

FATHERS and FAMILIES at the PUBLIC LIBRARY

Aaron Ames (Director of
Operations, Commonwealth
Center for Fathers & Families)



Kim Mullins (Library
Services Children's
Coordinator, Jackson
County Public Library)



Commonwealth
Center for
**Fathers &
Families**

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FATHERHOOD



A black and white photograph showing the silhouettes of a man and a young child sitting on a grassy bank next to a body of water. The man is crouching, and the child is sitting next to him. To the left, a bicycle is parked. The water is calm with gentle ripples. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

WHY FATHERS?

*Child/Family
Wellbeing*

*Homelessness/
Teen Runaways*

Mental Health

*Physical Health:
Child & Adult*

*Academic
Achievement*

*Poverty &
Economic
Stability*

*Healthy
Relationships*

Maternal Health

*Violent Crime:
Perpetrator &
Victimization*

*Addiction:
Recovery,
SUD's*

Incarceration

*Human
Trafficking*



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“The collapse of children's well-being has reached breathtaking proportions...One can think of many explanations for these unhappy developments: the growth of commercialism and consumerism, the influence of television and the mass media...the widespread availability of guns and addictive drugs, and the decay of social order...*But the evidence is now strong that the absence of fathers from the lives of children is one of the most important causes.*”

- David Popenoe



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Father Absence in America

17.8 Million Children, 1 in 4, Without a Biological, Step, or Adoptive Father at Home

Living absent their biological fathers:

- 47.5% of Black children
- 28.8% of Hispanic children
- 19.6% of White children ¹

According to 72.2 % of the U.S. population, father absence is the most significant family or social problem facing America. ²

Pre/Post Natal

FATHER ABSENCE

- Pregnant women / no father support experience pregnancy loss at a 48% rate (vs 22% with father present) ¹
- 4x rate of infant mortality ²
- Increased maternal stress ³
- Higher likelihood of maternal alcohol / tobacco use ³

FATHER PRESENCE

- Father involvement is related to improved weight gain and improved breastfeeding rates ¹
- Mothers are 1.5 times more likely to receive prenatal care in the first trimester ⁵



Sources:

1. Shah M., Gee R., & Theall, K. (2014). Partner support and impact on birth outcomes among teen pregnancies in the United States. *Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology* 27 (1), 14-19.
2. Alio, A. P., Kornosky, J. L., Mbah, A. K., Marty, P. J., & Salihu, H. M. (2010). The impact of paternal involvement on feto-infant morbidity among Whites, Blacks and Hispanics. *Maternal and child health journal*, 14(5), 735-741.
3. National Fatherhood Initiative. (2024). *Father Facts*, Ninth ed.
4. J.F., Keefe, H.A., & Leiferman, J. A. (2009). Early parental depression and child language development. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 50, 254-262.
5. Martin, L. T., McNamara, M. J., Milot, A. S., Halle, T., & Hair, E. C. (2007). The effects of father involvement during pregnancy on receipt of prenatal care and maternal smoking. *Maternal and child health journal*, 11(6), 595-602.



During the pre-natal and post-natal periods, men experience changes in hormone levels and in their brains that have an impact on their fatherhood role, suggesting that nature prepares men to become fathers.

- National Fatherhood Initiative



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Mental Health

FATHER ABSENCE

Suicide

- 63% of youth suicides are from father absent homes¹

Behavioral Disorders

- 85% of all children who show behavior disorders come from father absent homes¹

Emotional Health

- 2x-4x more likely to need help for emotional or behavioral problems^{2,3}

Maternal Health

- Single mothers are 2x as likely to experience mood, psychiatric, substance disorders than married parents⁴



Sources:

- 1.U.S. Department of Justice. (1998). "What Can the Federal Government Do To Decrease Crime and Revitalize Communities?" Executive Office for Weed and Seed, Washington D.C.
- 2.Anderson J. (2014). The impact of family structure on the health of children: Effects of divorce. The Linacre quarterly, 81(4), 378-387.
- 3.Teel, K. S., Verdeli, H., Wickramaratne, P., Warner, V., Vousoura, E., Haroz, E. E., & Talati, A. (2016). Impact of a Father Figure's Presence in the Household on Children's Psychiatric Diagnoses and Functioning in Families at High Risk for Depression. Journal of child and family studies, 25(2), 588-597.
- 4.Wade, T.J., Veldhuizen, S., & Ciarney, J. (2011). Prevalence of psychiatric disorder in lone fathers and mothers: Examining the intersection of gender and family structure on mental health. The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 56 (9), 567-573.

Mental Health



FATHER PRESENCE

Behavioral Disorders

- Associated with a lower level of aggression¹
- Greater Empathy²

Emotional Health

- Reduces psychological problems & rates of depression^{2, 3}
- Higher Self Esteem²
- Increased Confidence²
- Increased emotional Stability^{2, 3}

Sources:

1. Kim, S., & Glassgow, A.E. (2018). The effect of father's absence, parental adverse events, and neighborhood disadvantage on children's aggression and delinquency: A multi-analytic approach, *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 28, 570-587.

2. National Fatherhood Initiative. (2024). *Father Facts*, Ninth ed.

3. Sarkadi, A., Kristiansson, R., Oberklaid, F., & Bremberg, S. (2008). Fathers' involvement and children's developmental outcomes: a systematic review of longitudinal studies. *Acta Paediatrica*, 97(2), 153-158.

Physical Health

FATHER ABSENCE

Obesity

- 2x more likely to suffer obesity¹

Teen Pregnancy

- 7x more likely to experience teen pregnancy²

Physical Development

- Hinders development from early infancy throughout childhood and into adulthood³

Illness/Disease

- Children report significantly more psychosomatic health symptoms and illness (i.e., acute/chronic pain, asthma, headaches, stomach aches)⁴



Sources:

1. Teachman, J. D. (2004). The Childhood Living Arrangements of Children and the Characteristics of Their Marriages. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25(1), 86-111.
2. Ellis, B., Bates, J., Dodge, K., Ferguson, D., Horwood, L., Pettit, G., & Woodward, L. (2003). Does Father Absence Place Daughters at Special Risk for Early Sexual Activity and Teenage Pregnancy. *Child Development*, 74: p. 801-821.
3. National Fatherhood Initiative. (2024). *Father Facts*, Ninth ed.
4. Kruk, E. (2012, May 23). Father absence, father deficit, father hunger: The vital importance of paternal presence in children's lives. *Psychology Today*.
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/co-parenting-after-divorce/201205/father-absence-father-deficit-father-hunger?msockid=14622f6537886b5a093d3ba3369a6aa2>

Physical Health

FATHER PRESENCE



- Increased motor development¹
- Encourage physical activity²
- Rough-house play²
- Prevention of risky behaviors¹
- Access to resources (healthy food, gym, athletic clubs/activities, etc.)^{1,2}
- Support medical care habits (check-ups, immunizations, physicals)^{1,2}
- Healthier cellular function, longer telomeres, which affect aging and overall health³
- One study found that only fathers', not mothers', parenting behaviors were associated with risks of being overweight/obese in children⁴

Sources:

1.National Fatherhood Initiative. (2024). Father Facts, Ninth ed.

2.Yogman, M., Garfield, C., & Committee on Psychosocial aspects of child and family health. (2016). Fathers' Roles in the Care and Development of Their Children: The Role of Pediatricians. *Pediatrics*, 138 (1): e20161128.

3.Mitchell, C., McLanahan, S., Schneper, L., Garfinkel, I., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Notterman, D. (2017). Father loss and child telomere length. *Pediatrics*, 140(2), Article e20163245.

4.Wake, M., Nicholson, J.M., Hardy, P., & Smith, K. (2007). Preschooler obesity and parenting styles of mothers and fathers: Australian national population study, *Pediatrics*, 12, 1520-1527.



Attempts to understand the “active ingredient” in fathers’ play that promotes peer competence have revealed that children learn critical lessons about how to recognize and deal with highly charged emotions in the context of playing with their fathers.

- Joseph H. Pleck, Professor of Human Development and Family Studies

Academic Achievement



FATHER ABSENCE

Early Childhood Development

- Infants without fathers reading to them score lower on vocabulary expression by age two¹
- Disengaged and remote interactions of fathers with infants is a predictor of early behavior problems in children²

Sources:

- 1.J.F., Keefe, H.A., & Leiferman, J. A. (2009).Early parental depression and child language development. Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 50, 254-262.
- 2.Ramchandani, P. G., Domoney, J., Sethna, V., Psychogiou, L., Vlachos, H. and Murray, L. (2013). Do early father-infant interactions predict the onset of externalising behaviours in young children? Findings from a longitudinal cohort study. Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 54, 56-64.

Academic Achievement



FATHER ABSENCE

Behavioral Issues

- 2-4x the rate of behavioral problems^{1, 2}
- Upwards to 27% of 6th - 12th grade children with absent fathers are suspended or expelled³

Sources:

1. Anderson J. (2014). The impact of family structure on the health of children: Effects of divorce. The Linacre quarterly, 81(4), 378-387.
2. Teel, K. S., Verdeli, H., Wickramaratne, P., Warner, V., Voursora, E., Haroz, E. E., & Talati, A. (2016). Impact of a Father Figure's Presence in the Household on Children's Psychiatric Diagnoses and Functioning in Families at High Risk for Depression. Journal of child and family studies, 25(2), 588-597.
3. Nord, C.W., & West, J. (2001). Statistical Analysis Report: Fathers' and mothers involvement in their children's schools by family type and resident status. U.S. Department of Education: Office of Education and Research Improvement. National Center for Education Statistics.

Academic Achievement

FATHER ABSENCE

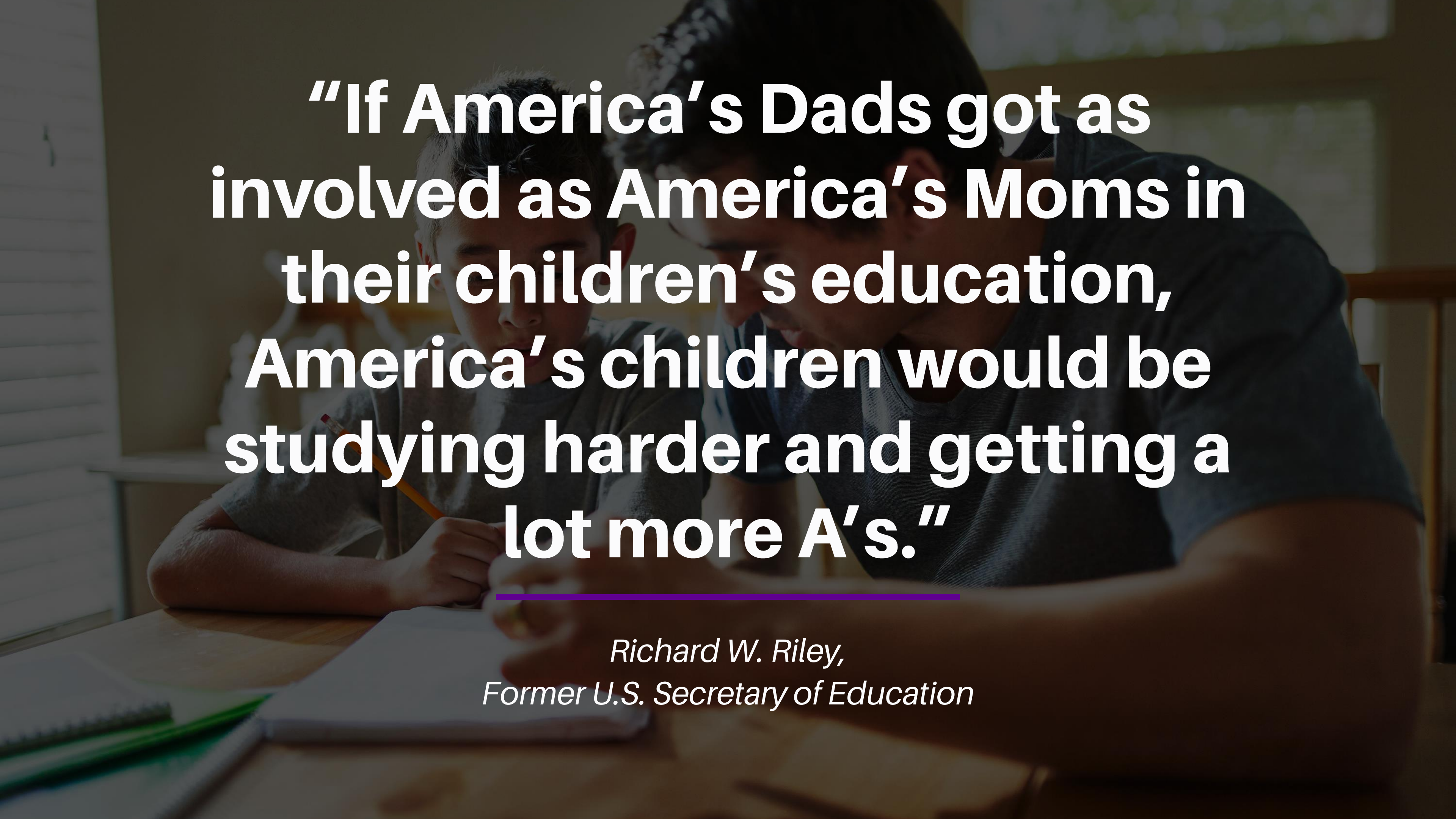
Academic Failure

- Youth who experienced divorce, separation, or a non-union birth reported lower GPAs¹
- The longer the duration of father absence the poorer the academic outcome²
- 2x more likely to drop out of school
- 71% of all high school dropouts come from father³ absent homes⁴



Sources:

1. Tillman, K. H. (2007). Family structure pathways and academic disadvantage among adolescents in stepfamilies. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77, 383-424.
2. Gillette, M. T., & Gudmunson, C. G. (2014). Processes linking father absence to educational attainment among African American females. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 24(2), 309-321.
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1993). Survey on child health. National Center for Health Statistics, Washington D.C.
4. U.S. Department of Justice. (1998). "What Can the Federal Government Do To Decrease Crime and Revitalize Communities?" Executive Office for Weed and Seed, Washington D.C.

A photograph of a father and son sitting at a desk. The father is leaning over the desk, pointing at a notebook, while the son sits and looks at the notebook. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source coming from the left, possibly a window. The father is wearing a dark t-shirt, and the son is wearing a light-colored t-shirt. The desk has several papers and a pencil on it.

“If America’s Dads got as involved as America’s Moms in their children’s education, America’s children would be studying harder and getting a lot more A’s.”

*Richard W. Riley,
Former U.S. Secretary of Education*

Academic Achievement



FATHER PRESENCE

Early Childhood Development

- Fathers who play with their infants help them develop cognitively and socially.^{1, 2}
- Fathers' unique way of reading to their children help them develop language and cognitive skills.³
- Father-child time spent on educational activities is associated with significant cognitive development for the child⁴

Sources:

- 1.Amodia-Bidakowska, Laverty, C., & Ramchandani, P.G. (2020). Father-child play: A systematic review of its frequency, characteristics and potential impact on children's development. *Developmental Review*, 57, 100924.
- 2.Sethna, V., Perry, E., Domoney, J., Iles, J., Psychogiou, L., Rowbotham, N.E.L., Stein, A., Murray, L., & Ramchandani, P.G. (2017). Father-child interactions at 3 months and 24 months: Contributions to children's cognitive development at 24 months. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 38(3), 378-390.
- 3.Culter, L. & Palkovitz. (2020). Fathers' shared book reading experiences: Common behaviors, frequency, predictive factors, and developmental outcomes. *Marriage & Family Review*, 56 (2): 144-173.
- 4.Cano, T., Perales, F., & Baxter, J. (2019). A matter of time: Father involvement and child cognitive outcomes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 81(1), 164-184.

Academic Achievement



FATHER PRESENCE

Graduate

- 33% less likely to repeat a grade¹

Academic Success

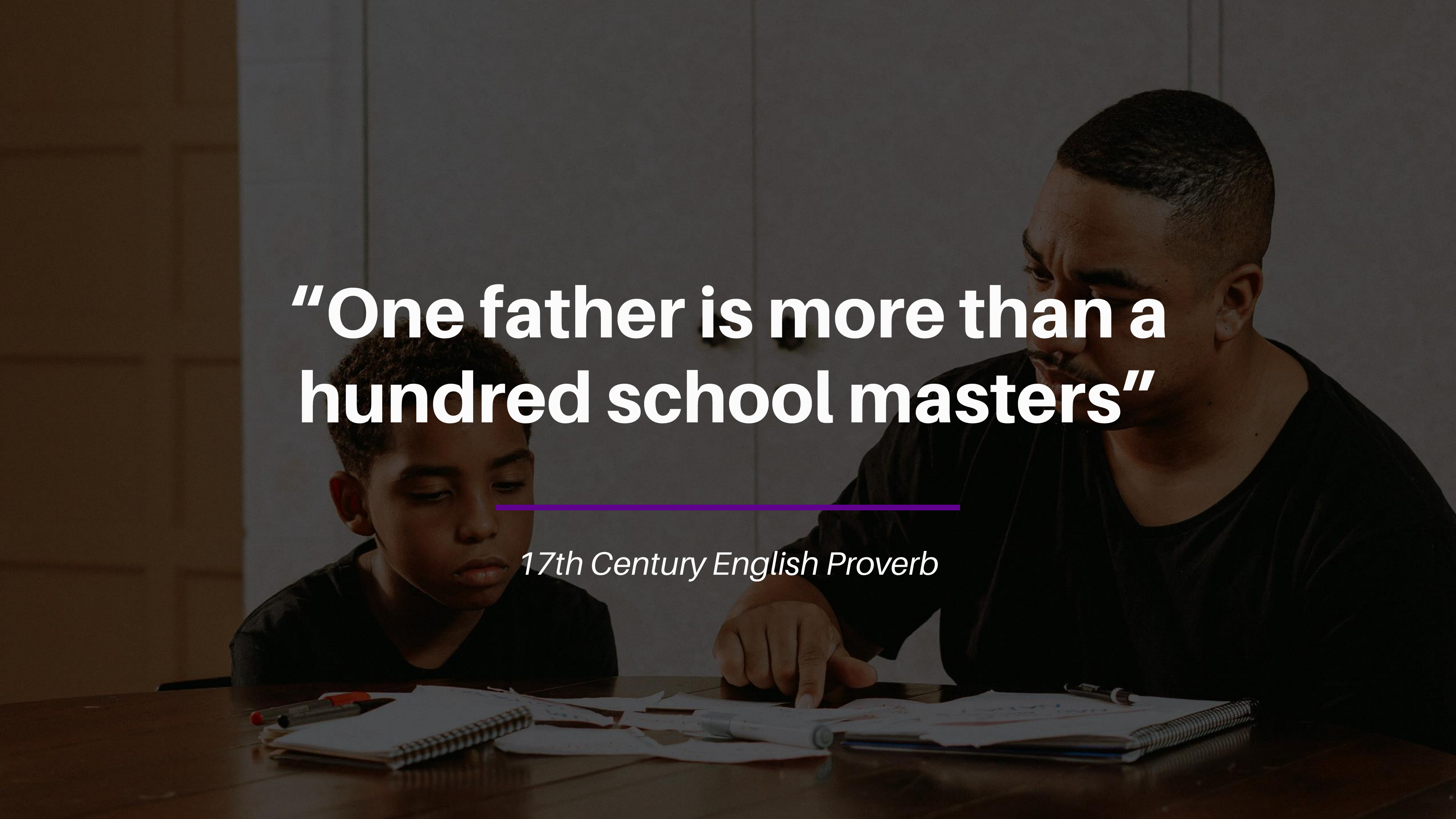
- 43% more likely to get A's¹
- Children are 2x as likely to enter college or find stable work after high school²
- Increased cognitive abilities & academic achievement³

Sources:

1. Nord, C.W., & West, J. (2001). Statistical Analysis Report: Fathers' and mothers involvement in their children's schools by family type and resident status. U.S. Department of Education: Office of Education and Research Improvement. National Center for Education Statistics.

2. Furstenberg, F.F., & Harris, K.M. (1993). When and why fathers matter: Impacts of father involvement on the children of adolescent mothers. Pp. 117-38 in Young Unwed Fathers: Changing Roles and Emerging Policies. Edited by R.I. Lerman and T.J. Ooms. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

3. National Fatherhood Initiative. (2024). Father Facts, Ninth ed.

A man and a young boy are sitting at a wooden table. The man, on the right, is pointing at a piece of paper on the table. The boy, on the left, is looking down at the papers. There are several papers, markers, and a spiral notebook on the table. The background is a plain wall.

**“One father is more than a
hundred school masters”**

17th Century English Proverb

Addiction

FATHER ABSENCE

- Far more likely to abuse chemical substances¹
- 75% of adolescent patients being treated in substance abuse centers come from father-absent homes²

FATHER PRESENCE

- Quality of father involvement is a protective factor against early substance use for males and females³
- Father communication with children has a unique impact on reducing alcohol use⁴
- Significantly less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol into adulthood¹



Sources:

1.National Fatherhood Initiative. (2024). Father Facts, 9th ed.

2.U.S. Department of Justice. (1998). "What Can the Federal Government Do To Decrease Crime and Revitalize Communities?" Executive Office for Weed and Seed. Washington D.C

3.Yoon, S., Pei, F., Wang, X., Yoon, D., Lee, G., McCarthy, K.S., Schoppe-Sullivan, S.J. (2018). Vulnerability or resilience to early substance use among adolescents at risk: The roles of maltreatment and father involvement. Child Abuse and Neglect, 86, 206-216.

4.Goncya, E.A., & van Dulmena, M.H. (2010). Fathers do make a difference: Parental involvement and adolescent alcohol use. Fathering, 8, 93-108.

Violent Crime

FATHER ABSENCE

- 279% more likely to deal drugs or carry firearms for offensive purposes¹
- A study of 56 school shootings, revealed only 10 of the shooters (18%) were raised in a stable home with both biological parents²
- 60% of repeat rapists come from father-absent homes³
- 85% of rapists who are motivated by displaced anger are from father-absent homes⁴
- A decrease in fathers' presence in neighborhood is associated with increase in teen violence⁵



Sources:

- 1.Allen, A. N., & Lo, C. C. (2012). Drugs, guns, and disadvantaged youths: Co-occurring behavior and the code of the street. *Crime & Delinquency*, 58(6), 932-953.
- 2.Langman, P. (2016). School Shooters: The Myth of the Stable Home. Peter Langman, Ph.D.
https://schoolshooters.info/sites/default/files/shooters_myth_stable_home_1.15.pdf.
- 3.Knight, R. and Prentky, R. (1987). The Developmental antecedents of adult adaptations of rapist sub-types. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, Vol. 14, 403-426.
- 4.U.S. Department of Justice. (1998). "What Can the Federal Government Do To Decrease Crime and Revitalize Communities?" Executive Office for Weed and Seed, Washington D.C.
- 5.Knoester, C., & Hayne, D. A. (2005). Community context, social integration into family, and youth violence. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67, 767-780.

Incarceration

FATHER ABSENCE

- 75% of long-term correctional facility inmates are from father-absent households ¹
- 70% of Youths in State Institutions are from father-absent homes ²
- 12% of Kentucky children have had a parent incarcerated ³

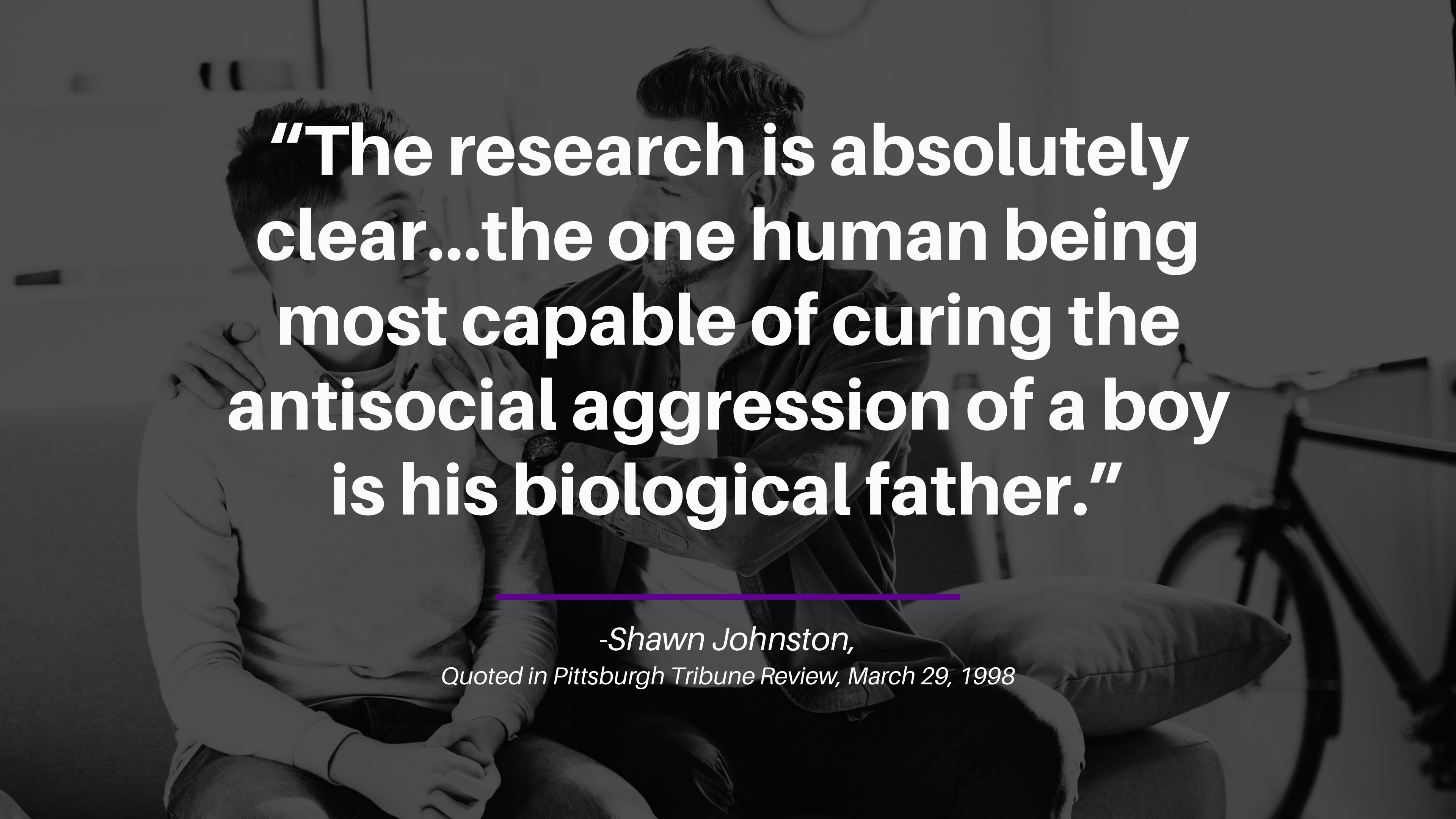
FATHER PRESENCE

- 80% less likely to spend time in jail ⁴



Sources:

1. Amneus, D. (1990). The garbage generation: The consequences of the destruction of the two-parent family and the need to stabilize it by strengthening its weakest link, the father's role. Primrose Press.
2. U.S. Department of Justice. (1998). "What Can the Federal Government Do To Decrease Crime and Revitalize Communities?" Executive Office for Weed and Seed. Washington D.C..
3. National Survey of Children's Health (2021). Child Trends analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Annie E. Casey Foundation.
4. Furstenberg, F.F, & Harris, K.M. (1993). When and why fathers matter: Impacts of father involvement on the children of adolescent mothers. Pp. 117-38 in Young Unwed Fathers: Changing Roles and Emerging Policies. Edited by R.I. Lerman and T.J. Ooms. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.



“The research is absolutely clear...the one human being most capable of curing the antisocial aggression of a boy is his biological father.”

-Shawn Johnston,

Quoted in Pittsburgh Tribune Review, March 29, 1998

WHERE'S THE FATHER?



WHEN THE FATHER ISN'T PRESENT:

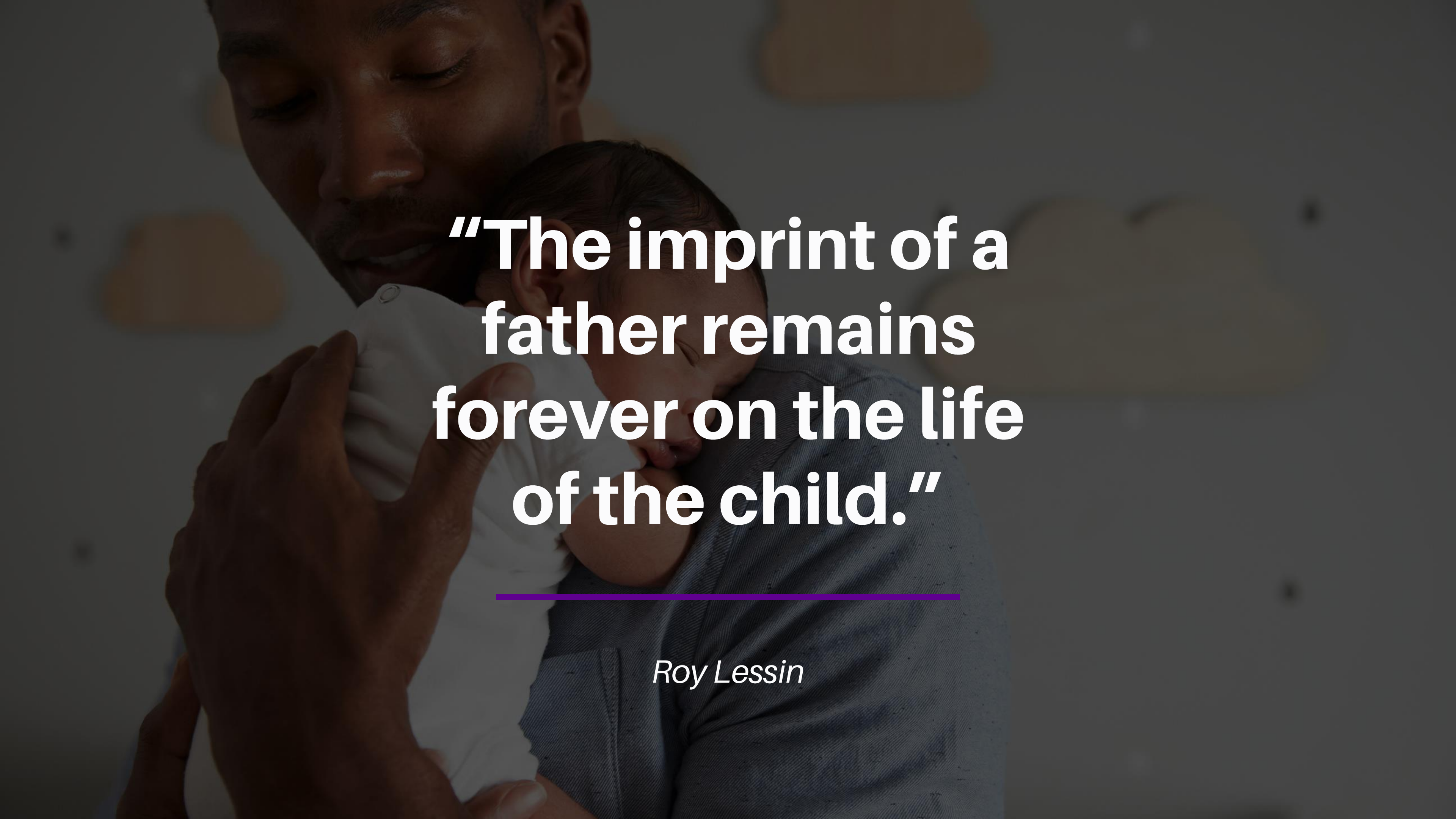
- ➖ 7x Greater Risk of Teen Pregnancy
- ➖ 2x More Likely to Suffer Obesity
- ➖ 4x Greater Risk of Poverty
- ➖ 4x more likely to need help for emotional or behavioral problems
- ➖ Far More Likely to Abuse Chemical Substances
- ➖ Greater Risk of Infant Mortality
- ➖ More Likely to Drop Out of School
- ➖ More Likely to Go to Prison
- ➖ More Likely to Face Abuse and Neglect
- ➖ More Likely to Marry as Teenagers and More Likely to Get Divorced

WHEN THE FATHER IS PRESENT:

- ➕ Increased Emotional Stability
- ➕ Increased Confidence
- ➕ Greater Empathy
- ➕ Prevention of Risky Behaviors
- ➕ 43% More likely to get A's
- ➕ Improved Cognitive Abilities & Academic Achievements
- ➕ 40% Less Likely to Drink Alcohol, Smoke, or Use Drugs
- ➕ 80% Less Likely to Spend Time in Jail
- ➕ Decreases Delinquency and Economic Disadvantage in Low Income Families
- ➕ Lower Levels of Aggression

Sources:

1. Ellis, B., Bates, J., Dodge, K., Ferguson, D., Horwood, L., Pettit, G., & Woodward, L. (2003). Does Father Absence Place Daughters at Special Risk for Early Sexual Activity and Teenage Pregnancy. *Child Development*. 74: p. 801-821.
2. Bremberg, S., Kristiansson, R., Oberklaid, F., & Sarkadi, A. (2008). Fathers' involvement and children's developmental outcomes: a systematic review of longitudinal studies. *Acta Paediatrica*, 97(2), 153-158.
3. Fathers matter – pass it on (2024) America first policy institute. https://americafirstpolicy.com/assets/uploads/files/Fathers_Matter_%28pass_it_on%29_V2.pdf.
4. Martinez, K., Rider, F., Cayce, N., Sawyer, J., & Williams, K. (2011). A guide for father involvement in systems of care. Washington, DC: Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/FatherhoodInvolvementGuide.pdf>.
5. National Center for Fathering. (2015). The Fatherless Epidemic. National Center for Fathering. <https://fathers.com/wp39/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/fatherlessInfographic.pdf>
6. National Fatherhood Initiative. (2024). Father Facts, 9th ed.
7. Research and Statistics. Rochester Area Fatherhood Network. <https://www.rochesterareafatherhoodnetwork.org/statistics>.
8. Teel, K. S., Verdeli, H., Wickramaratne, P., Warner, V., Voutsour, E., Haroz, E. E., & Talati, A. (2016). Impact of a Father Figure's Presence in the Household on Children's Psychiatric Diagnoses and Functioning in Families at High Risk for Depression. *Journal of child and family studies*, 25(2), 588–597.
9. U.S. Department of Justice. (1998). What can the federal government do to decrease crime and revitalize communities? Executive Office for Weed and Seed, Washington D.C.
10. Whitney, S., Prewett, S., Wang, Ze, & Haigin C. (2017). Fathers' importance in adolescents' academic achievement. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies*, 8(3–4), 101–126.

A close-up photograph of a man with dark skin and a beard, gently holding a newborn baby. The man's eyes are closed, and he has a peaceful expression. The baby is wearing a white onesie and is also sleeping. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a wall with some light-colored decorations. The overall mood is tender and intimate.

**“The imprint of a
father remains
forever on the life
of the child.”**

Roy Lessin



Commonwealth Center for **Fathers & Families**

Mission, Vision, and Pillars



Commonwealth
Center for
**Fathers &
Families**

Our Mission

CCFF's mission is to increase the capacity for positive fatherhood engagement across the Commonwealth through education, advocacy, and collaboration.



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”

*The imprint of a father
remains forever on the
life of the child.*

Roy Lessin

OUR VISION

CCFF seeks to improve child outcomes and enhance families and communities through increasing positive fatherhood engagement across Kentucky by ensuring services are available to fathers and families to increase responsible fatherhood, economic stability (employment), healthy relationships, and advocacy.

OUR HISTORY

First formed in 2005 as the Kentucky Fatherhood Initiative, it started as a group of conscious and concerned professionals, agencies, providers, and citizens with a vision to enhance the quality of life for children and the promotion of family well-being through healthy and positive father involvement. This group of dedicated citizens has "stayed the course," and CCFF was incorporated in September 2021 and received its 501(c)(3) designation in February 2022. This was all done with the administrative and fiscal guidance of the Lexington Leadership Foundation.

OUR PILLARS



1

Policy & Advocacy

Ensuring that policies, practices, and procedures promote healthy father-family formation

2

KYDaD Academy

Training fathers to be ambassadors for father engagement across the Commonwealth

3

Mini-Grants

Providing capacity-building mini-grants of \$5,000-\$10,000 to organizations for engaging fathers

4

Training

Deliver training services to increase awareness regarding the benefits of father engagement

5

Fatherhood Summit/Symposium

Promote collaboration and innovation through organization of local, state, and federal voices

Mini-Grant Events/Program Examples:

1. "Fishing with Fathers"
 - a. Private Property with 5 ponds
 - b. 403 fathers/713 attendees
2. "Father Fest"
3. 24/7 Dad Program
4. "Dunks with Dad"
 - a. Father-Child Basketball Camp
 - b. Supported by Local Div I Players
5. Father's Day Event
 - a. Highlighting Mental Health
 - b. Activities for Kids



Implementing the Program at the Library

**Kim Mullins (Library Services
Children's Coordinator, Jackson
County Public Library**



APPLICATION PROCESS



Commonwealth
Center for
**Fathers &
Families**

SPRING 2025 CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT REPORT TEMPLATE

Please complete the following report and submit no later than 30 days after your completing your scope of work or by December 19, 2025 – whichever is earlier.

Organization Name:	Jackson County Public library
Project Name (from original proposal):	Our Time
Date of Project: <i>(If multiple activities/events please list all dates)</i>	6/17/2025
Total # of attendees (all attendees): Total # of fathers engaged during the scope of the project:	30 Dads 30 children
Racial composition of attendees: (estimate)	
Counties served through the project:	Jackson

PROJECT SUMMARY

Was the project implemented as originally planned? If not, what changes were made? Yes, each Father received a toy and book to use with their child. The Very Busy Cricket and Insect collection.

OUR TIME : Monthly Father & Child Initiative







Write a comment





**Thank you to the
Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
for sponsorship of this webinar.**