Program evaluation of the Columbia Community Connections, Inc, father to father men's services program

Abdul-Rahmaan A.R.I. Muhammad

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ABSTRACT
SOCIAL WORK

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PROGRAM EVALUATION OF THE
COLUMBIA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, INC.
FATHER TO FATHER MEN'S SERVICES PROGRAM

Advisor: Dr. Sandra Foster
Thesis dated May, 1999

This study is an outcome evaluation and examines the goals and objectives of the Columbia Community Connections, Inc. Father to Father Men's Services Program in Decatur, Georgia. The program is also known simply as the Father to Father (FtF) Program. It provides parenting education, peer support and advocacy for fathers. The study was based on the premise that programmatic effectiveness is attributed to the implementation and accomplishment of program goals. The seven program goals were the independent variables and the dependent variable was the effectiveness of the program.

A survey was administered to participants in the Father to Father Program via the telephone. Data analysis was done with SPSSWIN. Frequency distribution and analysis of T-test were used to analyze the data. The researcher found that five out of seven program goals were being accomplished effectively. Recommendations were made for the other two program goals.
The conclusions from the findings suggest that Father to Father is working towards accomplishing each program goal. The results show high percentages and significant differences in fathers after participation in the program. Increased networking and promotion of the program will ensure the accomplishment of goals that the program is not meeting.
PROGRAM EVALUATION OF THE
COLUMBIA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, INC.
FATHER TO FATHER MEN'S SERVICES PROGRAM

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY

BY ABDUL-RAHMAAN ABD-RAHEEM IBN MUHAMMAD

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

MAY 1999
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ................................................................. ii

LIST OF TABLES ................................................................. v

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION ............................................................... 1

   Statement Of The Problem ............................................... 8
   Purpose Of Study .......................................................... 8

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION .................................................. 10

   Program Goals ............................................................. 16

III. METHODOLOGY .............................................................. 19

   Research Design .......................................................... 19
   Setting ........................................................................... 19
   Sampling ......................................................................... 19
   Data Collection Procedure/Instrumentation ......................... 20
   Data Analysis .................................................................. 20

IV. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS ............................................... 22

   Discussion ....................................................................... 26
   Recommendations for Father to Father Program .................. 27

V. CONCLUSION .................................................................... 28

   Limitations of the Study .................................................... 29
   Suggested Research Direction ............................................ 30

VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE ....................... 32

APPENDICES ........................................................................ 34

   A. Demographic Information .............................................. 34
   B. Letter to the Agency ..................................................... 37
   C. Consent Form ............................................................. 38
LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

1  Demographic Variable ................................................................. 23
2  T-Test Analysis Of Hypothesis Under Study .................................. 24
3  Questions Addressing Program Goals ........................................... 25
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Over the past three to five years, a focus on fathers has come to the forefront of American society. In a 1995 speech President Bill Clinton stated, "The single biggest problem in our society may be the growing absence of fathers in their children’s homes because it contributes to so many other social problems" (Fost, 1996). Even when it was the norm for individuals to get married and stay married, the main roles of the father were that of a financial provider and authority figure. In two parent households, fewer than twenty-five percent of young boys and girls experienced an average of at least one hour a day of relatively individualized contact with their fathers. The average daily amount of one to one "father/child" contact reported in this country is less than thirty minutes (Biller, 1994).

Presently, forty percent of American children live without their biological fathers (Furstenberg, 1991). A large number of these children do not see their fathers at all. Those fathers who do attempt to spend time with their children must make compromises with their ex-girlfriends or ex-wives on visitation times and child support payments. In most cases though, child support and visitation is regulated by the court through mediation either with a social worker, lawyer or both. In the state of Georgia, fathers pay between eighteen and twenty-one percent of their monthly income to child support (Office of Child Support Enforcement, 1996). Visitation is usually much more difficult to ensure unless the father has legitimated his child or children in court. Legitimation is a court
process that gives unwed fathers the same rights to their children as parents who were married at the time of the birth of their children (Pamphlet, Atlanta Legal Aid, 1998).

Too often, American society equates parenthood with motherhood, thereby, ignoring the role of the father and presupposing his absence. Institutions that claim to be family support networks such as, schools, the workplace, religious organizations, health and welfare agencies, assume that fathers are not available, not involved and not interested in giving or receiving support. David Pope, noted sociology professor at Rutgers University and author of the forth coming book "Life Without Father" states, "Although many absent fathers will never become superdads, there are lots of things businesses, governments and communities can do to help men become better fathers" (Fost, 1996).

For example, it is the researcher’s view that the government can pass laws that give fathers more rights as it pertains to involvement in their children’s lives. Single fathers should be granted more access or the same access to programs and support systems as single mothers. Further, businesses can make more flexible work shifts which will allow fathers more quality time to spend with their children. Father focused initiatives in the community and school system would be another useful tool. Also, rather than dismissing and not including fathers in the formation of new programs, activities that will interest fathers should be added to program components.

Father involvement, the act of being a part of the biological child’s life, spending quality time with them and nurturing the child’s positive development is of significance for all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups. Statistics show that in 1996, sixty percent of African-American children did not live with their dads while nineteen percent of white children did not live with their dads (Fost, 1996). Children born outside of marriage spend an average of six months (in their life time) living with their father. Three-fifths of unwed fathers whose children are younger than two years old see their fathers frequently. By the
time the child reaches age seven and a half years old, less than a quarter of unwed fathers will see their children frequently (Gallagher, 1994).

For the first time in history, the average child can expect to live a significant portion of his/her life without a father. If a person were to put the divorce and illegitimacy statistics together, they would come up with a disturbing trend: a baby born today stands roughly a fifty/fifty chance of being with his/her father (Gallagher, 1996). Year after year, the trend continues to get worse. In 1960, the number of children living without their fathers was eight million, by 1994, the number had reached more than twenty-three million and continues to rise (Horn, 1994).

Teenage fathers, not far from being children themselves, have a variety of excuses for not being involved in their children’s lives. The Atlanta Journal Constitution indicated, “Sometimes the baby’s mother has a new boyfriend or the father has a new girlfriend. Other fathers question the fact of whether the baby is theirs,” states Darrell Green, former social worker at Columbia Community Connections, Inc., in Decatur, Georgia (Hill, 1997). Many fathers have no excuses at all for not being involved in their children’s lives. Fathers attending parenting groups have cited the lack of a father figure in their own lives as the reason for their lack of involvement. Although, this is a poor excuse, many fathers obviously just do not know how to be good fathers.

Father involvement is so critical to the positive development of children. Only 7.6% of Americans disagree with the statement: “Fathers make a unique contribution to their children’s lives” (National Center for Fathering Gallop Poll, 1996). Through examining the negative effects of father absence, much of current research has documented the importance of fathers. Research shows that children from fatherless homes are more likely to: be absent from school, perform less well on standardized tests and school assignments, drop out of school, be sexually active, be susceptible to peer
pressure, be depressed and/or display aggressive behavior (especially girls) and be susceptible to disease (Blakenhorn, 1995). Children raised without a father in the home are also more likely to have a problem with the law. The likelihood that a young man will engage in criminal activity doubles if he is raised without a father. Seventy-two percent of adolescent murderers grew up in single or no parent situations (Blakenhorn, 1995). As adults, the chances are greater that those raised without fathers will: suffer from poverty, receive welfare, marry early, have children out of wedlock, commit delinquent acts and engage in alcohol and drug use. However, not all children are delinquent and mature to be nonproductive adults.

Many children from mother only homes will escape the problems associated with growing up in fatherless homes. Through extended family members like uncles, cousins and other positive male figures, children will have the opportunity to prosper in their endeavors. Presently, 27,341,000 children live apart from their biological father (Census Bureau, 1994). Psychologist Samuel Osherson, sums up the overall situation well. He states, “The psychological and physical absence of fathers is one of the greatest underestimated tragedies of our time (www.fathers.com., 1996).

The involvement a father has with his children is special. The various games a father plays, activities they create and standards they set for their children is very different from those of the mother or any other family member. Studies have shown that children who receive higher levels of interaction and attention with their fathers are better adjusted and healthier than children with uninvolved fathers. According to a 1990 study, children with highly involved fathers were: more confident and less anxious in unfamiliar settings, better able to deal with frustration, better able to adapt to changing circumstances and breaks from their routine and better able to gain a sense of independence and an identity outside the mother child relationship (Cantor, 1991).
A Harvard University study spanning twenty-six years reinforces the 1990 study by adding several more benefits for children with involved fathers. The study concluded that children are more likely to mature into compassionate adults; they are more likely to have higher self-esteem and grade point averages, and they are more sociable (Elias, 1990). Although, most researchers and laymen are not surprised by the aforementioned statistics, in a recent study by reporter Carla Cantor, there were surprising results. Cantor discovered that a child’s relationship with his father seemed more important than the mother/child bond when it came to the child’s ability to show compassion (Cantor, 1991).

In fact, there is evidence that banishes the idea of the “generic parent.” The term, generic parent, is used to symbolize the stereotypical roles that men and women portray as parents. Instead, the theory proposes that the mother possesses unique parenting skills and the father has unique parenting skills. Cantor (1991) relates that according to Yale Child Study Center Psychiatrist Kyle Pruitt: “It is through the father that the baby first learns about the comings and goings, transactions and separations and non-mother nurturing.” She also states that, “An involved father initiates his children into a world of objects, activities and people outside the mother sphere . . . which expands the child’s horizons and stimulates his thinking process.” Further, Cantor indicates that other researchers have substantiated Pruitt’s findings. “Fathers tend to be playful and physical, initiating unusual, exciting forms of rough and tumble play,” states Norma Radin, professor of Social Work at the University of Michigan.

Even as babies, children realize the difference between mothers and fathers. Pediatrician and author T. Berry Brazelton, notes that at three weeks a baby will show different reactions to his mother as compared to his father, when the father approaches, the baby will hunch his shoulders and lift his eyebrows as though in anticipation of playtime (Canfeild, 1996). Minton and Pasley (1996) state, “In comparison to mothers,
fathers interact less frequently, engage in different types of interaction, are less involved in care giving, are more involved in play, and display less affection to their children.” From this point of view, the father is seen as more playful but also as an important source of socialization for children to the outside world. Other scholars feel there is no comparison between mothers and fathers (Minton and Pasley, 1996). These scholars see the interaction between father and child as unique to the child.

Just as technology has rapidly changed over the past few decades, attitudes are changing as it pertains to father involvement in their children’s lives. Much like any successful endeavor in life, children need a team to fulfill their greatest potential and capabilities. Children need both their mother and father. In the past, the father’s role was to provide (food, shelter, finances) and the mother’s role was to nurture (rear the children, hugs and kisses). More and more evidence indicates that such definitions are too narrow for the needs of children. Children need their fathers to nurture and care for them, not just provide money in order to become healthy adults.

In 1970, only thirty percent of Americans believed it was important for fathers to spend equal time with their children as mothers did. By 1986, the figure had risen to ninety percent (Giveans, 1989). Twenty-five years ago fathers spent no more than one-third of the time mothers did in caring for children. On average, the study concluded fathers now spend half the time mothers do (Levine, 1992).

The time fathers spend with children can not be replaced. In a yearly essay contest sponsored by the National Center for Fathering, most of the essays are written about everyday activities (talking, swimming, and playing catch) that fathers do with their children. Nick Stinnett, a college professor of Human Development and the Family, writes:
People's fondest memories of family life are typically nothing really complicated or expensive activities. They remember such things as eating meals together, going to an uncle's house together or enjoying dad pulling them on a sled. The common thread is simply doing something together that is enjoyable. The activities they remember are not all entertainment; they include work too. We have some evidence that when people work together towards a goal that it is important to them, it tends to bring them closer together (Stinnett, 1992).

A couple of perfect examples of how important time is to children is described in Ken Canfeild's book, *The Heart of a Father*. Canfeild tells the story of Tony LaRussa, manager of Major League Baseball's St. Louis Cardinals. His two daughters, now ages twenty-five and twenty-seven years old, are suing him for 16 million dollars. The direct premise of their suit was that their father was not around enough to raise them. Another story in Canfeild’s book told of a father who promised to take his son fishing. The day before the trip the father was given the opportunity to make $1,000 dollars and further his career. The father, feeling bad about not being able to go on the trip propositioned his son with the $1,000 dollars to make up for the time. After thinking for a while, he (son) decided he would rather spend time with his dad (Canfeild, 1996). These are perfect examples of how much children value their fathers. Whether it is $16 million for a lifetime or $1,000 dollars a day it is impossible to replace time.

Father involvement is becoming more important in mainstream society. The roles and expectations of fathers have changed and will continue to do so over time. For children, fathers benefit them in a variety of ways and their (fathers) lack of involvement can lead children to their detriment. Through programs like Father to Father, fathers can learn how important they are to their children.
Statement Of The Problem

The expectations for fathers has increased immensely as we reach the turn of the century. Financially providing for the family and occasionally being a disciplinary source is no longer enough to be considered the father’s role. The increased expectations can be attributed to more mothers working outside the home or parents wanting to give their children what they missed out on as children themselves. Surprisingly, much of the increased expectations come from the fathers themselves, when they invest in their children, they find great rewards (www. fathers. com., 1996).

Due to high divorce rates, separation, and out of wedlock births, fathers do not have the same access to their children that they would if they were married. Many fathers lack the parenting and nurturing skills they need to be effective fathers. Fathers need programs that will aid them with parenting skills, visitation, and other parenting information.

The Father to Father Men’s Services Program (also known simply as Father to Father) in Decatur, Georgia is one of hundreds of programs working with fathers across the country. Through an outcome evaluation of the program’s goals, the researcher seeks to establish whether or not Father to Father is meeting its goals and effectively servicing the fathers involved.

Purpose Of Study

The purpose of the study was to examine and evaluate the Father to Father Men’s Services Program in Decatur, Georgia. This evaluation is based on the programs ability to achieve its program goals and objectives. To achieve this purpose, the fathers in the program were surveyed, staff was interviewed and records were reviewed. The type of evaluation used for the purpose of this study was an outcome evaluation.
Outcome evaluations determine whether goals and objectives have been met and the extent to which the program effects are generalized to other settings and populations (Marlow, 1998). Father to Father has been operating since January 1997. After two years of operation the agency is prepared for outside feedback on the effectiveness of the Father to Father program.
CHAPTER TWO

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Father to Father (FtF) Men’s Services Program is one of three programs operating at the Columbia Community Connections, Inc. (C.C.C.I.) – Family Resource Center in Decatur, Georgia. The other two programs are Parents as Teachers and Healthy Families Georgia. FtF is a comprehensive program that works in conjunction with the court system, Child Support Enforcement, local schools and other community based organizations, to provide fathers in the community with support, parenting education, comradery, individual and family counseling, and information assistance with visitation. The program also provides educational assistance by providing fathers with access to GED classes, computer training, resume and application training. Father to Father also helps fathers with their job search. The official start up date for FtF was January 1997. Over the past two years, FtF has bestowed its services to over 200 fathers (Father to Father Handout, 1999).

There are four major components to the Father to Father program, they are:

Parenting Education- where participants attend twelve weeks of parenting classes and discuss child development. Captain’s Team- Captain’s Team members are mentors from the community who are matched with young fathers. They meet weekly to discuss various fathering issues. Peer Support Outings- Fathers and their children have coordinated quality opportunities to interact with other fathers and their children. The group participates in monthly outings such as sporting events, the circus, museums, the zoo, the
library and public parks. **Paternity Establishment**—Participants receive assistance with establishing paternity and organizing visitation. Fathers can also take advantage of the referral system for job skills training and/or employment.

Fathers in the FtF program range in age from as young as fifteen years old, to much older and experienced fathers of fifty years old and above. The gap in age and experience enables the older, more knowledgeable fathers the opportunity to share what they have learned throughout their journey as dads with the younger, less experienced and first time fathers who have questions. Parenting information and shared experiences are conveyed and discussed in the weekly groups and peer support outings. The groups are facilitated by the FtF Coordinator or special speakers who are brought in as experts on specific topics. FtF uses two basic curricula that address the issue of effective parenting. The curricula are, *Raising Children With A Sense of Pride* and *The Seven Secrets of Effective Fathering*.

Some fathers are court ordered to attend two to six of the FtF program groups. However, participation in the Father to Father program including all its services is voluntary and free. Statistics from group attendance show that a large percentage of the fathers who are court mandated or part of CSE attend meetings far exceeding their mandatory number. Other fathers are encouraged to join the program by fathers who are already active in the program. Some join the program just because they have heard about the program (at a community presentation, flyer, etc.) and just want to learn more about establishing or enhancing their relationship with their children.

Father to Father is designed to operate in three 12 week cycles, leaving a four week planning session between each cycle. During the planning stage, monthly peer support outings and counseling continue for fathers who choose to remain in the program from one cycle to the next. Fathers who have successfully completed one cycle and
continue to attend become primary participants in the program and tend to take on more responsibility as it pertains to doing presentations in the community, appearing on panel discussions, becoming mentors and advocating for fathers.

The program uses the credo "Building strong families through community involvement." FtF has established a strong relationship with the community. FtF has sponsored numerous events in collaboration with area elementary, middle and high schools. A successful event was the Father to Father "Breakfast for Dads" at Hooper Elementary school. The "Breakfast for Dads" gave fathers who did not know about FtF the opportunity to hear about the program and also meet other fathers with children in their community. Fathers had the chance to exchange personal stories about fatherhood over a homemade, southern breakfast. Other community events FtF has been involved in are Career Day at Snapfinger Elementary and job fairs.

Father to Father’s chief funder is the National Benevolent Association (NBA). FtF also receives aid from local grants, community organizations, donations and sponsorships. Many local businesses such as Kroger, Dominoes and Boston Market, etc. have given support to FtF functions. Since membership in the FtF program is free to fathers, the various sources of income, support and donations enable the program to service the fathers effectively.

During the two years of operation, Father to Father has served as a pilot program for other FtF programs at other service units associated with the NBA. Quarterly, administrators from the National Benevolent Association come to Columbia Community Connections, Inc. to see the progress of the Father to Father program. After two years of operation, FtF continues to grow and show success.

The Father to Father program has a specific hierarchy. Dr. Jaine Francis-Asante, is the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer. She has her undergraduate degree in
Social Work and advance degrees in Counseling Education and Child and Family Development. She has been granted her Ed.S. in Marriage and Family Therapy. The Program Manager, Antoinette Williams, reports directly to Dr. Francis-Asante and oversees the daily program operation of the CCCI Family Resource Center. Mrs. Williams has her undergraduate and Master’s degrees in Social Work from the University of West Florida and Clark Atlanta University respectively. Rueben Lawrence is the Father to Father Coordinator and reports directly to Mrs. Williams. He coordinates the activities of the Father to Father program. He received his undergraduate degree in Pastoral Counseling and Education. He is currently completing the requirements for his Master’s degree in Psychology of Counseling.

As previously stated, FtF has affiliations with many community organizations. Local schools, churches and other social service agencies provide support for speaking engagements and different Father to Father sponsored events. Father to Father has cultivated relationships with these community based organizations to ensure their role in community development, planning and establishing the father’s role in community. A perfect example of one of the FtF collaborations is seen by the relationship the program has established with DeKalb County Child Support Enforcement. The Father to Father coordinator does four, one hour groups throughout a two week period. The groups provide an arena for discussing parenting information and the importance of paying child support. The coordinator emphasizes that children need support from their fathers in more ways than just financially. The fathers are also invited to attend the groups held at the CCCI Family Resource Center.

Throughout the state and country there are many other programs addressing the needs of fathers. Each program is doing something to uniquely aid fathers to be better fathers. For example, The Center on Fathers, Families and Public Policy in Chicago,
Illinois, examines the legal and social services support systems available to never married, low skilled and low income fathers. This program works to educate the public and policy makers about the need for public policies that assist never married, low income fathers in moving to complete involvement with his child/children (Family Resource Coalition Report, Spring, 1996).

Other organizations focus on providing training for social workers and other individuals who specialize in working with fathers. MELD for Young Dads is a network of ten programs in six states that work to connect fathers with their children. About seventy programs in twenty states have replicated the MELD model, which focuses on peer education. Also the National Center for Fathering adds support by advocating and researching fathering practices, providing training seminars for fathers and conducting public education forums on fatherhood issues.

Lastly, there are organizations that provide publications that focus on the father’s role, fatherhood from an African-American perspective and different methods of engaging fathers into programs. One of the most widely used books on the issue of father’s roles is The Heart of a Father by Ken Canfield, Ph.D., Founder and President of the National Center for Fathering.

Programs that address issues pertaining to fathers are becoming more wide spread out of necessity. Due to increased interest of policy makers and social service providers fatherhood has become a movement. In a handout distributed by Eric Esperanza Family Health Center, in Chicago, Illinois there were recommendations for involving fathers in programs. The recommendations included, going to where the fathers are (physically and geographically); establishing a trusting relationship; being streetwise (knowing survival skills, vernacular, and slang); being culturally aware and flexible; providing direct services; having a hook for the program (employment, counseling, sports, etc.); advertising the
program; considering the father's role in the parenting unit; recognizing and promoting that fatherhood begins with loving not money; making fathers feel welcome; providing an area that reflects fathers (posters, magazines); providing a safe environment and conducting on-going training for staff on fatherhood issues.
Program Goals

The goals of the Father to Father Men’s Services Program are centered around promoting positive father-child interactions. The program aims to help fathers understand themselves as a necessity to understanding their children. The rapport between father and child directs future behaviors in children. It is important that fathers grasp insight into the ways that they become involved with their children, their community, and thus, with society. Seven goals have been identified in the Columbia Community Connections, Inc. (CCCI) Father to Father Men’s Services Program brochure to help fathers become permanent fixtures in the lives of their children.

The goals are:

1. **Assist Fathers to increase the amount of quality time spent with their children and to assist fathers to have a positive impact on their child’s development**

   This goal will be most effective when the following components are implemented:

   A. Assisting the fathers in developing healthy family views and the importance of ensuring clear communication.  
   B. Assisting fathers in developing and maintaining a sense of self-respect.  
   C. Assisting fathers in understanding the importance of early intervention when dealing with conflict and control situations involving their children.  
   D. Assisting fathers in developing time management processes to allow for an opportunity to spend quality time with their families.  
   E. Assisting fathers in ensuring that their children’s basic needs are met.  

   This first goal is accomplished by developing a consistent strategy to emphasize the importance of fathers’ nurturing and keeping a high level of involvement with their children. The fathers are exposed to appropriate models of behavior during the weekly group sessions. During these sessions, fathers have opportunities to learn about the benefits of quality time with children as having direct results on the levels of self-esteem
and self-worth in their children.

2. **Increase the community's awareness of the father's role in the family and the importance of father's participation in the rearing and nurturing of children**

   This goal focuses on the father being involved in the community and the role they should play to ensure that they can provide comprehensive child rearing strategies in raising their children. This goal will be accomplished through the process of community presentations. Some of these presentations will take place in community based sites. Collaborations will continue to be developed with several key players and stakeholders in the community. Several of these community partners include the schools, churches, and the YMCA.

3. **To prevent child abuse and neglect**

   One of the primary objectives of this goal is to prevent or decrease the incidents of child abuse and neglect. During the implementation of this goal there are discussions on topics relating to negative behavior management and useful parent techniques for dealing with out-of-control children. After a series of successful trainings the fathers are added to the Captain's Team. The Captain's Team engages specifically in advocating for and teaching about child abuse and neglect.

4. **Develop a resource network of fathers in the community who serve as presenters, facilitators and mentors**

   This goal is being accomplished by fathers who have completed one cycle of Father to Father. These primary participants speak on panels that discuss fatherhood and parenting. These fathers are encouraged to mentor new fathers in the program.

5. **Assist fathers with paternity establishment and seek to create opportunities that make it feasible for fathers to financially support their children**
It is very important that fathers are able to establish paternity. This is important in encouraging and sustaining commitment to the child and the mother of the child, when appropriate. Other key aspects of the paternity process relates to the legal implication for visitation and child support rights. To facilitate this process, the program often invites Lawyers to the sessions to conduct presentations and answer specific questions.

6. Establish a linkage of the fatherhood program with other fatherhood programs throughout the United States

It is important for fathers to have national connections and involvement with networks in other parts of the country. Fathers are encouraged to utilize the Internet to identify other contact sources across the country. For the most part, this goal will be accomplished through the contacts made at conferences, workshops, tele-conferences, phone contacts and letters.

7. Develop a model fatherhood program that could be replicated in other agencies or organizations

Service duplication and replication are key functions of this program. It is important that these services are available to as many fathers as possible. The Father To Father program at CCCI is a model pilot program for many other FtF programs. Using the CCCI - Family Resource Center’s FtF program other National Benevolent Association service units are targeted to start similar programs.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used an exploratory research design to determine the effectiveness of the Father to Father Men's Services Program. An exploratory study explores a research question about which little is already known. The study uncovers generalizations and develops hypotheses that can be investigated and tested later using more precise, complex designs and data gathering techniques (Grinnel, 1997).

Setting

The participants in the study were members of the Father to Father program. Father to Father is one of the three programs operating at Columbia Community Connections, Inc. Obviously, all participants were men, with varying ages and ethnicity. Although, the majority were African-American.

Sampling

Participants in the study were acquired through a non-probability sampling process. A total of twenty-three research subjects were acquired between the ages of fifteen years and sixty-one years. The subjects were fathers who were members of the
Father to Father program. The participants were located by the Father to Father telephone listing. The list consists of forty active participants in the program. Although there was an attempt to contact all forty only twenty-three were reached.

Data Collection Procedure/Instrumentation

After active participants of the program were identified the research participants were contacted via the telephone. The consent form was read to the fathers. The participants were also informed they would be given the survey twice over the phone with two weeks in between. This was done to establish test re-test reliability.

Included on the consent form (see Appendix) were statements regarding the participants right to confidentiality and a brief explanation of what the survey entailed and aimed to accomplish. Contact numbers were given to fathers to voice questions and concerns about the survey. The demographic portion of the survey included questions relating to participants age, race, marital status, household income, education, income, employment status, number of children, and age when their first child was born.

Data Analysis

The information compiled from the questionnaire was examined using the statistical computer program for the Social Sciences for Windows (SPSSWIN). Descriptive statistics, frequency distribution and percentages were compiled. Two-tailed T-tests were utilized to determine statistically, significant differences between participants before attending the Father to Father program and participation after attending the Father
to Father program.

The frequency and percentages of each question were reviewed. The T-tests revealed six of ten questions to be significant at .05 or better. Results of the T-tests are presented in tables 1-3.

For the purpose of this study the dependent variable is the effectiveness of the Father to Father program. The independent variables are the program goals. The measurement of these variables were determined using a survey based on program goals and other variables associated with the program (Appendix A). The survey was tested by test re-test reliability via the telephone. The survey was constructed specifically to determine if the program goals were being achieved.
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The following information contains statistical data that were compiled for the total number of surveys that were filled out by participants in the study. Frequency distributions were utilized in Tables 1 and 3 to demonstrate percentages of responses. Table 1 includes demographic data about the individuals who completed the survey. Table 2 is a T-test analysis of before and after participation questions. Table 3 describes questions assessing program goals.

The purpose of this analysis was to assess the effectiveness of the Father to Father program by exploring the extent to which the program meets its objectives. The following section provides a profile of these findings.
Table 1

Demographic Variable
N=23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Variable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age Range</td>
<td>One (4.3%) responded between the age of 51-60; four (17.4%) between 41-50; nine (39.1%) between 31-40; seven (30.4%) between 21-30 and the remaining two (8.7%) between 12-21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Twenty (87%) respondents indicated being African American while two (8.7%) indicated Caucasian. The remaining one (4.3%) respondent gave a response of “Other.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Seven (30.4%) respondents were single; thirteen (56.5%) reported being married; two (8.7%) were divorced and the remaining one (4.3%) were separated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income</td>
<td>Four (17.4%) report an income between 5,000-14,999; ten (43.5%) reported between $15,000-24,999; six (26.1%) between $25,000-34,999; one (4.3%) father reported between $35,000-44,999; one between $45,000-54,999 and one between $55,000-64,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>Nineteen (82.6%) respondents report being employed while four (17.4%) report being unemployed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age When Your First Child Was Born</td>
<td>Three (13%) were between the ages of 13-16; nine (38%) between 17-20; five (21.6%) between 21-24; five (21.6%) between 25-28 and the remaining one (4.3%) reported being between 29-32.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children</td>
<td>Seven (30.4%) reported having only 1 child; five (21.6%) report 2 children; seven (30.4%) report 3 children and one father (4.3%) reported having 4, 5, 7, and 10 children respectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Level</td>
<td>One (4.3%) father reported 1-8 years of education; nine (39.1%) between 9-12 years of education; ten (43.5%) between 13-16; two (8.7%) report 17 years and the remaining one (4.3%) reported between 18-21 years of education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I spend quality time with my child</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before Participation</strong></td>
<td>2.0435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After Participation</strong></td>
<td>2.6957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I am a positive role model to my child</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before Participation</strong></td>
<td>1.9130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After Participation</strong></td>
<td>2.4783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I talk to my child’s mother about issues concerning our child</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before Participation</strong></td>
<td>2.0435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After Participation</strong></td>
<td>2.8696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I read to my child</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before Participation</strong></td>
<td>2.0435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After Participation</strong></td>
<td>3.1304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I pay child support on time</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before Participation</strong></td>
<td>2.1304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After Participation</strong></td>
<td>3.2609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I use the information provided by the Father -to- Father Program</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Before Participation</strong></td>
<td>1.9524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After Participation</strong></td>
<td>2.6667</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3
Questions Addressing Program Goals
N=23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did the Father-to-Father Program help you obtain a job</td>
<td>Four (17.4%) participants report the program did help them find a job while nineteen (82.6%) stated, no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your child legitimized</td>
<td>Nineteen (82.6%) fathers indicate their child is legitimized while four (17.4%) report no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you established paternity</td>
<td>Eighteen (78.3%) report they have established paternity and five (21.7%) report no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many Father-to-Father groups have you attended</td>
<td>Seventeen (73.9%) attended between 1-4 groups; four (17.3%) attended between 5-10 groups; the remaining two (8.6%) participants attended between 15-20 groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you facilitated groups in the community</td>
<td>Nine (39.1%) report they have facilitated a group in the community while fourteen (60.9%) report they have not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you a mentor to another father</td>
<td>Six (26.1%) fathers indicated that they were in fact mentors while the remaining seventeen (73.9%) were not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the services offered by the Father-to-Father programs</td>
<td>One a scale of 1-10 with 10 being excellent and one being poor; one father (4.3%) rated services as a 6; two (8.7%) gave a rating of 7; one (4.3%) gave a rating of 8; and seven (30.4%) rated services as a 9. The remaining twelve (52.2%) rated service at a 10.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

At the time of the evaluation, the Father to Father Men's Services Program was routinely accomplishing five of seven goals described in the Program Description chapter.

One program goal that was clearly not being accomplished was: Establish a linkage of our fatherhood program with other fatherhood programs throughout the United States. Through an interview with the Program Coordinator, there was no clear evidence of a linkage between Father to Father Program in Decatur, GA. and other fatherhood programs in other states. To achieve this goal it is recommended that the Father to Father Coordinator begin weekly correspondence with other programs via the internet, phone or mail. Through this correspondence the programs can exchange ideas, successes, failures and new experiences with fathers.

Results in table three show that goal number four: "Have you facilitated groups in the community," was only being accomplished by thirty-nine percent of the respondents in the survey. To successfully accomplish this goal more than fifty percent of the fathers involved in the program should be involved as presenters, facilitators and mentors. To achieve this goal more effectively, it is recommended that the program staff conduct training sessions of curricula and other presentable materials for fathers. These sessions will allow fathers to gain new skills and help the fathers to represent the program more effectively.

Results in tables two and three show high percentages as it pertains to accomplishing program goals. Table two shows the results of a t-test analysis on six of the ten variables in the survey. There were statistically significant differences before participation in the FtF Program as compared to after participation in the FtF Program.
As the Father to Father program continues to grow and the needs of the fathers continue to change, the Father to Father program may need to increase the services offered and re-evaluate the present goals.

**Recommendations for Father to Father Program**

Recommendations for the FtF Program include:

1. Develop a log that documents information from individual counseling sessions or and time a father comes into the agency other than a group day. This log will allow the Program Coordinator to know the situation of each father who comes in for individual counseling, job referral, training, etc.

2. Access the latest information and research on fatherhood via the internet, subscriptions to magazines, and other current event resources. The program needs to continue to add to the resource library and introduce new material at group sessions.

3. Involve fathers in community events, not just ones sponsored by C.C.C.I. Get pins, hats, or t-shirts so that the community knows that the fathers are united. This will increase community awareness of the program and give fathers the opportunity to be involved in community activities.

4. Develop a reliable job referral source. Supporting and encouraging small business endeavors and providing information on programs that assist individuals with entrepreneurship would be helpful to fathers.

5. Staff need to continue their education in the field of fatherhood, increase knowledge of techniques for working with fathers and learn activities to do in groups.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION

Throughout the Father to Father Men’s Services program, I realized that the focus of the program was not based solely on fathers but the family unit with outcomes being beneficial to the child. The four components: Parenting Education, Captain’s Team, Peer Support Outing, and Paternity Establishment are either a learning tool for the protection or enjoyment of the child.

Fathers learn parenting skills and discuss issues like stress, anger management, and ways to discipline to ensure they are equipped with the tools to add positively to their child’s development. Fathers become members of the Captain’s Team and become advocates for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The Captain’s Team also allows young fathers to learn from the experiences of older fathers. The Peer Support Outings allow fathers a chance to spend quality time with their child. Without this aspect of the program some fathers would never think to take their children on a field trip. By stressing the importance of Paternity Establishment and legitimation, the Father to Father program advocates for the legal rights of the father.

Statistics show that children who grow up without father involvement are at risk. It has been proven that fatherless children: are twice as likely to drop out of school, will engage in criminal activity, and have a seventy-two percent rate of being adolescent
Programs like Father to Father aid fathers in their endeavors to be involved with their children. Father to Father teaches the skills that will be needed for effective parenting, explains the importance of quality time, and seeks to provide viable means of support for fathers. Based on the goals the program has set for itself and the outcomes obtained by participants, it is obvious that the program operates effectively. As program improvements are made, fathers and the community will be serviced even better.

**Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of the study included the small number of fathers surveyed from the Father to Father program. Only the fathers who were on the phone list and at home at the time of the study were given the survey. Another limitation pertains specifically to question number twelve: “How many Father to Father groups have you attended?” This question does not represent the actual time of involvement in the program, only the number of groups.

Furthermore, self reporting procedures may have been a factor in the outcome of the results. A father may have reported what he felt the survey wanted him say to participate in the study and please the program coordinator. The father may want the program to sound good to other people because it was beneficial to him (father answering the survey). Also, the survey employed for this research can not be used universally because it was formulated to be a program specific instrument.
Suggested Research Direction

Program evaluations give the researcher a good view of whether or not a program is accomplishing its goals and having positive outcomes. A longitudinal study of Father to Father over a ten year span would be one direction for research on fathering. A study of this caliber could evaluate the program from all aspects; budget, community support, participation of fathers, retention rates, etc. Within a longitudinal study, research could expand to discover facts about the fathers involved in the program, such as parenting background, reason for joining, personal history, and so forth. Through this process, new interventions, curricula and ideas can be tested for effectiveness. A longitudinal study would show the flaws and advances of the program; therefore, allowing other programs to avoid similar set backs.

Another direction for future research should focus more on the children in fatherless homes. Questions that should be explored include, the difficulties children from fatherless homes endure, the measurable differences between children that have a father in the home and those who do not, and how the involvement of the non-custodial father or the divorced father hinders the child. Through better understanding and research on the effects of father absence on children, the better social workers and researchers will be able to express to fathers their importance in their children’s lives.

Although the statistics showed that the fathers in the Father to Father Program paid child support on time more frequently after participation in the Father to Father Program (Table 2. Analysis of T- test), organizations like Child Support Enforcement and Maxxum would not exist if lack of paying child support was not a problem. Research
would be useful on why fathers do not pay child support, what they spend the money on and the repercussions of their non-payment on the child and tax payers.

Research on fathers that are married, or live in the home with their children is very important to the advancement of the fatherhood movement. By using case studies and descriptions of father roles within the family structure and examples of adverse situations that were worked out could serve as a positive guide for Social Workers working with fathers in troubled relationships.

The research on the many aspects of fathering and programs that serve fathers will help program coordinators of fatherhood programs to enhance and develop better tools, activities and presentations that engage and retain the attention of fathers. Fathers in the program have voiced that they want to be involved, they want to pay child support, they want to be good fathers. Fathers need the proper support, information and ability to work.
CHAPTER SIX

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

The fatherhood movement is constantly growing. For the first time in history, programs, policy and laws are being established for fathers. Social service agencies all over the country have added or are rapidly adding a father-focused component to their agencies. Men are seeking assistance with establishing paternity and legitimizing their children because without having this done they have no rights to their children. They are also seeking help with obtaining visitation rights that are being denied even though they pay child support.

Furthermore, social service and government agencies that fund fatherhood programs have realized that just like mothers, fathers also need education on parenting, child care and the stages of development. Fathers need support systems and mentors in place to give them that extra little push when they encounter problems.

The Social Work profession plays a large role in the success of the fatherhood movement. Social Workers have the responsibility of facilitating parenting groups that teach fathers the developmental stages of a child, issues of child abuse and neglect, the importance of the father’s role in his child’s life and other parenting information. Social Workers will fulfill the jobs that put them in the role of advocates for fathers rights whether it pertains to child support, visitation or some other issues. Social Workers will
be called upon to address the counseling needs of men who cannot understand why they have not seen their child for a period of time. At times the Social Worker will have to perform many roles. These include educator, mediator, advocate, counselor, and case manager.

It is important that continued research is done on fathers, their problems and the programs that attempt to give them service. Social Workers that work with this population must remain current with the latest materials, techniques and program ideas. Agencies should institute mandated workshops that highlight the needs of fathers and teach techniques to engage them (fathers) into programming.
APPENDIX A

Demographic Information

Please answer the following questions with the most accurate response.

1. What is your age?
   A. Under 21
   B. 21-30
   C. 31-40
   D. 41-50
   E. 51 and over

2. What is your race?
   A. African-American
   B. Caucasian
   C. Hispanic
   D. Other

3. What is your marital status?
   A. Single
   B. Married
   C. Divorced
   D. Separated
   E. Widowed
   F. Living with girlfriend

4. What is your educational level?
   A. Elementary (k-8)
   B. High School (9-12)
   C. Some College (13-16)
   D. College Degree
   E. Masters, Professional, Doctorate Degree

5. What is your households annual income? Circle the best answer.
   Under 14,999  35,000- 44,999  65,000- 74,999
   15,000- 24,999  45,000- 54,999  75,000- 84,999
   25,000- 34,999  55,000- 64,999  85,000 and over

6. Are you employed? What is your occupation?

7. Did the Father to Father program help you obtain your job?

8. How many children do you have? What are their ages?
9. How old were you when your first child was born?

10. Is your child/children legitimized?

11. Have you established paternity of your child/children?

12. How many Father to Father groups have you attended?

13. Have you facilitated groups or did presentations about Father to Father in the community?

14. Are you a mentor to another father in the Father to Father program?

15. Rate the services offered by the Father to Father program on a scale 1-10. 10 being the highest.

In this section of the survey, I am trying to understand to what extent participation in the Father to Father program has changed daily behaviors and interactions with your child/children and their mother. Please circle the response that most accurately displays your behaviors before participation in the Father to Father program and your behaviors after participation in the Father to Father program. Use the following scale:

1- always  2- most of the time  3- sometimes  4- rarely  5-never

1. I spend quality time with my child.
Before- 1  2  3  4  5  After- 1  2  3  4  5

2. I am a positive role model to my child.
Before- 1  2  3  4  5  After- 1  2  3  4  5

3. I talk to my child's mother about issues concerning our child.
Before- 1  2  3  4  5  After- 1  2  3  4  5

4. I have a positive relationship with my child's mother.
Before- 1  2  3  4  5  After- 1  2  3  4  5

5. I play games with my child.
Before- 1  2  3  4  5  After- 1  2  3  4  5

6. I read to my child.
Before- 1  2  3  4  5  After- 1  2  3  4  5
7. My child spends the night at my house.
   Before- 1 2 3 4 5 After- 1 2 3 4 5

8. I use the information provided in Father to Father groups in daily interactions.
   Before- 1 2 3 4 5 After- 1 2 3 4 5

9. I pay child support on time.
   Before- 1 2 3 4 5 After- 1 2 3 4 5

10. I am a good father.
    Before- 1 2 3 4 5 After- 1 2 3 4 5
November 7, 1998

Dr. Jaine Francis-Asante
Columbia Community Connection, Inc.
P.O. Box 2565
Decatur, GA 30031

Dear Dr. Francis-Asante:

My name Abdul R. Muhammad and I am a graduate student in the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University. I am currently working to complete my thesis research project. For my project I want to do an outcome evaluation of the Father to Father Program. The information from this evaluation, will be kept in strict confidence and only used for the purposes pertaining to this study. The information will also be useful to the Father to Father Program for program development.

I am requesting approval and authorization to survey the fathers in the Father to Father Program and work with the program staff.

Approved_______

Not Approved_______

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Abdul R. Muhammad
Graduate Social Work Student

Dr. Sandra Foster
Thesis Advisor
APPENDIX C
CONSENT FORM

My name is Abdul R. Muhammad and I am a graduate student in the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University. I am currently working to complete my thesis research project. In this study I am evaluating the goals and services offered by the Father to Father program. By examining the goals and conducting a survey of the participants in the program, I will be able to ascertain whether or not the Father to Father program is achieving its goals effectively. I am only collecting data for research and statistical purposes for fulfilling my conceptual paper.

The survey administered will be kept in strict confidence and only used for the purposes pertaining to the evaluation. You need only give your response to the questions asked. The survey should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, you may contact me at (770) 819-7638 or Dr. Sandra Foster in the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University at (404) 880-8774.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Name ____________________________ Date _____________
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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Columbia Community Connections, Inc. (1996). *Father to father men’s services program.* [Brochure].


