Silberman School *of* Social Work

Module Two
The Socialization of Men- Culture of Fatherhood and Manhood

Learning Objectives

- Describe how the role of the father has evolved over time

- Describe common help-seeking behaviors among men

Small Group Discussion

- How are fathers represented in the various forms of media?

- What are some views that society holds about men's roles as fathers?

- What are some factors that have contributed to the shift in the role of fathers?

- What stereotypes associated with masculinity and parenting are reinforced or deconstructed in various forms of media?

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Changing Role of the Father

When men become fathers what behaviors are expected?

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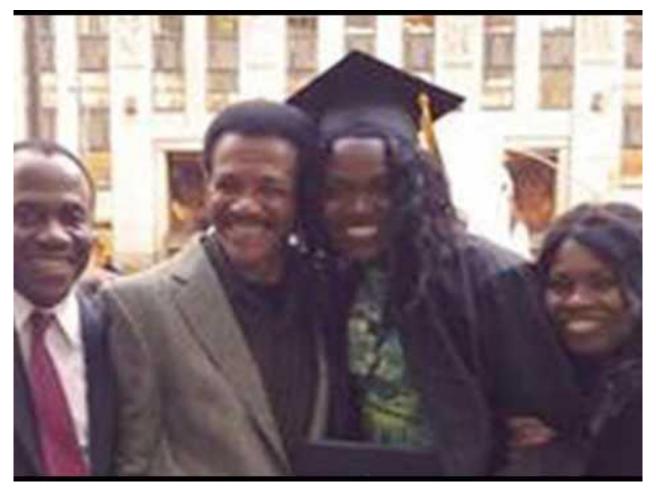
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Changing Role of the Father

- Prioritization of work with the view of fathers as "good providers" for their children.

- "Good fathers were heads of their families, the court-of-last-resort when it came to discipline, and limited to the playful aspects of childrearing."

- Link between masculinity and breadwinner ideology

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David's Digital Story

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David's Digital Story (cont.)

- How does David's relationship with his father characterize the changing role of fathers?

- How do you think David's relationship with his father has affected how he sees his role as a father?

- How does David's relationship with his child reflect Lamb and Pleck's conceptualization of father engagement?

Reshaping Family Life

Due to changes in the following areas:

1. demography of family life

2. social and cultural context

3. economy

Reshaping Family Life

- Growing number of fathers who live apart from their children.

- Divorce and non-marital childbearing present challenges to father involvement.

- The increase in female labor force and the changing cultural norms of gender relationships have led us to examine what is expected of fathers.

- Expectation that fathers develop an emotional connection to their children, be involved in their lives, and more egalitarian in their gender role expectations.

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How does becoming a parent affect the psychological well-being of fathers?

- Young fathers' well-being is negatively impacted. They are less likely to live with their children, have higher rates of multi-partner fertility, are likely to drop out of school, have erratic work histories, and low paying jobs.

- Older fathers have challenges of complex family relationships due to divorce and remarriage.

- Non-resident fathers' well-being is affected possibly by the stress of parenting.

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Diversity of Fathers

- Increase in diversity in the racial –ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations of fathers.

- The United States is increasingly a multi-racial and multi-ethnic society.

- Approximately 75% of Latino men and 71% of African American men aged 25 – 44. They represent nearly 23% of all American fathers (Eggebeen, Knoester, & McDaniel, 2013).

Meaning of Father Involvement

Among African American, African Caribbean, and Latino fathers:

- Concept of family and understanding the family system

- Social and psychological boundaries within these families shift and are renegotiated at critical points in the life cycle

- Issues of acculturation

Socio-economic Diversity

- Evident among fathers

- Low-income men are often fathers, some fathering children from multiple partners

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Debunking Myths Surrounding Gay Men as Fathers

Discussion Questions

- What interventions and policies might strengthen the link between becoming a father and positive changes in men?

- How might the experiences of poverty, joblessness, or social marginality affect their identity as fathers?

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Hegemonic Power of Masculinity

Father's emotional connection to their children is at odds with tenets of hegemonic masculinity.

Complete the Phrases

Men are...   Masculinity is…

Jaydell's Digital Story

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Jaydell's Digital Story (cont.)

- What are some of the issues Jaydell raises in his story relating to his role as a father and a man?

- What are some of the struggles Jaydell identifies with being a father?

- How does Jaydell deal with seeking assistance?

Male Help-Seeking Behaviors

Tasks associated with help seeking:

- Relying on others

- Admitting that one needs help

- Recognizing and labeling an emotional problem

Male Help-Seeking Behaviors (cont.)

Gender-role conflict linked to psychological well-being and help seeking:

- Internalized gender roles may create barriers to help seeking for men, particularly if help seeking involves violating important masculine gender roles

- Negative attitudes toward seeking counseling services

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Male Help-Seeking Behaviors (cont.)

Challenges/Barriers to help seeking:

- Difficulty with emotional expression

- "Gender specific" stigma associated with seeking psychological help

Male Help-Seeking Behaviors (cont.)

- What are strategies to engage fathers' in connecting to services?

- What role does masculinity play in affecting men's experience in counseling and other services?

- What role do you think the criminal justice system has in shaping men's perspective on accessing government support services?