

Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

Father Involvement in Early Childhood Programs A Key Topic Resource List July 2008

Research Connections conducted a comprehensive search of its collection for resources focused on **father involvement** in early childhood programs. This Key Topic Resource List includes an overview of the topic and listing of selected resources. While research on this topic is still emerging, resources of various types including reports and papers, fact sheets and briefs, summaries, and reviews are included.

Selection criteria included policy relevance and relatively recent publication (1999 to present). Based on the search results, resources were grouped into the following categories:

- o Father involvement in early childhood programs
- o Head Start/Early Head Start father initiatives

Within each category, resources are organized according to publisher type and publication date. *Research Connections'* one-sentence descriptions are included for each resource. For complete citations, which include abstracts and full text for some resources, click on the titles.

Overview:

Much research has demonstrated that fathers' involvement in their children's lives and education is linked to better child outcomes. Given these associations, early childhood programs, researchers, and policymakers have sought to understand how best to involve fathers in early childhood programs. Newly emerging research asks the following:

- o How interested are fathers in participating in their child's early education?
- o Are fathers engaged in bringing their child to care, communicating with their child care provider, and/or family "group" activities?
- o How have early childhood programs tried to engage fathers?
- o Are fathers more likely to be involved with specific father initiatives in early childhood programs?

Some child care and early education programs have made efforts to involve fathers. Federal early education programs like Head Start and Early Head Start, given federal mandates to involve fathers, have led the way in creating initiatives specifically aimed at fathers. The research on Head Start and Early Head Start explores effective practices for engaging fathers in early childhood programs and how father involvement in child care programs can lead to better child outcomes.

More evaluation and outcome studies are needed to better understand how participation in father initiatives is linked to child outcomes and whether father initiatives are cost effective.

Acknowledgements:

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Father Involvement in Early Childhood Programs

Government

- **United States. Child Care Bureau. (2004).** [Promoting responsible fatherhood through child care](#) Vienna, VA: National Child Care Information Center.
A discussion of the role of fathers in early childhood programs
- **United States. Department of Education. (2000).** [A call to commitment: Fathers' involvement in children's learning](#). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
A review of the research on father involvement and an overview of strategies to improve father's involvement in their children's education and model programs

Journals

- **Fagan, Jay. (2007).** [Research on children's environmental programmatic efforts](#) *Applied Developmental Science*, 11(4), 260-265.
A review of literature on father involvement in early childhood programs, focusing on fathers' attitudes towards involvement, patterns, levels, and correlates of involvement, and studies about fatherhood initiatives and their impact on fathers and children
- **Rimm-Kaufman, Sara E., and Zhang, Yubo. (2005).** [Father-school communication in preschool and kindergarten](#). *School Psychology Review*, 34(3), 287-308.
An examination of father-school communication during the preschool and kindergarten years, investigating the frequency of communication, how does the communication change upon kindergarten entry, and which family factors affect the amount of father-school communication.
- **Green, Stephen. (2003).** [Reaching out to fathers: An examination of staff efforts that lead to greater father involvement in early childhood programs](#) *Early Childhood Research & Practice*, 5(2).
An assessment of early childhood educators' efforts to involve fathers in their programs and to determine which efforts most successfully lead to greater father involvement

- **Ray, Aisha. (2002).** [Engaging fathers: Issues and considerations for early childhood educators.](#) *YC Young Children*, 57(6), 32-42.
A consideration of issues faced by fathers involved in the care, development, and education of their preschool-age children, and the implications of this involvement for early childhood educators
- **Stile, Stephen W., and Ortiz, Robert W. (2002).** [Providing training to fathers in early literacy through community-university partnerships.](#) *NHSA Dialog*, 5(2&3), 429-443.
A description of Project DADS, a training program for fathers participating in early literacy activities with their children
- **McBride, Brent A.; Rane, Thomas R.; & Bae, Ji-Hi. (2001).** [Intervening with teachers to encourage father/male involvement in early childhood programs](#) *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 16(1), 77-93.
An empirical evaluation of a program designed to facilitate father/male involvement in prekindergarten programs for at-risk children
- **Turbiville, Vicki P., Marquis, Janet G. (2001).** [Father participation in early education programs.](#) *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 21(4), 223-231.
A survey to determine the preferred forms of participation of fathers in their children's early education programs, based on a random sample of 318 fathers from six states
- **Stile, Stephanie, & Ortiz, Robert W. (1999).** [A model for involvement of fathers in literacy development with young at-risk and exceptional children](#) *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 26(4), 221-224.
An overview of a model to help early childhood educators encourage fathers to become involved with their young, at-risk children; themes of the model include early social interaction, shared book reading, incidental pre-literacy activities, and school involvement

Universities & Research Organizations

- **Avenilla, Frank, Rosenthal, Emily, and Tice, Pete. (2006).** [Fathers of U.S. children born in 2001: Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort \(ECLS-B\)](#) (E.D. Tab, NCES 2006-002). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
Findings from a survey of biological fathers of sampled children in the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), including data on fathers' demographic characteristics, attitudes about fathering, and involvement in child care
- **Fagan, Jay, and Hawkins, Alan. (2001).** [Clinical and educational interventions with fathers.](#) Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.
Descriptions of therapeutic and educational programs designed to enhance fathering skills and promote paternal family involvement in select populations of American men

Head Start/Early Head Start Father Involvement

Government

- **United States. Head Start Bureau. (2004). [Father involvement: Building strong programs for strong families](#). Head Start Bulletin, 77.**
A report exploring why and how fathers should be involved in Head Start programs.

Journals

- **Boller, Kimberley, Bradley, Robert H., Cabrera, Natasha J., Raikes, Helen, Pan, Barbara A., Shears, Jeffrey, Roggman, Lori A. (2006). [The Early Head Start Father Studies: Design, data collection, and summary of father presence in the lives of infants and toddlers](#) Parenting: Science and Practice, 6(2-3), 117-143.**
An overview of the Early Head Start Father Studies, describing the study methodology, response rates, father demographics, and father child relationship
- **Bradley, Robert H., Shears, Jeffrey, Roggman, Lori A., Tamis-LeMonda, Catherine S. (2006). [Lessons learned from Early Head Start for fatherhood research and program development](#) Parenting: Science and Practice, 6(2-3), 259-271.**
A summary of findings from the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project in relation to the fatherhood studies and the implications of these findings for future research
- **Raikes, Helen. (2006). [Two studies of father involvement in Early Head Start programs: A national survey and a demonstrated program evaluation](#). Parenting: Science and Practice, 6(2-3), 229-242.**
A study examining the extent to which fathers are present as participants in Early Head Start programs using data from the National Practitioners Survey and from the Fatherhood Demonstration Study
- **Raikes, Helen, Summers, Jean Ann, Roggman, Lori A. (2005). [Father involvement in Early Head Start programs](#). Fathering, 3(1), 29-58.**
This report describes the involvement levels, based on program-level data, of fathers participating in Early Head Start programs.
- **McAllister, Carol L., Wilson, Patrick C., Burton, Jeffrey. (2004). [From sports fans to nurturers: An Early Head Start program's evolution toward father involvement](#) Fathering, 2(1), 31-59.**
An examination of the Pittsburgh Early Head Start program's efforts to support and strengthen fathers' involvement in the lives of their infants and toddlers
- **Roggman, Lori A., Boyce, Lisa K., Cook, Gina A., Christiansen, Katie, Jones, DeAnn. (2004). [Playing with daddy: Social toy play, Early Head Start, and developmental outcomes](#). Fathering, 2(1), 83-108.**
An assessment of the impact of Early Head Start program participation on father's social toy play with their children.

- **Summers, Jean Ann, Boller, Kimberley, Raikes, Helen. (2004). [Preferences and perceptions about getting support expressed by low-income fathers](#) *Fathering*, 2(1), 61-82.**
A survey of fathers of children participating in Early Head Start to determine their perceptions of available supports for enhancing their fathering roles.
- **Fagan, Jay, and Stevenson, Howard C. (2002). [An experimental study of an empowerment-based intervention for African American Head Start fathers](#). *Family Relations*, 51(3), 191-198.**
An examination of the effects of Men as Teachers, an empowerment-based intervention program, on African American Head Start fathers' attitudes regarding their ability to teach their preschool children.
- **Roggman, Lori A., Boyce, Lisa K., Cook, Gina A., Cook, Jerry. (2002). [Getting dads involved: Predictors of father involvement in Early Head Start and with their children](#) *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 23(1-2), 62-78.**
An identification of characteristics associated with fathers' involvement in their children's lives and in Early Head Start programs, based on a sample of 72 low-income fathers in rural areas of Utah and Idaho

Universities & Research Organizations

- **Burwick, Andrew, Bellotti, Jeanne. (2005). [Creating paths to father involvement: Lessons from Early Head Start](#), (Issue Brief No. 1). Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research.**
An overview of lessons learned from the design, implementation, and operation of 21 programs intended to involve low-income fathers in intervention programs for young children
- **Vogel, Cheri, Boller, Kimberley, Faerber, Jennifer, Shannon, Jacqueline D., and Tamis-LeMonda, Catherine S. (2003). [Understanding fathering: The Early Head Start study of fathers of newborns](#) Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research.**
A study of the involvement of low-income fathers in the development of their birth to 14 month-old children, based on a sample of 108 fathers in 10 states
- **Downer, Jason T. (2003). [Multidimensional father involvement and its association with Head Start children's school readiness](#). Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of South Carolina, Columbia.**
A study of the impact of different measures of father involvement, including observations of father-child play interactions, on Head Start children's school readiness
- **Gorvine, Benjamin J. (2002). [Fathers and father figures of Head Start children: A study of the effects of involvement on children's socioemotional development](#). Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.**
An examination of father involvement in the Head Start program, focusing on predictors of father involvement and the effects of involvement on Head Start children's socioemotional development

- Raikes, Helen, Boller, Kimberley, van Kammen, Welmoet, Summers, Jean Ann, Raikes, H. Abigail, Laible, Debbie, Wilcox, Brian, Ontai, Lenna, Christensen, Lanette. (2002). [Father involvement in Early Head Start programs: A practitioners study](#). Lincoln: University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Center on Children, Families, and the Law.
A survey of 261 Early Head Start programs on father involvement in program activities.
- Rich, Susan. (2002). [A study of African American fathers' involvement with their preschool children](#). Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ.
A study examining African-American fathers' involvement with their Head Start children and their personal views of involvement through surveys and focus groups
- Fagan, Jay. (1999). [Predictors of father and father figure involvement in pre-kindergarten Head Start](#). Philadelphia: National Center on Fathers and Families.
A study of the factors associated with fathers' involvement in urban Head Start programs, based on a sample of 134 fathers and 23 teachers
- Fagan, Jay. (1999). [Father involvement program effects on fathers, father figures, and their Head Start children: A quasi-experimental study](#) *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 14(2), 243-269.
An evaluation of the effects of participation in an early intervention program designed to increase the rate of father participation in their young children's Head Start programs

To suggest additions to this Key Topic Resource List, please email us at contact@researchconnections.org.

To view and sort the full search results from which these resources were selected, including any resources added to the collection since selection of the Resource List, use the Create Updated Search Results function. The full results came from a key word search on "father*" in the title and "father involvement" exact phrase between the dates 1999 to the present.