

Silberman School of Social Work

Module Two

The Socialization of Men- Culture of Fatherhood and Manhood



Department of
Social Services

Human Resources Administration
Department of Homeless Services

Office of Child
Support Enforcement

HUNTER
The City University of New York

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?

Changing Role of the Father

When men become fathers what behaviors are expected?

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

David's Digital Story

www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVngjK4cbRw

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.

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.

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

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?

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

www.youtube.com/watch?v=37e4b5_iaz8

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

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?