



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  
*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# **Effectively Engaging Teen Fathers**

---

**Prepared for the Texas Juvenile Justice Department**

# Today's Objectives

---

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. The Important Role of a Father**
- 3. Understanding the World of Teen Fathers**
  - A. The Interview
  - B. The Breakdown
- 4. Tips for Effectively Engaging Teen Fathers**
- 5. Resources**



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*



# Today's Presenters



David Bryant - Fatherhood Program Specialist

Department of Family and Protective Services  
Texas-Prevention and Early Intervention



Henry Montelongo- Parent Educator

BCFS Health and Human Services – Cameron County



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

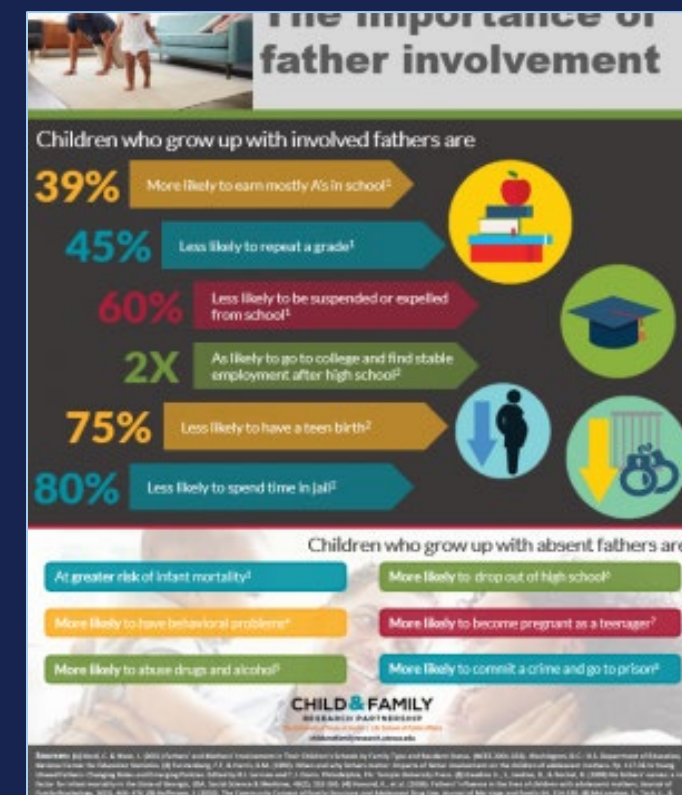
# Why are fathers important?



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  
*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# The Research

- Children who grow up with involved fathers experience better mental, emotional, educational, and social outcomes, and are:
- 39% more likely to earn mostly A's in school
- 45% less likely to repeat a grade
- 60% less likely to be suspended or expelled from school
- 2X as likely to go to college or find stable employment after high school
- 75% less likely to have a teen birth
- 80% less likely to spend time in jail



# Cognitive, Motor, and Verbal Development

---

Children who had fathers:

- Read to them regularly, were more likely to do better in many important cognitive skills categories than children who did not have fathers who read to them. Interestingly, one of the strongest benefits was a substantial increase in a daughter's verbal skills.



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

(Psychologist Ellen Bing "The Effect of Child-Reading Practices on the Development of Differential Cognitive Abilities")

# Security, Confidence, & Attachment

---

- Children with involved fathers in the first eighteen to twenty-four months of life are more secure.
- More likely to explore the world around them, with increased enthusiasm and curiosity.
- Father's active play and rough housing, response to help the child through frustrating situations promotes problem-solving.

(- Dr. Kyle Pruett *Fatherhood: Why Father Care Is as Essential as Mother Care for Your Child*)



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# Fathers Parent Differently

---

- By eight weeks of age, infants can tell the difference between their mother or father interactions.
- The diversity , in itself provides children with a broader, richer experiences of contrasting relational interactions, more so than for children who are raised by only one parent



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

(- Dr. Kyle Pruett *Fatherhood: Why Father Care Is as Essential as Mother Care for Your Child*)



# Father's Impact

**Fathered children are less likely to be raised in poverty.**

Fatherless Children are

**4X**

**More likely to be raised in poverty.**



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# Father's Impact

**Fathered children are less likely to abuse chemical substances.**

**10X**

**Fatherless Children are More likely to abuse chemical substances.**



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  
*Prevention & Early Intervention*

Chuck Eddy, "The Daddy Shady Show", Village Voice, Dec. 31, 2002

# Father's Impact



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

**Children with involved fathers are less likely to commit suicide.**

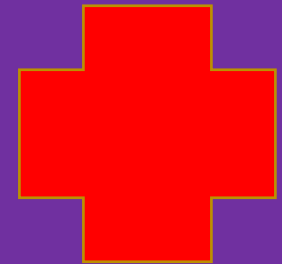
**2X** Fatherless Children are likely to commit suicide.

# Father's Impact

## Physical and Emotional Health

**When fathers are involved, children are less likely to experience accidents, a higher rate of chronic, asthma, headaches, and speech defects.**

**Fatherless children experience more accidents and a higher rate of chronic asthma, headaches, and speech defects.**



Harknett, Kristin. Children's Elevated Risk of Asthma in Unmarried Families: Underlying Structural and Behavioral Mechanisms. Working Paper #2005-01-FF. Princeton, NJ: Center for Research on Child Well-being, 2005: 19-27



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# Father's Impact

Children with involved fathers are less likely to be incarcerated.



**20X**

When dad is not there kid are more likely to be incarcerated.

Chuck Eddy, "The Daddy Shady Show", Village Voice, Dec. 31, 2002



**TEXAS**

Department of Family  
and Protective Services

Prevention & Early Intervention

# Father's Impact

When fathers are involved in the life of the children, they are less likely to have teenage pregnancies.



70% Of teenage pregnancies **happen in fatherless homes.**

David T. Lykken, "Reconstructing Fathers", American Psychologist 55, 681,681, 2000

"Why There Is No Substitute For Parents," IMPRIMIS 26, NO. 6, June 1997



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# Infants to Toddlers

---

According to an article written by Claire Lerner for Zero to Three entitled, “The Daddy Factor: The Crucial Impact of Fathers on Young Children's Development” the impact of father involvement starts early, during the prenatal period.

1. Research shows that when a father is involved during pregnancy, he is more likely to be involved in parenting later on, such as reading with his child, performing caregiving tasks, and offering emotional support.
2. Children whose fathers are involved in their daily care, such as feeding, bathing, and playing together, tend to be more confident and develop a secure attachment to their fathers.
3. Fathers who care for, nurture, and play with their babies raise children with higher IQs and with better language and **cognitive skills**.



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*



# Data on Teen Fatherhood

---

8 out of 10 teen dads don't marry the mother of their child.<sup>[2]</sup>

Teen Pregnancy by the Numbers." New York City Human Resources Administration. [http://www.nyc.gov/html/hra/downloads/pdf/news/campaigns/teen\\_pregnancy/teen\\_pregnancy\\_infographic.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/hra/downloads/pdf/news/campaigns/teen_pregnancy/teen_pregnancy_infographic.pdf) (accessed July 21, 2014)

In the US, about 750,000 women under the age of 20 become pregnant every year, meaning that about 750,000 men are also involved in teen pregnancies

- "Pregnancy and Childbirth among US Teens." Planned Parenthood. [http://www.plannedparenthood.org/files/2013/9611/7570/Pregnancy\\_And\\_Childbearing\\_Among\\_US\\_Teens.pdf](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/files/2013/9611/7570/Pregnancy_And_Childbearing_Among_US_Teens.pdf) (accessed July 21, 2014)<sup>16</sup>





# Data on Teen Fatherhood

---

Teen dads are less likely to finish high school than their peers.

Teen Fatherhood and Educational Attainment: Evidence from Three Cohorts of Youth." Cornell Institute for the Social Sciences and the Cornell Population Program. <http://resiliencelaw.org/wordpress2011/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Teen-Fatherhood-and-Educational-Attainment.pdf> (accessed July 21, 2014)

Teen fathers face a lack of teen parent programs to help them

- "Fast Facts: The Unique Needs of Young Fathers." Teen Health Network. <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/providers/notices/Young.Fathers.Healthy.Teen.Network.pdf> (accessed July 21, 2014)



# Data on Teen Fatherhood

---

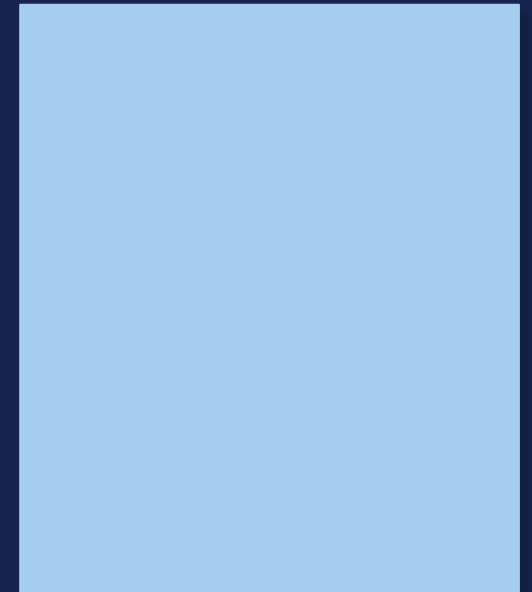
- Despite the stereotypes, there is increasing evidence that teen fathers want to be (and are) involved with their children, though this involvement may not always include financial support



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  
*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# Data on Teen Fatherhood

- **Like teen moms, teen dads are more likely to have grown up in or near poverty.**
- Statistically, Blacks and Latinos are over-represented among teen fathers, but it's not just a problem for people of color. Just under half of teen fathers are White.



# Data on Teen Fatherhood

---

1. Federal studies indicate approximately 180,000 teen boys become fathers every year. Most are 18 or 19 when their (first) child is born, but some are younger.



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# Data on Teen Fatherhood

---

1. Almost one-half of men who father a child as a teen have more than one child by the time they are 22–24 years old.
2. What type of goals do fathers have for their children



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

## Who becomes a teenage father?

**Compared to their non-father peers, teen fathers are:**

- **Three times as likely to have suffered sexual abuse.**
- **Two times as likely to have experienced physical abuse or neglect**
- **Two times as likely to be poor**
- **Two times as likely to be a school drop out**
- **Three times as likely to abuse drugs/alcohol**
- **Two times as likely to have a criminal record**
- **Significantly more likely to have a psychiatric illness and to be raised in a single-parent home by a depressed parent in a socially isolated family that has undergone numerous transitions and provides poor child supervision**

## Undersocialized Teen Fathers

- ① **Between 25 – 33 percent of teen fathers fit the stereotype of the callous young man who deliberately exploits a teenage girl and then dumps her and her baby.**
- ② **These young fathers tend to have serious academic difficulties, histories of substance abuse, antisocial behavior, and incarceration, serial sexual partners, more than one child, and sporadic or no contact with their partner and children.**

# A few Types of Fathers

---



**TEXAS**

Department of Family  
and Protective Services

Prevention & Early Intervention







**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  
*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# **Understanding the World of Teen Fathers**



# **In what ways or capacities have you worked with teen fathers in your career?**

---

1. Is there a curriculum that you use when working with dads?
2. What are some of the attitudes like of these young fathers that you have worked with?
3. Can you recall some of the ages of the young fathers that you have worked with?
4. Do they typically have their fathers involved? What type of role models do these teen fathers have?



# The brain of a young father is still maturing. Have you ever had conversations about dad's decision making at this age?

---

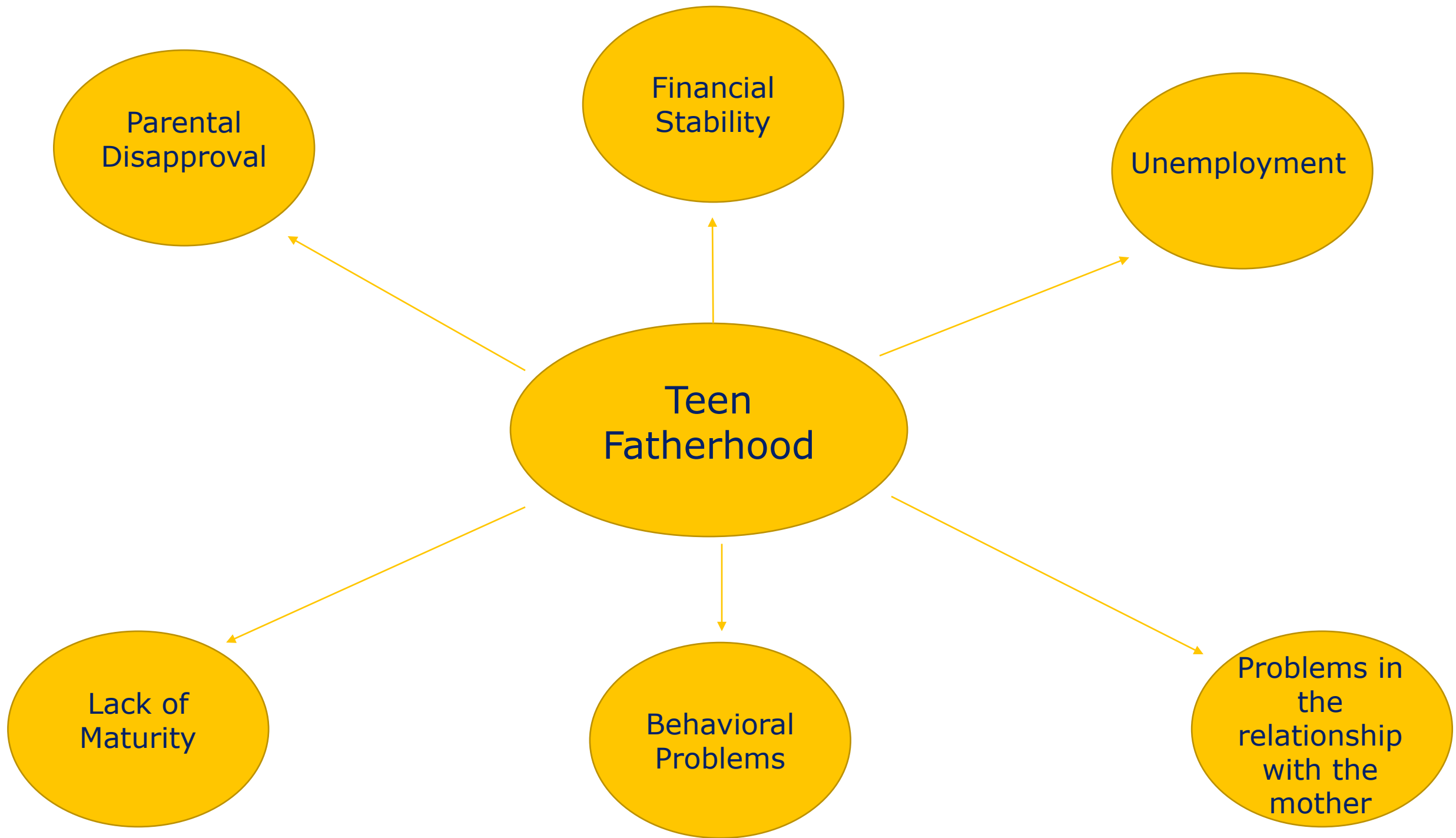
- Sometimes young dads don't realize all the consequences from their decisions (job related)
  - At that age thinking about all the good things rather than the bad things.



# Do you work with teen fathers one on one or in a group setting?

---

- When do you meet with these young fathers? Are they good about keeping the schedule you have set?
  - responsibility schedule (sometimes would forget and go do things with friends. Not keeping track of the commitment .



Is there really a bias against serving teenage fathers?

What are people's attitudes about teenage fathers?

What do the data tell us about teenage fathers?

What are the hardships and service needs of teenage fathers?

How does public policy affect teenage fathers?

What are the most effective ways for helping teenage fathers?

*Journal of  
Mental Health  
Counseling*  
article, 1992

```
graph TD; A["Journal of Mental Health Counseling article, 1992"] --> B["Is there really a bias against serving teenage fathers?"]; A --> C["What are people's attitudes about teenage fathers?"]; A --> D["What do the data tell us about teenage fathers?"]; A --> E["What are the hardships and service needs of teenage fathers?"]; A --> F["How does public policy affect teenage fathers?"]; A --> G["What are the most effective ways for helping teenage fathers?"];
```



# What are some challenges and barriers that these fathers face

---

1. Looking at young fathers as incompetent or teen father with a baby carrier
2. Finishing School
3. Working (income)
4. Moms' family (father, mother, brother, etc.), can make it hard
5. Friends, Social Media, Movies giving the wrong idea on parenting
6. Teen Parenting Programs



# What are some challenges and barriers that these fathers face

---

7. Child Support

8. Baby Mama Drama

9. Grandparents wanting to parent and give advice

10. Alpha male vs teen dad under the same roof

11. Dealing with the pressure of being a teen dad

12. His environment





**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

---

What are the stereotypes that society has of young fathers



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

---

What are some ways we can help young fathers be fathers, who happen to be in the criminal justice system?

# #Hashtag Story with Teen Fathers

---



#Fatherhood



# How do you help these fathers navigate and overcome these barriers

---

- Build these fathers up –

Example: May tell them I have never thought of that and will write it down because I want to use that. It builds their self esteem.

- Being open for change and to listen versus have a closed minded or falling into that fight or flight mode



# Co-parenting

---

- Can teen fathers be good co-parents?
- What are some challenges or co-parenting issues the teen parents may face.
- Can this scenario raise any problems?  
Being taken away from something we are involved i.e. video games to help father or take care of child



## **Co-parenting**

- Good fathers work with the mothers of their children to form strong co-parenting relationships, recognizing the important contributions of both mother and father to the well-being of a child, whether those contributions occur within the bonds of marriage, co-habitation, or in a relationship characterized by separation or divorce



## **Have you ever worked with a father that did not get it yet? Fathers who still wanted to continue their life of lack of responsibility and don't want to give up their lifestyle.**

---

- The maturing part of knowing I can't do that anymore.
- Having the mindset of what can we do as a family versus being single.
- For some of these dads the program did not work for them. They were not ready.
- Slow walk them into being the dads that they "need" to be or the fathers they want to be

Example:

1. This week set a goal to see your child twice a week
2. Change your child's diaper or feed them this week.



**TEXAS**

**Department of Family  
and Protective Services**

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

- 
1. How can these young fathers have a conversation with their parents, so they are not talked down to all the time or feel like he ruined their life. Strengthen the support of the parents) Helps young fathers to want to be involved.





# Financial Burden

---

- Are teen fathers typically expected to contribute to raising of the child financially?
- What other ways can these young fathers contribute besides financially.



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  
*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# **Tips for Working with Teen Fathers**

---

# Tips for Working with Teen Fathers <sup>1-5</sup>

---

1. Treat him like a father first
2. Understand that the majority of teen fathers want to be involved and be good fathers
3. Build him up in a world that seeks to tear him down
4. Treat him like the expert of his child. If he is not there yet, empower him to step into that role
5. Consider the culture of the teen father and the environment they come from



**TEXAS**

Department of Family  
and Protective Services

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# Tips for Working with Teen Fathers 6-10

---

- ✓ Treat Be familiar with some of the barriers teen fathers face so you can help him navigate them
- ✓ Be familiar with the resources available to teen fathers and be willing to make warm handoffs to ensure the teen father is well received at the referred organization
- ✓ Teach fathers how to respectfully advocate for their role as father with parental duties.
- ✓ Be aware of your own biases and gender roles concerning teen fathers (Mark Kiselica "Helping Boys Become Parents")
- ✓ Encourage him to ask questions when attending prenatal visits, the birth and well child checkups.



**TEXAS**

Department of Family  
and Protective Services

*Prevention & Early Intervention*



# Resources

- **Mentorship**



- An older father mentoring a young father
- Peer Mentoring – A young father mentoring another young father

- **Quick Videos for Fathers**

Videos dads can watch on social media or other platforms that capture themes of fatherhood you intend to share.



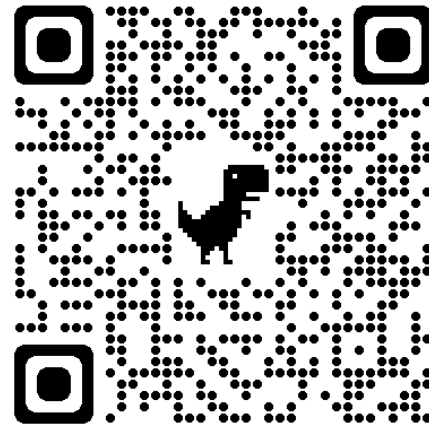


TEXAS  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  
Prevention & Early Intervention

# Resources



Father's  
Playbook



## Fatherhood.org

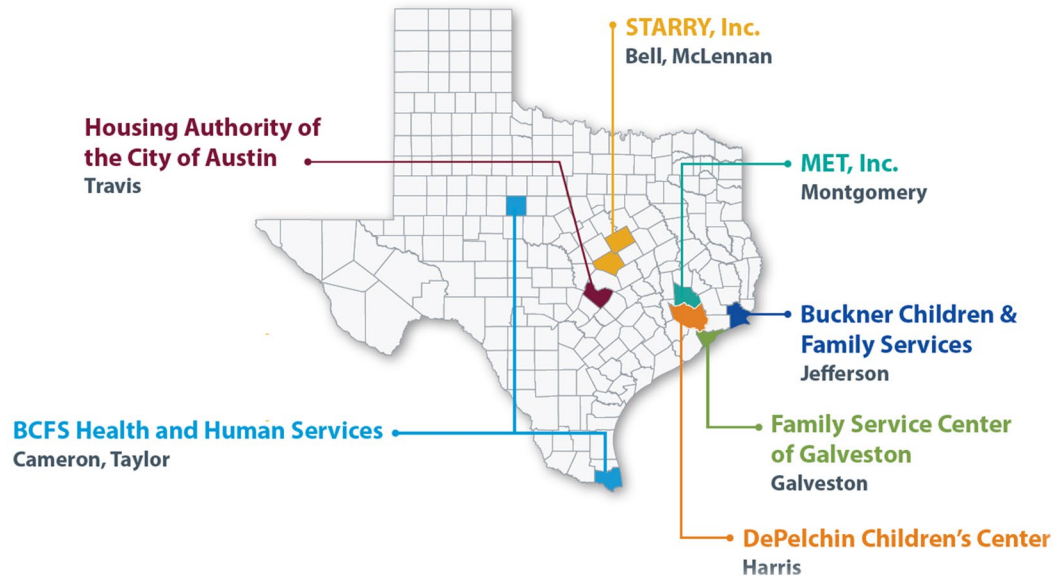




# Resources

## Fatherhood Programs

Fatherhood programs can provide parent education, workforce development, resources to fathers, and more.



9/20/2022

**The Fatherhood Program**

### 24/7 DAD COURSE

Being a great father is a set of skills you can learn! The 24/7 Dad curriculum will give you the confidence, knowledge, and tools to parent today's children.

- FREE
- 1x/week for 12 weeks
- In-person or Virtual
- Meals provided
- Gift cards

Meetings are led by our trained team of fatherhood specialists in a small, relaxed, and private environment using a proven course curriculum and the real-world experience of other fathers.

For more information and

### FATHERHOOD EFFECT

**BE THE BEST DAD YOU CAN BE**

Learn how to:

- Co-parent effectively
- Improve communication
- Resolve conflict in your family
- Show and handle feelings
- Deal with complicated emotions

The 24/7 Dad curriculum teaches the characteristics of a good father, like effective discipline and a healthy work-family balance.

**ELIGIBILITY:**  
Families with children under the age of 17 who live in Cameron County.

Participants can receive assistance with basic needs such as food, clothing and diapers.

**CONTACT US:**

Cameron County  
(956) 230-3849  
overBCFS.net/FatherhoodEffect

**Now offering VIRTUAL Services!**

- FaceTime
- Zoom
- Skype
- Phone

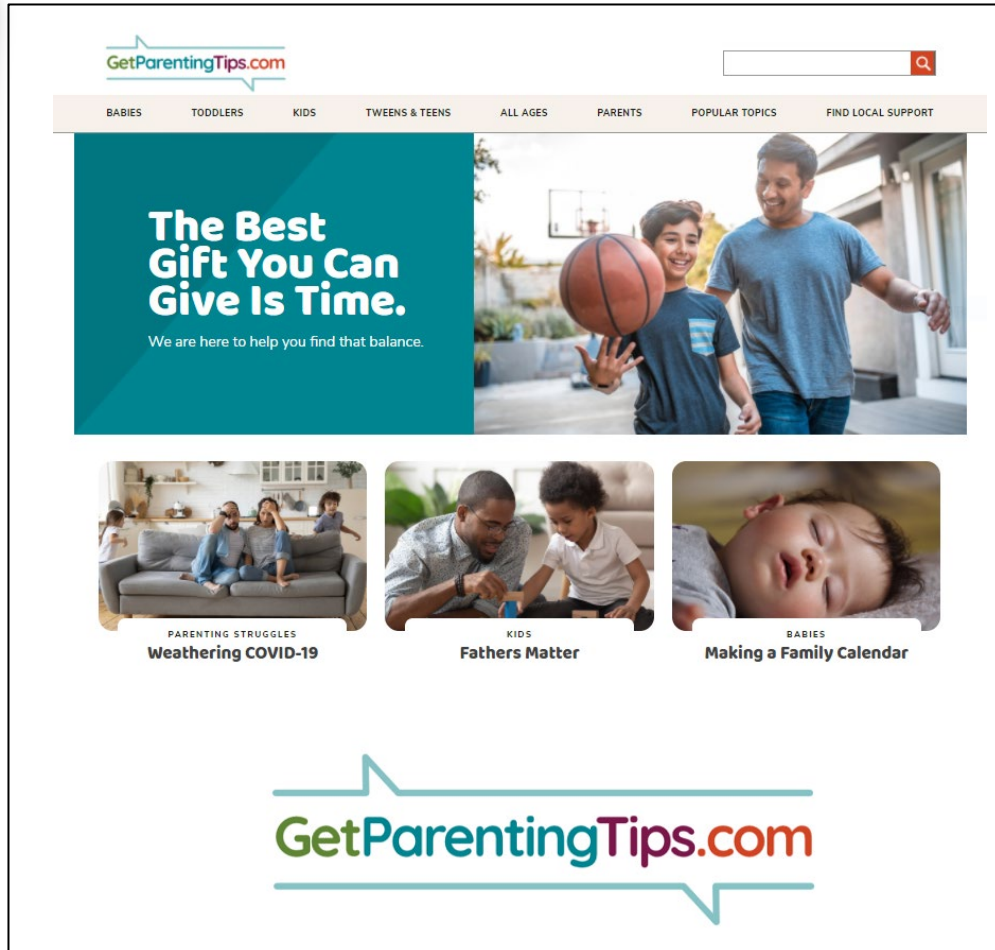
**BCFS**  
Health and Human Services - AA, 2196

FATHERHOOD EFFECT is operated by BCFS Health and Human Services-Harlingen  
by the Prevention and Early Intervention Division.

Educating Fathers For Empowering Children Tomorrow



# Resources



Fatherhoodresourcehub.org







TXACCESS.ORG

Every child needs the love of both parents

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Categories

- ▶ Child Support
- ▶ Co Parenting
- ▶ Custodial and Noncustodial Parents
- ▶ Enforcement
- ▶ Incarcerated Parents
- ▶ International Travel
- ▶ Mediation and Mediation Alternatives
- ▶ Modification
- ▶ Safety Concerns
- ▶ Standard Possession Order and Parenting Time
- ▶ Teen Parenting
- ▶ Visitation
- ▶ Visitation for Grandparents
- ▶ Visitation for Non Conservator Parents
- ▶ Visitation for Non Parent Conservators

## Teen Parenting

### - I am a teen parent. Is anything different for me?

A teen parent, also known as a "minor parent," refers to a person under 18 years of age, who requires an adult (preferably a parent or legal guardian) to represent him or her in the child support court process. An adult representative must come to court because a minor cannot legally sign a waiver of service or enter a general appearance before the court in lieu of being served in person. When a child support case is opened with the OAG, a child support worker will contact the minor parent. The child support worker will describe the child support process; explain why the minor parent must have his or her parent, legal guardian, or adult representative present during all legal proceedings; and verify who can serve as the minor's adult representative. If the minor parent identifies someone other than his or her parent or legal guardian, the OAG must get an Authorization for Release of Information or payment form on file so that the representative can receive information on the minor's case.

#### Additional Resources:

- Office of Attorney General – Parenting and Paternity Awareness
- Office of Attorney General – Child Support Publications

Click here to chat.



# Breastfeeding Fathers

1. Skin to skin contact
  2. Feed them and dad can change and re-swaddle
  3. Give fathers concrete tasks. Within tasks come schedules and routines.
  4. Have conversations about who is going to do what at what time? Being sure either party does not get burnt out.
- Be present with their child. Presence outweighs presents

# What Can Dads Do?



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  

---

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

- Hold, cuddle, rock, talk, sing, hug, and kiss your baby often to make him/her feel safe.
- Try to console and comfort your baby even though your baby might not always calm down.
- If you can't spend a lot of time with your baby, play, talk, and sing during his alert stages (dressing, bathing, feeding, walking, driving) because it is more fun for you both.
- Create routines and habits when you wash, feed, and put your baby to bed. Your baby will learn to rely on you and sleep better at night.



# Other Tips

---

- Being involved is important, but what is the state of mind when we are involved. Are we building up the child or tearing them down. Ex: Helping child with homework but yelling at child when he does not get the answer correct, or when dad gets frustrated.
- Helping is good, but how dad helps is important.

# What can dads do if they don't live with baby?



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  

---

*Prevention & Early Intervention*

1. Visit as often as you can
2. Daily phone calls
3. Maintain Good relationship with mom/family
4. Spend as much time as you can or allowed
5. Be financially responsible
6. Know his rights as a **non-custodial parent**
7. Dos and Don'ts of Fatherhood

## **The Service Needs of Teenage Fathers**

- Preparation for parenthood**
- Relationship counseling**
- Mental health and substance abuse services**
- Career and educational counseling**
- Job training and placement**
- Legal advice regarding paternity issues**

## **Research Question 6: How does public policy affect teenage fathers?**

- **Child support enforcement**
- **Incarceration**
- **Legal aid**
- **Child custody**
- **Visitation**
- **Welfare**
- **Statutory rape**



**TEXAS**  
Department of Family  
and Protective Services  
*Prevention & Early Intervention*

# Thank you

---

**David Bryant**

**[Derrick.Bryant@dfps.Texas.gov](mailto:Derrick.Bryant@dfps.Texas.gov)**

**512-550-7630**

**Henry Montelongo**

**[EM2914@bcfs.net](mailto:EM2914@bcfs.net)**



## **Tips for Working with Teen Fathers**

1. Treat him like a father first.
2. Understand that most teen fathers want to be involved and be good fathers.
3. Build him up in a world that seeks to tear him down.
4. Treat him like the expert of his child. If he is not there yet, empower him to step into that role.
5. Consider the culture of the teen father and the environment they come from.
6. Be familiar with some of the barriers teen fathers face so you can help him navigate them.
7. Be familiar with the resources available to teen fathers and be willing to make warm handoffs to ensure the teen father is well received at the referred organization.
8. Teach fathers how to respectfully advocate for their role as father with parental duties.
9. Be aware of your own biases and gender roles concerning teen fathers (Mark Kiselica "Helping Boys Become Parents").
10. Encourage him to ask questions when attending prenatal visits, the birth and well child checkups.