215-276-2260

## DADS

Continued from Page 6

He said he remains hopeful that Chrissy will attend some sessions for the sake of the child.

Thompson got a new job through the program. He works as a security guard at a North Philadelphia construction site at 13th and Dauphin streets.

He also has been studying for his high school equivalency diploma and plans to open his own business someday.

Thompson is "learning the steps to be a responsible man," he said.

Aaron Peoples, 24, says the program helped he and his girlfriend, Michele Hainey, 21, stay together when she was pregnant with their 9-month-old daughter, Jasmin.

They are engaged and plan to

marry next summer. But there was a time during Hainey's pregnancy when they had stopped speaking to each other, even though they lived together.

Then, they started co-parenting sessions at Patton's insistence.

"If it hadn't been for that, I don't think we would still be together," Peoples said. "Greg said we had to talk to each other for the child's sake."

Peoples said the issue driving a wedge between them was his desire to continue hanging out with his friends. The co-parenting sessions have helped Peoples work on dividing his time so he spends more of it at home.

The couple, who live in a South-west Philadelphia house owned by Hainey's grandmother, also have a better handle on their "roles of responsibility" in the household, Peoples said.

"We've been working on everything from agreeing on baby sitters to disciplining Jasmin to who gets up at night to change her diapers," Peoples said.

Currently, Peoples and Hainey are between jobs.

Peoples most recently lost his job at a bakery for health reasons. He has also worked at Bell Atlantic and for the U.S. Postal Service. He is scheduled to take a test later this month for a full-time career assignment with the Postal Service.

In the meantime, Peoples said, Hainey gets food stamps and they survive by dipping into their modest nest egg.

Before entering the program, "it was like I was living day to day instead of looking toward the future," Peoples said. "Now, we both want to go back to school and we had even started a little college fund for Jasmin." ■

## ONE OF US

Family man loves his wife, teaches sons respect



G. LOIE GROSSMANN/DAILY NEWS

JOSEPH A. DEL PERCIO

Age: 44

Lives: South Philadelphia

Family: Married 26 years to wife, Patricia, 45; sons, Joseph, 24, and Nicholas, 21.

Education: Attended Bishop Neumann High School.

Job: SEPTA bus driver for 11 years.

Good hubby: Last month, his wife became inexplicably tired with headaches, and her own throat was choking her. Del Percio took her from doctor to doctor until the cause was found. A cancerous brain tumor was removed, and the prognosis is good.

Good father: Their sons respect their parents, their girlfriends and everyone else. They coach Little League. They have full-time and part-time jobs. They're both good with kids. "My wife and I set the example."

Family's best friend: The chiropractor, Dr. John de Sandis, who correctly diagnosed Patricia's condition. He's since called the family almost every day, even while on vacation, given them his home number and sent a fruit basket to Patricia. "I owe that doctor a lot ... He always wants to know how my wife's doing and how I'm doing."

— Marc Meltzer

FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 1994

PHILADELPHIA DAILY

# NEWS

THE PEOPLE PAPER



## FATHERHOOD

*Last of a special series*

*Pages 6-7*



# Dads labor under mistaken

by Anthony S. Twyman

Daily News Staff Writer

## About the series

For years, the unwritten role of a father seemed simple: Be strong, be silent, work hard, protect your family.

Things changed. Women started bringing home the bacon themselves. Married couples struggled with anger and unhappiness — then found quick resolution through divorce or abandonment. Single-parenthood became less stigmatized — and in some cases was encouraged.

In some neighborhoods, fathering a child out of wedlock became a badge of honor — living proof you were a man, even though you were just 15.

Society is paying the price — with fatherless homes, where poverty and troubled children are more likely to exist.

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We're also devoting One of Us, our daily feature that highlights individual achievement, to outstanding dads.

Also, see today's Guest Opinion, Page 44.

## Breadwinner role proves staggering burden

Is having a job critical to being a good father?

Many professors and community leaders say it shouldn't be, but the reality is that fatherhood and employment have become intertwined.

And for fathers struggling to find and keep jobs, this perceived connection can cause a host of problems — including questioning their self-image.

"You cannot be a successful, good father in this country if you're not working," said Bilal Qayyum, head of the Father's Day Rally Committee, which holds anti-violence rallies, picnics and demonstrations.

Even if you teach a jobless man how to be a better father, it is difficult when he returns home and faces the demands of his wife and children, he said.

"At one point kids want some shoes. At one point a kid gets up and says, 'Dad, I'm hungry,'" Qayyum said. "Then as much education as we give them, how do they respond to that?"

### When roles changed

The social and familial pressure on men to bring home the bacon wasn't always so intense.

"It was only at start of the Industrial Revolution that the father's function was redefined as being [primarily] the breadwinner of the family," said Wade F.

Horn, a psychologist and director of the National Fatherhood Initiative, a Washington-based, non-profit group seeking to reassert fatherhood as a priority.

Horn said it was during the late 19th century that the role of father became redefined as "primarily economic." Before, fathers had more balanced roles as providers, teachers, and character builders in the family, he said.

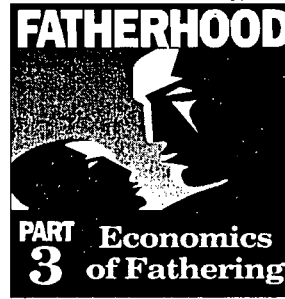
Back then, society recognized the father's importance in several ways. For example, fathers, he said, were "almost always" awarded custody in a divorce, and child-rearing manuals were targeted toward men.

Also, he said, the family was closely knit and often worked and lived in the same location.

During the Industrial Revolution the family changed as fathers went away to work, leaving mothers home to raise the children.

Then, Horn said, the man's self-image became tied to how much money he could bring into the household.

Today, he said, "one of the great challenges to our society is to re-



emphasize that fathers are much more than a paycheck."

### What lies ahead

But American society has a long way to go before reaching that goal. Many men still believe their role is primarily as economic provider.

"It has to do with the pride that a man has," said E. Randy Urquhart, a retired police officer and past president of Concerned Black Men.

The group mentors African-American youth and provides programs and activities for them.

Urquhart said our society places such a high expectation on a man as breadwinner that when he becomes unemployed it can be devastating.

"He ends up in sort of a vicious cycle," Urquhart said. "Often he will start drinking more. He will start smoking more. His temper will become frayed. There will be more arguments with his wife. There will be more arguments with his children."

Black men are disproportionately represented among Ameri-

cans who are not working.

The Center for the Study of Social Policy, a non-profit group in Washington, D.C., found that in 1993 of the black men ages 16 to 64 — about 10,800,000 — in the country, 43 percent were not working. "That's an astonishing figure," said Cheryl Rogers, a senior associate at the center.

By comparison, Rogers said, of the 70,623,000 white men ages 16 to 64, 21 percent were not working.

The figures included men who were unemployed, in prison, gave up looking for work, or couldn't be found by the U.S. Census Bureau.

But Urquhart and others are quick to point out that joblessness is no excuse for being a lousy father.

"External work is a very minute part of being a father," said the Rev. Luis Cortes Jr., head of Nueva Esperanza, a Hispanic community development group.

Cortes said being a father means spending quality time with your children, helping them with their homework, volunteering in their school.

If a man is active in his community and cares about his family, he can be a good father with or without a job, Cortes said.

Horn, of the Fatherhood Initiative, said the good news is that some modern advances could help re-establish non-economic ties between men and their children.

Telecommunications, he said, allows people to work out of their homes and to spend more time with their children, as he does.

"What this allows me to do is have a cookie and milk break at 3:30 when my kids come home from school," he said. ■

# For underground father, being

by Ron Goldwyn

Daily News Staff Writer

“It’s a difficult situation where I have to be labeled a missing father when in reality I’m there every day.”

Jerome, father of two daughters, who is breaking welfare rules by moving back in with his family and starting a part-time job

Jerome smiles broadly as he describes his daughters, the 8-year-old scholar who's "a better reader than I am" and the 6-year-old tomboy who "practices jump shots and layups" on an adjustable backyard hoop.

But don't tell the authorities Jerome is spending so much time with his kids. He is an underground father.

Jerome — not his real name — receives public assistance as he battles back from addiction and homelessness. In the upside-down world of welfare, he is breaking rules by moving back in with his wife and children in North Philadelphia and starting a part-time job.

While many poor, homeless or troubled young men are absent from their children's lives by choice, others are forced to keep their distance — or lie about their status — by a system loaded with disincentives to fatherhood.

"There are policies that really drive young men away from their children," said Ralph Smith, creator of the Philadelphia Children's Network. "We have created a class of underground fathers. It's a phenomenon we haven't paid attention to."

Jerome, 26, is reconciling with his wife, enrolled in job training and working in a fast-food joint. The goal, he said, is to get the family off welfare. But he

can't afford that now.

If he tells the Department of Public Welfare where he's staying "we'd both lose our benefits," Jerome said, referring to his wife's food stamps and his own public assistance.

"It's a difficult situation where I have to be labeled a missing father when in reality I'm there every day."

Joblessness and poor job prospects are crippling to single fathers.

"The best form of child support is a job," says Phyllis Ryan, director of the Philadelphia Committee for the Homeless.

Family Court Judge John L. Braxton, who has worked with Smith's organization, said joblessness, including barriers against African Americans, make it much harder for poor fathers to play the parenting role.

"Racism has to come into play. If you can't find a part-time job, you cannot give any help when the mother asks for help."

Braxton pointed to other complications: Many poor mothers are raising children by several fathers, none of whom have ever lived with the mother. Often these women, or teen-age moms, won't or can't say who fathered which children.

"Who do we send in? Who do we build the family around?" Braxton wondered.

But he said he did "not accept the premise that

# impression: No job, no good



GEORGE REYNOLDS/DAILY NEWS

Alfred Williams and son Brad, 12: "Things will get better."

## 'They know I have been a hard worker'

by **Anthony S. Twyman**

Daily News Staff Writer

There are many men who are coping with the loss of a job without failing their children.

Alfred Williams, 46, was a construction worker until the economy got tight in 1991. Since then, he has searched for full-time jobs, but found none.

Williams, of South Philadelphia, has seven children, ages 10 to 26. Some live on their own. Others live with his wife. Williams lives with his parents. Last year, he went on welfare.

He admits that being jobless has been difficult. But he takes some solace in knowing that he's among thousands of men who are being laid off by companies that are closing or reducing staff.

Williams said he thinks his children understand that this is just a phase.

"They know that I have been a hard worker. I tell them that things will get better," he said.

Because of his situation, Williams is concerned about the state Legislature's approval of welfare reform. Statewide estimates are that 180,000 poor people will lose some aid.

Hardest hit would be 29,000 people like Williams ages 45 to 65 who are considered "chronically

needy." They would see their monthly grants of \$205 reduced to one such grant a year.

Otto Mims, 38, a former civilian worker with the Air Force, has also learned to cope with joblessness while being a father for his 11-year-old daughter.

In 1990, he said, he was forced out of the Air Force after he complained about being passed over for a promotion because he was an African-American. He later lost his job and moved back to his hometown, Philadelphia. He has a lawsuit pending.

When he worked, Mims said, he made over \$40,000 a year. He's since taken jobs paying as little as \$4 an hour.

To make ends meet, he now lives with his family. His wife lives with her family, and his daughter lives with his wife. The arrangement keeps the state from reducing their welfare and health benefits.

Mims began receiving welfare earlier this year. As a single man he receives \$205 a month. His wife also receives welfare.

Mims said he copes by remaining positive and keeping a sense of humor.

"There's times when she wants things and me as a father I'm just not able to do those things," Mims said. ■

## ONE OF US

### For foster dad, 8 only half-enough



GEORGE MILLER/DAILY NEWS

**ELEASIN PADRO**

Age: 64

Lives: Kensington

**Job:** Now on worker's compensation. Co-founder of United Neighbors Against Drugs; coordinator of Hispanic Prison Ministry.

**Family:** Married to Alba E. for 28 years; three children, Orlando, 23; Edgardo, 24; Alba, 27.

**But there's more:** Four foster children, 2, 3, 7, and 10. Over past eight years, has taken in about 16 foster children.

**Why foster kids:** He and Alba were struggling financially, heard foster care could provide extra cash. But after their first foster child, the "desire to resolve our economic problems turned into love for these children."

**On raising his children:** "We provided them with all the necessities . . . We tried to be a happy family. I'm not saying perfect, but we have raised three children with no problems."

**On the foster children:** "We feel the same way about giving these children the love and care we gave our own."

**Fathering secret:** Put love into everything you do. Many parents merely "baby-sit."

— Al Hunter

# with family is risky business

welfare causes fathers not to relate to their kids . . . Most mothers would be happy to have fathers involved with their children. What I see more often is a general abandonment."

The courts and welfare agencies want mothers to name the father of each child. Pennsylvania is among states with laws that require such disclosure, but enforcement is tough and spotty.

However, a father who acknowledges paternity often gets nothing except an order to pay child support.

"The relationship is very much defined in terms of money the father can produce, and figuring out ways to get money from the father," said Richard Weishaup, Community Legal Services project head for health and human services.

Weishaup believes the welfare system sets up "extra hurdles" that two-parent families must clear, in addition to being poor, to qualify for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, he said.

As for laws and regulations that work to keep fathers involved in poor families, "there aren't very many . . . that go the right way," Weishaup said.

"There are certainly marriage penalties. If a welfare recipient marries the father, bad things happen." In broken families where the courts have intervened, there is an incentive on both sides to go off the books.

If the father of a child receiving AFDC pays support through the courts, the first \$50 each month

goes to mom, the rest goes into the welfare system's coffers.

If the father wants to acknowledge and support his own child, the courts will require him to support all children living with the mother, including those by other men.

In public housing, or in private non-profit housing projects, Smith said, rules often force fathers to stay out of sight and off the books.

Workers who have tried to recruit fathers from the projects for crime prevention, kids' sports or other community programs, have been told, according to Smith, "I don't want to get involved. Tell 'em I don't live here."

For Jerome, the contradictions in his rebuilding life are everywhere. He tries to be honest with his kids while he keeps authorities in the dark.

Jerome has been officially homeless almost a year, with about three months spent in shelters, and several months in rehab. He was raised by a mother and father, and recognizes that his intact family served as a valuable model — not always the norm in his neighborhood.

He remembers family gatherings, and it's a tradition he clings to.

"You know what I do every Father's Day? I take my daughters and my wife out West River Drive and have a barbecue," he said.

"We haven't done it the last two years. It was easier when I had a car. We're going to get out there some kind of way. I'm afraid of losing that." ■

## MORE INFO FOR DADS

For more information on fathering and fatherhood programs, contact:

**Philadelphia Children's Network**  
Box 59119  
Philadelphia, Pa., 19102  
215-686-3910

**The National Fatherhood Initiative**  
600 Eden Road, Building E  
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# Opinion

Readers are welcome to submit proposed "Guest Opinion" columns to the Editorial Department, Philadelphia Daily News, Box 7788, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101 or fax to 215-854-5691. All submissions are subject to editing.

## In Our Opinion

### The true meaning of fatherhood

For American dads, Father's Day has long been a ho-hum greeting-card kind of holiday, a time for purchasing Bor-ing Man Presents like monogrammed handkerchiefs and silly undershorts.

The offhand way we observe the annual recognition of dads contrasts with the sentimentality and real emotion that Mother's Day generates. We have trouble really seeing and valuing fathers — as if even when they fulfill the basic role of breadwinner and protector, they don't warrant notice.

Unless they leave. Or were never there.

Then they are deadbeat dads, absent fathers who make cute second families with new young honeys while Original Wife keeps the kids and slides into poverty.

Or teen-age testosterone predators, boys who make babies as notches in the belt of adolescent macho, rather than as gifts to be nurtured and cherished for a lifetime.

It's easy to demonize dads who disappear or don't pay, but the complex difficulties faced by many of them are often ignored. Fatherhood programs, locally and nationally, are beginning to fill in the blanks and provide support.

A Daily News series is looking at the changing roles of fathers, as society is beginning begun to recognize that families and children's lives are altered in powerful ways by a father's love — and by its absence.

Fatherhood is in transition. Half of

all children today and 60 percent of children born this decade will not spend their childhood with dad, and as a result, are much more likely than kids in two-parent families to experience poverty and the risks it carries — dropping out of school, substance abuse, emotional instability and yes, teen-age parenthood.

Economics is frequently the root of paternal abdication of duty. Although gender roles are shifting and working women increasingly share the bread-winning chores, the ability to be a provider is at the core of our definition of what it means to be a father and a man.

We must stop making outlaws of absent fathers who attempt to be involved in their children's lives. Instead of penalizing them — and the mothers of their children — for breaking the rules of the welfare state, fathers who care and contribute should be supported in their efforts.

Nearly 100 years ago, Father's Day was born when Sonora Louise Smart Dodd, of Spokane, Wash., heard a Mother's Day sermon. She was moved to pay tribute to her dad for raising six children alone, after the death of their mother.

So the man whose fathering inspired the holiday was no "traditional" dad but a widower and a single parent. Forced to be both mother and father, William Jackson Smart gave what all good fathers give — eager and steady involvement in the lives of his chil-

dren.

As we work at new definitions of successful fathering, and hammer out social policies to include rather than banish single fathers from their children's lives, some of the answers to the enormous problem of family disarray are really quite simple — and can have positive side effects.

The Responsive Fathers Project of the Philadelphia Children's Network has demonstrated this. Many young men in the program, who develop relationships with their children, also turn around their own messy lives. They get out of the drug trade or decide to go back to school.

Why? Because like most people, they're willing to work hard, fly straight and make sacrifices for a lifetime — when inspired by the endearing tilt of a tiny face, the magic of a toddler's smile or the conviction that the 4th grade math whiz really can end up at M.I.T.

In that way, new fathers are just like the old. Happy Father's Day. ■

### Childwatch

The WIC (Women/Infants/Children) supplemental food program in Philadelphia provides nutritional care to 60 percent of the women and young children eligible (the budget passed by the state Legislature this week in Harrisburg cuts WIC funding by nearly 60 percent). ■

## Guest Opinion

### Absent dads imperil their kids' future

Where have all the fathers gone? This would seem a reasonable question in light of the worsening plight of children in single-mother families.

Engaging fathers in the lives of their children is a benign strategy for improving children's life chances.

It has, however, not been universally supported. As one Goldwater-candid curmudgeon put it, "[These young men] are not worth a damn, not worth a dime, and certainly not worth the time. These men don't care about themselves, about the women or about their children. They just make a baby and move on to the next one. They are not worth the investment."



RALPH R. SMITH

This policy of assured invisibility for noncustodial fathers has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Millions of children are being born into and growing up in first-, second- and even third-generation "father-absent" families. Many have never seen either a father or a grandfather in their home or neighborhood. These children will have no clue as to how to share the responsibilities for raising children, for maintaining a common household or sustaining a committed relationship. Like the rest of us, they will seek to raise their own children as best they can with what they know, drawing on their own experience. So it is all too likely their children, too, will grown up in father-absent households and will extend the pattern into yet another generation.

Less understood but equally disturbing is the emergence of "underground dads" — men who confound the statistics and census-takers by continuing to be present in the lives of their children even as they are discounted as "absent fathers" and "deadbeat dads." No one knows how many are out there, but there are enough to suggest that Mark Twain might be moved to observe that the reports of their absence may be exaggerated.

That this official absence is seen as a rational option for an increasing number of caring fathers is a scathing commentary on the obstacle course created by allegedly "pro-child" public assistance policies. Child support enforcement has become a bounty-feddling process, indifferent to the uncertainties that accompany joblessness and marginal employment. Little thought is given to the destructive impact this adversarial approach has on the fragile relationships involved.

"Absent fathers" and "underground dads" are two sides of the same coin — a dramatically failed policy of forming the families needed to nurture the next generation. We can and must do better. ■

## Editorial Board

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Ralph R. Smith is founder of the Philadelphia Children's Network and one-time chief of staff to Schools Superintendent Constance Clayton.

## Fathers learn to be 'Dads'

Michael L. Lockett slides the well-worn photograph out of his wallet and hands it to a fellow parent with practiced skill. His smile radiates affection for the subject of the portrait, a little girl dressed in a natty outfit.

"I love my daughter and I don't know if something happened to her if I could ever make it," he says of 3-year-old Capri.

"She's very precious."

Lockett never imagined he'd be feeling such love and responsibility for a child. He had been drifting in his life in his Philadelphia neighborhood, content to

let Capri's mother, now his wife, do all the work while he spent his free time with friends.

"I used to hang out and do all types of different stuff," the 21-year-old father recalls. "Now I want to work and be a family person."

He attributes his turnaround to a special program for young African American men at the Philadelphia Children's Network, a program created to improve the lives of children by improving the lives of their fathers.

This program has eight sites in the United States, but Philadelphia's is the only one north of Annapolis and east of Cleveland.

It strives to teach the young men their rights and responsibilities within the system, says Gregory L. Patton Sr., a PCN caseworker who's been working with the 47 men active in the program.

"You can't change a person's lifestyle in 18 months," Patton says of other short-term programs. "There's a lot of up front baggage. We're working with criminal records, getting them to get their GEDs, getting them into community college."



OUR  
FAMILIES  
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The men in the program learn about child development, as well as communication and decision making skills, the PCN caseworker says. "Little people don't come with a manual," he laughs.

Another father in the program, Aaron D. Peoples, 24, nods knowingly.

"It takes a lot of patience, especially right now," he says, referring to his 9-month-old daughter, Jasmine. "She's developing her own attitude."

Peoples believes the program has helped him mature and grow closer to his daughter and his fiancée. "Now I'm a homebody," he laughs.

It's not a common attitude among some of his former friends, Peoples realizes. "They want to make them (the babies), but they don't want to take care of them," he says.

Patton quickly jumps in on this point to emphasize that medical insurance or public assistance programs based on income makes for invisible fathers.

"To get a nicer house, to get your children into better schools, you have to make Daddy disappear," he explains. "They get more money if Daddy isn't there."

Patton stresses options to the young fathers. It's up to them if they want to continue their education, like Peoples, who wants to enroll in a computer program, or they want to work, like Lockett, who's employed at a food-manufacturing plant. But responsibility to the child and respect for the mother of the child must come first.

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**'I used to hang out and do all types of different stuff. Now I want to work and be a family person.'**

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Betsi Blodgett is a freelance writer. Her column appears on the second and fourth Monday of the month.



Ralph Smith is the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Children's Network, Philadelphia.

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*"Families without fathers are more likely to be trapped in poverty."*

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# Putting Fathers into Families

By Ralph Smith

Where have all the fathers gone?

This would seem a reasonable question in light of the growing number and worsening plight of children in single-mother families. That the question is not asked more often speaks volumes about the extent to which the prevailing approach to the "children and families" is interpreted to include just young children and mothers.

In recent years, issues such as elder care and youth development have succeeded in fighting their way onto the agendas. Not so with fathers. Fathers seem to matter in terms of public discourse and public policy only when typecast as "absent fathers" to be castigated or "deadbeat dads" to be pursued.

It is this situation that has become the central component of the work of Philadelphia Children's Network (PCN), a not-for-profit organization founded in 1990 to improve the life chances of children by facilitating systems change. Over the past three years, PCN has developed a deepening understanding that "fixing the system" is an essential, but insufficient strategy for responding to the plight of children.

On the surface, re-engaging fathers in the lives of their children seems a reasonable and relatively benign strategy for improving the living conditions, lived experience and life chances of young children. It has become increasingly clear, however, attending to fathers is a courageous if fool-hardy venture—and even more so when a disproportionate number of fathers in question are easily identified as young and African-American.

Millions of children are being born into and growing up in first, second and even third generation "father-absent" families. Many of these children have never seen either a father or a grandfather either in their home or in their immediate neighborhood.

When called upon, these children will have no clue as to how to share the responsibilities for raising children, for maintaining a common household, or for sustaining a committed relationship. Like the rest of us, they will seek to raise their own children as best they can with what they know, drawing upon their own experience. That being the case, it is all too likely that their children, too, will grow up in absent households and will extend the pattern into yet another generation.

All this assumes agreement with the proposition that father absence matters. And it does. Father absence matters in economic terms. Families without fathers are more likely to be trapped in poverty. Father absence matters in terms of family functioning. The distress many children in single-parent families face undoubtedly stems from the fact that one parent is trying to do the job of two (Beyond Rhetoric 1991).

Father absence also matters in terms of child development. When children have access to only one parent with limited economic and human resources, they often are denied that strength, advice, and encouragement from adults who could serve as role models or provide for their physical and emotional needs (Gadsden 1993).

Even among those who believe that father absence matters, still tender and unresolved issues of race, gender and class have had a chilling effect on candid discussions of the risk-rich environments for children in single-mother households. So, too, has unwillingness to deprecate in any way the efforts of mothers who have overcome the odds to raise their children. Or, however unintentionally, to devalue the achievements of so many women and men who are products of single-mother households.

Both concerns are exacerbated by a

public debate increasingly dominated by calls for a return to the "traditional family," by proposals to restrict the reproductive freedom of poor women, by increasingly less subtle racial stereotyping, and finally, by resurrecting the long-discredited notion of "illegitimacy"—a shibboleth which begins by blaming the parent and ends by branding the child.

Despite these valid concerns, there is an urgent need to confront the challenge presented by the worsening plight of these children. These children are in trouble because their families are in trouble. Single-mother households are in trouble. Black and Hispanic single-mother households are in even more trouble. And Black and Hispanic single-mother, never-married households are in the most desperate shape of all.

Almost half of Black and Hispanic children under six years old live in single-mother, never-married households. Among those children, a mind-boggling 71.3 percent and 74.1 percent, respectively, live below the poverty level. Twenty-five years after the baleful prognosis of the Kerner Commission, the dramatic differences between the well-being of white children and the well-being of Black and Hispanic children underscore that ours truly has become two nations, separate and unequal.

Without contending that it is a magic bullet that will resolve the myriad issues confronting children in households with single unwed mothers, there is enough anecdotal and empirical evidence to support "putting fathers into families" as a matter of policy and as a matter of fact. The final report of the National Commission on Children had a great deal to say on this subject:

1) Research on the effects of single parenthood confirms that children who grow up without the support and personal involvement of both parents are more vulnerable to problems throughout childhood and into their adult lives.

2) Children who live with only one parent, usually their mother, are six times more likely to be poor as children who live with both parents. They suffer more emotional, behavioral, and intellectual problems. They are at greater risk of

dropping out of school, alcohol and drug use, adolescent pregnancy and child-bearing, juvenile delinquency, mental illness, and suicide.

Putting fathers into families does not require choosing sides between those who champion a return to "traditional" families and those who see single mother families as a fact of life to which our attitudes and institutions must adjust. This is an argument that will proceed unabated for decades to come. And in many respects it is irrelevant.

Quite simply, the fate of children should not depend upon household composition. Consensus can be developed around the proposition that a child is better off if more than one adult accepts the responsibility to care for and care about that child. That being the case, parents could be a good place to start. It is a worthy public policy goal to assure children the benefit of both their parents regardless of whether their parents choose to share a house, a bed, or a committed relationship.

This "benefit of both parents" approach is no mission impossible if we decide to think differently about families, prioritize self-sufficiency and build community capacity. First, this approach will require abandoning the cherished notion that the only "intact" family is the autonomous nuclear family with a common household and gender-specific roles for "mom" and "dad."

Cliche has become reality. Families do come in all shapes, sizes and colors. And with the increase in divorce and separation as well as unwed parenthood, the majority of today's children are likely to live in a single-parent household for some period of time before reaching adulthood. Keeping non-custodial parents connected to their children will become an increasingly important issue.

Next, prioritizing family self-sufficiency will require some attention to the well-documented impact that male joblessness has on delaying marriage and increasing out-of-wedlock births. The recent work of the Center for the Study of Social Policy illuminates clearly the correlation between workforce participation and family formation.

Overlooked in the reports about mounting arrearage in child support is a simple fact: Whether living with their children or not, the majority of parents who can afford to contribute to the financial support of their children do. This being the case, the best child support assurance program well might be a decent-paying job for the non-custodial parent.

Putting fathers into families also will require community capacity building. For many children and in far too many instances, frayed kinship networks, deteriorating neighborhoods and disintegrating communities, added to less influential churches, can no longer be counted upon to provide the guidance, support, and role modeling lacking in homes.

A long-term strategy must require attention to the role of community-based organizations and churches in rebuilding the social infrastructure and natural networks within neighborhoods with the resources upon which families can depend and to which they can turn. Over the near term, we must frame interventions that will provide young parents—mothers and fathers both—with the support they need to form fully-functioning families and to become effective parents and successful parent teams.

### **ONGOING EFFORTS**

The Philadelphia Children's Network's Father Re-Engagement Initiative is a multi-faceted effort which seeks to improve the life chances of young children living in single-mother households by encouraging and enabling the fathers of those children to assume their parental role and become fully involved in caring for and about, supporting, and advocating on behalf of their children.

Specifically, the Father Re-Engagement Initiative seeks (1) to enable young fathers to understand the needs of their children and to develop the emotional and financial capacity to meet those needs, (2) to assist both mothers and fathers with developing the skills, behaviors and relationships that they will need if they are to share successfully the responsibilities for parenting, and (3) to promote the development of "father-friendly" communities by

facilitating policies and systems that support rather than impede father presence and involvement. Under the auspices of this initiative, PCN has launched a number of systems change efforts and is in the early stages of a major multi-city citizen education and media outreach campaign.

The linchpin of the Father Re-Engagement Initiative is the Responsive Fathers Program with its deepening involvement in the lives of 47 young men and through them, ongoing contact with their 92 children and the 75 young women who are the mothers of those children.

### **LEARNINGS, LESSONS, AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Now almost three years after it commenced, common sense encourages us to be modest about definitive "findings." Much of the learning is still elusive, ephemeral, contingent and conditional. Other learnings are sufficiently disturbing as to invite considerably more investigation and deliberation prior to public report. But there are some learnings that ought to be part of the public policy conversation about children, families and communities. Among those are the following five:

First and foremost, these fathers care about their children. That caring is not always obvious and often is not shown in ways that are recognized and counted in society that sees fathers primarily as providers. On the level of policy, that societal view of fathers has been reduced to a simple admonition: **Live at home and pay rent. Live any place else and pay child support.** Fathers unable to pay child support are dispensable. From this perspective, it matters not if they provide emotional support, share in child care or seek to assist in other ways.

Second, despite the professed commitment to family values and two-parent families, key aspects of the existing family support system operate to discourage

fathers from remaining actively involved with their children. The paternity establishment, public assistance and child support enforcement systems combine to disrupt and destroy already frail relationships.

Third, bringing this population into the economic mainstream is a formidable task. This is especially so for those young men who fit the profile of the 12-year-old truant, 16-year-old dropout, 20-year-old father with no employment history and a record of involvement with both the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems.

Fourth, doing what it takes to share the responsibilities for parenting is an acquired skill for which modeling and support are essential. So is nurturing a long-term committed relationship. Many second and third generation single parents have had neither modeling nor support for either.

Fifth, connecting these young fathers to their children has imbued these young men with a sense of the future, and by doing so, has provided them a compelling reason to change their behaviors and their lives. This transformative potential of parenting could be a powerful strategy for connecting to a generation of young men who seem to be orbiting farther and farther away from the mainstream.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Many, but not all, of the policy implications of the learnings and lessons set out above are invitingly self-evident. The futility and obvious counterproductivity of seeking to collect child support from unemployed and in many cases unemployable fathers presents a compelling argument for a comprehensive long-term strategy to end chronic joblessness. Such a strategy would have to engage the troublesome issues raised by Jerry Miller and his colleagues at National Center on Institutions and Alternatives, who have documented the disproportionate involvement with the criminal justice system and John Wilson, whose research illuminates the intersections between

joblessness, criminal justice involvement and impaired social functioning.

The economic status of many young fathers presents an equally compelling case for a more immediate "alternative currency" approach that would recognize and value what fathers can give—time, emotional support, respite care and a host of in-kind and intangibles.

If there is validity to the observation about the impact that intergenerational father absence has on family formation, then family formation should join family planning, family preservation, family support and family sufficiency as a family development issue worthy of attention and support. Admittedly, promoting family formation and even committed relationships without conditioning support on marriage will require a paradigm shift. There is some hope that the difficulty of this change can be overcome when confronted with catastrophic consequences of the status quo alternative.

In the final analysis, it is the transcending and transformative potential of parenting which provokes the most in the way of policy. For young men who often are viewed and in turn view themselves as pariahs within the communities in which they live, parenting brings with it a unique opportunity to claim a stake in the society. As the nation's attention is drawn to preventing violence, upgrading the workforce and ensuring personal security, connecting these young men with their children and through their children imbuing them with a sense of a future, could be a strategy with far-reaching implications.

The bad news? That the 20-year-old who was once a 12-year-old truant, 16-year-old dropout and who has seen his probation officer far more often than he has seen any given employer is probably a father. That also could be the good news. Putting fathers into families could be a two-generation intervention that improves the life chances of children, of fathers, and of us all.

# NATIONAL CENTER ON FATHERS AND FAMILIES

## Overview

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The National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF) is founded with the University in the spirit of PCN—to improve the life chances of children and the efficacy of families by facilitating the effective involvement of fathers in caring for, supporting, and advocating on behalf of their children. In achieving this mission, NCOFF will organize its work through three interdependent approaches:

- **Program development** designed to explore, identify, implement, and evaluate effective approaches and strategies in PCN's programs and others, and to expand the existing media campaign
- **Policy research and policymakers engagement component** that examines the impact of policies and practices designed to promote the healthy social and educational development of children, fathers, and families, and that engages policymakers in briefings and roundtable discussions on research results
- **Dissemination activities** that provide the field (practitioners as well as policymakers) with timely information about NCOFF activities and the learnings and lessons from work throughout the field

The work of NCOFF will contribute to the broad cross-disciplinary research base on children, mothers, and families and the emerging knowledge base on father development, father-child attachment, and father involvement. NCOFF aims to advance the knowledge base by identifying critical, cross-cutting issues emerging from practice and research; encouraging collaboration in the development of studies and approaches; and providing critical analyses of the impact of policies on the real lives of fathers and families and implications for their educational, emotional, and social development and well-being.

Among the major projects proposed for NCOFF's first three years are:

- continuation and deepening of the work of PCN's **Responsive Fathers Program**
- expansion of the **Co-Parenting Education Program** to additional pilot sites outside Philadelphia
- establishment of a **Father Friendly Communities Project**, to include work in at least four other metropolitan areas in the first year
- survey of multiple literatures (e.g., sociology, anthropology, and psychology) to support the compilation of **interdisciplinary bibliographies and literature reviews** on topics and issues involving or relevant to father engagement
- development of a **research agenda** (basic and applied) responsive to the needs of both practitioners and policymakers
- in-depth **program evaluations** of PCN direct service programs, and of other related programs
- publication of **Policy Updates** and **Policy Briefs** on current, pending, and proposed policy initiatives
- publication of a quarterly **Newsletter** and occasional **working papers** and **monographs** on program and policy research
- establishment and coordination of a **Practitioners' Network** and an **Interdisciplinary Research Group**
- **conferences, policy roundtables**, and additional opportunities for interchange among scholars, practitioners, and policymakers
- the development of **new regional, cross-city, and national collaborations** with agencies, groups, and individuals concerned with issues of policy and practice for fathers and families



## PHILADELPHIA CHILDREN'S NETWORK

### An Overview of Purposes and Accomplishments

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*The Philadelphia Children's Network was established in 1990 as a vehicle through which the community – both the public and the private sectors – can rethink, reorganize and refocus resources to improve the life chances of its youngest, most vulnerable citizens and their families.*

*Such an agenda has required a wide variety of activities to raise the visibility of issues, to maintain them on the public agenda, to provide concrete solutions to the most pressing problems as needs and opportunities have presented themselves, and to focus energy and resources in areas that hold particular promise for effective change.*

#### 1990-1992

During the first two years (1990-92), we focused our efforts around three major areas – promoting school readiness, re-engaging young fathers with their children, and coordination of systems serving pre-school children and their families. Through providing technical assistance, project development, and project management and by forging collaborations, brokering agreements, coordinating efforts, and leveraging resources, PCN has been able to foster system change. Accomplishments include:

- *Lee-West Park Head Start.* PCN facilitated an agreement between the Philadelphia Housing Authority and the Department of Recreation that made it possible for thirty-six additional children to participate in Head Start.
- *PHA Head Start Expansion.* PCN project development, technical assistance, and proposal writing support helped PHA obtain funding for expansion of their Head Start program to the Mill Creek Apartments and Bartram Village.
- *Mayor's Transition Oversight Committee on Children's Issues.* At the request of Mayor Wilson Goode, PCN coordinated the work of a "blue-ribbon" panel convened by the Mayor to ensure that the important issues which affect the lives of Philadelphia's children were not overshadowed during the time of

transition from one administration to the next. PCN also developed the committee's final report, "A Window of Opportunity."

- *More Dollars for Philadelphia.* PCN commissioned and supervised the development of a "funding stream analysis" to identify federal categorical programs which could be tapped to support services and programs for children and families within the City of Philadelphia. This strategy has yielded an increase of several million federal dollars to date. PCN also developed and co-hosted a two-day conference, entitled "Making Sense of Federal Dollars in Pennsylvania," to provide information to representatives of other local service provision agencies on how to access federal funds.
- *Restructuring Child-Serving Systems.* PCN brought together top administrators and upper-level managers from the major agencies and organizations that provide services to children within the City of Philadelphia in order to develop the conceptual design and preliminary workplan for a geographically-based demonstration project through which the City of Philadelphia will pilot innovative programs for restructuring its child-serving systems.

#### 1992-94

Over the past two years (1992-94), our focus has been on a **Father Re-engagement Initiative**, seeking to encourage and enable young fathers to become actively involved in the lives of their children, who are now living in single-parent households.

Specifically, the effort seeks to help these young men understand the needs of their children and become willing and able to meet those needs and to find ways to change the policies and practices of public and private systems which impede young fathers from assisting their children. Recent accomplishments include:

- *Responsive Fathers and Co-Parenting Education Programs.* PCN developed and is managing two nationally-recognized direct service projects. The first aims to enhance the capacity of young, unmarried fathers to become responsible and involved parents, wage-earners, and providers of child support. The second aims to enable father/mother co-parenting teams to

develop the skills necessary to cooperate in the care of their children -- no matter what the character of the relationship between father and mother.

- *Collaboration with Fox Children's Network.* In collaboration with PCN, Fox Children's Network produced three Peabody Award-winning 60-second public service announcements regarding young fathers and fatherhood. The PSAs are currently being aired nationally on Fox affiliates.
- *Philadelphia Father's Day Campaign.* PCN is now organizing a full week of publications, media coverage, and activities in Philadelphia surrounding Father's Day 1994. PSAs will be aired on local television and radio stations; feature news and public affairs stories will be run on each local television station; the *Philadelphia Tribune* published a 16-page news supplement (for distribution to its semi-weekly readership and also to local schools) on fatherhood, families, and available services in the metropolitan area. Other articles will be appearing in other publications throughout the area.
- *Increased Visibility of Issues and PCN.* Over the last year, increased attention has been given to the issues of fathers and families, and to PCN, in the pages of *Newsweek*, the *Ford Foundation Magazine*, *Education Week*, the *Georgia Academy Journal*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Philadelphia Magazine*, and in local television and radio spots and features.
- *National Policy Agenda.* A significant element of the Father Re-engagement Initiative has been the search for change in policies and practices which impede fathers from establishing rich, durable relationships with their children.

*Policy Roundtable.* In October, 1993, PCN organized and co-sponsored with the Center for the Study of Social Policy in Washington, DC, a two-day roundtable discussion for legislators, Federal program administrators, direct service providers, and scholars on the policy implications for children and families in the African-American community of lowered male labor-force participation.

*National Policy Network.* PCN has been able to put issues of fathers and families on the agendas of major national policy organizations (most recently, the Family Resource Coalition and the National Center for Children in Poverty), of public policy groups (the National Conference of State Legislators, the National Governors Association, and the National League of Cities), and has advised both public authorities (Office of the Mayor, City of Philadelphia; Mayor's Cabinet, City of Baltimore; Office of Senator John Danforth) and private foundations (the Danforth Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Enterprise Foundation) on matters of systems change.

*Federal Executive Branch – Welfare Reform Task Force.* Executive Director Ralph Smith participated as an advisor to the members of the President's Task Force, particularly on matters of the policy implications of alternative welfare legislation on fathers and family formation.

*Federal Legislative Branch – Congressional Black Caucus.* In 1992, PCN developed and coordinated an Issues Forum that was designed to generate more focused national discussions on policy options for re-engaging young fathers with their children which was held in during the Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Weekend. During the 1993 CBC Legislative Weekend, Mr. Smith was a featured panelist at the *Reuniting the Black Family* braintrust.

*National Family Policy Conference.* Mr. Smith also has been asked by Vice President Gore to serve on the six-member organizing committee for the "Family Re-Union III: The Role of Men in Children's Lives" conference to be moderated by Mr. Gore in Nashville in July. The focus of the conference will be on issues regarding fatherhood and families.

*Practitioner/Experts Network.* PCN is creating a Practitioner/Experts Network which will first convene at a roundtable discussion held in conjunction with the "Family Re-Union III: The Role of Men in Children's Lives" Conference. This network of practitioners and experts who work with young fathers will now have a more formal opportunity to discuss, explore and share "best practices".

**FATHER RE-ENGAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE**  
**(The Inaugural/Organizing Meeting of PCN's**  
**Father Re-Engagement National Practitioners Network)**

**July 9 - 12, 1994**

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**FATHER RE-ENGAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE**  
**(The Inaugural/Organizing Meeting of PCN's**  
**Father Re-Engagement National Practitioners' Network)**

*Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza*  
*July 9 -12, 1994*

**AGENDA**

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**SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1994**

12:00 - 2:00 Opening Luncheon..... Suite 6

- Welcoming Remarks
- Introductions
- Program Overviews

2:00 - 5:00 Plenary Session: *Lessons and Learnings –*  
*The Multi-Site Programs and Frontline Practice* ..... Suite 6

Lead Discussants:

- **Charles Ballard**  
*National Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and  
Family Development*
- **Wade Gatling**  
*Young, Unwed Fathers Demonstration Project  
Public/Private Ventures*
- **Thomas Henry**  
*Responsive Fathers Program  
Philadelphia Children's Network*
- **James Levine**  
*Fatherhood Project  
Families and Work Institute*
- **Marilyn Price**  
*Parents Fair Share  
Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation*

9:00 - 11:00 *Hospitality, Networking and*  
*Technical Assistance Exchange* ..... Suite 7A

**SUNDAY, JULY 10, 1994**

8:00 - 10:00 Breakfast/Brunch ..... Suite 6

8:30 - 10:30 Plenary Session: *Lessons and Learnings –  
Implications for Practice, Policy and Research* ..... Suite 6

Lead Discussants:

- **Vivian Gadsden**  
*National Center on Fathers and Families  
University of Pennsylvania*
  
- **David Pate**  
*Paternal Involvement Demonstration Project  
Community Renewal Society*
  
- **Donell Whitfield**  
*Penrose Family Service Center  
Missouri Department of Social Services*

10:30 - 11:30 *Joining the Debate/Changing the Conversation* ..... Suite 6

Lead Discussants:

- **Ronald Mincy**  
*Urban Poverty Division  
Ford Foundation*
  
- **Ralph R. Smith**  
*National Center on Fathers and Families  
Philadelphia Children's Network*

12:00 Noon Bus Departs for Tennessee State University

1:00 - 5:00 Experts Forum with  
Vice-President Gore ..... Tennessee State University  
(Please see attached.)

5:30 - 7:30 Family Re-Union III Reception  
with Vice President Gore ..... Tennessee State Museum





## **SUNDAY "EXPERTS FORUM"**

**Tennessee State University, Sunday July 10, 1 PM - 5 PM**

- 1:15 - 2:25** **"WHY DO CHILDREN NEED MEN IN THEIR LIVES?"**  
Moderated by Vice President Al Gore and Dr. Marty Erickson,  
assisted by Richard Louv, Dr. Richard Weinberg and Dr. Waldo  
Johnson
- 2:30 - 3:30** **"WHAT ARE EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES FOR  
BRINGING FATHERS AND OTHER MEN INTO THE LIVES OF  
CHILDREN IN A POSITIVE WAY?"**  
Moderated by Vice President Al Gore and Ralph R. Smith,  
assisted by Barbara Clinton, Charles Ballard and Dr. James  
Levine
- 3:30 - 4:00** **BREAK** *...refreshments...opportunity to network...*
- 4:00 - 5:00** **"WHAT ARE THE PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES THAT MUST BE  
ADDRESSED IF WE ARE TO BRING MEN INTO CHILDREN'S LIVES  
IN A MORE POSITIVE WAY? AND HOW CAN WE BRING ABOUT  
THE NECESSARY CHANGE OF HEART?"**  
Moderated by Vice President Al Gore, Tipper Gore and  
Commissioner Grunow
- 5:30 - 7:30** **"FAMILY RE-UNION III" RECEPTION WITH VICE PRESIDENT  
AL GORE AND TIPPER GORE**  
Tennessee State Museum  
Tennessee Performing Arts Center  
505 Deaderick Street

**FAMILY RE-UNION III: The Role of Men in Children's Lives**  
**Monday July 11, 1994**  
**Tennessee Performing Arts Center**

- 8:30 - 8:35 CONFERENCE OPENS**  
Dr. Erickson introduces children's chorus.
- 8:35 - 8:45 "THE SELECT SINGERS", W.O. SMITH NASHVILLE COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL**
- 8:45 - 8:55 INTRODUCTIONS**  
Commissioner Grunow introduces Governor McWherter  
Governor McWherter introduces the Vice President
- 8:50 - 8:55 VICE PRESIDENT WELCOMES AND INTRODUCES FILM COLLAGE**  
Images of men in children's lives seen through the lens of American film and TV
- 8:55 - 9:05 FILM COLLAGE**
- 9:05 - 9:20 VICE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**
- 9:25 - 10:45 MEN'S FORUM**  
Vice President Gore leads thirty men who have made a commitment to children, their own and others, in a discussion of the issues surrounding their involvement
- 10:45 - 10:55 VICE PRESIDENT AND TIPPER GORE INTRODUCE CHILDREN'S VIDEO**
- 10:55 - 11:15 VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**  
A series of interviews with children of different ages and backgrounds about their fathers and the men in their lives

## **FAMILY RE-UNION III: The Role of Men in Children's Lives (Cont.)**

### **11:15 - 12:00 PROGRAM RESPONSE**

The Vice President invites responses from those who are actively engaged in programs working with men and children

### **12:00 - 2:30 LUNCHEON**

Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza  
Entertainment by "Free Spirit"

**ADDRESS BY REVEREND JESSE JACKSON**

### **2:30 - 3:15 WOMEN'S FORUM LED BY TIPPER GORE**

Mrs. Gore leads a conversation with six other women about the role of men in their children's lives

### **3:15 - 4:00 STRATEGIES**

Vice President Gore and Carol Rasco lead a discussion among the representatives of federal agencies, and state and local government about the policy responses to the issues raised during the day

### **4:00 - 4:55 TOWN HALL FORUM**

During the final hour of the conference, the Vice President will open the discussion to the entire audience

### **4:55 - 5:00 VICE PRESIDENT'S CLOSING REMARKS**

## FATHER RE-ENGAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE

July 9 - 12, 1994

### General Information

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#### *Father Re-Engagement Roundtable Information*

The Roundtable is being held at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza in Nashville. The meetings will be held in the following rooms:

Saturday, July 9	12:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Suite 6
	9:00 - 11:00 p.m.	Suite 7A
Sunday, July 10	8:00 - 11:30 a.m.	Suite 6
Tuesday, July 12	8:00 - 11:30 a.m.	Ballroom 23

The Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza's address and phone/fax numbers are:

Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza  
623 Union Street  
Nashville, TN 37219  
(615) 259-2000  
FAX (615) 742-6056

Telephone and fax messages for participants in the Roundtable can be left at the front desk.

#### *Hotel Information*

Most participants will be staying at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza at the above address. Telephone and fax messages for participants who are staying at the hotel should be directed to the above numbers with the attention of the participant.

#### *Sunday "Experts Forum" with Vice -President Gore*

This session is being held at Tennessee State University (TSU) from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Transportation to and from TSU will be provided. Buses will leave from the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza at 12:00 noon. There will be a reception with Vice-President and Tipper Gore following the afternoon session.



Policy

3. Which of these "reforms" would you be prepared to support? Why?

4. Given your experience what if any additional policy changes would you advocate?

Practice

5. What would you describe as the learning(s) from your program that holds the most far-reaching implications for changing practice?

Additional Comments



# FATHER RE-ENGAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE

## FOCUS QUESTIONS:

### Research

The National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF) intends to pursue a research agenda that is practice-focused and practice-derived. PCN's work has produced seven (7) major "learnings" around which NCOFF's early research agenda will be organized:

- Fathers care (even if that caring is not always shown in conventional ways).
- Fathers matter (in terms of economic well-being, social support and child development).
- Joblessness is a major impediment to family formation and father involvement.
- Existing approaches to public benefits, child support enforcement and paternity establishment operate to provide obstacles and disincentives to father involvement.
- The disincentives are sufficiently compelling as to have prompted the emergence of a phenomenon dubbed "underground fathers"--men who acknowledge paternity and are involved in the lives of their children but who refuse to participate as fathers in the formal systems.
- A growing number of young fathers and mothers need additional support to develop the skills they will need to share the responsibility for parenting.
- The transition from biological father to committed parent has significant developmental implications for young fathers.
- The behaviors of young parents, both fathers and mothers, are influenced significantly by intergenerational beliefs and practices within families of origin.

1. Please indicate whether and to what extent these "learnings" are consistent with, different from or contradicted by your expertise, program experience or intuition.
2. Drawing on your own work, experience and intuition, please list 3-5 other learnings and/or questions that you would wish to have placed on the research agenda. In other words, what do we need to know?

# FATHER RE-ENGAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE

## FOCUS QUESTIONS:

### Policy

The "learnings" cited above have prompted PCN and others to urge significant changes in the public assistance (esp. AFDC), paternity establishment and child support enforcement policies. Among those changes are:

- unhook paternity establishment processes from child support enforcement
- abandon the distinction between "custodial" and "non-custodial" parents insofar as benefits are concerned
- substantially increase the child support "pass through" to AFDC-receiving parents
- use the child support enforcement system as a case-finding mechanism while de-emphasizing its collection and punitive aspects
- provide "amnesty" from arrears for fathers who wish to declare paternity but are discouraged from doing so due to arrears
- promote and facilitate voluntary paternity establishment
- encourage and even require mediation and counseling as essential components of the paternity establishment and child support enforcement processes
- include support for developing and strengthening the co-parenting relationship

3. Which of these "reforms" would you be prepared to support? Why?
4. Given your experience what if any additional policy changes would you advocate?

## FATHER RE-ENGAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE

### FOCUS QUESTIONS:

#### Practice

PCN and others have learned much from the MDRC "Parents Fair Share" and P/ PV "Young Unwed Fathers" multi-site demonstrations. For PCN, the most significant additional learnings growing out its experience were those which led to development of the Co-Parenting Education (CoPE) component of its work.

5. What would you describe as the learning(s) from your program that holds the most far-reaching implications for changing practice?

# FATHER RE-ENGAGEMENT ROUNDTABLE

## FATHER RE-ENGAGEMENT NATIONAL PRACTITIONERS NETWORK

### Data Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

## FATHER RESOURCE PROGRAM

" Building.....a noble legacy of fatherhood"

### GOALS

- 1) Place participants in stable, full-time employment at wage and benefit levels sufficient for personal economic security and fulfillment of family obligations such as child support and parenting.
- 2) Help participants who lack a diploma to gain a high school equivalency (GED) and create opportunities for them to pursue post-secondary education.
- 3) Empower participants to deal with their role as young fathers through developing a higher degree of self-esteem and self-worth; improved problem solving skills; and peer support.
- 4) Help participants establish significantly more positive and stronger relationships with their children.
- 5) Encourage participants to establish legal paternity.

PERSONS SERVED: Young fathers who:

- \* Are between 18-25 years old
- \* Are expectant fathers and/or parenting fathers with child(ren) up to 3 years
- \* Are seeking a good job with a future and benefits
- \* Want to further their education (GED and/or vocational training)
- \* Use the Wishard system or live in the general Blackburn area

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF PARTICIPANTS: (18 months)

- \* Provide financial contributions to their child(ren)
- \* Complete GED
- \* Attend Father Resource Program scheduled meetings and activities
- \* Maintain regular visitation with child(ren)
- \* Drug free (illicit drugs and inappropriate use of legal drugs)

## SERVICES

The Father Resource Program offers the following broad areas of service:

- 1) Employability assessment and testing of basic skills.
- 2) Individual employability and personal development planning.
- 3) Counseling and case management with special attention to parenting rights and responsibilities.
- 4) Basic skills remediation (GED) support.
- 5) Fatherhood/social development and life management skills training.
- 6) Effective parenting and child development training.
- 7) Leadership training and volunteer opportunities.
- 8) Full-time jobs with benefits through placement with Father Resource Employers (ie. Wishard).
- 9) Extended post-placement counseling and support group work to assure job retention.
- 10) Support services, including weekly workshop stipends.
- 11) Recreational opportunities.
- 12) Working relationship with Marion County Prosecutor's Office (On-Track Program.)

## DESIGN

- \* Initial Program is funded for 18 months.
- \* 30 men will be recruited for the program in cycles of 10.
- \* First class of men will begin on April 11th and end on May 20th.
- \* Upon completion of 6 weeks workshop on Job Readiness and Fatherhood Development, participants will be placed in jobs and followed weekly with individual counseling and support group meetings.

## STAFF

- |                            |                              |        |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------|
| * Director                 | Wallace O. McLaughlin, Ph.D. | (2487) |
| * Project Social Worker    | Frank R. Snyder, Ph.D.       | (2490) |
| * Outreach Coordinator     | Khabir Shareef               | (2489) |
| * Administrative Secretary | Denise Fowlkes               | (2486) |
| * Employment Counselor     | Barbara Sanders              | (2488) |

# TIPS FOR PARENTS of Toddlers & Preschoolers

## Fatherhood

Whether or not you live with your children, being a father is a full-time job. Providing financially is only one aspect of fatherhood.



Children also need your time, support and attention. Remember, you are a role model for your children.

**Here are few tips:**

### **Spend as much time with your children as you can.**

- See and talk with your children regularly. Ask how their day went and tell them about yours.
- Take time to play and laugh with your children; go to the zoo, take a walk, visit museums or play games.

### **Take an active role in your children's development.**

- Encourage your children to express themselves. Talk with your children about their thoughts and feelings.
- Help establish a daily routine for your children.
- Encourage your children to continue learning as much as they can.
- Keep track of their height, hang up their drawings, take photographs together.
- Let your children know that you are proud of them.
- Have family meals together when you can.
- Encourage your children's natural curiosity.
- Limit television, and let children watch shows made for children.

### **Be involved in your children's education.**

- Visit your children's day care center or school.
- Stay in touch with their teacher(s).
- Take an interest in your children's homework and studies.
- Read a lot of books with your children, even when they are very young.

(over)  
**SUCCESS BY 6**  
Helping all children succeed for life.

An initiative of United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania  
For more information call 215-665-2666.

### **Be a role model for your children.**

- Remember that your children look up to you. Lead by example.
- Treat other family members with respect.
- Before you act, stop and think if that is how you want your children to behave.
- Keep yourself healthy, and above all, keep learning.

### **Make sure your children are in good health.**

- Be sure that your children are eating enough fruits and vegetables and drink plenty of water and juices.
- Take your children for regular check-ups with their dentist and pediatrician.
- Make sure that your children's immunizations are up-to-date.
- Be aware of your children's allergies.
- Remind and encourage your children to brush their teeth every morning and evening.

### **Keep your children safe.**

- Have your children's home checked for lead paint.
- Child-proof the house by making sure that cleaning detergents, small objects, medicines, electric outlets and heaters are out of a child's reach.
- Know emergency phone numbers — police and fire, poison control, close relative, next door neighbor, doctor.
- Put infants to sleep on their backs with no pillows. The room should not be too hot.
- Install smoke detectors.

## **Fun Places for You and Your Child**

Academy of Natural Sciences	299-1020
Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum	574-0380
Elmwood Park Zoo (Norristown)	277-3825
Franklin Institute Science Museum	448-1200
The Free Library of Philadelphia (Children's Department)	686-5369
New Jersey State Aquarium (Camden, NJ)	609-365-3300
Philadelphia Museum of Art	763-8100
Philadelphia Zoo	387-6400
Please Touch Museum	963-0666
Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education	482-7300
Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (Ambler)	646-8866

**This information is brought to you by**





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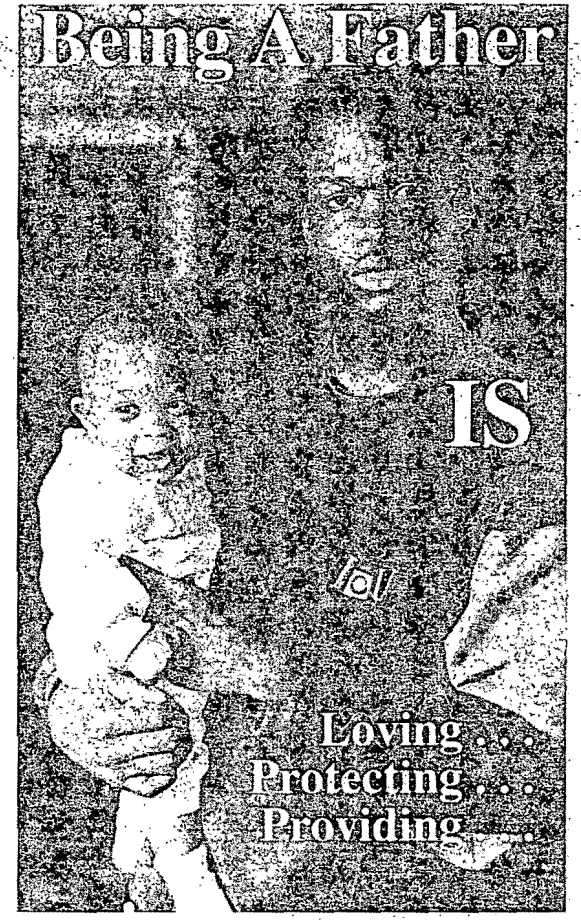
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OF

FATHERHOOD  
FATHERHOOD



An opportunity to make  
your child proud



Wishard Memorial Hospital  
Myers Building, 2nd Floor  
Outpatient West Room 224  
1001 West 10th Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
(317) 630-2486

THE  
FATHER RESOURCE  
PROGRAM  
OF WISHARD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

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# The Father Resource Program Can Help

## If you . . .

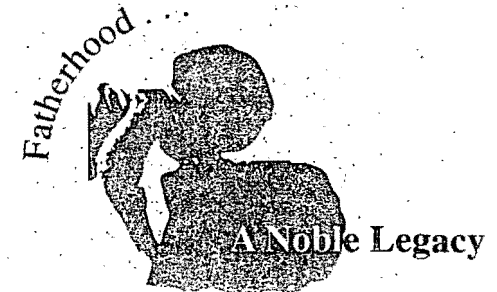
- are between 18 and 25 years old
  - are an expecting father or have a child up to age 3
  - need a good job with a future and benefits
  - need to further your education (GED or Vocational Training)
  - use Wishard Memorial Hospital or the Blackburn Health Center
  - live in the general Blackburn area (North and South boundaries are: 10th to 38th Streets, East and West boundaries are: Keystone to Tibbs)
- . . . you may qualify for a special program of education, training, jobs and support for young fathers in your neighborhood.**
- 

## The program will:

- guarantee a job opportunity upon program completion . . . a job with benefits and a future
- provide support with individual and group counseling
- answer your questions about child development and learning
- help you complete your education (high school, GED or beyond)
- provide parent training
- link you to support services in your community
- bring you together with other young fathers for fun and recreation
- help you develop a higher self-esteem and greater sense of self-worth

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**Being a father is a big responsibility. Be the best father you can be with assistance from the Father Resource Program.**



*To learn if you qualify, call 630-2486 TODAY and ask for Khabir Shareef, Outreach Coordinator.*

The Father Resource Program is funded by The Lilly Endowment, The Indianapolis Foundation and The Wishard Memorial Foundation.

*A program of The Department of Social Work  
Wishard Memorial Hospital  
Wallace O. McLaughlin, Ph.D.  
Director*

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**Sarah Meadows**  
Department of Social Services  
630-7086



**WISHARD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER**

1001 West 10th Street • Indianapolis, Indiana 46202



# **FAMILY RE-UNION III: THE ROLE OF MEN IN CHILDREN'S LIVES**

*A conference sponsored by the  
University of Minnesota  
Children, Youth & Family Consortium  
and the  
Tennessee Department of Human Services*

**Tennessee Performing Arts Center  
Nashville, TN  
July 11, 1994**

## **CONFERENCE AGENDA**

**8:30-8:55 a.m.**

### **Welcoming Ceremony**

Dr. Martha Farrell Erickson, *Director, University of Minnesota  
Children, Youth & Family Consortium*

The Select Singers, *W.O. Smith Nashville Community Music School*

Commissioner Bob Grunow, *Department of Human Services, Tennessee*

The Honorable Ned McWherter, *Governor, Tennessee*

Vice President Al Gore

**8:55-9:05 a.m.**

### **Film Collage**

Images of men in children's lives seen through the lens of American film and television

**9:05-9:20 a.m.**

### **Opening Remarks**

Vice President Al Gore

**9:25-10:45 a.m.**

### **Men's Forum**

Vice President Gore leads 28 men who have made a commitment to children, their own and others, in a discussion of the issues surrounding their involvement.

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*P.O. Box 198166*

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*Nashville, TN 37219*

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*(615)742-8113*

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*FAX (615)259-4040*

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- 10:45-11:15 a.m.**                    **Voices of Children & Youth**  
Vice President and Tipper Gore introduce a series of interviews with children of different ages and backgrounds about their fathers and the men in their lives.
- 11:15 a.m.-12:00 p.m.**            **Program Response**  
The Vice President invites responses from those who are actively engaged in programs working with men and children.
- 12:00-2:30 p.m.**                    **Luncheon**  
Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, 623 Union St.  
Entertainment by "Free Spirit"  
Address by the Reverend Jesse Jackson
- 2:30-3:15 p.m.**                    **Women's Forum Led By Tipper Gore**  
Mrs. Gore leads a conversation with six other women about the role of men in their children's lives.
- 3:15-4:00 p.m.**                    **Strategies**  
Vice President Gore and Carol Rasco, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, lead a discussion among the representatives of federal agencies, and state and local government about the policy responses to the issues raised during the day.
- 4:00-4:55 p.m.**                    **Town Hall Forum**  
During the final hour of the conference, the Vice President will open the discussion to the entire audience
- 4:55-5:00 p.m.**                    **Closing Remarks**  
Vice President Al Gore



Carol Rocco

P.O. Box 198166

Nashville, TN 37219

July 10, 1994

TO: Panelists in the Strategies Session, 3:15 p.m.-4:00 p.m

Bernard Anderson	Gene V. Morrison
Dr. Jane Asche	Wilbur Peer
Charles Burson	Bill Purcell
Ron Carter	Les Ramirez
Lois DeBerry	Jane Ranum
David Ellwood	Carol Rasco
Anna Forbes Towns	Reginald L. Robinson
Don Fraser	Anne Rosewater
Robert Glenn	Andrew Shookhoff
Thomas P. Glynn	Cheryl Sullivan
Robert Grunow	Kevin Sullivan
Andrew P. Hornsby, Jr.	Sally Vogler
Ed Jurith	Dr. Marc A. Weiss
Elaine Karmack, Ph.D.	Sarah Whitman
Gaynor McGowen	James Lee Witt

FROM: Holly Dodge, Stage Manager  
Family Re-Union III: The Role of Men in Children's Lives, July 11, 1994

SUBJECT: Important Logistics Information

We are very pleased that you are able to participate in this very important conference. Response has been exceptional, with over 950 persons registering.

This memo is intended to give you some vital information to assist you in getting where you need to be, on time and with the least amount of confusion. Please keep my number handy if you should need to reach me. On Sunday night I can be reached at the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza at 259-4000. Please leave me a telephone message or a note at the desk. On Monday, I can be reached at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) conference office at 726-2027 where you can leave a message.

**Strategies Panel**

**July 10, 1994**

**Page 2**

**Entering TPAC building:**

Panelists will be picking up their name badges at the STAGE DOOR entrance to TPAC which is located on Union Street between 5th and 6th Streets. If you arrive at the general registration doors, you will be escorted to the STAGE DOOR. The STAGE DOOR is easily identified by its red awning which says "STAGE DOOR". A security person and a registration person will be inside to give you your namebadge (which you will need to get into lunch) and your conference materials. I have attached the conference agenda for your information.

**Please check in at the STAGE DOOR, by 8:30 a.m.** You will be escorted to the Polk Theater for the morning sessions of the conference. The conference begins at 8:30 a.m.

After lunch, please come directly to the STAGE DOOR. You will be directed to the Green Room where the panel will assemble. The Women's Forum, the panel from 2:30 p.m.-3:15 p.m., will be shown in the Green Room on monitor so that you will not miss any part of the conference. A volunteer will come to the Green Room and escort you to the stage at the appropriate time. I will look forward to meeting you at that time.

**Information about the session:**

The Strategies Session is scheduled for 3:15 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Following the Women's Forum, the stage crew will be partially reconstructing the stage, adding chairs to accommodate the Strategies Panel. I will be asking you to assemble in groups that minimize on stage activity when you take your seats. Please remain seated until the Vice President leaves the stage at the end of the conference at 5:00 p.m. or when I indicate it is time to exit the stage.

The Vice President will be engaging the audience in a Town Hall Forum from 4:00 p.m.-4:50 p.m. during which time he may call on you to participate in the conversation. The conference will end when the Vice President concludes his closing remarks, scheduled for 5:00 p.m.

Vice President Gore will moderate the session with Carol Rasco, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy. Hand-held microphones will be passed by a stage hand amongst the panelist who will be seated in armchairs on two levels, half the panel on each side of the stage.



**Strategies Panel**

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**Sunday, July 10, 1994 activities:**

Following the Expert's Forum today, there will be a reception in the Tennessee State Museum. It is the wish of the Vice President and Mrs. Gore that you attend so that they may thank you for your participation. Dress is casual for the reception.

The Museum is located one block from the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza. Buses will be leaving the Expert's Forum after the end of the session, scheduled for 5:00 p.m., and be going directly to the Museum. Please join us.

Attachment: Conference Agenda