

PATERNAL PERINATAL MOOD AND ANXIETY DISORDERS


7TH ANNUAL EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH *WE CAN'T WAIT* CONFERENCE
SAN DIEGO, CA 9/22/2016

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe key psychosocial elements in the transition to fatherhood and men's perinatal mental health
- Cite examples of how fatherhood involvement impacts the family system
- List evidence-based approaches to better engage fathers with perinatal services, with their children, and with their partners during pregnancy and early parenthood


A series of sexist, heterosexist, age-ist, and racist observations!



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FAMILY DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXT

U-Shaped Curve of Marital Happiness






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MEN'S SOCIALIZATION — "DADDY 1.0"

Traditional Masculinity (Brannon, 1976)

1. Antifemininity- "No Sissy Stuff"
2. Status and Achievement — "The Big Wheel"
3. Inexpressiveness and Independence "The Study Oak"
4. Adventurousness and Aggressiveness "Give 'Em Hell"

- Dad's Role Is To Support Mom And Earn
- Uninvolved with Children 0-5




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MEN'S SOCIALIZATION — "DADDY 2.0"

Generative Fathers (Hawkins & Dollahite, 1996)
"The task of establishing and guiding the next generation."

Nontraditional Masculine Norms
Nurturing, Hands-On Care of Child
Emotionally Open to Mom and Baby
Few Models of Generative Fathers — "Generation Gap"

Mental Health Implications
Changing Roles Brings Stress/Uncertainty
One in 10 have depression, One in 20 have PTSD
History of MH Issues/Abuse/Trauma
Gender Role Conflict — ↑ MH probs, ↓ Help-Seeking


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THE FATHERHOOD ROLE

(ROSENBERG & WILCOX, 2006)

- Fostering a positive relationship with the child's mother
- Spending time with the child
- Nurturing the child
- Disciplining appropriately
- Serving as a guide to the outside world
- Protecting and providing
- Being a role model


BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH MOM AND BABY



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ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Aggressive	Assertive	Passive
Only MY Needs matter	BOTH of our needs matter	Only YOUR Needs matter



Do **NOT** try to fix or win right off the bat

- **ASK:** Find out specifically why the issue is important to him/her
- **LISTEN:** Active listening – ask 3 open questions, followed by a restatement
- **ASSERT:** Communicate why this is important to you
- **COMPROMISE:** THEN find the common ground about what to do

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WHY IS FATHERHOOD INVOLVEMENT IMPORTANT?

Parenting of children 0-5 is really just mothering, right?

Child Outcomes:


- Higher IQ, school readiness, social skills, emotional regulation, and empathy
- Increased attachment, emotional security, popularity, independence

Paternal Outcomes:

- Fewer mental health issues
- Increased confidence, parenting satisfaction, relationship satisfaction

Maternal Outcomes:


- Fewer mental health issues
- Increased responsiveness, confidence, and affection



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BARRIERS TO FATHER INVOLVEMENT

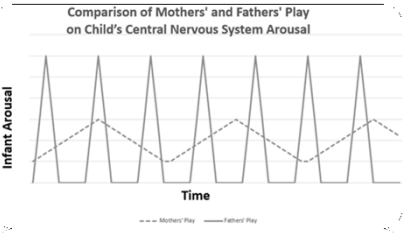
- Blended / Inconsistent Family Structure
- Substance Use
- Fathers' AND Mothers' Socialization
- Low Self- And Other-Efficacy
- Anxiety/Gatekeeping**
- Custody Arrangements/CPS
- Work/Life Balance



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WHAT EXACTLY DOES DAD CONTRIBUTE?


Comparison of Mothers' and Fathers' Play on Child's Central Nervous System Arousal



Infant Arousal

Time

--- Mothers' Play — Fathers' Play




One-on-One High-Intensity Interactions Promote Emotional and Behavioral Regulation

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ATTACHMENT AND THE PATERNAL ACTIVATION RELATIONSHIP

"The affective bond that enables children to open up to the outside world, focusing primarily on parental stimulation of risk-taking and control." (Paquette, 2013)



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ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACE) STUDY



Death

Early Death

Disease, Disability, and Social Problems

Adoption of Health-risk Behaviors

Social, Emotional, & Cognitive Impairment

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Whole Life Perspective

Conception

Scientific Gaps

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DADS' MENTAL HEALTH

Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs)
 Depression, GAD, OCD, PTSD, Psychosis
 10-20% of men experience PMADs during perinatal period
 DSM-5 "with peripartum onset" specifier – 4 weeks postpartum
 Stress brings elevated risk for new episode and relapses
 Men's socialization and expression of "weak" emotions
 Maternal PPD is the strongest predictor of paternal PPD



MALE "MASKED" DEPRESSION

(COCHRAN & RABINOWITZ, 2000)

- | | |
|---|--|
| Lower stress threshold | Sleep problems |
| Substance use | Feeling anxiety –especially in the morning |
| Aggressiveness, low impulse control | Abusive, hyperactive, or antisocial behavior |
| Feeling of being burned out and empty | Depressive thoughts |
| Constant, inexplicable tiredness | Criticizing |
| Irritability, restlessness, dissatisfaction | The "withdrawal response" |
| Difficulty making ordinary everyday decisions | |

ANGER, ADDICTION, AND WITHDRAWAL

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

Screen Dads Early – "Whole Family Approach to Wellness"
 Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale – Subscales; Lower Cutoff
 PHQ-2 and PHQ-9
 Beck Depression Inventory II
 Beck Anxiety Inventory
 Paternal Involvement with Infants Scale
 KNOW HOW TO REFER BASED ON RESULTS!

PATERNAL INVOLVEMENT WITH INFANTS SCALE (PIWIS-35)

The only theory-based, psychometrically validated self-report measure of fathers' involvement with their infants.

Subscales assess:

- Warmth and Attunement - "Smiling at your baby"
- Control and Process Responsibility – "Setting baby's schedule/activities"
- Frustrations – "Feeling jealous of your partner's connection with your baby"
- Indirect Care – "Taking baby to medical appointments"
- Positive Engagement – "Feeding your baby"

NEW DADS GAME PLAN

"You should do everything but nurse the baby ASAP"
 Learn about the child's development – scaffolding
 Weekly "state of the union" meeting with mom
 Weekly "family operations" meeting with mom
 Providing more than materially – "Be the best you"
 Communicate assertively with mom
 Diversify social support portfolio – connect with other dads
 Expectant dads – take my Basic Training for New Dads class 😊
 Getting therapy with a "coach"



WHAT CAN MOMS DO?

- Give dad "alone time" with child
- Encourage dad to hang-out-with-buddies get social support Guilt-Free
- Get their own social support needs met
- Recognize that dads' approach to parenting is different, not necessarily bad
- Manage own mental health



COUPLE

- Keeping the relationship strong starts between your ears, THEN between the partners
- Did mom or dad experience ACEs?
- Reflective parenting/partnering
- Actively cultivate and use social support outside of the relationship
- Foster awareness that dad's involvement might look different than mom's, but his engagement with baby is important for everyone's sake.
- Foster empathy and understanding regarding their own and/or partner's abuse/trauma
- Actively work to have a clear understanding of perinatal medical care "decision trees" and required resources in the event of complications.

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ORGANIZATIONS / PROVIDERS

- Always assess moms' AND dads' mental health
- Healer, know thyself - Check your assumptions
- Ask the tough questions, assess with EPDS and know how to refer!
- Familiarize yourself with resources
- Is your organization set up to foster fathers' attunement with moms and babies?

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FATHER INVOLVEMENT AND THE WORKPLACE

What Are Your Organization's Official and Unofficial Stances on Work/Life Balance and Family Leave?

How Is Your Organization Already Father-Inclusive?

How Are You Lacking in Father-Inclusiveness?

Given Time and Resource Constraints – What Is a Concrete Next Step to Enhance Father Inclusiveness in Your Setting?



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RESOURCES

Basic Training for New Dads – www.menexcel.com
 Postpartum Health Alliance – www.postpartumhealthalliance.org
 Postpartum Support International – www.postpartum.net
 Strategies Father Involvement - <http://www.familyresourcecenters.net/projects-2/supporting-father-involvement/about/>
 Dudes to Dads - www.meetup.com/Dudes-To-Dads-North-San-Diego
 The Good Men Project - <http://goodmenproject.com/category/families/>
 Daddit - <http://www.reddit.com/r/daddit>
 Dad Labs - <http://www.dadlabs.com/>
 National Fatherhood Initiative – www.fatherhood.org

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THANKS VERY MUCH!



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**"You can't babysit your own kid –
that's called 'fathering.'"**



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