A study of select barriers that adversely impact father's participation and family reunification of foster care children in the state of Georgia

Jimmy L. Wilson
Clark Atlanta University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations
Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in ETD Collection for AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. For more information, please contact cwiseman@auctr.edu.
The purpose of the study is to determine in what ways incarceration, undocumented paternity, substance abuse, and parental conflict create barriers to father involvement and family reunification with children in the Georgia foster care system. The study is designed to explore the impact that child welfare workers have on these four major barriers preventing fathers' lack of participation.

The participants of the study are social workers and case managers who work with fathers and their children who are in the custody of the Georgia Department of Human Services foster care system. In addition, this study explores ways in which social work practices mandate the importance of reaching out to fathers in every client's case.
As well, consideration is given to the historic, cultural and psychosocial barriers that the child welfare system must address in the family reunification process.

Furthermore, this study challenges the child welfare system to offer services and make intentional efforts to engage the fathers' participation in all aspects of their child's case including, but not limited to, assessments, medical treatment and family conferences. Finally, this study further advocates a paradigm shift in the culture of the child welfare system to fulfill the goal of foster care, which is family reunification.
A STUDY OF SELECT BARRIERS THAT ADVERSELY IMPACT FATHERS’ PARTICIPATION AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION OF FOSTER CARE CHILDREN IN THE STATE OF GEORGIA

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
JIMMY L. WILSON

WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR., SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY 2014
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express thanks to the following individuals for their guidance and encouragement with this work: Dr. Richard Lyle, Dr. Robert Waymer, Dr. Carolyn L. Gordon, Dr. Tonya Malone, Ms. Claudette Rivers-King, Ms. Cynthia Winzer, Ms. Sheila Williams, Mrs. Joyce A. Peoples, and Ms. Margaret Wilson Harper. This study is dedicated in memory of my loving mother, Mrs. Novella Clark Wilson. When I think about the sweetness of my mother, I pause and thank God for loving me through my mom. All that I am and ever hope to be, I owe it to Christ who used my mother to enrich my life. Thank you God for the life of Novella Clark Wilson who lives in and through me today. It is because of her that I worked this mission and stayed the course.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</strong></td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIST OF TABLES</strong></td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION...</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE...</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Perspective of Foster Care</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarceration</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undocumented Paternity</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Conflict</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatherhood and Culture</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino Fathers</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American Fathers</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American Fathers</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay Fathers</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Reunification of Foster Care Children</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Framework</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. METHODOLOGY...</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the Site</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample and Population</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Data</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

(continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Data</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions and Hypotheses</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarcerated Fathers</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undocumented Paternity</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Conflict among Fathers</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.................79

Conclusions........................................79
Recommendations...................................83

APPENDICES..........................................85

Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter..................86
Appendix B: Letter of Approval to Administer Survey Questionnaire......87
Appendix C: Informed Consent......................88
Appendix D: Survey Questionnaire..................89
Appendix E: SPSS Program Analysis.................91

REFERENCES.........................................97
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Demographic Data of Study Respondents</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Incarcerated Fathers</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Undocumented Paternity</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Substance Abuse</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Parental Conflict</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 INCARCE • Incarceration - Computed Variable</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 ESTABLI • Undocumented Paternity - Computed Variable</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 SUBABUS • Substance Abuse - Computed Variable</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9 CONFLIC • Parental Conflict - Computed Variable</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10 Parental Conflict by Incarceration</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11 Undocumented Paternity by Incarceration</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12 Parental Conflict by Undocumented Paternity</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13 Undocumented Paternity by Substance Abuse</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Within the foster care system, social work practitioners tend to work more with mothers than fathers. This practice undermines the management of risk and limits the number of resources available for children in the child welfare system. While acknowledging the importance of the legal and biological concept of fatherhood, the term ‘fathers’ in this study is used more inclusively. The term refers to men who have a significant role in the foster child’s life, including biological fathers, legal fathers, and social fathers (stepfathers, mothers’ boyfriend/male friends and male relatives). We do so because it is the failure to engage men who have a significant role in the child’s life, and not just those men who legally have parental responsibility or are biological fathers, that is problematic for the safeguarding of children (Wiley, 2012).

Fathers have been a challenging population for social workers and other helping professionals to effectively engage and serve (Greif, 2011). Providing father-friendly service, joining with fathers, holding them accountable for their behavior, and addressing their relationship with their child and the mother of their child through couples work are needed along with other interventions (Greif, 2011).

Biological, legal, and social fathers provide emotional, physical, and financial supports to children. Child welfare policies and practices related to involving fathers
and/or their families in case planning and services are almost nonexistent (English, 2009). Excluding fathers from participation in the reunification process has had an adverse impact on their children thus contributing to a number of social problems. Fathers are almost never contacted by child welfare workers (O’Donnell, 1999). This lack of contact leaves out a significant component when it comes to permanency planning for children.

The primary goal of foster care is family reunification; therefore, the involvement of fathers is crucial in achieving this goal. The impact of such an involvement has the potential to revolutionize the culture of the child welfare system. The ancient African proverb states, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Given the truth of this proverb, social workers and other helping professionals must engage fathers to take their place in the child welfare village seriously in order to reunite with their children.

Statement of the Problem

The number of American youth entering the foster care system is increasing. Escalating school dropout rates, social isolation, poverty, and poor health care are just a few social concerns that point to the need for father involvement in the life of their children. Fathers must become an active participant in the child welfare process of family reunification.

Attempting to develop an agreement of understanding between the child welfare system and father involvement has negatively impacted the role of biological, legal and social fathers associated with the foster care system. The definition of fatherhood as defined by child welfare for the most part is limited to financial support, cohabitation,
and legal documentation of paternity, which is not aligned with many fathers’ perspectives on what fatherhood means. This definition difference is compounded by the fact that fathers are disproportionately classified as nonresident, noncustodial fathers – a status which by limiting legal access to their children limits their parental involvement (Perry, 2009).

According to focus groups with experienced social workers and supervisors, this classification status carries with it an assumption among child welfare workers that they are indifferent and irresponsible parents (Perry, 2009). Furthermore, using financial support as a baseline for paternal involvement in the child welfare system discourages those parenting activities, which are not tied to the father’s ability to serve as breadwinner and put those fathers who are of the lower socioeconomic status at a disadvantage as they seek alternate ways to provide for their children (Perry, 2009). It cannot be over emphasized that the barriers that prevent the process of reunification must be addressed for those fathers who desire to reunite with their children.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine in what ways incarceration, undocumented paternity, substance abuse, and parental conflict create barriers to father involvement and family reunification with children in the Georgia foster care system. The study is designed to explore the impact that child welfare workers have on these four major barriers preventing fathers’ lack of participation.
The participants of the study are social workers and case managers who work with fathers and their children who are in the custody of the Georgia Department of Human Services foster care system.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are as follows:

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and parental conflict among fathers?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and undocumented paternity among fathers?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between undocumented paternity and parental conflict among fathers?
4. Is there a statistically significant relationship between substance abuse and undocumented paternity among fathers?

Hypotheses

The null hypotheses for this study were as follows:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and parental conflict among fathers.
2. There is no statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and undocumented paternity among fathers.
3. There is no statistically significant relationship between undocumented paternity and parental conflict among fathers.
4. There is no statistically significant relationship between substance abuse and undocumented paternity among fathers.

Significance of the Study

In order to increase fathers’ participation in the family reunification process within the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services foster care system, child welfare professionals must take an in depth observation of the barriers preventing participation and offer interventions that would lead to active participation in the family reunification process. This study evaluates the impact that first responders/child welfare workers contribute to sustaining those barriers.

This study explores ways in which social work practices mandate the importance of reaching out to fathers in every client’s case. As well, consideration is given to the historic, cultural and psychosocial barriers that the child welfare system must address in the family reunification process. Furthermore, this study challenges the child welfare system to offer services and make intentional efforts to engage the fathers’ participation in all aspects of their child’s case including, but not limited to, assessments, medical treatment and family conferences. Finally, this study further advocates a paradigm shift in the culture of the child welfare system to fulfill the goal of foster care, which is family reunification.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this literature review is to establish a scholarly foundation that substantiates the need for the study. This chapter is a review of the current literature on the recent strides to engage fathers in participation and family reunification with their children in foster care. The review covers a historical perspective of foster care, and the barriers of participation: incarceration, undocumented paternity, substance abuse, and parental conflict. Cultural differences among fathers and highlights of their interactions between the child welfare workers will be explored. The review outlines the disenfranchisement of fathers and explores the historic, cultural and psychosocial basis of current child welfare practice. This literature review explores the benefit of improved engagement with fathers and will provide suggestions for improving child welfare practice in this neglected area.

Historical Perspective of Foster Care

Historical documentation of children being cared for in foster homes can be located in the Old Testament and the Talmud. These documents establish caring for dependent children as a responsibility under law. Ancient Christian church records verify children were provided room and board with worthy widows who were paid by offerings from the congregation (NFPA, 2012).
Because of the English Poor Law, the development and eventual regulation of family foster care was established in the United States. In 1562, these laws permitted the placement of poverty-stricken children into indentured service status, until they came of age. This practice transitioned to the United States and was the formation of placing children into homes. Even though indentured service condoned abuse and exploitation, it was a step forward from almshouses where children did not learn a skill and were exposed to disgusting surroundings and unsavory adults. Various types of indenturing children continued into the first decade of this century (NFPA, 2012).

In 1636, about thirty years after the formulation of the Jamestown Colony, Benjamin Eaton, at the age of seven, became this nation's first foster child (NFPA, 2012). Charles Loring Brace, in 1853, began what was known as the free foster home movement. A minister and director of the New York Children's Aid Society, Brace was concerned about the massive number of immigrant children, who were homeless, and sleeping in the streets of New York. He created a plan to provide homes for these children by advertising in the South and West for families willing to provide free homes for children, whether for charitable reasons or whatever assistance these children could be to them. In several cases, these children were placed in circumstances similar to indenture. However, Brace's persistent and creative action became the foundation for the foster care movement, as we know it today (NFPA, 2012).

As a result of the New York Children's Aid Society's placements, sectarian social agencies and state governments became involved in foster home placements. Three states led the movement. Massachusetts, prior to 1865, began paying board to families who took care of children too young to be indentured. Pennsylvania passed the first licensing
law in 1885, which made it a misdemeanor to care for two or more unrelated children without a license. South Dakota began providing subsidies to the Children's Home Society after it was organized in 1893 for its public child care work (NFPA, 2012).

During the early 1900's, social agencies began to supervise foster parents. Records were kept, children's individual needs were considered when placements were made, and the federal government began supporting state inspections of family foster homes. Services were provided to natural families to enable the child to return home and foster parents were now seen as part of a professional team working to find permanency for dependent children (NFPA, 2012).

In the United States, methods of providing child welfare have been determined by the popular attitudes and philosophies of the age. During our nation's history, adults considered children as simply property, plain numbers or the keys to social control. Attitudes began to change with the emergent theories of Freud regarding nurturance, infancy and development. In more recent years, the public began to define parental abuse and neglect as a responsibility of the federal government. In response, children were placed in children's homes and orphanages until society regarded the family as essential to child well being. Children were then placed in foster homes, and with time, significance was granted to providing a permanent, loving home for the child. Today, attitudes toward child welfare focus on permanent homes and in-home services for parents. Follow the progress of America's answer to child welfare in the subsequent paragraphs. The following is a brief timeline of child welfare in America (NFPA, 2012).

During the 1700s, orphans and children whose parents could not care for them were often indentured to work for other families (NFPA, 2012). In the 1800s, private
religious and charitable organizations established the first orphanages by concerned groups such as the New York Orphan Asylum Society and the New York Children’s Aid Society. Investing in morals and humane treatment, Charles Loring Brace led Orphan Trains of orphaned or immigrant children from New York to the South and West to live with families there. It should be noted that South Dakota began providing subsidies to the Children’s Home Society* (CHS) after it was organized in 1893 for its public child care work (NFPA, 2012).

Around 1900, the first state laws to prevent child abuse and neglect were passed. For instance, the Social Security Act of 1935 authorized the first grants from the government for child welfare services. This allowed the states to develop child welfare agencies and services (NFPA, 2012).

The 1960s was a time when children’s rights and their best interests were paramount, as represented in a court ruling that determined states could not ignore a child’s needs on the basis of belonging to an unsuitable household (born out of wedlock). As a result to this ruling and several others supporting it, a growing number of children were placed out of the home in the mid to late 1960s (NFPA, 2012).

During the 1970s, reporting laws and expectations for investigating the abuse or neglect of children became clearer via the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) that required states to develop child abuse reporting procedures and investigation systems. Also, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978 allowed for all child welfare court proceedings involving Native American children to be heard in tribal courts. In addition, tribes were given the right to intervene in state court proceedings (NFPA, 2012).
Creation of intensive home-based services became popular (in the 1980s) as a means of preserving the family. Most significantly, the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 was passed, allowing for the first major federal role in administration and oversight services of child welfare. The law called for states to develop a plan stating how child welfare services would be delivered while also requiring states to make reasonable efforts to keep families together. As a result, in the early 1980s the number of children in foster care and the average time of stay decreased (NFPA, 2012).

In the 1990s, despite the trend of the early years of the previous decade, between 1986 and 1995, the number of children in foster care increased from 280,000 to nearly 500,000 a 76 percent increase, possibly due to social phenomenon such as the economic slowdown and crack cocaine epidemic. Accordingly, the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997 was passed to address three specific concerns: 1) Length of time children remained in foster care was too long; 2) The trend toward family preservation proved to be at the expense of children’s safety and well being; and 3) Adoption as an option for permanent placement of abused and neglected children was not given adequate attention or resources (NFPA, 2012).

Barriers to Participation

Incarceration

The first barrier preventing fathers from participating and reuniting with their children, in foster care, is incarceration. Incarceration is defined as a state of being imprisoned or confined. In the United States, various types of institutions are used to
incarcerated persons convicted of crime. There are state prisons and local jails for adults
convicted in state courts; federal prisons for persons convicted in federal courts; and
various types of residential institutions (for example, training schools) for juveniles
found delinquent in juvenile courts (US legal, 2013). Fathers who are incarcerated are
not only convicts they are also parents. The family role and responsibilities of these
fathers are not the focal point of institutional policies, child welfare services, or scholarly
research (Hairston, 1998).

Family centered practice is the treatment modality practiced by child welfare
professionals. Fathers are either intentionally or unintentionally left out to this practice
model. Reunification services are concentrated around the mother (Huebner, 2008).

Many children, besides those in foster care, have an incarcerated parent, and this
number continues to grow. Since the early 1990s, the prison population has almost
doubled from a little fewer than 800,000 in 1991 to more than 1.5 million in 2009. A
good number of these incarcerated individuals have children. As of 2007, an estimated
1.7 million children under the age of 18 had at least one parent in prison—an increase of
over 80 percent since 1991. Fathers comprise more than 90 percent of incarcerated
parents in prison and their numbers continued to climb to about 75 percent between 1991
and 2007. In the meantime, the number of incarcerated mothers, who were more likely to
be primary caretakers before incarceration, more than doubled during this timeframe.
Minority children are disproportionately more likely to have an incarcerated parent
compared to white children. In 2007, black (non-Hispanic) children were seven times
more likely to have a parent who is incarcerated and Hispanic children were two times
more likely (Bureau of Justice, 2013).
Hairston, in the article, The Forgotten Parent states that fathers who are incarcerated are not just convicts; they have sons and daughters. Many have the same dreams and aspirations for their children as other fathers and share some of the same parental responsibilities and obligations. Their children and families have expectations of them as well, although those expectations are frequently restrained by the realities of incarceration. The family position and responsibilities of incarcerated fathers, however, are rarely the focus of institutional policies, scholarly research, or child welfare practice/services. Limited family-oriented programs are provided for incarcerated fathers or their children. The relationship between the father and child are generally dismissed as unimportant or ignored in broader efforts to strengthen families and promote children's welfare (Hairston, 1998).

According to Roettger and Swisher (2011), nearly 13 percent of young adult men report that their biological father has served time in jail or prison; yet surprisingly little research has examined how a father's incarceration is associated with delinquency and arrest in the contemporary United States. Using a national panel of Black, White, and Hispanic males, their study examines whether experiencing paternal incarceration is associated with increased delinquency in adolescence and young adulthood. They discover a positive association with paternal incarceration that is robust to controls for several structural, familial, and adolescent characteristics. Relative to males not experiencing a father's incarceration, their results show that those experiencing a father's incarceration have an increased propensity for delinquency that persists into young adulthood. Using a national probability sample, they uncover that a father's incarceration is highly and significantly associated with an increased risk of incurring an adult arrest
before 25 years of age. These observed associations are similar across groups of Black, White, and Hispanic males. Taken as a whole, their findings suggest benefits from public policies that focus on male youth at risk as a result of having an incarcerated father (Roettger & Swisher, 2011).

A number of factors lead to the inclusion of incarcerated fathers as an important and needed strategy in societal efforts to advance and enhance children and families' well-being. There are the millions of children whose fathers are incarcerated, and the millions whose fathers have been, or will be, incarcerated, and the millions more who will go through many life cycles while their fathers are incarcerated. Our knowledge and understanding of the position of fathers in child development, of the negative impact of parental separation and absence on children, and of the need to have regular parent-child contact in sustaining meaningful parent-child relationships during periods of separation. The critical impact that the disproportionate number of African Americans incarcerated has on their communities and the resulting expectation of imprisonment as a part of the African-American experience, is an important factor in maintaining and supporting families (Moore 1996).

Hairston explores major issues that must be understood and addressed when creating policies and providing services, which promote the maintenance of parent-child relationships and responsible parenting when fathers are incarcerated. He describes the family roles and structures of men incarcerated and compare differences between public perceptions and the real-life experiences of incarcerated parents. The manner in which correctional policies and child welfare practices influence and shape fathers' parenting abilities and father-child relationships are addressed. Strategies for creating a supportive
father friendly environment for their children and families are recommended (Hairston, 1998).

Liz Walker (2009) presents analyses of key findings from narrative interviews with 16 ex-offender fathers. All fathers interviewed served custodial sentences, ranging from 6 months to 14 years, and were on license at the time of interview. Her research focuses on the ways in which this group, of marginal men, reflects on their perceptions, practices and aspirations as fathers. She seeks to understand how they make sense of fathering in the context of criminality. Her research demonstrates the social, cultural and economic context in which many of these men are parenting is very complex and demanding. It points to the impact of prison on their relationships with their children and partners and highlights the role of their families in supporting their parenting/fathering (Walker, 2009). Walker argues that the costs of crime/imprisonment for many of these men is very high and that fathering can be productive, resourceful and generative in the ‘context of offending’, where the deficit model of fathering is the norm (Walker, 2009).

The Government Office of Accountability (GOA) states that foster care children with an incarcerated parent are not a well-identified population, although they are likely to number in the tens of thousands. Health and Human Services (HHS) data collected from states reveal that, in 2009 more than 14,000 children entered foster care, in part, due to at least one parent being incarcerated. This figure is probably an undercount, however, because of underreporting from states and other factors. For instance, the data does not identify when a parent is incarcerated after the child entered foster care—a more common occurrence, according to social/case workers interviewed by the Government Office of Accountability. Health and Human Services is presently developing a proposal
for new state reporting requirements concerning all foster care children; however it remains to be seen if officials would include more information collected from states on children with incarcerated parents (GOA, 2013).

A survey was conducted, in 10 selected states, and the GAO found a range of strategies, which support family connections. Many state child welfare agencies have provided guidance and training to social/caseworkers for managing such cases; and local agencies have worked with dependency courts to help inmates participate in child welfare hearings by telephone or other technological means. Many correctional agencies ease children's visits to prisons with special visitation hours and specialized programs. In a number of cases, correctional agencies and child welfare agencies have collaborated, which has resulted in some interagency training for personnel, video visitation conducted by non-profit providers, and the creation of liaison staff positions, (GOA, 2013).

Health and Human Services and Department of Justice (DOJ) provide information and assistance to child welfare and corrections agencies on behalf of children and families. For example, both federal agencies post information on their websites for practitioners working with children or their incarcerated parents, with some specific to foster care. The HHS information, however, was not always up to date or centrally organized, and officials from most of the state child welfare and corrections agencies GAO interviewed said they would benefit from information on how to serve these children. Further, DOJ has not developed protocols for federal prisons under its own jurisdiction for working with child welfare agencies and their staff, although GAO heard from some state and local child welfare officials that collaboration between child welfare and corrections agencies would facilitate their work with foster care children and their
parents. This would also be in keeping with a DOJ agency goal to build partnerships with other entities to improve services and promote reintegration of offenders into communities (GOA, 2013).

Since the mid-1970s, the U.S. imprisonment rate has increased roughly fivefold. As Christopher Wildeman and Bruce Western (2010) explain, the effects of this sea change in the imprisonment rate—commonly called mass imprisonment or the prison boom—have been concentrated among those most likely to form fragile families: poor and minority men with little schooling (Wildeman & Western, 2010). They report that imprisonment diminishes the earnings of adult men, compromises their health, reduces familial resources, and contributes to family breakup.

In addition, contributing to the deficits of poor children thus ensuring that the effects of imprisonment on inequality are transferred inter-generationally. Perversely, incarceration has its most corrosive effects on families whose fathers were involved in neither domestic violence nor violent crime before being imprisoned. Because having a parent go to prison is now so common for poor, minority children and so negatively affects them, the authors argue that mass imprisonment may increase future racial and class inequality—and may even lead to more crime in the long term, thereby undoing any benefits of the prison boom (Wildeman & Western, 2010).

U.S. crime policy has thus, in the name of public safety, produced more vulnerable families and reduced the life chances of their children. Wildeman and Western (2010) advocate several policy reforms, such as limiting prison time for drug offenders and for parolees who violate the technical conditions of their parole, reconsidering...
sentence enhancements for repeat offenders, and expanding supports for prisoners and ex-prisoners (Wildeman and Western, 2010).

Wildeman and Western (2010) argue that criminal justice reform alone will not solve the problems of school failure, joblessness, untreated addiction, and mental illness that pave the way to prison. In fact, focusing solely on criminal justice reforms would repeat the mistakes the nation made during the prison boom: trying to solve deep social problems with criminal justice policies. Addressing those broad problems, they say, requires a greater social commitment to education, public health, and the employment opportunities of low-skilled men and women. The primary sources of order and stability—public safety in its wide sense—are the informal social controls of family and work. Thus, broad social policies hold the promise not only of improving the well being of fragile families, but also, by strengthening families and providing jobs, of contributing to public safety (Wildeman & Western, 2010).

Substance Abuse

The second barrier preventing fathers from participating and reuniting with their children, in foster care, is substance abuse. Substance abuse issues are a major reason for children entering the foster care system. Substance abuse is defined as the overindulgence in or dependence on an addictive substance, especially alcohol or drugs (Webster, 2013).

Research reveals that child welfare professionals favor the biological mothers as the primary care giver and the major focus of services are towards mothers. Fathers are often overlooked, considered dangerous or just totally viewed as unnecessary. Several
evidence-based practices have been designed for women in substance abuse treatment, and men are offered little to no services to overcome substance abuse addiction (Thompson, 2013).


Alcohol and other drugs abused by primary caretakers is regularly cited as a leading reason for children entering foster care, however, limited research has been conducted to examined the consequences that substance abuse has on the stability of family reunification. Event history analysis showed that children whose reasons for initial placement in foster care included caretakers with both alcohol and drug involvement were much more likely to reenter care following reunification than any of the other groups. However, drug or alcohol involvement as the initial reason for removal was also associated with higher risk of reentry (Brook, 2009).

Limited studies, involving fathers with substance abuse issues, inform us of the frequency and type of father involvement in families who have contact with the child welfare system, and even fewer demonstrate how father involvement relates to child welfare outcomes. A study employed data from a sample of 3,978 families involved with
the U.S. child welfare system, taken from the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being. The degree of father involvement in these families and its relationship to:
(a) caseworkers' perception of children's risk for maltreatment report; and (b) entry into out-of-home care were explored. Results indicate that most caregivers report father involvement, distinct types of father involvement are related to the likelihood of out-of-home care, and households that include non-parental adult males are perceived by caseworkers as relatively risky. No father involvement indicator tested, however, was related to maltreatment report. Implications include the need to appropriately assess, include, and engage fathers across diverse family systems (Bellamy, 2008).

Conner reports the following: Men and women in recovery from addiction were compared on levels of depression and self-conscious affect including proneness to shame, guilt, externalization, detachment, and pride. The sample consisted of 130 subjects (88 men and 42 women; mean age 33.04), 90 of who were active participants in a 12-step recovery program, and 40 of who were in a residential treatment community. Subjects completed The Beck Depression Inventory and The Test of Self-Conscious Affect. Significant differences between the sexes were found for proneness to shame, detachment, and depression. Women were significantly higher on shame and depression; men were significantly higher on detachment. The subjects were compared to subjects who were not chemically dependent. It was found that these recovering drug-addicted subjects scored significantly higher in proneness to shame and externalization and significantly lower on proneness to guilt. Treatment implications of proneness to shame in the drug-addicted population, and particularly in women, are discussed. The use of confrontational drug treatment strategies may be contraindicated (Connor, 2002).
Osterling (2008) informs us as child welfare systems across the country face the problem of parental substance abuse, there is an increasing need to understand the types of treatment approaches that are most effective for substance-abusing parents in the child welfare system—the majority of whom are mothers. This structured review of the literature focuses on evidence related to two areas: (1) individual-level interventions designed to assist mothers and women in addressing their substance abuse problems, and (2) system-level interventions designed to improve collaboration and coordination between the child welfare system and the alcohol and other drug system. Overall, research suggests the following program components may be effective with substance-abusing women with children: (1) Women-centered treatment that involves children; (2) Specialized health and mental health services; (3) Home visitation services; (4) Concrete assistance; (5) Short-term targeted interventions; and (6) Comprehensive programs that integrate many of these components (Osterling, 2008). This study validates that the focus of treatment is on mothers.

Research also suggests that promising collaborative models between the child welfare system (CWS) and the alcohol and other drug (AOD) system typically include the following core elements: (1) Out-stationing AOD workers in child welfare offices; (2) Joint case planning; (3) Using official committees to guide collaborative efforts; (4) Training and cross-training; (5) Using protocols for sharing confidential information; and (6) Using dependency drug courts. Although more rigorous research is needed on both individual-level and system-level substance abuse interventions for parents involved in the child welfare system, the integration of individual-level interventions and system-
level approaches is a potentially useful practice approach with this vulnerable population (Osterling, 2008).

Green points out that meeting the needs of families involved with the child welfare system because of a substance abuse issue remains a challenge for child welfare practitioners. In order to improve services to these families, there has been an increasing focus on improving collaboration between child welfare, treatment providers, and the court systems. Green presents the results from qualitative interviews with 104 representatives of three systems that explore how the collaborative process works to benefit families, as well as the barriers and supports for building successful collaborations. Results indicate that collaboration has at least three major functions: building shared value systems, improving communication, and providing a team of support. Each of these leads to different kinds of benefits for families as well as providers and has different implications for building successful collaborative interventions. Despite these putative benefits, providers within each system, however, continue to struggle to build effective collaborations, and they face such issues as deeply ingrained mistrust and continued lack of understanding of other systems’ values, goals, and perspectives. Challenges that remain for successful collaborations are discussed (Green, 2008).

In a European study, Forrester reports that where there were placement and welfare outcomes for children an allocated social worker was made available to assist concerning parental misuse of drugs or alcohol. Cases identified for allocation concerning long-term work in four London boroughs, over on average for one year, where a total of 290 families were examined. Of the 290, 100 families with 186 children involved concerns about parental substance misuse (Forrester, 2007). File studies were
carried out at allocation and two years post-referral for these children. At follow-up only 46% of the children remained with their main caregiver, with 26% living in the extended family and 27% in the formal foster care system (Forrester, 2007). Logistic regression found the factors associated with children remaining at home were parental heroin misuse, violence and one or more parents being a first generation immigrant; factors associated with children moving was where the child was identified as at risk of harm (Forrester, 2007). A rating of welfare outcome was made based on educational, emotional/behavioral and health development. At follow-up, 47% of children had no problems, 31% had continuing problems and 22% had problems in more areas than at allocation. Regression analysis found the factors associated with poor welfare outcome were children remaining at home, domestic violence, alcohol misuse and being a boy. The combination of a high proportion of children changing caretakers and poor outcomes for those at home suggests that attention needs to be paid to improving outcomes in this area (Forrester, 2007).

In his study, Morgenstern (2008) examined barriers to employability, motivation to abstain from substances and to work, and involvement in multiple service systems among male and female welfare applicants with alcohol- and drug-use problems (Morgenstern, 2008). He conducted a representative sample (N = 1,431) of all persons applying for public assistance who screened positive for substance involvement over a 2-year period in a large urban county were recruited in welfare offices. Legal, education, general health, mental health, employment, housing, and child welfare barriers to employability were assessed, as were readiness to abstain from substance use and readiness to work (Morgenstern, 2008).
According to Morgenstern (2008), only 1 in 20 participants reported no barrier other than substance use, whereas 70% reported at least two other barriers and 40% reported three or more. Moreover, 70% of participants experienced at least one additional barrier classified as severe and 30% experienced two or more. The number and type of barriers differed by gender. Latent class analysis revealed four main barriers-plus-readiness profiles among participants: (1) multiple barriers, (2) work experienced, (3) criminal justice, and (4) unstable housing (Morgenstern, 2008).

Morgenstern (2008) findings suggest that comprehensive coordination among social service systems is needed to address the complex problems of low-income Americans with substance-use disorders. Classifying applicants based on barriers and readiness is a promising approach to developing innovative welfare programs to serve the diverse needs of men and women with substance-related problems (Morgenstern, 2008).

Brook (2009) states that alcohol and other drug (AOD) abuse by caretakers is frequently cited as a precipitating reason for the entry of children into foster care, however, little research has been done to examine the impact of alcohol and other drugs on the stability of family reunification (Brook, 2009). His study examined the likelihood of reentry into foster care following reunification for children whose primary caretakers were stratified into groups based on the type of substance abuse cited as a primary reason for the initial removal: those with alcohol only involvement, those with drug only involvement, those with both alcohol and other drug involvement, and those with no alcohol or drug involvement. Event history analysis showed that children whose reasons for initial placement in foster included caretakers with both alcohol and drug involvement were much more likely to reenter care following reunification than any of
the other three groups. However, drug or alcohol involvement as the initial reason for removal was also associated with higher risk of reentry (Brook, 2009).

Research involving parenting integration for fathers, in substance abuse treatment, has been limited. In spite of the fact that father involvement in parenting services has resulted in better outcomes (Thompson, 2013).

Undocumented Paternity

The third barrier preventing fathers from participating and reuniting with their children, in foster care, is undocumented paternity. Undocumented paternity is an important factor as child welfare professionals attempt to engage fathers in the family reunification process. Many fathers are unaware that they have children in the foster care system because of undocumented paternity. This is one of the major reasons why some children enter and remain in foster care. Paternity is defined as the state of being someone’s father (Webster, 2013).

In the state of Georgia, if you are not legally married to the mother of a child and have no court order, you have no rights as a father. Many states have marital assumptions of legitimacy, which offers children born to married parents with total protection against paternity lawsuits, which question their legitimacy. However, most states do not have legitimacy presumption laws for unmarried couples. This unequal balance between married and unmarried couples makes it so that children born to unmarried parents, who have developed an attachment or psychological bond with a man they have always assumed to be their father, are not allowed the same protection as other children in similar situations, simply because their parents were never united in marriage when they
were born. Social work professionals must advocates for states to rewrite their paternity statutes to provide protection against non-paternity lawsuits to psychological fathers and their psychological children. State statutes should provide a psychological father with the right to be declared the legal parent of his psychological child in cases where the child's legal father has been substantially absent from the child's life (Moulton, 2009).

Consider the following: Two married parents living in one household with their children once comprised the normative family in the United States. Today, approximately 41 percent of children are born to unmarried parents and nearly one third of children live apart from at least one of their biological parents. These changes in family structure are cause for concern because unmarried fathers have no automatic legal ties to their children, and children living apart from at least one parent are considerably more likely to live in poverty and spend less time with the noncustodial parent (National Center for Health Statistics, 2009).

One strategy to ensure that unmarried fathers have legal ties to their children and to improve their financial and emotional investment in their children is to establish paternity in the hospital at the time of birth through parental signing of an Acknowledgement of Paternity Form (AOP) (National Center for Health Statistics, 2009).

The Family Court Review Journal explains that many states have marital presumptions of legitimacy, which provide children born to married parents with protection against paternity lawsuits questioning their legitimacy. However, most states do not have legitimacy presumption statutes for unmarried couples. This lack of equality between married and unmarried couples makes it so that children born to unmarried
parents, who have developed a psychological bond with a man they have always thought
to be their father, are not afforded the same protection as other children in similar
situations, simply because their parents were not married at the time of their birth.
Therefore, this note advocates for states to amend their paternity statutes to provide
protection against non-paternity lawsuits to psychological fathers and their psychological
children. State statutes should provide a psychological father/social with the right to be
declared the legal parent of his psychological child in cases where the child's legal father
has been substantially absent from the child's life (Moulton, 2009).

Parental Conflict

The fourth barrier preventing fathers from participating and reuniting with their
children, in foster care, is parental conflict. Parental conflict creates a breakdown in
communication and understanding. This barrier can drive the mother of the child to use
the child as a weapon against the father. Social/case workers must learn tools to assist
families dealing with conflict. Harmony among parents can create working solutions that
will help fathers become involved with their children in foster care, in an effort to bring
about family reunification. Many fathers are unaware that they have children in foster
care simply because of the emotional and physical conflict with their child's mother.
Anger for whatever reasons causes the mother not to communicate with the child's
father. Conflict is defined as a serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted
one. Conflict is an incompatibility between two or more opinions, principles, or interests
(Webster, 2013).
Many studies have resulted in inconsistent findings concerning the implications of contact with nonresidential parents for children in single-parent households. In his study, Amato (1994) tested the hypothesis that children's contact with nonresident parents decreases children's behavior problems when inter-parental conflict is low but increases children's behavior problems when inter-parental conflict is high. Data were analyzed from 1,285 children in single-parent families from the National Survey of Families and Households. The hypothesis was supported among boys from divorced families. No support for the hypothesis was found among girls, regardless of family background (Amato, 1994).

A considerable amount of research has examined how children fare when their parents fight. A new study goes further by examining how different types of conflict between parents affect children and families. We've long known that conflict between parents detracts from parents' abilities to be warm, supportive, and emotionally available to their children, while also negatively affecting children with mental health. But much of the research that's been done so far has examined only one aspect of this type of conflict—hostility. Because parents differ in the ways they argue, how might different types of conflict (such as withdrawal or detachment) affect children? What effect might these different forms of discord have on the family as a whole? (Sturje-Apple, 2006).

Researchers at the University of Rochester and the University of Notre Dame studied 212 families with 6-year-old children over a three-year period. The research study concludes that various kinds of conflict may have different implications for how mothers and fathers execute their parenting duties. For example, mothers had problems showing warmth, support, and being involved with their children when they experienced
conflict with their spouse and when there was poor communication between the parents. But fathers' ability to engage with their children was influenced mainly when there was distance between the parents, not when there was conflict between them (Sturge-Apple, 2006).

The study also found that the way fathers go about parenting when they experience distance from their spouses may have a greater effect on children's psychological problems than the way mothers parent under the same circumstances. Namely, when fathers have emotionally shutdown, their children are very anxious, depressed, and become distant, and they also may exhibit more aggressive and negative behavior patterns and have more trouble adjusting to school. When mothers are emotionally withdrawn, only children's adjustment to school suffers (Sturge-Apple, 2006).

Taken together, the findings from the present study stress the importance of understanding how parents fight and the implications of this for the broader family system, according to Melissa Sturge-Apple (2006), the study’s’ lead author and a researcher at the Mount Hope Family Center at the University of Rochester. Her results highlight the possibility that hostility and withdrawal between parents may negatively affect parenting and, in turn, child adjustment over time, and that these types of conflict may have distinct meanings and implications for the child and family system as a whole (Sturge-Apple, 2006).

According to The National Resource Center for Foster Care & Permanency Planning at the Hunter College School of Social Work of the City University of New York, they are committed to excellence in child welfare service delivery. As a Center
dedicated to action and change, their work focuses is on establishing the capacity of child welfare agencies to meet the needs of children at risk of removal from their families and those already placed in some form of foster care. Their goal is to promote family-centered and collaborative approaches to achieving safety, permanency and well being of children and families within the child welfare system (NRCPFC, 2013).

Child welfare practitioners to engage families in decision-making about their children and themselves use the concept of child welfare mediation. Mediation can enhance permanency planning by reducing the parents’ sense of alienation and helplessness and empowering parents by involving them in planning their children’s futures.

The term mediation is used almost interchangeably with several other terms: alternate dispute resolution (ADR), collaborative negotiations, conflict resolution, and conflict intervention strategies. In family matters, mediation is best known for its use in divorce and custody disputes, and mediation has been used in many other areas such as landlord-tenant disputes, labor disputes, and to reduce violence among teen gang members. During the last decade, techniques of mediation have also been applied to child protection and child welfare situations (NRCPFC, 2013).

Child welfare mediation, as defined by Mayer (1985), is an approach to resolving disputes in which the various parties attempt to resolve their differences through a bargaining procedure that is not adversarial in nature. This concept works excellent with fathers who cannot resolve issues with their child’s mother. Through mediation, parties engage in a mutual effort to discover solutions that will maximize the degree to which everyone’s interests are met, rather than attempting to obtain their objectives by
promoting their own positions, rebutting others’ arguments, and threatening to bring their power to bear on each other (Mayer, 1985).

The mediation process includes the participation of a third-party neutral individual (usually called a mediator) that has no power to make decisions and no investment in the outcome of the negotiations. The mediator facilitates participants into a constructive problem-solving mode and assists them to frame their proposals, consider their options, and approach other parties in a constructive manner. The mediator guides the process of negotiations but does not advocate a particular solution (Mayer, 1985).

The following review emphasizes the importance of good communication and engagement skills that unwed fathers need to establish a bond with their child. Leman (2010) points out that young, minority, and poorly educated fathers in fragile families have little capacity to support their children financially and are hard-pressed to maintain stability in raising those children. In this article, Robert Leman examines the capabilities and contributions of unwed fathers, how their capabilities and contributions fall short of those of married fathers, how those capabilities and contributions differ by the kind of relationship the fathers have with their child's mother, and how they change as infants grow into toddlers and kindergartners (Leman, 2010).

Unwed fathers' employment and earnings vary widely among groups but generally rise over time. At the child's birth, cohabiting fathers earn nearly 20 percent more than non-cohabiting unwed fathers, and the gap widens over time. Still, five years after an unwed birth, the typical unwed father is working full time for the full year. Although most unwed fathers spend considerable time with their children in the years soon after birth, explains Leman, over time their involvement erodes. Men who lose
touch with their children are likely to see their earnings stagnate, provide less financial support, and often face new obligations when they father children with another partner.

By contrast, the unwed fathers who marry or cohabit with their child's mother earn considerably higher wages and work substantially more than unwed fathers who do not marry or cohabit. These results suggest that unwed fathers' earnings are affected by family relationships as well as their education and work experience (Leman, 2010). Leman notes that several factors influence the extent to which unwed fathers stay involved with their children. Better-educated fathers, those who most identify with the father's role, and those with good relationships with the child's mother, are most likely to sustain a relationship with their children. Some studies even find that strong child support enforcement increases father involvement. For many years, policy makers approached the problem of noncustodial, unwed fathers on a single track—by trying to increase their child support payments. Today's policy makers are recognizing the limits of that strategy. New programs focus on improving the relationship and communication skills of unwed fathers. In addition, targeted training programs, such as apprenticeships, enable unwed fathers to earn a salary while they learn skills (Leman, 2010).

Fatherhood and Culture

While ethnic families and fathers do not deviate much from Anglo-American families and fathers, they still should not be judged by Anglo-American middle-class standards. Ethnic families are diverse, and there is no single monolithic ethnic family structure among or within them. Internal variation within major ethnic groups prohibits generalization (Fatherhood, 2003).
There is a new and unique generations of fathers, including those from various ethnic/racial backgrounds that are engaging in a new fathering paradigm. This paradigm takes the best from what they have learned and combines it with what they hope to become as fathers, in an effort to develop a style that is comfortable and generative for their children and future generations (Martinez, 2011).

Hispanic/Latino Fathers

Hispanic/Latino men suffer from incorrect stereotypes, as do many other men of color. They are inaccurately viewed as being authoritarian, distant, not emotionally connected, and averse to family intimacy, and machista husbands and fathers. On the contrary to popular opinion, Hispanic/Latino fathers do not conform to stereotypes or media portrayals. There is supportive evidence that deficit models to describe fathers of color do not accurately describe the care they feel and show for their children (Fitzpatrick et al., 1999; Toth & Xu, 1999).

Taylor and Behnke (2005) found that a transformation is taking place between Latino fathers on both sides of the border. Many fathers exhibit contemporary views and feelings that reflect the trend of ‘new fathering.’ They are redefining machismo through their attitudes and fathering practices. Although many fathers on both sides of the border are involved and aware of their children’s needs and aspirations, to those on the outside these fathers may still show signs of traditionality. The report notes that the Latino men in this study were profoundly affected by their relationships with their fathers, which ranged from involved dads to absent dads. This is similar to other findings that fathers’
own fathers’ models of parenting, whether positive or negative, influenced how they interacted with their children (Daly, 1995).

Taylor and Behnke (2005) also state that the most prominent value that Latino fathers want to transmit to the next generation is the importance of a good education; they also want to instill a strong work ethic in their children. The fathers want to see their children in better jobs but, at the same time, don’t want them to lose the satisfaction of working hard. The authors conclude that their findings support the idea of generative fathering (meeting the needs of the next generation instead of current societal expectations [Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997]) to describe the resiliency of Latino fathers and the contributions they make to families, communities, and future generations (Martinez, 2011).

Several Latino fathers are significantly overwhelmed by poverty and economic hardship; they have fervent family values and belong to close-knit communities that assist increasing their resiliency. Latino fathers are complicated individuals with family values that facilitate their involvement in the lives of their families. These studies appear to demonstrate that Hispanic/Latino fathers defy the stereotypes ascribed to them and define their own style of fathering that unites the best of what they learned from their fathers and their own styles of what they think is best parenting practice (Martinez, 2011).

African-American Fathers

African-American fathers are often characterized as absent, violent, and uninvolved in their children’s lives. Policy discussions, while they do not always identify
African-American males as a source of the problem, repeatedly suggest that African-American males are inherently irresponsible, erratic in behavior and unable to assume the responsibility of employment or fatherhood (Gadsden & Smith, 1994).

Father absence in most western cultures does have a tremendous impact on children, resulting in higher rates of violence, substance abuse, gang-related activities, low school performance, escalating dropout rates, and lower occupational attainment. Many social factors serve as barriers and affect fathers' involvement, including education and economic and legal problems (Martinez, 2011).

Contrary to the false negative descriptions characterizing African-American males, research concluded, African-American fathers are neither absent nor uninvolved in family life, but play essential roles within families (as cited in Fatherhood, 2003). They emphasize family unity, stability, and adaptability. Middle-class African-American fathers are involved in the rearing of their children; maintain warm, interpersonal relations with them; and their children are well adjusted and motivated (Fatherhood, 2003).

White and Connor (2007) stated that traditional definitions of fatherhood underestimate the role of black fathers and do not adequately capture the cultural nuances that surround the fathering role in the African-American experience. Social fatherhood is a term used by Rebekah Coley (2001) and others that encapsulates the role of the community in raising a child, including the biological father and others. The term includes men who assume some or all of the roles fathers are expected to perform in a child's life, regardless of whether or not they are biological fathers. These social fathers
provide a significant degree of nurturance, moral and ethical guidance, companionship, emotional support, and financial responsibility in the lives of children (Martinez, 2011).

When everyone in the community, including fathers, take responsibility for the nurture of their children, the likelihood of success is greater. African-American fathers can and do play important positive roles in their children’s lives, especially when they are given the opportunity to advance through educational and employment. (Martinez, 2011)

Native American Fathers

Advising Native American men from a strength-based approach, Pooley (2010) reminds them that fatherhood is leadership—the most important kind of leadership in the entire world...The father’s primary job is to bring happiness and safety to his family...You lead your family with kindness, dignity and humility. His message is that fathers are not sick or bad, but that some fathers have been misled, misguided, misdirected, and misinformed. Therefore fathers (and mothers) need to be forward thinking, feeling, and acting people (Martinez, 2011).

Pooley speaks to the historical trauma that is a vital part of Native peoples’ history, culture and psyche. He states that often those who teach this history are affected by historical trauma and are left only with anger, which can be destructive. The teaching of historical trauma should motivate people to do better, especially in future generations (Martinez, 2011).

The spiritual component is very important in being and in Native American fathering. To Pooley, greatness is not in the person. Greatness comes from the Creator and flows through a person...The Creator is who men can ask for guidance and
direction...Two of the most sacred things on earth are fatherhood and motherhood...
Families are the most important institution. Our other institutions must all exist to
support the institution of the family.

Native American fatherhood continues to be important, but the stresses of western
culture have misguided Native fathers. The goal, according to Pooley, is not to preach to
fathers about what they do wrong because they are aware of this already, but to uplift and
encourage them, strengthen their existing hope, and inspire, assist, and equip them. Only
then will they be energized to listen so that they can learn (Martinez, 2011).

Gay Fathers

Tasker (2008) shares that gay and lesbian parenting is a fertile research field with
many important new developments in content and methodology over the last decade. Gay
and lesbian parenting occurs in a wide diversity of family constellations, yet the cultural
context of lesbian and gay parenting is a neglected topic. The relative depth of
knowledge of lesbian parenting is contrasted with the lack of research on gay male
parenting across different routes to parenthood. Gay and lesbian parenting researchers
have employed a wide variety of methodological designs in their investigations, and the
field has benefited from the employment of quantitative and qualitative techniques to
investigate developmental outcomes for children and increase understanding of the
variety of experiences of gay and lesbian parenthood. Tasker’s review highlights
significant developments in the field and suggests new directions (Tasker, 2008).

Brinamen (2008), in his use of in-depth interviews, proposes a six-stage model of
identity development for gay men who are becoming parents. The six stages include: (1)
a coming out experience that assumes being gay means not parenting; (2) increased self-awareness and confidence as a gay man; (3) recognition of the strength of newly constructed gay families; (4) observation of gay families and learning about the effects of gay parents on children; (5) valuing the unique gifts a gay man has to offer a child; and (6) an integration of the gay and father components of identity, including both a narrowing and expansion of support networks. The model is compared with well-known models of gay identity and ethnic identity development. To understand this developmental transition, 10 gay men who became fathers after establishing a gay identity were interviewed. These men (four single and six in a couple relationship) described the development of their family, their understanding of their gay father identity, challenges as male primary caregivers, and their evolving relationship with the gay community, with their families of origin and families of choice, and with the larger society (Brinamen, 2008).

Henny (2010) examined whether there are differences between gay father families (n = 36) and heterosexual families (n = 36) on father-child relationship, fathers' experiences of parental stress and children's well-being. In his study, the gay fathers all became parents while in same-sex relationships. They donated sperm to lesbian couples and then shared the child rearing with them in kinship arrangements. It was also examined whether aspects that are related specifically to gay fathers (i.e., experiences of rejection, having to defend their family situation, with whom the children live, and conflicts with the children's mothers) are also related to the father-child relationship, parental stress and children's well-being. Data were collected by means of questionnaires filled in by the fathers. No significant differences between the family types were found
on emotional involvement and parental concern in the father-child relationship, parental burden (as an aspect of parental stress) or the children's well-being. However, gay fathers felt less competent in their child-rearing role than heterosexual fathers. For gay fathers especially, experiences of rejection and the feeling that they have to defend their situation were significantly related to father-child relationship, parental stress and children's well-being (Henny, 2010).

Bergman (2010) explores how gay fathers who become parents through gestational surrogacy experience the transition to parenthood. Structured interviews were conducted with one of the partners in 40 couples that had conceived children via surrogacy. The interviews consisted of closed- and open-ended questions examining changes in fathers' careers; lifestyles; couple relationships; relations with family of origin; friendships; self-esteem; and self-care. Thematic and quantitative analyses of the data were employed. The most striking psychological findings were that fathers reported greater closeness with their families of origin and heightened self-esteem as a result of becoming parents and raising children (Bergman, 2010).

According to the Journal of Family Therapy, Cameron reports that Australian gay men have only recently become parents through surrogacy arrangements. They have had to overcome a discriminatory legal, social, political, cultural and financial environment. A cooperative inquiry action research group was formed, with seven two-father families conceived via surrogacy, to explore their journey to parenthood and their consequent politicization as gay fathers. This article reveals how that experience of the cooperative inquiry process strengthened their resolve to be intentionally 'out' in their communities to overcome discriminatory and conservative social attitudes. They embraced the
political reality of their parenting and were stimulated to create improved support
structures for themselves and future parents. This transformed the legal, social, political
and cultural environment for their families (Cameron, 2009).

Recent public debates have addressed lesbians and gay men caring for children as
a novel phenomenon, but such arrangements are not new. Helen Cosis Brown and
Christine Cocker track debates concerning lesbian and gay families and examine the
relationship between policies and practice that is evidence based and ideologically
driven. They outline the complexities of adoption and fostering practice within its
political and social context and argue that the paramount of the child's welfare is the
lynchpin to understanding the issues involved with the placement of children with lesbian
and gay careers. The emphasis, in examining the detail of practice, is on recruitment,
assessment, matching and support (Brown, 2009).

When gay and lesbian couples decide to become parents, they are unique as a
group in always requiring the involvement of a facilitating other: a donor, surrogate, or
(in the case of adopted or foster children) birth parents. This clinical paper explores
common psychological and social challenges gay and lesbian couples face when using
alternative reproductive technologies to attain parenthood. Between the wish and the
actuality of being at home with their baby, gay and lesbian parents travel a long and
winding road of choices and chances taken. The parenting partners often consist of one
biological and one non-biological parent. Issues of psychological/emotional parenthood
as opposed to merely biological parenthood (including assumptions of potential
inequality or differential legitimacy) must be reconciled in the minds, couple
relationships, family of origin relationships, and friendship support systems of the
partners before and after the child's birth. The family must also navigate others' questions and assumptions as they venture ever further beyond their intimate circle and as their growing child forms relationships with peers. Specific guidelines are offered for helping couples surmount these psychosocial challenges (Mitchell, 2008).

Family Reunification of Foster Care Children

In spite of the mounting evidence identifying how fathers contribute to the well being of their children, they are largely ignored in the child welfare intervention research (O'Donnell, 1999). Data reveals that many fathers did not participate in case assessments, case planning, or receipt of services. Caseworkers did not make it a priority to engage or pursue paternal involvement or lack of participation as a professional concern. Policy and practice changes must take place if we are going to increase fathers' involvement in the family reunification process (O'Donnell, 1999).

Again, the lack of understanding between the child welfare system and fathers about what it means to be a father negatively impacts the role of the father in the child welfare system. The literature confirms that the foster care's legal definition of fatherhood (financial support, cohabitation, legal documentation of paternity) is not aligned with many fathers' perspectives on what it means to be a provider for their children. Once again, this issue is compounded by the fact that many fathers (especially those of color) are disproportionately represented among nonresident, noncustodial fathers – a status which, by limiting legal access to their children, limits their parental involvement (Johnson & Bryant, 2004), and according to focus groups with experienced social workers and supervisors, often carries with it an assumption among child welfare
professionals that they are indifferent and irresponsible parents (Johnson & Bryant, 2004).

The child welfare system’s dependence on financial support as a standard for paternal involvement can have the devastating impact of discouraging those parenting activities which are not tied to the father’s ability to serve as breadwinner (Johnson & Bryant, 2004; Perry, 2009) and puts those fathers who are of lower socioeconomic status at a disadvantage as they seek alternate ways to provide for their children (Hamer & Marchiaro, 2002). Further, the emphasis on a class-based, financial support expectation also hinders a lower-income father’s ability to be considered fit as a custodial parent (Johnson & Bryant, 2004).

As O’Donnell (1999), Johnson and Bryant (2004) and Pate (2005) found in their interviews with direct service social workers and fathers in the child welfare system, there is a general assumption that fathers who do not reside in the home with their child do not contribute in any way to the child’s well-being. Focus groups with fathers reveal that they view providing love and support, providing their children with someone to confide in, providing guidance, being a role model, protecting and supervising, educating, showing unified parenting, and providing material and spiritual needs as ways that they support their children (Dubowitz et al., 2006). Noncustodial fathers are often unaware of the way their living arrangements affect their legal status. For instance, fathers who otherwise remain involved in the lives of their children through social, financial, and moral roles often do not understand the need or the rationale for establishing legal paternity (Pate, 2005). In some instances, fathers might choose to contribute informally to their child’s well-being, but could lose their child to the system
because they failed to go through the proper channels of documenting their contributions and formally expressing through the courts their interest to be involved in their child's life (Roberts, 2002).

High rates of violence targeting males of color, few employment opportunities, and a number of consistent father-figure role models affect fathers in low income urban communities, presenting major barriers to meeting the child welfare definition of paternity; nonetheless, the role of father is important to most men (Black, Dubowitz & Star, 1999). Despite these challenges, the child welfare system and the dominant culture in general expect fathers to align with dominant, normative father figure ideologies.

Although exposed to fathering discourses, men of color are aware that socially, they are not viewed as good or educated enough to be fathers (Brown et al. 2009; Pate, 2005; Hamer & Marchioro, 2002), and in qualitative interviews Hamer and Marchioro (2002) found fathers' experiences at local offices of public assistance to be congruent with this perception. Hamer and Marchioro (2002) found that workers in public assistance offices did not trust a father's motives for applying for aid, and fathers reported that case workers would express that they found it inappropriate for children to reside with their fathers. In focus groups, noncustodial fathers of color expressed feeling discouraged from becoming involved fathers because they feel they have to go to great lengths to prove their parenting ability even when they express a desire to be more involved (Johnson & Bryant, 2004). Too often, rather than assisting fathers to confront and deal this standard of paternal expectation, child welfare workers do not engage fathers and do not take the time to find out the types of services, vocational training, or
job search assistance they might need in order to fulfill the prescribed parental obligations (Johnson & Bryant, 2004).

In direct practice, the cultural bias toward many fathers is further compounded by the general practice of individual case-workers rarely seeking out contact with fathers, and generally focusing more on perceived problems than strengths of the father (O’Donnell, 1999). Further, in interviews with 51 child welfare workers and reviews of 60 cases, O’Donnell (1999) found that 81% of African-American fathers had not been involved in the development of the most recent case plan. When asked what additional information they would have liked for the case plan, social workers mentioned a need for more input from fathers in only 4% of cases. The lack of contact and engagement between fathers and social workers did not vary according to the social worker’s race or the size of the social worker’s caseload (O’Donnell, 1999). This can be perceived as a general lack of interest on the part of caseworkers in finding out what fathers could offer their children (Roberts, 2002). Brown and colleagues (2009) recently argued that child welfare practices convey that as long as an intervention is taking place with one parent (i.e., the mother) that no intervention is needed for the other parent (i.e., the father). A preference toward working only with mothers is reflective of case workers’ perceptions of mothers as being more motivated and able to deal with the child welfare system than fathers (Johnson & Bryant, 2004). However, this could also be a reflection of a bias in the system against paternal involvement. Even when single men are awarded custody of their children, custodial fathers often report having less access to social service provisions than mothers (Pate, 2005).
In his study of child welfare involvement of fathers in case planning and services delivery, O'Donnell (1999) found that not only had over 70% of workers had no recent contact with fathers but also, many of them had never attempted contact. Although non-resident fathers may be difficult to locate (Malm, Murray, & Geen, 2006) O'Donnell (1999) revealed that case workers often did not attempt to contact any paternal family as well. Pate (2005), in his study of African-American noncustodial fathers, found that most low-income fathers are not contacted by child welfare workers if their children are being considered for placement with the state. Rather, many of the fathers found this information out from family members or the biological mother. Often, the caseworker's decision to cease efforts to locate fathers or paternal relatives is based solely on information provided by the mothers that the father is uninterested or uninvolved, and no effort to find corroborating evidence is made (Johnson & Bryant, 2004).

Case workers' readiness to accept this negative portrayal of fathers, particularly nonresidential fathers of color, continues despite findings that there is no significant difference between nonresident fathers of color and other nonresident fathers in the amount of contact or financial support they give to their children (Smith et al., 2005). Relying on one information source, not asking about the father, using incomplete information to assess a father's care-giving ability, or accepting a response of “I don't know where my child’s father is” are examples of inadequate efforts to seek out fathers that are endemic in the child welfare system (Johnson & Bryant, 2004; Pate, 2005; Roberts, 2002). The implication for these findings is that there are foster youth who are being denied paternal family contact due to systemic inequities and oversights. These findings also suggest that while child welfare ideologically supports the concept of
family, it simultaneously reinforces injurious social structures and low expectations of fathers of color as unviable resources.

Potential barriers impacting these fathers extend beyond the social level and are also prevalent at the child welfare agency level. According to the landmark quantitative study by the Urban Institute on fatherhood and child welfare practices (Malm, Murray, & Green, 2006), child welfare administrators cite a reluctance to involve fathers in cases because they fear introducing a person who was possibly a previous abuser to an already destabilized family. Another concern of child welfare administrators includes increasing caseloads of their workers by increasing the number of people they must contact, a concern which is supported by Johnson and Bryant’s (2004) case study of child welfare workers in which workers reported feeling relief upon hearing that a father was uninterested because it reduced their workload. Administrators also reported concern about facing the resistance social workers have about working with fathers with criminal histories. While these concerns are valid, they are divergent with child welfare’s goal to first place children in the care of families and to provide resources to parents so that they can better take care of their children.

Historical and cultural factors play a large role in shaping parents’ embodiment of the parenting role, reflecting individual values and experiences shaped by larger social forces, but research shows by acting to maintain or improve the relationship between the child and father, the social worker can affect change for future generations. While Roy (2006) found that the parenting styles of some men were influenced by their level of positive contact with their fathers, in that those who had minimal contact may lower their
own parenting expectations as fathers, he reported key variables associated with others who transcend negative fathering patterns.

Having a father present can positively influence youth later in life (Dubowitz et al. 2006; Roy 2006; Pate, 2005). For children in foster care, paternal involvement increases the likelihood of reunification and decreases the likelihood of long-term foster care (Coakley, 2008). Key components to cultivate positive outcomes for youth include assisting children in developing positive relationships (Malm, Murray, & Green, 2006) and healthy attachments to their fathers (Black, Dubowitz & Star, 1999). Attachment is reported as a factor in reducing negative outcomes during adolescence such as teen pregnancy, dropping out of high school, and depression (Black, Dubowitz & Star, 1999).

In addition to this, there are indirect benefits of paternal involvement, one being additional support for mothers. This occurs indirectly by fathers providing economic assistance, providing respite for mothers, enhancing the quality of children’s home environments and overall additional parenting support.

Child welfare social workers are in a unique position to make a difference in this area by working to provide not only viable kinship placements for children but also to commit themselves to social justice by breaking negative cycles of fatherlessness in various communities. The first step towards engaging fathers of color is to understand their perspective and history, as many fathers avoid child welfare because they have experienced social services as depreciating and demeaning (O’Donnell, 1999). Some may see child welfare social workers as functioning to remind them of their failures.

Dubowitz et al. (2006) provide recommendations for practitioners on how to encourage fathers to become involved in their child’s life. One way in which social
workers can accomplish this is by communicating to fathers the benefits of fathering, which include giving and receiving love, teaching children their values and helping youth developmentally and emotionally so that their children can lead healthier and happier lives. Practitioners can also highlight the satisfaction and benefits that both parents may experience as a result of fathers being a part of their children’s lives. Services and resources should be offered to fathers (Malm, Murray, & Green, 2006) and fathers should be included in parenting assessments, appointments, and family conferences. In planning these interventions and support services, it is important to target young fathers, particularly those who are still involved with their children and their child’s mother (Perry, 2009; Carlson & MacLanahan, 2002). Solidifying father’s attachment to their children at an early age will increase the likelihood that they will remain involved, as the child grows older (Perry, 2009).

Practitioners should seek to include both maternal and paternal extended families in case plans (Perry, 2009). One technique that seeks to accomplish this is Family Group Decision Making (Pate, 2005). Through FGDMs, all concerned individuals, including noncustodial fathers, paternal relatives, mothers, and maternal relatives, participate in creating permanency plans for children (Pate, 2005). Targeted programs, such as Chicago’s Paternal Involvement pilot project, which aimed to increase the custodial fitness of noncustodial fathers, are an additional type of support to be considered (Jeffries et al, 2001). Concurrent planning, in which fathers and paternal relatives are considered as permanency resources, can also be instrumental in efforts to include fathers since such practice will increase social workers’ efforts to locate noncustodial fathers (Pate, 2005).
Programs for fathers should aim to teach job training skills and improve the financial earnings of fathers (Smith et al., 2005; Carlson & McLanahan, 2002), but they should also recognize the importance of the nontraditional roles and tasks of fatherhood that are not tied to financial contributions (Connor, 2002). In designing programs and systems of public assistance for fathers, it is important to treat fathers and mothers as individuals, and to not assume that gender-neutral programs address the needs of both fathers and mothers equally (Johnson & Bryant, 2004). Fathers should be educated about any legal and financial implications about their involvement with their children and their mothers, and consideration should be given to the father’s strengths, limitations, needs, familial commitments, responsibilities, and support systems (Carlson & McLanahan, 2002).

Huebner (2008) points out that federal initiatives encourage social service agencies to engage fathers and strengthen families, but little research is available to guide administrative action. His survey among 339 fathers and 1,203 social services workers targets policy development. Gaps between father and worker perceptions, that imply limited or misunderstanding, were found. Although fathers perceived agency intervention as helpful, they requested more case-specific help and father-centered services. Social service workers valued father input, but struggled to navigate parental conflicts. Findings suggest needs for improving information systems, services guided with father input, and staff development on father specific practices. In turn, administrators need funding and legislative support (Huebner, 2008).

Poverty plays a key role in fathers participating and reuniting with their children in foster care. Hatcher, in his article Forgotten Fathers, states that for these impoverished
fathers, the "end of men" is often not simply a question for purposes of discussion but a fact that is all too real. In the instances in which poor fathers are not forgotten, they are targeted as causes of poverty rather than as possible victims themselves - or more accurately they fall somewhere along the false dichotomy between pure blame and pure sympathy. The poor fathers are lumped together in monolithic descriptions that become constants in equations attempting to understand and solve societal ills. If a continuously evolving factor is treated as a known constant rather than an undetermined variable, the math will inevitably be wrong. Rather, the discussion for impoverished fathers should be directed toward whether there is an opportunity to turn back from their gradual acquiescence to failure, and whether at-risk boys can veer away from a seemingly predetermined path. The monolithic treatment of poor fathers is corrected in the many systems that the fathers encounter; the fathers' jaded view that the whole world is against them will continue to be disturbingly correct (Hatcher, 2013).

Ultimately, none of the above suggestions can truly set in until the child welfare system reframes attitudes about the mother being responsible for children and the father only having rights to children (Brown et al., 2009). These changes have the potential to improve outcomes in permanency and well being for children and youth by opening a door to additional potential permanency connections and improving the relationships children have with their fathers. While there is no doubt this effort requires additional contact and engagement efforts, the improved outcomes may serve to prevent future placement disruption and generational involvement with the child welfare system.

According to Helen Cahalane (2013), engagement with families involved in the child welfare system is challenging for even the most seasoned professionals. Effective
engagement can become compromised by the complexity of legal mandates, the crisis nature of the work, the economic and social challenges faced by children and families, an often-critical public, and less than optimal agency staffing patterns. Opportunities to impact the lives of children and families in crisis, to improve a family’s capacity to care for their children, and to enhance a young person’s options for permanency rest upon the ability to engage clients in a meaningful partnership. Workers who operate from a strengths-based, solution-focused perspective are able to see opportunities for change in even the most complicated family situations and understand that establishing a meaningful connection is the first step in addressing difficult life issues (Cahalane, 2013).

To effectively engage families as partners, child welfare workers must be prepared to share power, ask for and use feedback, and see themselves as coaches or mentors who stand beside families and not in front of them. The skills that are required include the ability to suspend quick judgments, recognize one’s own frame of reference, respect differences, and anticipate challenges. Family engagement practices such as Family Group Decision Making and Family Finding can help to transform the child welfare system of care from one of legal authority over families to one of partnership with families. As these practices mature and become more widely disseminated, one measure of success will be the adoption of the core principles into a community philosophy. Integration of family engagement practices into traditional child welfare services can provide families with opportunities to assume control of their lives, as well as more options for child welfare professionals to engage in supportive interventions that are likely to increase job satisfaction (Cahalane, 2013)
Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based upon attachment and the strengths perspective theory. Attachment theory according to Miles, examines an individual’s sense of optimal balance between closeness to and distance from key people in his or her life. The theory attempts to explain the nature of the affective bonds that people make with each other. It assumes that early childhood experiences of attachment to caregivers have long-term effects on social relationships and the stress regulation of adults (Miles, 2012).

Attachment is an emotional bond to another person. Psychologist John Bowlby was the first attachment theorist, describing attachment as a lasting psychological connectedness between human beings. Bowlby believed that the earliest bonds formed by children with their caregivers have a tremendous impact that continues throughout life. He suggested attachment also serves to keep the infant close to the mother, thus improving the child's chances of survival (Cherry, 2013).

An attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond between people that persists across time and space. Attachments can be reciprocal, but are often one-way. They involve specific behaviors, such as wanting to spend time in the proximity of the person with whom one has an attachment when one feels upset, scared, or threatened. In an adult child attachment relationship, an adult can respond to the needs of a child through being sensitive and by attending to the child’s needs. Attachment behaviors appear to be universal across all cultures (Miles, 2012).

The central theme of attachment theory is that primary caregivers who are available and responsive to an infant's needs allow the child to develop a sense of
security. The infant knows that the caregiver is dependable, which creates a secure base for the child to then explore the world (Cherry, 2013).

According to Schore (2008), over the past decade attachment theory has undergone an intense expansion of both its original scientific foundations as well as its applications to clinical work. Bowlby’s original description of the theory occurred during a period of behaviorism and an emphasis on the strange situation and secure base behaviors, which then gave way to dominance of cognition and an emphasis on attachment narratives and reflective capacities. Schore argues that in line with Bowlby’s fundamental goal of the integration of psychological and biological models of human development, the current interest in affective bodily-based processes, interactive regulation, early experience-dependent brain maturation, stress, and non-conscious relational transactions has shifted attachment theory to a regulation theory. This emphasis on the right brain systems that underlie attachment and developmental change has in turn forged deeper connections with clinical models of psychotherapeutic change, all of which are consonant with psychoanalytic understandings. Modern attachment theory can thus be incorporated into the core of social work theory, research, and practice (Schore, 2008).

Dykas (2011) explains that researchers have used J. Bowlby’s attachment theory frequently as a basis for examining whether experiences in close personal relationships relate to the processing of social information across childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. He presents an integrative life span–encompassing theoretical model to explain the patterns of results that have emerged from these studies. Dykas’ central proposition is that individuals who possess secure experience-based internal working models of attachment will process—in a relatively open manner—a broad range of
positive and negative attachment-relevant social information. Moreover, secure individuals will draw on their positive attachment-related knowledge to process this information in a positively biased schematic way.

In contrast, individuals who possess insecure internal working models of attachment will process attachment-relevant social information in one of two ways, depending on whether the information could cause the individual psychological pain. If processing the information is likely to lead to psychological pain, insecure individuals will defensively exclude this information from further processing. Dykas (2011) explains that if, however, the information is unlikely to lead to psychological pain, then insecure individuals will process this information in a negatively biased schematic fashion that is congruent with their negative attachment-related experiences. In a comprehensive literature review, he describes studies that illustrate these patterns of attachment-related information processing from childhood to adulthood. His review focuses on studies that have examined specific components (e.g., attention and memory) and broader aspects (e.g., attributions) of social information processing. He also provides general conclusions and suggestions for future research (Dykas, 2011).

Bowley theorized that people have thousands of early attachment experiences that influence their working mental models of the self and of other people in later life. The mental models that people form influence their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in relationships with others in many ways. Research has shown that if an adult has developed and extremely negative view of attachment relationships, positive experiences with a partner or therapist can help bring about a reconstruction of a poor attachment mental model (Miles, 2012).
When engaging fathers in the family reunification process it is important to understand how fathers contribute to creating healthy attachment within their children. This theory can serve as a basis for understanding the process of assisting fathers to engage in the family reunification process.

The strengths perspective is a philosophy and practice theory generated within the field of social work, the strengths perspective focus on the concept that client groups have many strengths that are untapped resources of energy and momentum the could produce positive outcomes for their lives. An alternative to viewing clients as pathology units, the strengths perspective directs all persons working with clients to guard against allowing negative labels to dictate or constrain the course of treatment that a given client or client group might receive (Nissen, 1998).

The strengths perspective presents service providers with a work practice which focus on strengths, abilities and potential rather than issues, deficits and pathologies. Concepts such as respecting and looking for client strengths, engaging client motivation for change through strengths, being a collaborator with the client in therapeutic work, avoiding victim mindsets, and seeing the environment as full of resources are some of the key principles in the strengths approach (Nissen, 1998).

This model is an important alternative to many of the traditional theories that operate throughout systems. The strengths perspective challenges program models that do not include a search for the strengths of clients and families as resources to bring about lasting change (Nissen, 1998).

There are seven principles associated with the strengths perspective: (1) people have several strengths and the ability to continue to grow, learn and change; (2) the focus
of intervention is concentrated on the strengths and goals of individuals; (3) resources
include the community/social environment; (4) there is collaboration exist between the
service provider and the client; (5) solutions or interventions are based on the clients
right to self-determination; (6) empowerment is a commitment that is evident throughout
the process; and (7) challenges are viewed as the result of interactions between
individuals, organizations or structures rather than deficits within individuals,
organizations or structures (Nissen, 1998).

Jacques explains that there is a growing trend in social work practice to use a
strengths perspective with families in difficulty. Beginning with a description of the
characteristics of the strengths-based approach, this article then moves on to examine the
interventions of practitioners working in Youth Centers (YCs) and in Centres Local de
Services Communautaires (Local Community Services Centers, or CLSCs). A qualitative
analysis of the practitioners' personal practice descriptions and a quantitative study,
based on a questionnaire measuring professional behaviors of the practitioners' work
with 118 families, were done. Most of the practitioners concentrated on the personal
weaknesses of the parents and accorded little or no importance to their strengths. The
results also show that the organizational context influences the emphasis put on the
parents' strengths by the practitioners (Jacques, 2009).
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The study was designed to ascertain information in order to analyze the four barriers (incarceration, undocumented paternity, substance abuse and parental conflict) that prevent fathers from participating and reuniting with their children who are in the custody of the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services Foster Care System. In this chapter, the following are explained: Research design: description of the site; sample and population; instrumentation; treatment of data, and limitations of the study.

Research Design

A descriptive and exploratory research design was employed in the study. The descriptive aspects of the design permit for a descriptive presentation and analysis of all the data collected. The exploratory aspects of the design allow for an analysis of the statistical relationships that exist among the data collected. This type of research design makes it possible to describe and explore the four barriers that prevent fathers' involvement in the family reunification process, as well as, analysis of the impact child welfare workers have on these barriers.
Description of the Site

The research study was conducted in Atlanta, Georgia. Atlanta is the largest urban metropolitan city in the State of Georgia. The surveys were administered at the Department of Family and Children Services of Fulton and DeKalb counties. The Atlanta site was selected because Fulton and DeKalb are the two largest counties in the state of Georgia. Region 14 (Fulton and DeKalb counties) is the largest foster care region within the state. In addition, the administrator and staff at this location were cooperative, accessible and demonstrated a genuine interest in the purpose and outcome of the research.

Sample and Population

The target population for the research was composed of current child welfare social/case workers from the Department of Family and Children Services who have foster children on their caseload and who are responsible for engaging fathers' participation in the family reunification process. One hundred and eleven (111) respondents were selected utilizing nonprobability convenience sampling at the Atlanta site (Region 14).

Instrumentation

The research study employed a survey questionnaire entitled Barriers to Father Involvement In Foster Care. The survey questionnaire consisted of two sections with a total of twenty (20) questions. Section I solicited demographic information about the characteristics of the respondents. Section II employed a scale to measure how child
welfare social/case workers interact with the fathers of the children in the Georgia foster care system.

Section I of the survey questionnaire consisted of eight questions (1 thru 8). All of the eight questions were used as independent variables for the study. The questions in Section I were concerned with gender, age group, childhood family composition, length of experience, education, average caseload, racial category, and average per casework time. These questions provided information for a presentation of the demographic profile on the respondents of the research study.

Section II consisted of twelve questions concerning the extent of involvement that social/case workers had with their client’s fathers (9 thru 20). Respondents were given a four-point continuum Likert scale. The scale was follows: 1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3=Agree; 4=Strongly Agree.

Treatment of the Data

Statistical treatment of the data employed descriptive and inferential statistics. The statistics include measures of central tendency, frequency distributions, and cross tabulations. The test statistics for the study were Phi and Chi Square. The measures of central tendency (mean, median and mode) and the frequency distributions were tabulated for each of the variables of the study in order to summarize the data collected. The various summaries were used to develop demographic profiles and gain insights about the respondents of the study.

Cross tabulations were utilized to examine the statistical relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables. Cross tabulations were prepared,
crossing each of the independent variables: gender classification, age group, childhood family composition, length of experience, educational level, average caseload, racial classification, and average per case work time with the dependent variables: Incarceration, undocumented paternity, substance abuse, and parental conflict.

Two test statistics were employed. The first was Phi (\(\phi\)), which is a symmetric measure of association that is used to demonstrate the strength of relationship between two or more variables. The following are the values associated with Phi (\(\phi\)):

Figure 3.1 Values Associated with Phi (\(\phi\))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Range</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.00 to .24</td>
<td>“no relationship”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.25 to .49</td>
<td>“weak relationship”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.50 to .74</td>
<td>“moderate relationship”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.75 to 1.00</td>
<td>“strong relationship”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second test statistic employed was Chi square. Chi Square was used to determine if any of the relationships among the variables were statistically significant at the .05 level of probability.

Limitations of the Study

This study has two primary limitations. The first limitation is the number of sites available for selection that met the criteria for participation. The second limitation of the study is that the site from which the sample was drawn is predominantly African American. Thus, the findings are limited to the viewpoint of only one racial group.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of the study, in order to analyze the four barriers (incarceration, undocumented paternity, substance abuse, and parental conflict) affecting father involvement and family reunification with their children in the Georgia foster care system. The study is designed to explore how child welfare workers handle these four major barriers preventing fathers' lack of participation.

The participants of the study are social workers and case managers who work with fathers and their children who are in the custody of the Georgia Department of Human Services foster care system. The findings are presented in two sections: Demographic Data and Research Questions and Hypotheses.

Demographic Data

This section provides a profile of the study respondents. The descriptive statistics presented in Table 4.1 include the following: Gender, age group, ethnicity, education, primary caregiver, length of social work experience, average case load and average length of time working with cases. A descriptive and exploratory research design was employed in the study.
The study respondents were social workers from the Department of Family and Children Services of Fulton and DeKalb counties. Ninety-seven social workers were selected utilizing convenience sampling.

Table 4.1

Demographic Profile of Study Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25 yrs</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 yrs</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35 yrs</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40 yrs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45 yrs</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 yrs and over</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts/Science</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Social Work</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters (Non-MSW)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Social Work</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Caregiver</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and Father</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Only</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Only</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length of Social Work Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 6 years</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 11 years</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 15 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 years or more</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Case Load</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 12</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 18</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Case Work Time</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 6 Months</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12 Months</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 24 Months</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Months or more</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.1, the profile of the typical respondent for the study is an African-American female raised in a mother-father household between the ages of thirty-one and thirty-five with a Masters of Social Work. In addition, the data indicate that the typical respondent has on the average six years of social work experience, a caseload of over 12 cases and the average length of time working with cases is between seven and twelve months.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

There are four research questions and four null hypotheses in the study. This section provides analysis of the components of the research questions and testing of the
null hypotheses. Study respondents were asked about their interaction with their clients’
fathers by rating three statements unique to each of the four barriers (incarceration,
undocumented paternity, substance abuse, and parental conflict). Each statement was
rated on a scale of 1 through 4 as: (A) strongly disagree, (B) disagree, (C) agree, and
(D) strongly agree. Their responses were summarized into two categories: Disagree and
Agree. Below is an analysis of the results of these statements for each of the four
barriers.

Incarcerated Fathers

In this study, incarceration is defined as a state of being imprisoned or confined.
The place of confinement includes local jails, state prisons, federal prisons and various
types of residential confinement institutions.

According to Hairston (1998), fathers who are incarcerated are not only convicts
they are also parents. The family role and responsibilities of these fathers are not the
focal point of institutional policies, child welfare services, or scholarly research. Family
centered practice is the treatment modality practiced by child welfare professionals.
Fathers are either intentionally or unintentionally left out to this practice model (Hairston,
1998).

Child welfare workers were asked to rate the following three statements regarding
incarcerated fathers of their foster care clients. The statements were: (1) I visit
incarcerated fathers regularly, (2) I include incarcerated fathers in my service plan, and
(3) I plan regular visits with my clients and their incarcerated fathers.
Table 4.2 presents the results of the responses to these statements. About 38% of child welfare professionals agreed that they include incarcerated fathers in their case evaluation; leaving 62% that did not include incarcerated fathers in their case evaluation. Further analysis of Table 4.2 reveals that over 50% of child welfare professionals include incarcerated fathers in their service plan while 68% did not plan regular visits with their clients and their incarcerated fathers.

Table 4.2

Incarcerated Fathers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Incarcerated fathers visited regularly.</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Incarcerated fathers included in my service plan.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regular visits with clients and their incarcerated fathers.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Undocumented Paternity

Many fathers are unaware that they have children in the foster care system because of undocumented paternity. This is one of the major reasons why some children
enter and remain in foster care. Paternity is defined as the state of being someone’s father (Webster, 2013).

Many states have marital assumptions of legitimacy laws; while most states do not have legitimacy presumption laws for unmarried couples. In the state of Georgia, if you are not legally married to the mother of a child and have no court order, you have no rights as a father.

Child welfare workers were asked to rate the following three statements regarding undocumented paternity as it relates to their foster care clients. The statements were: (1) I always ask about clients’ father during life of case; (2) I encourage every father to take a paternity test; and (3) I do research to locate my clients’ father.

Table 4.3
Undocumented Paternity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Ask about clients’ father during life of case.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Encourage every father to take paternity test.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do research to locate my clients’ father.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Table 4.3, taking of a paternity test were encouraged by 60% of the study respondents. Similarly, 64% stated that they do research to locate their clients’ father. While over 75% percent of the child welfare professionals indicated that they do ask about their clients’ father during the life of the case.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is defined as the overindulgence in or dependence on an addictive substance, especially alcohol or drugs (Webster, 2013). Alcohol and other drugs abused by primary caretakers are regularly cited as a leading reason for children entering foster care.

Child welfare workers were asked to rate the following three statements regarding substance abuse among fathers of their foster care clients. The statements were: (1) I send every father for a drug and alcohol assessment visit; (2) I enroll fathers (who need treatment) in a treatment program within 30 days; and (3) I do place a child with a father who is working on his substance abuse issues.
Table 4.4

Substance Abuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Every father sent for a drug and alcohol assessment.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Enroll fathers (who need treatment) in a treatment program.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Place a child with a father who is working on substance abuse issues.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 shows that 54% of the child welfare professional would send fathers who need treatment to a substance abuse treatment program. Seventy-nine percent of the child welfare professionals did not send every father for a drug and alcohol assessment. Twenty-seven percent indicated that they would place a child with a father who is working on substance abuse issues.

Parental Conflict among Fathers

Conflict is defined as “a serious disagreement or argument. Conflict is an incompatibility between two or more opinions, principles, or interests” (Webster, 2013). Parental conflict creates a breakdown in communication and understanding. Many fathers are unaware that they have children in foster care simply because of the emotional and physical conflict with their child’s mother.
Child welfare workers were asked to rate the following three statements regarding parental conflict among the fathers of their foster care clients. The statements were: (1) I instruct every mother not to use her child as a weapon against her child’s father; (2) I seek to enroll fathers, along with mothers, in conflict management training; and (3) I advise each father to have mutual respect and positive communication with the child’s mother.

Table 4.5
Parental Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Mothers instructed not to use child as a weapon against her child’s father.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Enroll fathers along with mothers in conflict management training.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Advise father to have mutual respect and positive communication with child’s mother.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seventy-three percent (73%) of the child welfare professional agreed that they instruct the mothers of their clients not to use their child as a weapon against the client’s father. Likewise, seventy-seven percent (77%) advised the fathers of their clients to have mutual respect and positive communication with their child’s mother. Over fifty percent (50%) of the child welfare professionals responded that they enroll fathers along with mothers in conflict management training.
Tables 4.6 through 4.9 present the frequency distributions for the computed variables of the four barriers. These variables are: INCARCE, ESTABLI, SUBABUS, and CONFLIC. In order to determine the true value or arithmetic mean, the four values from the rating scale previously described for each of the three statements for each barrier were calculated by dividing the sum total of the set of figures by the number of figures. The tables below describe whether the respondents disagree or agree overall with the statements describing their interaction with their clients’ fathers who may face some or all of the four barriers affecting fathers’ involvement and family reunification with their children who are in the Georgia foster care system.

Table 4.6

INCARCE • Incarceration - Computed Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.67   Std Dev .948
Table 4.7

ESTABLI • Undocumented Paternity - Computed Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 3.23       Std Dev .97

Table 4.8

SUBABUS • Substance Abuse - Computed Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 2.36       Std Dev .769
Table 4.9

CONFLI • Parental Conflict - Computed Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean 3.23  Std Dev .977

Research Question 1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and parental conflict among fathers?

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and parental conflict among fathers.

Table 4.10 is a cross tabulation of the barrier, parental conflict (CONFLIC) by the barrier, incarceration (INCARCE). The table shows how child welfare workers responded to fathers experiencing parental conflict as compared to fathers experiencing incarceration.
Table 4.10
Parental Conflict by Incarceration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Conflict</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Frequency 29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent 31.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Frequency 33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent 35.5</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Frequency 62</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent 66.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phi = .234 df = 1 p = .024

Table 4.10 shows that sixty-one percent (61%) of child welfare professionals indicated that they incorporated measures to resolve parental conflict experienced by their clients’ fathers but approximately twenty-six percent (25.8%) of these professionals extended the same measures to their clients’ fathers experiencing incarceration. Thirty-one percent (31%) did not implement measures to assist their clients whether they were experiencing parental conflict or incarceration. Conversely, thirty-three (33%) of the child welfare professionals made efforts to address the needs of their clients’ fathers experiencing incarceration and approximately eight percent (7.5%) of these same professionals did not provide measures to assist their client’s
fathers who were experiencing parental conflict. Approximately, sixty-seven percent (66.7%) of the professionals did not practice measures to assist their clients' fathers who were experiencing incarceration but approximately thirty-six percent (35.5%) of those professionals practiced measures to assist their clients' fathers experiencing parental conflict.

Research Question 2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and undocumented paternity among fathers?

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and undocumented paternity among fathers.

Table 4.11
Undocumented Paternity by Incarceration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undocumented Paternity</th>
<th>Incarceration</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phi = .421  df = 1  p = .000
Table 4.11 crosses the variables INCARCE (incarceration) and ESTABLII (undocumented paternity). Approximately; thirty-nine percent (38.7%) of the child welfare professionals did not provide assistance with their clients’ fathers with establishing legal/document paternity. Additionally, thirty-six (36%) did not practice measures to address their clients’ fathers’ incarceration issues. Looking at those professionals who implemented measures to assist their clients’ fathers to establish paternity, sixty-one percent (61%), (approximately half of them) also implemented measures to address their clients’ fathers who are incarcerated. Overall, only thirty-three percent (33%) of the child welfare professionals implemented measures to address their clients’ fathers’ incarceration issue, compared to sixty-one percent (61%) who implemented measures to assist their clients’ fathers to document paternity. Of the professionals who addressed their clients’ fathers’ incarceration over ninety percent (90%) also addressed the issue of their clients’ fathers to document paternity.

Research Question 3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between undocumented paternity and parental conflict among fathers?

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant relationship between undocumented paternity and parental conflict among fathers.
Table 4.12
Parental Conflict by Undocumented Paternity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Conflict</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phi = .460  df = 1  p = .000

Table 4.12 examines the variables, undocumented paternity (ESTABLI) and parental conflict (CONFLIC). The table shows approximately sixty-two percent (61.7%) of the child welfare professionals exercised measures to assist their clients’ fathers to resolve parental conflict as well as to resolve issues regarding undocumented paternity as compared to approximately thirty-nine percent (38.3%) that did not address these issues. Approximately twenty-six percent (25.5%) of the professionals did not assist their clients’ fathers with either documenting paternity or resolving parental conflict.
Research Question 4: Is there a statistically significant relationship between substance abuse and undocumented paternity among fathers?

Hypothesis 4: There is no statistically significant relationship between substance abuse and undocumented paternity among fathers.

Table 4.13

Undocumented Paternity by Substance Abuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undocumented Paternity</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phi = .293 df = 1 p = .005

Table 4.13 presents data regarding the variables SUBABUS (substance abuse) and ESTABLI (undocumented paternity). Slightly more than eighty-two percent (82.2%) of the child welfare professionals did not address the substance abuse issues of their clients' fathers
compared to sixty-three percent (63%) that addressed their clients' fathers need to document paternity. However, forty-seven percent (47%), over half of the professionals who did not address substance abuse did address their clients' fathers' need regarding paternity. Overall, slightly more than sixty-three percent (63.3%) addressed the paternity issues of their clients' fathers. Thirty-six percent (36%) did not employ measures to assist their clients' fathers with documenting paternity nor with resolving substance abuse issues.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was designed to answer four (4) questions. These questions focus on the barriers (incarceration, undocumented paternity, substance abuse, and parental conflict) affecting father involvement and family reunification with their children in the Georgia foster care system.

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the research findings. Recommendations are presented for child welfare agencies regarding the necessity to include their clients' fathers in their foster care plans. The significant findings are presented for each research question as well as the statistical significance of the findings. The statistical measurement Phi (ϕ) was used to test the strength of the relationship between barriers. The statistical significance of the relationship between barriers was also further tested using Chi Square.

Conclusions

Research Question 1: Is there a statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and parental conflict among fathers?

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and parental conflict among fathers.
Sixty-one percent (61%) of child welfare professionals addressed their clients' fathers' needs regarding parental conflict. However, sixty-seven percent (67%) did not address the needs of their clients' fathers regarding incarceration. Approximately, one-fourth or twenty-six (26%) of the professionals addressed both needs; while thirty-one percent (31%) of the professionals did not address either parental conflict or incarceration with their clients' fathers (See Table 4.10).

The value of Phi (\( \phi \)) equals .234 indicates a slight relationship between the two barriers. When the Chi Square test was applied, the null hypothesis was rejected (\( p = .024 \)) indicating a statistically significant relationship between parental conflict and incarceration.

Research Question 2: Is there a statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and undocumented paternity among fathers?

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant relationship between incarcerated fathers and undocumented paternity among fathers.

The summary of findings presented for Question 1 show a similar pattern for Question 2. Sixty-one percent (61%) of child welfare professionals addressed their clients' fathers' need to document paternity. However, sixty-seven percent (67%) did not address the needs of their clients' fathers regarding incarceration. Thirty percent (30%) of the professionals addressed both needs; while, thirty-six percent (36%) of the professionals did not exercise measures to assist their clients' fathers with paternity or incarceration issues.

The value of Phi (\( \phi \)) equals .421 indicates an almost moderate relationship between undocumented paternity and incarceration. The null hypothesis was rejected (\( p = .000 \)) indicating a strong statistical significance between undocumented paternity and incarceration.
Therefore, with confidence, the findings show that child welfare professionals provide the necessary support to help their clients' fathers document paternity but provide significantly less support (approximately 50% less) to help their clients' incarcerated fathers (See Table 4.11).

Research Question 3: Is there a statistically significant relationship between undocumented paternity and parental conflict among fathers?
Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant relationship between undocumented paternity and parental conflict among fathers.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of child welfare professionals addressed their clients' fathers' parental conflict. Nearly fifty percent (50%) of the same professionals assisted their clients' fathers to document paternity. Twenty-six percent (26%) of child welfare professionals did not exercise measures to assist their clients' fathers with paternity or parental conflict issues.

The value of Phi ($\phi$) equals .460 indicates an almost moderate relationship between undocumented paternity and parental conflict. The null hypothesis was rejected ($p = .000$) indicating a strong statistical significance between paternity and incarceration. Therefore, with confidence, the findings show that child welfare professionals provide the necessary measures to help their clients' fathers document paternity as well as to resolve parental conflict (See Table 4.12).

Research Question 4: Is there a statistically significant relationship between substance abuse and undocumented paternity among fathers?
Hypothesis 4: There is no statistically significant relationship between substance abuse and undocumented paternity among fathers.
Examination of paternity with substance abuse shows that sixty-three percent (63%) of child welfare professionals addressed their clients’ fathers’ needs to document paternity. However, eighty-two percent (82%) did not address the needs of their clients’ fathers who are dealing with substance abuse. Only seventeen (17%) of the professionals addressed both needs; while, thirty-six percent (36%) of the professionals did not address undocumented paternity nor substance abuse with their clients’ fathers (See Table 4.13).

The statistical measurement Phi (\(\Phi\)) was used to test the relationship between the barriers undocumented paternity and substance abuse. The value of Phi (\(\Phi\)) equals .293 indicates a slight relationship between the two barriers. When the Chi Square test was applied, the null hypothesis was rejected (\(p = .005\)) indicating a statistically significant strong relationship between undocumented paternity and substance abuse.

In summary, the findings reveal that about one-third of the respondents indicated that they do not employ measures to rectify any of the barriers experienced by their clients’ fathers. This finding is significant because the ultimate goal of foster care is family reunification; however, if thirty-three percent (33%) of child welfare professionals are not addressing the needs of their clients’ fathers then the success of the reunification process is jeopardized and the foster care system has failed to meet its goal. In addition, the findings show that child welfare professionals are not likely to implement measures to assist their clients’ fathers who are incarcerated and even less likely to offer support to their clients’ fathers dealing with substance abuse issues. Because of the negative connotations associated with both incarceration and substance abuse, child welfare professionals may find it difficult to interact with their clients’ fathers dealing with incarceration and substance abuse. Although both
incarceration and substance abuse are major reasons for children entering the foster care system, the findings show that child welfare professionals limit their efforts to address these two issues experienced by their clients’ fathers; thus hindering the success of family reunification.

It should be noted that nearly seventy percent (70%) of the child welfare professionals implement measures to address the needs of their clients’ fathers in order to ensure that family involvement and family reunification is achieved. However, as shown in the findings presented above, child welfare professionals give the majority of their support to resolving paternity and parental conflicts experienced by their clients’ fathers.

Recommendations

As stated earlier, family centered practice is the treatment modality practiced by child welfare professionals. Fathers are either intentionally or unintentionally left out of this practice model. Reunification services are concentrated around the mother. Instead of “family-centered practice” the profession has evolved into what can be termed as “mother-centered practice.”

The research of this study recommends the following:

1. Offer to fathers who are incarcerated as well as to fathers with substance abuse issues, the same programs and privileges given to mothers who are experiencing the same issues.

2. Provide specialized training for child welfare workers on how to assist and interact with fathers who have incarceration and substance abuse issues.

3. Create innovated ways for foster children to visit their fathers who are incarcerated through both traditional and technological channels.
4. Expand and enhance current programs that assist fathers to document paternity and resolve parental conflict issues.

5. Strengthen the commitment of the foster care management system to family reunification by implementing policies that mandate fathers of foster care children be identified and included in the foster care treatment plan.

6. Provide readily available expert resources to child welfare professionals to assist them in communicating more effectively with their clients' fathers who may be experiencing issues that are uncomfortable to the child welfare professional.

7. Recruit more male child welfare professionals.
APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board
Office of Sponsored Programs

October 6, 2013

Mr. Jimmy L. Wilson <Jimmy_Wilson57@yahoo.com>
School of Social Work
Clark Atlanta University
Atlanta, GA 30314

RE: A Study Of The Barriers That Prevent Fathers From Participation And Family Reunification Of Foster Care Children In The State Of Georgia.

Principal Investigator(s): Jimmy L. Wilson
Human Subjects Code Number: HR2013-10-489-1

Dear Mr. Wilson:

The Human Subjects Committee of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your protocol and approved of it as exempt in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

Your Protocol Extended Approval Code is HR2013-10-489-1/A

This permit will expire on October 5, 2014. Thereafter, continued approval is contingent upon the annual submission of a renewal form to this office.

The CAU IRB acknowledges your timely completion of the CITI IRB Training in Protection of Human Subjects – "Social and Behavioral Sciences Track". Your certification is valid for two years.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Georgianna Bolden at the Office of Sponsored Programs (404) 880-6979 or Dr. Paul I. Musey, (404) 880-6829.

Sincerely:

Paul I. Musey, Ph.D.
Chair
IRB: Human Subjects Committee

cc. Office of Sponsored Programs, "Dr. Georgianna Bolden" <gbolden@cau.edu>
APPENDIX B

LETTER OF APPROVAL TO ADMINISTER SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

TO: Mr. Jimmy L. Wilson
FROM: Ms. LaMarva E. Ivory
Region XIV Director
DATE: November 13, 2013
RE: Barriers to Fathers Involvement Questionnaire

This letter is forwarded in response to your email dated October 3, 2013, requesting the Foster Care Case Managers to complete a brief questionnaire that relates to the research that you are currently conducting. I, LaMarva E. Ivory am granting you permission to conduct your questionnaire amongst my staff within DeKalb and Fulton Counties for participation.

We hope that any information you receive from the Department of Family & Children Services, Region XIV, will be helpful in your current studies. I would like to extend best wishes in your educational pursuits.

If you have any questions or concerns, that need to be addressed, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Ja'Melle R. Smith, DeKalb/Fulton Regional Office Manager at (404) 205-3670 or (678) 994-7262 for any further assistance.

Sincerely,

LaMarva E. Ivory, MSW
APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT

October 2, 2013

Dear Participant:

My name is Jimmy L. Wilson. I am a Ph.D. student at Clark Atlanta University Whitney M. Young, Jr., School of Social Work under the supervision of Dr. Richard Lyle.

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: A Study Of The Barriers That Prevent Fathers From Participation And Family Reunification Of Foster Care Children In The State Of Georgia. The purpose of the survey is to determine in what ways do incarceration; undocumented paternity; substance abuse; and parental conflict create barriers to father involvement and family reunification with children in the Georgia foster care system. Clark Atlanta University's Institutional Review Board has approved the study. There are no identified risks from participating in this research. Neither the researcher nor the University has a conflict of interest with the results.

Thank you for agreeing to complete a questionnaire as part of my research. Attached is a copy of the questionnaire. I would be grateful if you will complete and return the questionnaire to me in the enclosed stamped envelope by November 15, 2013. You may return the questionnaire by e-mail if you prefer, jlapc89@aol.com. It should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete. You will receive no compensation for participating in the research study.

Before you complete the enclosed questionnaire I wish to confirm that:

• Your anonymity will be maintained and no comments will be ascribed to you by name in any written document or verbal presentation. Responses to the survey will only be reported in aggregated form to protect the identity of respondents.

• Participation in this research is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate without consequence and request that your questionnaire be excluded from the findings.

• If you would like to know the results of this research please contact me at jlapc89@aol.com.

• If you have any queries concerning the nature of the research or are unclear about any question please contact me at jlapc89@aol.com.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to help me with my research. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Jimmy L. Wilson
Ph.D. Candidate, Clark Atlanta University
APPENDIX D
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE
BARRIERS TO FATHER INVOLVEMENT SURVEY

Barriers to Father Involvement
School of Social Work PhD Program
Jimmy L. Wilson - September 2013
Clark Atlanta University

Questionnaire

Section I: Demographic Information
Instructions: Mark (X) in the appropriate box below. Choose only one answer for each item.

1. My gender: □ Male □ Female
   □ 46 and older
3. I was raised by my: □ Mother & Father □ Mother Only □ Father Only
   □ Other (Specify)
4. Length of Experience: □ 1 year or less □ 2-5 years □ 7-11 years
   □ 11-15 years □ 15 years or more
5. My education: □ BA/BS □ BSW □ MSW □ Masters Degree (not MSW)
   □ PhD
6. Average Case Load: □ 0-12 □ 11-18 □ 20-25 □ 26-30 □ 31-40
   □ 40 & up
7. The one racial category that best describes me: □ Black □ White □ Hispanic
   □ Asian □ Other (Specify)
8. Average length of time working with cases: □ 3-6 months □ 7-12 months
   □ 13-24 months □ 25 months & Up

Questionnaire continues on the following page.

89
APPENDIX D

(continued)

Section II: How much do you agree with the following statements?
Instructions: Write the alphabet indicating your answer (A, B, C, or D) in the blank space in front of each statement. Choose only one answer for each statement and respond to all statements.

- **A** = Strongly Disagree
- **B** = Disagree
- **C** = Agree
- **D** = Strongly Agree

Incarceration

___ 9. I visit incarcerated fathers regularly.
___ 10. I include incarcerated fathers in my service plan.
___ 11. I plan regular visits with my clients and their incarcerated fathers.

Established Paternity

___ 12. I always ask about my clients' father during the life of the case.
___ 13. I encourage every father to take a paternity test.
___ 14. I do research to locate my clients' father.

Substance Abuse

___ 15. I send every father for a drug and alcohol assessment.
___ 16. I enroll fathers (who need treatment) in treatment programs within 30 days.
___ 17. I do place a child with a father who is working on his substance abuse issues.

Parental Conflict

___ 18. I instruct every mother not to use her child as a weapon against her child's father.
___ 19. I seek to enroll fathers, along with mothers, in conflict management training.
___ 20. I advise each father to have mutual respect and positive communication with the child's mother.

Thank you for your participation.
APPENDIX E

SPSS PROGRAM ANALYSIS

TITLE 'BARRIERS TO FATHER INVOLVEMENT'.
SUBTITLE 'JIMMY WILSON - CAU PHD PROGRAM'.

DATA LIST FIXED/
ID 1-3 GENDER 4
AGEGRP 5 RAISED
6 EXPERI 7
EDUCAT 8 CASELO
9 ETHNIC 10
LENGTH 11 IVISIT
12 INCLUDE 13
IPLAN 14 ALWAYS
15 ENCOURA 16
RESEARCH 17
ISEND 18 IENROLL
19 DOPLACE 20
INSTRUCT 21
ISEEK 22 IADVISE
23.

VARIABLE LABELS
ID 'Questionnaire'
GENDER 'Q1 My Gender'
AGEGRP 'Q2 My Age Group'
RAISED 'Q3 I was raised by my'
EXPERI 'Q4 Length of Experience'
EDUCAT 'Q5 My Education'
CASELO 'Q6 Average Case Load'
ETHNIC 'Q7 The one racial category that best describes me'
LENGTH 'Q8 Average length of time working with cases'
IVISIT 'Q9 I visit incarcerated fathers regularly'
INCLUDE 'Q10 I include incarcerated fathers in my service plan'
IPLAN 'Q11 I plan regular visits with my clients and their incarcerated fathers'
ALWAYS 'Q12 I always ask about my clients fathers during the life of the case'
ENCOURA 'Q13 I encourage every father to take a paternity test'
RESEARCH 'Q14 I do research to locate my clients father'
ISEND 'Q15 I send every father for a drug and alcohol assessment'
IENROLL 'Q16 I enroll fathers who need treatment- in treatment programs within 30 days'
DOPLACE 'Q17 I do place a child with a father who is working on his substance abuse issues'
INSTRUCT 'Q18 I instruct every mother not to use her child as a weapon against her childs
father'
ISEEK 'Q19 I seek to enroll fathers along, with mothers-in conflict management training'

91
APPENDIX E

(continued)

I ADVISE 'Q20 I advise each father to have mutual respect-positive communication with the child's mother'.

VALUE LABELS
GENDER
1 'Male'
2 'Female'

AGEGRP
20-25'
26-30'
31-35'
36-40'
41-45'
46-Older'

RAISED
'Mother-Father'
'Mother only'
'Father only'
'Other'

EXPERI
1 '0 yrs or less'
2 '2-6 yrs'
3 '7-11 yrs'
4 '11-15 yrs'
5 'Over 15 yrs'

EDUCAT
1 'BA-BS'
2 'BSW'
3 'MSW'
4 'MA'
5 'PhD-DSW'

CASELO
1 '0-12'
2 '11-18'
3 '20-25'
4 '26-30'
5 '31-40'
6 'Over 40'

ETHNIC
1 'Black'
2 'White'
3 'Hispanic'
4 'Asian'
5 'Other'

LENGTH
1 '1-3 Months'
2 '7-12 Months'
3 '13-24 Months'
APPENDIX E

(continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
<th>Option 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IVISIT</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCLUDE</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I PLAN</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALWAYS</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENCOURAGE</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISEND</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IENROLL</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOPLACE</td>
<td>'Strongly Disagree'</td>
<td>'Disagree'</td>
<td>'Agree'</td>
<td>'Strongly Agree'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E
(continued)

INSTRUCT
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
ISEEK
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/
IADVISE
1 'Strongly Disagree'
2 'Disagree'
3 'Agree'
4 'Strongly Agree'/

MISSING VALUES
GENDER AGEGRP RAISED EXPERI EDUCAT CASELO
ETHNIC LENGTH IVISIT INCLUDE IPLAN ALWAYS ENCOURA RESEARCH ISEND IENROLL
DOPLACE INSTRUCT ISEEK IADVISE (0).

BEGIN DATA
00115154111343111230111
00214132022300424131444
00322124111122123141114
0042511221233333333444
00522423212342323222222
0061523121311111111111
007211121123434231444
00822121114333323444334
00923141223121124221333
010211122124413231414
0112111311111111111111
0122111211444331111113
01325253211000000000000
0142222321433243111444
015211231122324132333
016232111444444244444
017231235121422111343
0182622221433443411414
0192024311244434332444
0202232321233333231333
021260332114444243444
0222342221243243313333
0232415421323144424444
0241615421444444444444
02526252213322234222333
026162532114444444444
02726144213111342132444
APPENDIX E

(continued)

02825131213443444143424
02925431213111111111111
0302312125333444133424
0312312143333333111133
0322242311333443333233
03326214111111111111111
0342615321333443343434
03526152114443444314444
03626251112333332222323
03723144314332423232434
03821132152433444433334
039121131113233344433333
04023122114342444222423
04114153114342434333444
04224233214222432323434
0432313421223232220434
04422132114111142111111
0452013214131444332444
0461314213233333233444
0472343322222444334343
0482413221222323232323
04922142113334232333434
0502212321311143131413
0512615321233333222433
0522221311343443434124
0531312321314444144444
0542342221433334233433
05522232142243222223
0562415221344444243444
0572415311213421334444
05825153112222444242444
0592522211222323232333
0602323311213441334444
0612515321411434111111
06222223112113211111111
063221231141431113111
0642322214131243223424
0652314111423233220323
0661625211343334323434
067261240103000300004
0682615431310030003400
0691514114222432424444
0702624311422222222222
071232412213432112113
072234341142221122222
07324141212111111111111
0741322314112432424444
07522424113114111413
0762342421123232324444
APPENDIX E

(continued)

07725144114111343111444
07821112111111211111312
079211222122321341333
08022134114111111111444
08122102211111111111444
0822322122222222222222
08322131111211111111144
084231322413232000323
0852443211223243241433
0862343411111411111111
0872212321211322242434
08823001213111111111131
08906252313111111111133
0902412111111412111411
0912643411141444414444
0922311411111111111111
09321113121111311111111
094141212332422221444
0952411411111111111111
0962421111111412111411
097242431411144431444
END DATA.

FREQUENCIES
/VARIABLES GENDER AGEGRP RAISED EXPERI EDUCAT CASELO ETHNIC LENGTH IVISIT
INCLUDE IPLAN ALWAYS ENCOURA RESEARCH ISEND IENROLL DOPLACE INSTRUCT
ISEEK IADVISE
/STATISTICS = DEFAULT.
REFERENCES


Flack, J. (2011, November 10). *Incarceration prevention for adolescent males impacted by parental incarceration and foster care* [Scholarly project].


Jeffries. (2001). *Internet* [Article online without full credits attached].

Johnson, & Bryant. (2004). *Internet* [Article online without full credits attached].


Pate. (2005). *Internet* [Article online without full credits attached].


Roberts. (2002). *Internet* [Article online without full credits attached].


Thompson, M. L. (2013, May). *Increasing the equitability of substance abuse services for fathers involved in the child welfare system: A grant proposal* [Scholarly project].

*US Office of General Accounting Office. (1998).*

http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t02.htm

www.gao.gov/

USLegal, Inc. (2013). Retrieved from uslegal.com

Walker, L. (2009). My son gave birth to me: Offending fathers-generative, reflexive and
risky. University of Hull.

for healthy relationships and father involvement. Social Problems, 53(3),
392-420.

Wildeman, C., & Western, B. (2010). Incarceration in fragile families. The Future of
Children, 20, 157-177.