ABSTRACTS — March 2010

Compiled from the monthly e-mail update of new publications added to the Child Welfare Information Gateway library for the month of March 2010.

Title: Parent, Support, Education, and Leadership.
Published: 2010, FRIENDS National Resource Center For Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention http://www.friendsnrc.org

Abstract: This article reconsiders the development of fathers' rights politics within the legal arena in recent years, seeking to trace a way through the often highly polarised debates in this area. The paper argues that studies of fatherhood and law reform have much to gain from incorporating a more complex and multi-layered account of the interconnected nature of the personal lives of women, children and men. In the context of significant shifts in the messages law sends about the 'good father', as well as within parenting cultures, the paper tracks changes within fathers' rights activism to shifting ideas about masculinities and emotion, rationality and intimacy. Set against a framework of gender neutrality and formal equality, and of a wider policy agenda that has sought to engage fathers in families over the past decade, the greater prominence of fathers' rights politics can be understood as one aspect of a complex renegotiation of men's role as parents that has occurred in the light of a rethinking of paternal...
responsibility in law. (Author abstract)


Abstract: On August 5, 2009, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Administration for Children and Families hosted a White House Community Roundtable and Town Hall Meeting on Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families in Chicago, Illinois. The event provided a forum for responsible fatherhood program representatives, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers at the Federal, State, and local levels to discuss the successes and challenges faced by fathers and responsible fatherhood programs. Divided into a series of listening sessions, the Roundtable hosted a group of local Chicago-based fatherhood and healthy marriage program representatives to discuss specific program components and promising activities that have improved services to fathers, families, and communities. The interactive Town Hall consisted of fathers, practitioners, and policymakers and allowed an open dialogue among stakeholders to catalog services, solutions, and challenges for responsible fatherhood programming. This report begins by providing background information on White House Office for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, federal Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Initiatives, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. The purposes of the Roundtable and Town Hall meeting are then discussed. Following sections summarize comments and discussions from Roundtable participants on connecting anti-violence and fatherhood, mentoring young men and future fathers, the connection between fatherhood and economic stability, and promising practices increasing father involvement, and discussions from the Town Hall. A conclusion draws from the discussions to present key recommendations for promoting responsible fatherhood to President Obama's administration.

Author(s): Smithgall, Cheryl.;DeCoursey, Jan.;Gitlow, Elissa.;Yang, Duck-Hye.;Jarpe-Ratner, Elizabeth.;Lansing, Jiffy.;Goerge, Robert.
Published: 2009, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago http://www.chapinhall.org

Abstract: Launched in 2005, the Illinois Integrated Assessment (IA) process is designed to provide better information about child and family strengths, support systems, and service needs. In this study, we examine the extent to which fathers -- stepfathers, putative fathers, legal fathers, adoptive fathers, or biological fathers -- were interviewed as a part of the IA process and the factors associated with fathers being interviewed. An analysis of over 9,000 completed IA cases indicates that when both parents were interviewed as part of the IA, children were significantly more likely to be reunified than when only one or neither parent was interviewed. The information in the IA reports provide a rich description of the ecology of these families, covering such topics as housing, education, employment, finances, informal supports, domestic violence, substance use, and criminal behavior. We draw on a sample of IA reports as well as caseworker interviews to provide rich descriptions of the complex circumstances and family roles of fathers, examine the extent to which case service plans reflect the assessment recommendations and fathers' circumstances, and explore caseworkers' experiences in engaging or working with fathers. Findings from this study are discussed with respect to implications for ongoing efforts by the child welfare system to engage fathers and effectively deliver or arrange services that address fathers' needs and improve child and family well-being. (Author abstract)

Author(s): Guerrero, Desi Alonzo Vasquez.
Available from: Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) http://www.cwla.org/

Abstract: This study examines the relationships between hypermasculinity, sexual aggression, intimate partner violence, social support, and child maltreatment risk among heterosexual fathers completing parenting classes. Hypermasculinity scores were found to be significant predictors of study participants' reported verbal, physical, and sexual aggression toward their intimate partners. Only lack of social support, operationalized as the reported frequency of participants' conversations with friends, relatives, or neighbors about their problems, was found to be a significant predictor of child maltreatment risk. Alcohol frequency, education, and monthly income were not found to be unique, significant predictors of any dependent variables. Implications for clinical practice and research as well as limitations to the current study are discussed. (Author abstract)

Title: Men's Involvement in the Emotional Domain of Marriage: The Influence of Family Expressiveness, Emotional Intelligence, and Gender Role Conflict.
Author(s): Wall, Sterling Kendall.
Journal Name: Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences, v. 64, 2-A, 2003, p. 679-

Abstract: Marital friendship is identified as the foundation for a sound marital house. Gender differences between husbands' and wives' involvement in the emotional domain of marriage are discussed. Research linking mens' involvement in the emotional domain
to marital quality highlights the need to identify the characteristics of those men who are likely to be involved in the emotional domain and the construction of marital friendship. Only men's characteristics are used for the analysis in this study. Based on existing theory and research, it is proposed that Family Expressiveness in husbands' family of origin, Emotional Intelligence, and Restrictive Emotionality will each be related to husbands' and wives' perceptions of Marital Friendship. It is also expected that family expressiveness will be related to husbands' levels of emotional intelligence and restrictive emotionality, and that emotional intelligence will also be related to restrictive emotionality. Correlational analysis revealed positive associations between husbands' reports of positive forms of family expressiveness, emotional intelligence, and husbands' and wives' perceptions of marital friendship. Inverse correlations were found between husbands restrictive emotionality and both spouse's marital friendship reports.

A small inverse correlation was also found between negative family expressiveness and marital friendship, but only for husbands. Path analysis revealed significant paths leading from positive family expressiveness to both emotional intelligence and restrictive emotionality, and from these two variables to husbands' and wives' marital friendship reports. A significant path also existed from emotional intelligence to restrictive emotionality. The largest path was found between restrictive emotionality and marital friendship.

Together, the results indicate that the foundation of husbands' involvement in building a marital friendship with their wives is found in their early socialization experiences in the family of origin. Those from families where the expression of emotion is modeled and encouraged are more likely to be emotionally intelligent themselves. This competence in the emotional domain will in turn lead to confidence, instead of emotional restriction, when confronted with emotionally laden situations. (Author abstract)

Title: Preventive Interventions for Couples. (Chapter in Family Psychology: Science-Based Interventions.)
Author(s): Silliman, Benjamin.;Stanley, Scott M.;Coffin, William.;Markman, Howard J.;Jordan, Pamela L.
Published: 2002, American Psychological Association http://www.apa.org

Abstract: This chapter reviews conceptual frameworks for approaches to preventing distress and divorce and promoting marital adjustment. Current approaches for preventing marital distress and divorce are also reviewed, including assessment, informational and awareness, and skills training approaches. Practical issues in preventive work with couples are discussed, including the selection of target groups, recruitment and screening, delivery, and follow-up. (Author abstract)

Title: [Colorado] Juvenile Law Benchbook [Website].
Author(s): Furman, David M.; Sidebotham, Theresa Lynn.; Stokowski, Rachel.
Published: 2009, Colorado Office of the Child's Representative http://coloradochildrep.org/
Document available online at: http://www.cobenchbook.com/

Abstract: Designed for judges and attorneys in Colorado, this online benchbook provides information on relevant State and federal law governing juvenile services. Standards and guidelines are provided in the areas of: dependency and neglect, relinquishment and adoption, paternity and support, mental health, immigration considerations, truancy, the Indian Child Welfare Act, services for children with disabilities, and contempt of court cases. Key topics are addressed in each of the areas, along with additional relevant information and legal citations. A search feature enables users to access specific statutes and topics.

Title: Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining Participants in Prevention Programs.
Author(s): Cooney, Siobhan M.; Small, Stephen A.; O'Connor, Calin.
Published: 2007, Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance http://oja.state.wi.us/
Printable version (PDF): http://oja.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=10555&locid=97

Abstract: This brief discusses obstacles to recruiting and retaining youth and families in prevention programs and offers the following strategies for overcoming participation obstacles: involve members of the targeted population and the local community in program planning, including selection, recruitment, and implementation; link the program to a trusted and respected institution or individual already known to potential participants; strategically choose the site where the program will be held; involve additional family members and other support networks; hire and train culturally sensitive individuals to recruit participants and implement programs; provide for basic needs and give participation incentives; be flexible in scheduling; make frequent contact; make every effort to maintain staff members throughout program implementation; keep promises; and help potential participants to see the program as worthwhile.

Title: Measure the Impact of Your Parent Education and Support Programs.
Published: 2009, Wisconsin Children's Trust Fund http://wctf.state.wi.us/home/
Document available online at: http://wctf.state.wi.us/home/FRCeval.htm

Abstract: The Wisconsin Children's Trust Fund (CTF) has developed a set of outcomes-based evaluation materials based on our logic model for family resource centers. Our family resource center grantees use these surveys, redesigned in 2009, to collect demographic, participant satisfaction, and participant outcomes information. We are pleased to make these surveys available for use by other family resource centers and parent education programs. (Author abstract)