

WHAT ABOUT THE DADS: A CASE STUDY OF YOUNG FATHERS OF BABIES
BORN TO ADOLESCENT MOTHERS

by

Marilyn Faris Scholl
A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty
of
George Mason University
in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
Education

Committee:

S. David By

Chair

Justin Kitzman
Priscilla Norton

Gary R. Gallardo
Michael C. ...

Program Director

Dean, College of Education and Human
Development

Date: *August 20, 2012*

Summer Semester 2012
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

WHAT ABOUT THE DADS: A CASE STUDY OF YOUNG FATHERS OF BABIES
BORN TO ADOLESCENT MOTHERS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University

by

Marilyn Faris Scholl
Master of Arts in Education
Northern Arizona University, 1976
Bachelor of Science
Northern Arizona University, 1972

Director: S. David Brazer, Professor
College of Education and Human Development

Summer Semester 2012
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA



THIS WORK IS LICENSED UNDER A [CREATIVE COMMONS
ATTRIBUTION-NONCOMMERCIAL 3.0 UNPORTED LICENSE](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/).

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to the memory of my parents, Betty and Charles Faris, who modeled a loving marriage and how parents can raise happy, healthy children with limited means when you work together as a couple, take advantage of educational opportunities, and have fun with your children. May this research assist schools and communities to strengthen families through helping young men to be better fathers for their children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the many friends, relatives, and supporters who have helped make this life-long goal a reality. My loving husband, Russ, assisted me in my research, and he enabled me to find some semblance of balance between work and family responsibilities while pursuing this graduate degree. Our sons, Wesley and Ethan, and our daughter, Kinsey, also helped me finish by encouraging me to persevere, as did numerous friends and colleagues over several years. Drs. Brazer, Galluzzo, Kitsantas, and Norton were of invaluable help. Finally, thanks go out to the Arlington Public Schools for providing clean, quiet, and well-equipped facilities in which to work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	ix
Abstract	x
Chapter One: Introduction	1
General Statement of Problem	1
Background to the Problem	3
Statement of Purpose	7
Research Questions	8
Significance	9
Personal Significance	9
Research Significance	10
Practical Significance	12
Definition of Terms	14
Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework	16
Father Factors	24
Relationships with fathers and patterns of fatherhood	26
Psychological well-being	27
Role identification	28
Residential status	29
Mother Factors	30
Child Factors	30
Coparental Factors	31
Contextual Factors	34
Chapter Three: Methodology	37
Research Design	37
Research Setting	39

Research Participants	42
Data Collection Methods.....	44
Review of program records	44
Caring Equation fathers written follow-up survey	45
Interview protocol.....	47
Data Collection Procedure	48
Data Analysis	49
Limitations and Generalizability.....	51
Validity Threats.....	53
Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Findings	55
Research Question 1	56
Participant Profiles	57
Father #518.....	57
Father #292.....	62
Father #276.....	69
Father #524.....	75
Father #189.....	82
Father #210.....	89
Father #690.....	97
Father #614.....	102
Father #299.....	106
Father #500.....	111
Research Question 2.....	126
Mother Factors.....	127
Child Factors.....	128
Contextual Factors.....	128
Father Factors	133
Coparental Factors.....	141
Summary	145
Chapter Five: Discussion, Summary of Findings, Limitations, Recommendations for Practice, and Recommendations for Further Research.....	147
Discussion of Purposes.....	147
Discussion of Significance	148

Summary of Findings	150
Fatherhood Experiences	151
Factors Influential in the Emergence of Responsible Fatherhood.....	152
Limitations	156
Recommendations for Practice.....	157
Recommendations for Further Research.....	159
APPENDIX A.....	162
Young Fathers Telephone Protocol.....	162
APPENDIX B	163
Informed Consent Form	163
APPENDIX C	165
Caring Equation Fathers Written Follow-up Survey.....	165
APPENDIX D.....	171
Father Involvement w/ School-age Child.....	171
APPENDIX E	173
Interview Questions for Fathers	173
APPENDIX F.....	175
Caring Equation Services	175
APPENDIX G.....	176
Caring Equation Fathers Data Summary Chart.....	176
APPENDIX H.....	178
Father Involvement w/ School-age Child Tally	178
APPENDIX I	180
Coding Categories for Caring Equation Fathers Interviews	180
References.....	183

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
Table 1	119
Table 2	119
Table 3	120
Table 4	121
Table 5	122
Table 6	123
Table 7	123
Table 8	124

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
Figure 1 Influences on Fatherhood Conceptual Model (adapted from Doherty, 1996)...	20

ABSTRACT

WHAT ABOUT THE DADS: A CASE STUDY OF YOUNG FATHERS OF BABIES BORN TO ADOLESCENT MOTHERS

Marilyn Faris Scholl, Ph.D.

George Mason University, 2012

Dissertation Director: S. David Brazer

Adolescent pregnancy remains a persistent societal problem. Both teenage mothers and the fathers of their babies are unprepared for parenthood and often drop out of school, take low-paying jobs, and never complete their education. Fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers are a critical but often forgotten component of the adolescent pregnancy picture. Few programs exist, either in Virginia or in other states, for fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. This dissertation focuses on young males, aged 17 to 21 years, who fathered a child with an adolescent mother and participated in a five-year, grant-funded fatherhood program that operated from 2003 to 2007 in Arlington, Virginia, called the Caring Equation. Research on fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers may assist educational leaders to better serve young fathers, their children, and families begun when the mother was an adolescent. What these males share may provide a broader understanding of young fathers.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

General Statement of Problem

Adolescent pregnancy remains a persistent societal problem. One in every eight births in the United States is to a teenager. Each year the federal government alone spends \$40 billion to help families that began with a teenage birth. Despite federal, state, and community attention to this issue, America still faces crisis levels of adolescent pregnancy, the highest of any nation in the western world (Kirby, 1997). Every hour in the United States approximately 40 children are born to teenage mothers. The U.S. teenage birthrate is more than three times as high as Canada's, more than four times as high as France's, more than four times as high as Germany's, and more than eight times as high as the Netherlands' (United Nations, 2009). Annually, more than one million young women under 20—approximately 10 percent of all 15- to 19-year-old American females—become pregnant.

Even though adolescent pregnancy is declining, a report issued in 2008 by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy stated that about 30 percent of adolescent females—three out of every ten American girls—will become pregnant before they reach their 20th birthday. In 2006, slightly more than half of these pregnancies, fifty-nine percent, resulted in birth (Guttmacher, 2011). Only 51 percent of teen mothers who have children before age 18 go on to graduate from high school compared to 89 percent of

women from similar social and economic backgrounds that do not give birth until age 20 or 21. Both teenage mothers and the fathers of their babies are unprepared for parenthood and often drop out of school, take low-paying jobs, and never complete their education.

Children born to adolescent parents are at risk for a host of negative outcomes (National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2010). Teen mothers are more likely than mothers over age 20 to give birth prematurely (that is, before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy). Babies born prematurely face an increased risk of newborn health problems, long-term disabilities, and even death. Children do not fare as well if born out-of-wedlock or raised in a father-absent home. Further, more than 50 percent of children born to adolescent mothers never live with their biological fathers (McGrew & Shore, 1991). Children who live without their biological fathers are, on average, more likely than their peers who live with their married, biological mothers and fathers to be poor, experience educational, health, emotional, and psychological problems, be victims of child abuse, and engage in criminal behavior (Horn, 2007).

Fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers are an important but often forgotten part of the adolescent pregnancy picture. Even though societal norms and expectations place most of the responsibility for pregnancy and prevention of pregnancy on young women, fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers are an essential component of the equation. They are equally responsible for creating a pregnancy with an adolescent female. However, fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers are generally not married to the adolescent mothers. As a result, their level of commitment to responsible

fatherhood is often vastly different than that of married fathers. Furthermore, teenage mothers and the fathers of their babies do not share equally in parental responsibility. In a study of 1095 adolescent mothers in Baltimore, one half of the mothers complained of receiving too little help from the fathers in raising the child (Hardy, Duggan, Masnyk, & Pearson, 1989). Most programs and services focus on the mothers and their children (Herzog, Umana-Taylor, Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2007). Much more is known about adolescent mothers than the males who father their children because most teen pregnancy research has focused on the young women who get pregnant rather than on the men who contributed to this outcome (Howard, Burke Lefever, Borkowski & Whitman, 2006). Another conundrum is that much of what is known about these fathers has been obtained from the young mothers or the grandmothers, not the fathers. Therefore, this study focuses on males who have fathered a child with an adolescent mother.

Background to the Problem

In the past two decades, more public, political, and academic attention has focused on fathers, looking at their roles in the family, their responsibilities, and their influence on their children (Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 2002). The preponderance of academic work concerning fathers has thus far focused on married and middle-class sample groups (Coley, 2001). Some studies included only teen fathers while others examined fathers in their early 20s. Social service organizations and public agencies that work with women and children have not historically focused on fathers. Thus, little

research exists regarding program support for young fathers (Rhein et al., 1997; Thornberry, Smith & Howard, 1997).

Fathers of infants born to adolescent mothers are notoriously underrepresented in the literature due to sampling issues and lack of involvement with social service agencies (Thompson & Walker, 2004). Although fathers have multiple needs, their concerns are rarely addressed. For example, while adolescent mothers are given opportunities to learn about their bodies and to be informed about pregnancy and birth, fathers either get secondhand information or none at all. It is argued here that certain services deemed essential for young women are no less important for young men, including the prevention of unwanted pregnancies, responsibilities of parenting, family planning services, and comprehensive services to support young parents and their babies (Hardy et al., 1989; Weinman, Smith & Buzi, 2002). It would appear, however, that as these men do not bear the burden of childbirth, little is known about them. For the most part, they have been overlooked, excluded, or forgotten (Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1998; Coley, 2001; Paschal, Lewis-Moss & Hsiao, 2011; Pirog-Good & Good, 1995; Thompson & Crase, 2004).

Accurate data on the age of the fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers are not always available because fathers' ages are often left blank on birth certificates. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, the proportion of births to teens for whom fathers' ages are not reported has increased substantially from 13% in 1960 to 41% in 1990 (Elo, Kino, & Furstenberg, 1999). Estimates of the number of adolescent fathers vary widely, as well (Elo et al., 1999; Landry & Forrest, 1995). As a whole,

adolescent fathers represent a very small percentage of all fathers. According to national birth statistics in 1986, only three percent of all fathers were teenagers when their first child was born.

Perceptions about the ages of fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers may differ from reality. One study using a nationally representative sample of teen mothers drew much attention because only 35 percent of the fathers of the babies born to adolescent mothers aged 15-19 were also under 20 (Landry & Forrest, 1995). In this particular study, adult males fathered higher proportions of babies born to teenage mothers than did adolescent males. In another study, 60 percent of mothers aged 15-17 and 51 percent of those aged 18-19 reported that the father of their child was 3-5 years older than they were, and 7 percent had partners who were 6 or more years older (Darroch, Landry, & Oslak, 1999).

The higher percentage of fathers who are no longer teens is not always the case as it depends on the sample. In a study of 1095 Baltimore mothers 17 and under, 72 percent of the fathers of babies born to black mothers were under 20, and 56 percent of the partners of white mothers were 19 and younger (Hardy et.al, 1989). All in all, approximately 85 percent of all children born to teen mothers are fathered by men in their teens or early 20s, and this percentage has remained nearly constant in the last three decades. Many of these men are only 2-3 years older than the mothers of their children, and that is an age difference generally accepted as typical (Elo et al., 1999). In this study, the term “young father” refers to the males who fathered a baby with an adolescent mother regardless of whether they were adolescents or already in their 20s.

Another perception about fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers involves changes in the societal expectation for marriage when an adolescent becomes pregnant. Even though the overall rate of births among teens has declined since 1970, the number of teens choosing to remain single has risen (National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2006). In 1950, one teen birth in seven, 14 percent, was to an unwed mother. During that era, if an adolescent became pregnant, the expectation was either a “shotgun wedding” or relegation to a maternity home with the baby placed for adoption. By 1982, by contrast, half of all teen births were to single mothers and that statistic rose to nearly 79 percent in 1998 (Zavodny, 2001). In 2002, 80 percent of births to teenage mothers were out of wedlock (Horn, 2007). The percentage of non-marital births among teens varies by race. In 1994, the proportion of non-marital births to teens across the racial axis was: White, 67 percent; Black, 96 percent; and Hispanic, 70 percent (Moore, Romano, & Oakes, 1996). Clearly, today’s adolescents are more likely to have children outside the confines of marriage.

The dramatic increase in non-marital births to teens has implications for the father’s place of residence, his coparental relationship with the adolescent mother, and his involvement with his child. Adolescent mothers and maternal grandmothers can act as gatekeepers and limit the father’s contact with his child for various reasons. Additionally, young fathers’ educational level may negatively impact their ability to provide financially for their child since only 70 percent of young fathers finish high school. Young fathers for whom English is not their native language may have language

and cultural challenges to overcome as well. Fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers have numerous barriers to successful parenting and economic stability.

Statement of Purpose

Little is known about the fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. Most of what is known is secondhand, obtained from adolescent mothers or from grandparents instead of from the young fathers themselves. Examining the fatherhood experiences of young fathers who participated in the Arlington Public Schools, Arlington, Virginia, Caring Equation Fatherhood Program offers the opportunity to expand what is known about the fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. A total of 310 fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers participated in the Caring Equation fatherhood program between 2003 and 2007. In the summer of 2007, when grant funding ended, the Caring Equation fatherhood program ceased. Since 2007, no fatherhood program has existed in Arlington. The current status of fathers who participated in the Caring Equation is unknown. It is not known what these fathers believe about the impact of the Caring Equation on their role as a father, on their relationship with their child, or on their relationship with the mother of their child.

The purpose of this study is to hear from males firsthand who have fathered a baby with an adolescent mother and to learn more about young fathers and their specific experiences from their own perspectives. Additional purposes of this study are to find out what has happened to young fathers who participated in a fatherhood program called

the Caring Equation, what the important influences on their lives have been, and what happened to their relationships with their children and their partners. Their views with respect to the most valuable fatherhood program components as well as the impact of the Caring Equation on their lives were sought. Data obtained contributed to an understanding of the support of and barriers to father involvement among fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. This study gives a voice to fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers.

Research Questions

This study addressed two research questions:

1. What has been the fatherhood experience for Caring Equation participants?
2. What factors—contextual, father, coparental, mother, child—do Caring Equation participants report as influential in the emergence of their understanding of responsible fatherhood, measured as legal paternity, economic support, presence in child's life, personal involvement with mother—in providing care for children?

To answer these questions, a case study approach was used to examine young fathers who participated in the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program. Three kinds of data were analyzed: program records, written surveys, and oral interviews.

Significance

Personal Significance

In my professional role, I have been instrumental in developing new programs to address the myriad needs related to adolescent pregnancy. While most of the programs are specifically designed for the teenage mothers, the most frequent question I hear when making a presentation about these program is, “What about the dads?” While this is a legitimate question and I have always wanted to address the specific needs of the young fathers, until the Caring Equation grant, there were insufficient funds and no men on staff to connect with the males. Having had a wonderful father in my own family of origin, in addition to a husband who has been actively involved with our own children, I sensed that many of the fathers of the babies born to teenage mothers lacked fathering skills. This may be due to a lack of positive role models from whom to learn what it means to be a father. I also believe that some of these men do not know how to develop a healthy relationship with their children, and some do not know how to maintain a healthy relationship with their girlfriends. On the one hand, they may no longer be involved with the mother of the baby and, on the other, they are possibly not encouraged to have contact with their child and fail to fulfill their parental responsibilities.

A number of factors influence a young man’s perception of fatherhood as well as his fathering behaviors. I believe that if the fathers are shown a variety of ways to connect with their children and helped to see the important role they can play in the lives of their children, they will choose to spend time with their children. I focus this study on the Caring Equation fathers in order to learn the most important influences on young

fathers and their relationships with their children and their partners. Hearing from the young fathers may guide decisions about future program development designed to address their specific needs. Ultimately, it may also increase the number of young fathers who remain involved with their children and discover joy in their fatherhood experience.

Research Significance

Fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers are a critical part of the adolescent pregnancy equation but, until recently, have received limited attention from social work practitioners, social science researchers, and policy makers. Therefore, research on them is fairly sparse (Bunting & McAuley, 2004; Furstenberg & Harris, 1993; Gavin et al., 2002; Goodyear et al., 2000; Herzog et al., 2007; Lane & Clay, 2000; Miller, 1997; Pirog-Good & Good, 1995; Rhein et al., 1997; Sander & Rosen, 1987; Thompson & Walker, 2004). Qualitative data on young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers is practically nonexistent. This study begins to fill that gap.

Hearing the voices of fathers who participated in the Caring Equation provides firsthand knowledge about their real life experiences. This study provides previously undocumented information from the male perspective since it includes surveys and interviews of selected young fathers. The young fathers' views on fathering are valuable because, in many previous studies, information about fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers was obtained from the mothers or grandparents. The majority of data in this study come from the young fathers.

This study also increases research significance by attempting to understand the influence of the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program on fathers' involvement with their children. An expanding body of literature has indicated that father involvement, especially positive engagement, is beneficial to children—particularly for children born to adolescent mothers (Cutrona, Hessling, Bacon & Russell, 1998; Marsiglio, Amato, Day & Lamb, 2000). Research has suggested that early father involvement may lay the foundation for continued involvement (Futris, 2010). Fathers remain integral in providing optimal learning and stable emotional environments in which children can grow and develop to their full potential. Although many children are being raised without fathers in their lives, research conducted by Cox and Bithoney (1995) found that fathers of children born to teenage mothers were more likely to be involved in their child's life at age two if they were involved around the time of birth. Thus, outcomes for the children of adolescent mothers could be improved if fathers were assisted in fulfilling their fatherhood roles. All children deserve two parents who love and nurture them for optimum growth and development.

Another aspect of research significance of this study is the influence of the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program on the relationship of the young fathers with their partners. The surveys and interviews provide data from the fathers with respect to assistance that improves communication between the couples and improves parenting of their children. This study points to the types of assistance that increase father involvement and foster coparental relationships for adolescent mothers and the fathers of their children.

Practical Significance

Every community and school system has pregnant teens, though many ignore this societal problem. Based on my experience in the field of adolescent pregnancy over the past 25 years and an extensive review of related literature, I have found that few programs exist either in Virginia or in other states for fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. The services and special programs for this population generally focus only on the females, forgetting or overlooking the males who have fathered the babies. Research on fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers may assist educational leaders to better serve children and families begun when the mother was an adolescent. Understanding fatherhood experiences, involvement of fathers with their children, and the influence of the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program on young fathers should be valuable in developing future programs and services in order to meet their needs.

Fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers are an important but often forgotten part of the adolescent pregnancy picture. Each year in the Commonwealth of Virginia, there are more than 7000 children born to teenage mothers. More than 70 percent of these births are out-of-wedlock, a phenomenon that may deter more young men from accepting responsibility for the children they father. With respect to the education sector, using a ratio of 25 students per class, it takes nearly 300 kindergarten classes per year just to accommodate the children born to teenage mothers in Virginia. Since early father involvement lays the foundation for continued involvement, aggressive efforts that reach out to the males involved in adolescent pregnancy and that assist them in fulfilling their

fathering roles are crucial. Father-friendly practices may help young fathers make their children a priority.

Educational leaders can be pivotal in addressing the needs of young fathers because schools may be the most opportune sites to gain access to adolescent fathers as school staff often maintain trusted relationships with students (Dallas, 1998). In addition, educational leaders are key in addressing needs of young fathers because issues of educational access are central to programs designed to increase low-income fathers' involvement in children's lives (Anderson, Kohler, & Letieco, 2002).

Education also enhances fathers' job or career preparation; in turn, education completion rates increase fathers' abilities to be involved with their own children's education. Information about young fathers would be valuable for practitioners who work with this population as well as for communities and agencies that serve adolescent mothers or are in the process of developing programs to address adolescent pregnancy. Furthermore, the results of this study may assist educational leaders in determining how to involve other fathers in the lives of their children in order to improve educational outcomes for all children.

It is important to hear from selected young fathers who have participated in the Arlington Young Fathers Program. Their voices need to be heard because no programs or services are currently directed to young fathers; therefore, their needs remain unknown. What these young fathers share may provide a broader understanding of young fathers and could be used to inform and guide future decisions regarding services to young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. These data could also be used to

formulate potential recommendations for strategies and/or programs serving young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. For those considering establishing a young fathers program, research-based data could support requests for grant funding as well as to justify the creation of new operating budget positions either in county government budgets or in the school system budgets. Designing fatherhood programs in the future will be more rational because the data in this study are from young fathers who were participants in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program, a fatherhood program that specifically served fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. Data from this study could guide education leaders to better meet the needs of young fathers and support their involvement with their children.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following conceptual definitions are used:

Adolescent Girls. Adolescent girls in this study are females younger than 20 years old who were mothers.

Caring Equation. Caring Equation was a grant-funded fatherhood program that operated between 2003 and 2007, in Arlington, Virginia; it served adolescent mothers, their children, and the fathers of the babies.

Child Factors. Child factors are characteristics or behaviors of a child which influence the child's interactions with his or her father, including child's age and attitude toward the father.

Contextual Factors. Contextual factors are aspects in the community or beliefs and behaviors within groups of people regarding the understanding of fatherhood and father-child relationships.

Coparental Factors. Coparental factors are aspects of the parental relationship or the relationship between the father and mother that influence the father's interaction with his child.

Father Factors. Father factors are the personal meanings, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of a father relating to his understanding of fatherhood.

Fatherhood Specialists. Fatherhood specialists were the male staff in the Caring Equation who worked directly with young fathers and received training related to fatherhood development.

Mother Factors. Mother factors are the meanings, beliefs, motivations, attitudes, and behaviors that mothers possess regarding the fathering of her child by the child's father.

Responsible Fatherhood. Responsible fatherhood is a conceptual view of fatherhood that encompasses fathers who establish legal paternity, provide economic support, are present in their children's lives, and are personally involved with the mother in providing care for the children (Doherty, Erickson, & Kouneski, 1996).

Young Fathers. Men who are fathers and are either an adolescent or in their 20s.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Fathering is a social construction that is influenced by contextual forces in the family and in the community. In order to link theory and the bigger picture of fatherhood in practice, the various factors or contextual forces that affect fathering can be understood by using a conceptual framework that highlights the multiple interacting influences on the father-child relationship. These contextual forces or factors in the conceptual framework used here include father factors, mother factors, child factors, coparental factors, and broader contextual factors. Based on review of the fatherhood literature, it appears that the best way to investigate fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers is by using the Doherty, Erickson, & Kouneski (1996) Influences on Responsible Fatherhood Conceptual Model (Figure 1). Throughout this study, reference to conceptual framework or conceptual model has been used interchangeably and refer to Figure 1.

Recent shifts have occurred regarding how men see themselves as fathers and how policies encourage their involvement in the lives of children and families. Between the mid 1970s to the mid 1990s research on fatherhood and father-child relationships increased and public policy shifted to focus on a thoughtful reconceptualization of fatherhood and male involvement in the lives of children (Lamb, 1997). Initially, the primary concern was how much money the father contributed toward the child (Gavin et al., 2002). Many government organizations have taken the stance of solely emphasizing

the need for fathers to provide financial support. Close monitoring of child support compliance by the child support enforcement agency became the tactic for enforcing so-called responsible fatherhood. However, by overemphasizing the role that money plays in the father-child relationship, this approach does not take into account the fathers' abilities to provide love and guidance. In this case, such policy inadvertently reinforces the fact that children may be left without any of the positive effects of father involvement in their lives. Recently, focus has shifted toward issues relating to time and how much of it a father spends with his child (Florsheim et al., 2003). Furthermore, more important than the amount of time a father contributes, is the quality of interaction within that time (Cowan, Cowan, Pruett, & Wong, 2009).

A few conceptual models exist from which to study father involvement but the field lacks a unified theory (Cabrera and Peters, 2000). One theory of father involvement is the deficit model in which fathers are viewed as being fully in control of their parenting ability and they choose how much time and money to extend to their children. If they're not interested in being involved with their child it's because they lack the skills or they aren't aware of the positive effects of father involvement on the family and the child's development.

Another model of paternal involvement that was developed by Lamb (2000) defines fatherhood using three components: engagement, accessibility, and responsibility. Engagement involves time spent in one-on-one interaction with the child such as feeding or playing catch. Accessibility categorizes less intense interactions such as cooking in the kitchen while the child plays in the next room or at the parent's feet. Responsibility is

the most important type of involvement because it includes interactions in which the parent takes ultimate responsibility for the child's physical and emotional safety and welfare, such as making arrangements for care and nurturance when the child is sick.

Another popular model to study father involvement is via the various types of capital—human, financial, and social—to which fathers have access (Amato & Gilbreth, 1998). Both the quantity and quality of these resources or capital that fathers provide are beneficial to their children's overall development. A study by Futris (2010) using this model focused on the father-child relationship and the father-mother relationship. This study suggests that early father involvement may lay the foundation for continued involvement and that completing high school or a GED increases the probability that a father remains substantially involved in his child's life.

A fourth lens to study father involvement is the Doherty et al. (1996) conceptual framework that looks at the influences on responsible fathering by building on the three previously mentioned perspectives. This fourth fatherhood model is a broad, ecological model that emphasizes individual, relationship, and contextual factors that influence the father-child relationship. The Influences on Fatherhood Conceptual Model (Figure 1) provides the most comprehensive framework currently available to study fathers and fatherhood, and it is frequently cited in the fatherhood literature.

All factor domains in the Doherty et al. (1996) conceptual framework, such as father factors, mother factors, child factors, coparental factors, and contextual factors, draw from previous fatherhood models (e.g., Amato & Gilbreth, 1998; Lamb, 2000) as well as other fathering research in order to allow generalizability to all fathers. This

conceptual framework was originally developed by Doherty and colleagues for the Administration for Children and Families and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation of the United States Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C. It has been cited extensively in the literature (Anderson et al., 2002; Cabrera & Peters, 2000; Coley, 2001; Coley & Hernandez, 2006; Fagan, Barnett, Bernd, & Whiteman, 2003; Forste, 2007; Futris & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2007; Futris, 2010; Marsiglio, Amato, Day & Lamb, 2000; Marsiglio & Cohan, 2000; Parke, 2000) and can be used as a guide in understanding the various influences on fathers and fatherhood, regardless of fathers' age, education, marital status, residential status, family of origin, or employment situation. Thus the fathering behaviors of fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers could be captured in the Doherty framework.

Furthermore, this conceptual framework provides a helpful approach for studying fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers because it is both a developmental and contextual model. For these reasons, I have chosen this conceptual framework as the best lens for the purpose of this study.

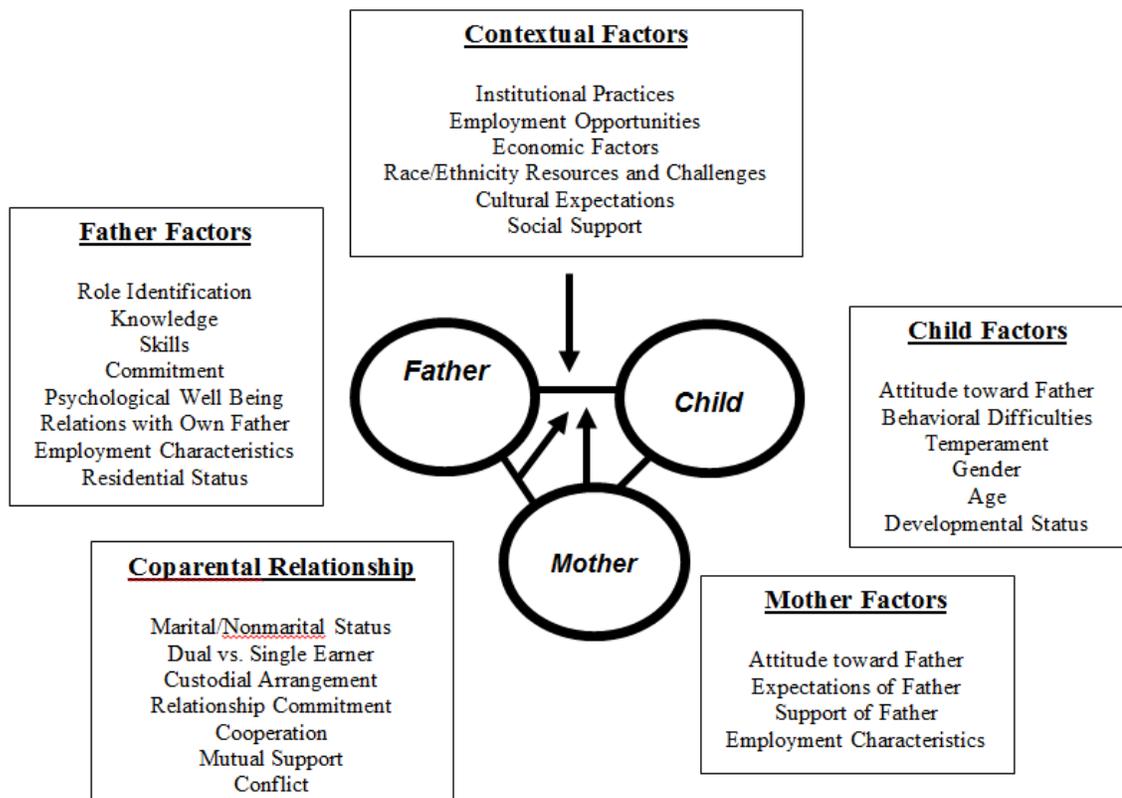


Figure 1 Influences on Fatherhood Conceptual Model (adapted from Doherty, 1996).

Fathering is a social construction. It is “a multilateral process involving fathers, mothers, children, extended family, and the broader community and its cultures and institutions. Fathering is a product of the meanings, beliefs, motivations, attitudes, and behaviors of all these stakeholders in the lives of children” (Doherty et al., 1998, p. 278). Doherty expanded on work by Levine and Pitt (1995) and defined responsible fatherhood as encompassing four tasks; namely: (a) establishing legal paternity, (b) being present in

the child's life or providing emotional support, (c) sharing economic support, and (d) being personally involved in the child's life in collaboration with the mother such as providing care.

As shown in the Influences on Fatherhood Conceptual Model (Figure 1), the father-child relationship is at the core of responsible fatherhood as demonstrated by the line connecting the father and the child. The father and child combine with the mother to form the father-child-mother triad, which is an interacting unit. In this triad, the mother interacts with the child as well as with the father, and the father interacts with the child and along with the mother of the child. In addition to the father-child-mother triad, multiple interacting influences affect the father-child relationship including the mother, the coparental relationship, and contextual factors as shown by the arrows pointing toward the father-child bond.

The Influences on Fatherhood Conceptual Model (Figure 1) focuses on the factors that help create and maintain the father-child bond. Many factors affect the father-child bond as well as the father's ability to fulfill the aforementioned tasks of responsible fatherhood. These categories of factors include father factors, mother factors, child factors, coparental factors, and broader contextual factors, as shown in Figure 1. Father factors include such variables as his view of fatherhood roles, his knowledge and skills, his commitment to his child, his relationship with his own father, his psychological well-being, his employment status, and where he resides. Many of these father factors are shaped by his family of origin and in tandem with his life experiences. Mother factors include such variables as her attitude toward the father of her child, her expectations of

the father, her opinion of and satisfaction of the level of support provided by the father, and her employment situation. Her attitudes and expectations of the father of her child are also shaped by her family of origin and her life experiences. Child factors include such variables as the child's attitude toward the father, the child's temperament, the gender and age of the child, the developmental level of the child, and whether or not any child behavioral difficulties exist. These individual factors for the father, mother, and child affect each member of the triad as individuals and also impact the quality of their relationships with the others in the triad.

Additionally in this conceptual model, mother-father relationship or coparental relationship factors exist that impact the father-child bond. These include such variables as whether or not the couple is married; whether it is a single or dual earner family; the commitment toward the couple's relationship; who has custody of the child, and if the child resides with the young parents or a grandparent; the level of cooperation and mutual support in the coparental relationship; and the level of conflict in the relationship, as well as how conflict is resolved. For example, citing this model, Coley & Hernandez (2006), found that father-mother conflict concerning parenting and financial issues showed a significantly negative relation with father involvement in both residential and non-residential father families. Their research found that maintaining a cooperative and relatively low-conflict relationship is central to fathers' continued paternal involvement.

A number of contextual factors also exist that affect the father-child relationship such as the father's potential employment opportunities; the economic condition of the area; race/ethnicity resources and challenges; cultural expectations for young fathers;

social support, both available and utilized; and institutional practices, such as how the father is treated by health care or school staff. The father-child relationship is also strongly affected by the coparental relationship, characteristics of and details affecting the mother, and larger contextual factors (as shown by the arrows in the model that point to the father-child relationship). Because all mothers in this study were adolescents, their parents or the grandparents of the baby constitute additional factors that must be considered. Grandparents may provide housing, child care, and financial support. They also influence communication between the young couple and the ways in which cultural expectations are met.

The five categories of factors or domains identified in the Influences on Fatherhood Model (father factors, mother factors, child factors, coparental relationship factors, and contextual factors) can be viewed as additive if one factor associated with another factor leads to a similar level of father involvement (Doherty et al., 1996). For example, if the father has a strong commitment toward his fatherhood role, such as providing financial support for the child, and if he earns sufficient income to meet his financial obligations for the child's needs, then these factors are viewed as additive. Similarly, if the father's relationship with his own father match the expectations that the mother has of the father of her child, then these factors are viewed as additive in that they lead to a similar level of father involvement.

The factors in this model could also be viewed as interactive. A high level of one factor may offset or mitigate some other factor. For example, positive support from mothers and the larger context can move men toward more responsible fathering even if

the fathers were not initially that committed. It would also take a father with strong commitment and skills to overcome negative influences from the mother, the greater context, or the coparental relationship. The father's relationship with his own father could be a positive influence and a source for healthy role identification—something he must compensate for if his own father was either unavailable or a negative influence. On the other hand, fathers who experienced consistent and positive parenting by their own father during childhood may have a healthy cognitive model of fathering to emulate. Negative experiences during childhood may also be modeled in adulthood or, by contrast, may lead to an enhanced desire not to repeat their fathers' mistakes. For example, a father who was physically abused by his father may believe physical force is the only way to discipline children. On the other hand, if his father squandered his paycheck on alcohol and beat up his wife, a young father may vow not to hit his wife and use his paycheck to benefit his family. A range of influences, including mothers' expectations and behaviors, the quality of the coparental relationship, economic factors, institutional practices, and employment opportunities, all have potentially powerful effects on fathering (Doherty et al., 1996). For instance, employed mothers may seek greater involvement from fathers to help balance work and child-rearing responsibilities (Coley & Hernandez, 2006). The Influences on Fatherhood model is intended to be dynamic and not seen as a set of linear influences because, conceptually, fatherhood is an evolving creation.

Father Factors

For fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers, various father factors influence fatherhood. Young fathers may experience a variety of difficulties once their children are

born. These include poor educational and financial outcomes as well as potential involvement with illegal activities. The relationship between the young father, the teenage mother, and their children coupled with different expectations regarding the role of fathers and the level of father involvement may comprise additional barriers for young fathers to both attain and maintain paternal involvement with their children.

Fatherhood and father involvement has certainly changed over time: it has shifted from moral guidance to breadwinning to sex-role modeling; toward marital support, and finally, to nurturance (Lamb, 2000). Despite these shifts, the father's primary role in the family is generally associated with being the breadwinner. While young fathers believe fathers are important, they view the father's role to be centrally conceptualized as one of economic and emotional support (Allen & Doherty, 1996; Bunting & McAuley, 2004). Coley and Hernandez (2006) found that fathers' employment stability predicted greater father involvement and lower parental conflict. A strong father role identity and commitment to parenthood are linked to father participation at the time of birth and continued involvement over time.

Among non-residential, low-income, and minority fathers, employment was found to be a significant correlate of higher father involvement possibly because employed fathers are more able to fulfill the provider role which gains the mother's cooperation (Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1998; Rangarajan & Gleason, 1998). However, while adolescent fathers may work more hours and earn more money than non-parents in the first few years following the birth, over time, lower educational achievement results in lower long-term labor market activity and lower earnings (Coley & Chase-Lansdale,

1998). Furthermore, in a British National Child Development Study that compared experiences of young parents following the birth of their children with those who had their first baby at an older age, by the time they were 33 years old, young fathers were less likely to own their own homes, twice as likely to be unemployed, and more likely than other parents to be receiving income support (Bunting & McAuley, 2004).

Relationships with fathers and patterns of fatherhood

A young father's notion of fatherhood is transmitted across generations. In most studies, young fathers reported poor or nonexistent relationships with their own biological fathers. Such defective father-son relationships influenced their own expectations for paternal behaviors. Either they attributed a trait such as anger to their father or, by contrast, they were determined to "be there" and to "spend time" with their children—in stark opposition to how their own fathers behaved (Allen & Doherty, 1996; Dallas, Wilson & Salgado, 2000). Children who had close ties with their biological father, on the other hand, had better outcomes for education and employment and were less likely to be depressed or become teenage parents themselves (Furstenburg & Harris, 1993).

Coley and Hernandez (2006) found that children only benefited from close paternal relationships, but that only a small minority of children of teenage mothers formed close ties with their biological fathers. More consistent childhood contact with one's own biological father predicted greater father involvement for non-resident fathers. Growing up without a stable father figure in the home correlates strongly with having a

child early in life. Sons whose biological fathers were absent were significantly less likely to be living with their own children, compared to those who lived with their fathers through adolescence (Furstenberg & Weiss, 2000).

Psychological well-being

A variety of stressors that young fathers experience may include an inability to provide financially for their child, problems in the relationships with the mother or her family, concerns for the health of the child, as well as difficulties in seeing their child. Paternal responsibility and involvement is critical to diminishing stress levels and to the self-esteem and self-image of the young fathers (Bunting & McAuley, 2004). Miller (1997) found that financial pressures were among many of the stresses young men associated with fatherhood. Upon learning about impending birth, young fathers became more committed to stopping negative behavior so they could be responsible and take care of their child (Anderson et al., 2002).

On the other hand, drug involvement by the teen father was often cited as a barrier to paternal involvement in child rearing (Rhein et al., 1997). In research by Larson, Hussey, Gillmore, and Gilchrist (1996) in a Northwest metropolitan area, all 170 school-age mothers who took part in the study reported that the fathers had used or sold illegal drugs during their pregnancy. Furthermore, 21% (35 mothers) reported that the father of their child had sold illegal drugs after the baby was born. Fathers who exhibit antisocial behaviors may be a more detrimental than supportive influence on their children—to the extent, perhaps, that their families may not benefit from high levels of paternal involvement (Jaffee, Caspi, Moffitt, Taylor, & Dickson, 2001).

Role identification

Teenage mothers and grandparents influence young fathers' view of their roles. Approximately 93% of teenage mothers, paternal grandmothers, and maternal grandmothers expected that teenage fathers would attend delivery, provide financial support, feed and play with the child, and take the child to clinic visits compared with 58% of teenage fathers who believed that participation in these activities should be expected of them (Rhein et al. 1997). Mothers and grandmothers can serve as gatekeepers for the father's presence in the child's life. Young fathers genuinely want to be involved with their children and would have more contact and input if they could. However, some young fathers are treated with hostility or ignored by the maternal grandparents (Bunting & McAuley, 2004). Paternal grandparents, grandmothers in particular, are an important source of support for young men. African American adolescent fathers reported increased involvement in care-taking activities with their children when they are assisted by family members and significant others within their social environment. The most involved fathers reported that they received some type of support from their family members, usually in the form of financial aid, material aid, and assistance with care-taking responsibilities (Miller, 1997).

Because men fear that their relationships with children are tenuous, they are often reluctant to set firm rules or to discipline their children for misbehavior. The activities shared by non-resident fathers and their children may be enjoyable, but these activities, in the absence of authoritative parenting, contribute little to children's development (Amato

& Gilbreth, 1999). When non-residential fathers were able to feel close and use authoritative parenting, it positively influenced children's academic achievement and there was a decrease in externalizing and internalizing problems (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999). This is strong evidence of valuable contributions by non-resident fathers in addition to fathers' payment of child support.

Residential status

The father's place of residence can affect how involved he is (Cabrera & Peters, 2008). If fathers do not live with the mother and child, their presence in the child's life is frequently marginal and can be fragile over time. According to Blankenhorn (1995), the preconditions for effective fatherhood are twofold: namely, co-residency with children and a parental alliance with the mother. These two foundations do not guarantee effective fatherhood, but they do sustain the possibility of good-enough fatherhood. Conversely, when one or both of these enabling conditions are absent, good-enough fatherhood is not possible for most men. When a man does not live with his children and does not get along with the mother of his children, his fatherhood role becomes essentially untenable, regardless of how he feels, how hard he tries, or whether he is a good man. A strained relationship with the mother of the child affects both the quantity of time with their child and the quality of father-child interactions (Allen & Doherty, 1996). Father-mother conflict concerning parenting and financial issues showed a substantial negative relation with father involvement in both residential and non-residential father families. Hence, retaining a cooperative and relatively low-conflict relationship, whether in or outside of a romantic involvement, appears central to fathers'

continued paternal involvement (Coley & Hernandez, 2006). Fathers who are supportive to mothers during pregnancy and birth may create a sense of coparenting and cooperation that leads to positive patterns of engagements in the coming months and years (Coley & Chase-Lansdale, 1999).

Mother Factors

Mothers play a crucial role in how fathers are involved with their children. For example, a mother's attitudes toward the father of her child and her expectations of the roles he should play impact his relationship with his child. Bunting & McAuley (2004) found that teenage mothers were more likely to cite paternal disinterest as the reason for a lack of paternal involvement, whereas the young fathers cited maternal resistance as the primary barrier to their involvement. These researchers also found that mothers and fathers held different views regarding the level of practical involvement expected from fathers. The fathers in Dallas et al.'s (2000) study appeared to feel it was more important to be involved in pleasurable activities with children, rather than participating in child care activities. The Rhein et al. (1997) study found a significant difference in expectations between teenage fathers and teenage mothers and those of the child's grandmothers. Whether or not mothers support fathers in being involved with their children as well as mothers' employment status are other influences in the mother factors domain.

Child Factors

The contribution of the child to the father-child relationship is also important. The child's age impacts the interaction with the father, and such interaction varies with

developmental and maturation levels of the child. Because children require diverse levels of parental monitoring, direct care, and management, so parents spend more time with children who are younger (Lamb, 2000). Child gender can elicit different parental responses, as well. Lamb (1997) found that fathers spend more time and are more likely to be involved with boys than girls, but no studies with teen fathers have found that the child's gender had an effect on the father's level of involvement. Fathers are more likely to be highly motivated and to take advantage of the services offered by fatherhood programs around the time of a new child's birth, when the father is likely to be romantically involved with the baby's mother (McLanahan & Carlson, 2002).

Coparental Factors

The majority of births to adolescent mothers are nonmarital, so most dads in these situations may not contribute to their children's economic well-being. The new-style absent fathers of the 1990s are much less likely to pay child support because they are much less likely even to attempt to act as fathers toward their children (Blankenhorn, 1995). Young children living with their mothers only are almost five times as likely to be poor as those living with married parents and almost ten times as likely to be extremely poor (Horn, 2007). In fact, 88 percent of women who had children out-of-wedlock and did not finish high school are living in poverty, compared to just 8 percent of women who finished school, married, and had a baby after the age of twenty (Horn, 2007). The father's perception of his financial situation may influence his fathering behavior but clearly the reverse is also true: if he is not involved with his children, he is much less

likely to contribute financially. According to Coley and Hernandez (2006), for non-resident, low-income, minority fathers, fathers' employment stability predicted greater father involvement possibly because employed fathers are more able to fulfill the typical provider role and to contribute financially to the child's care. Fathers were more likely to stay involved with the adolescent mother if the couple had an intimate and supportive relationship six weeks after delivery. Education on child development and parenting, stress management, and relationship maintenance skills, including basic communication and conflict resolution skills, is needed to help young parents maintain a mutually supportive relationship (Cutrona, Hessling, Bacon, & Russell, 1998).

Declaring legally that one is a father is considered to be an essential condition of responsible fathering. With legal paternity comes a variety of economic, social, and psychological benefits to the child. Tangible benefits include health care benefits if the father is employed, social security benefits, mandated child support benefits, and Armed Forces benefits if the father is in the military. However, some men and women often decide not to formally declare paternity, so that any child support payments the father makes go directly to the child and mother instead of making payments to the child support enforcement agency (Doherty et al., 1998). In fact, only about one-third of nonmarital births in the United States are followed by paternity adjudication (Adams, Landsbergen, & Hecht, 1994). According to Cabrera and Peters (2000), it is not clear whether the act of paternity establishment leads to greater father involvement or whether fathers are more likely to develop long-term positive relationships with their children when policies encourage and facilitate voluntary paternity acknowledgment.

After declaration of paternity, a cornerstone of responsible fathering is presence in the child's life, both individually as the father and in collaboration with the mother (i.e., coparental relationship). Fagan and Barnett (2003) report greater father involvement if the couple is in a romantic relationship with less partner conflict. Research conducted by Cox and Bithoney (1995) found that fathers of children born to teenage mothers were more likely to be involved in their child's life at age two if they were involved around the time of birth. This involvement included attending at least one prenatal visit, seeing the newborn in the hospital, and a reported supportive relationship between the young mother's family and the father at 2 weeks after birth. However, this same study found that 38% of the (mother/father) relationships had ended before the child's birth. Teenage fathers' involvement in childcare is correlated with the duration of their relationship with the mother. The proportion of young men sharing the responsibility is higher if the relationship was stable. Though the parents weren't married, children given the father's name on the birth certificate were more likely to receive support from and to have contact with their fathers during the first five years of their life. Rangarajan and Gleason (1998) found that fathers of babies born to low-income teenage mothers connect the rights of fatherhood—spending time with their children with its responsibilities—providing economic support). Joint registration of the birth or establishing legal paternity indicated greater commitment and involvement later on and contributed to a more amicable arrangement with the birth mother (Bunting & McAuley, 2004).

Additional coparental influences include commitment to the couple relationship and whether or not the couple marries. Children in families where the parents cohabitate

are worse off economically compared to children living with married biological parents (Manning & Lichter, 1996). A study using a nationally representative sample of 2,992 married and cohabiting couples found that cohabiting individuals reported poorer relationships with both their fathers and mothers, and lower levels of happiness than their married counterparts (Nock, 1995).

Contextual Factors

Fatherhood is influenced by contextual factors. Fathers from different racial and ethnic backgrounds may participate in fathering differently, due to cultural norms or structural barriers and supports (Parke, Coltrane, Borthwick-Duffy, Powers, & Adams, 2004). Latino fathers are most likely to be married, but among unmarried parents, Latino fathers have less contact with their children than low-income African American and White fathers (Lerman & Sorensen, 2000). In a study of Latino male adolescents who had fathered a child, researchers found that Latino teenage fathers were more likely to believe that causing a pregnancy was a sign of manhood and enhanced their masculinity (Goodyear, Newcomb & Allison, 2000).

Many factors can create barriers to father presence, particularly for young fathers who may lack skills necessary to negotiate negative challenges. Institutional practices, which aren't known for being father-friendly, may create barriers as well. Many of the young fathers perceived social institutions as barriers to paternal involvement, with many feeling that the staff of schools, hospitals, and social service agencies hindered rather than facilitated their efforts to care for their child. In one specific instance, the hospital and social service agency treated the young father as though he didn't matter and refused

to give him information about a bite on his child's cheek as it was considered confidential, despite the fact that he was the parent who reported the injury (Allen & Doherty, 1996).

Encouraging men who never wanted to become fathers to be “responsible” is likely to be more difficult than working with men who were eager to assume their new roles. Strategies for working with this population probably need to be dramatically altered. Fatherhood programs have helped fathers navigate larger social systems (Anderson et al., 2002). According to a monograph from the National Center on Fathers, Families, and Public Policy, renamed as the National Center on Fathers and Families, successful programs on fathering must focus on fathers' strengths, not deficits, and stress the importance of fathers as nurturers—even if the father is a non-custodial parent. Programs must build on fathers' needs and solicit their input. Successful programs must provide fathers with an opportunity to interact in a support group context where they feel safe, and can share concerns and frustrations, and be allowed to assimilate basic parenting skills. Successful programs must adapt to local context and recognize unique community needs (Palm, 1998). Investing in the fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers will promote responsible fathering, which benefits their children, the adolescent mothers, and our communities.

From the perspective of fathers who participated in the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program, this study uses the Influences on Fatherhood Conceptual Model (Figure 1) in order to determine the most important contextual influences on their fatherhood experience and the factors that contribute to involvement with their children.

This conceptual framework contains several categories of influences that affect fathers in their relationship with their child and the mother of their child as well as the influences that help shape their overall experience as fathers. By contacting, surveying, and interviewing Caring Equation fathers, using data collection instruments that were based on this conceptual framework, a unique case study of fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers has been created.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Young fathers are a difficult population with which to work. They are hard to locate and engage. Little empirical research exists on young fathers. Of the studies that include young fathers, the majority of these studies consists of cross-sectional designs using national data and do not provide insight into the complex family lives of young fathers whose relationships may be unstable and whose personal situations may be dynamic. Yin (2003), Merriam (1998), and Miles and Huberman (1994) state that case studies are appropriate when little is known about the population or situation. Yin (2003) further states that the case study strategy is best when investigating a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context. Therefore, this study uses an embedded single-case design of a unique group of young fathers from the fatherhood program, Caring Equation, which operated in Arlington County, Virginia, from 2003 to 2007. Young fathers who participated in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program were embedded units of analysis in this case study research.

Not much is known about the fatherhood experience of Caring Equation fathers nor what influenced the fathers' behavior. The evaluation conducted during the federal grant demonstration period between 2003 to 2007 measured such variables as educational attainment of adolescent mothers, immunization rates for infants, increased knowledge of

appropriate child rearing practice, if subsequent adolescent pregnancies were postponed for at least two years, and whether or not young fathers increased time spent with their children. The Caring Equation Young Fathers Program ended in 2007, and all efforts to re-establish services for young fathers in Arlington have thus far been unsuccessful.

Therefore, this study explores what has happened to the Caring Equation fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers since the end of the program in 2007, what influenced their fatherhood experience, and what factors contributed to the fathers' involvement with their children. A case study provides information-rich data from the young fathers who were served by a fatherhood program designed specifically for them.

Yin (2003) defines case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Miles and Huberman (1994) define a case as “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (p. 25). They present the case study graphically as a circle with a heart in the center. The heart is the focus of the study while the circle “defines the edge of the case: what will not be studied” (p. 25). In terms of what constitutes the case, Merriam (1998) states that “the case could be a person such as a student; a program; a group such as a class; and so on” (p. 27). Because fathering is influenced by contextual forces, case study research design is an appropriate strategy in this study because it covers contextual conditions. Though the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program no longer exists, the unknowns about the fathers compel case study research of young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers in Arlington, Virginia.

Research Setting

The research setting was Arlington, Virginia. In 1998-99, Arlington Public Schools Teenage Parenting Programs established the Young Fathers Program with a \$25,000 grant from the Virginia Department of Social Services as a part of the Virginia Fatherhood Campaign. Two men were hired on a part-time, hourly basis (10-12 hrs. per week) as fatherhood specialists in order to reach out to and assist the fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers enrolled in the Arlington Teenage Parenting programs. The fatherhood specialists made phone calls and invited young fathers to attend workshops on baby care, male/female communication, and resume writing. These two part-time employees assisted approximately 20 young fathers per year. Other small grants were obtained to sustain the Young Fathers Program at this level for three additional years.

Between 2003 and 2007, a large, five-year, federal demonstration grant, Caring Equation, was used to significantly expand the Young Fathers Program. The Caring Equation was a multifaceted intervention program that identified out-of-school, 13 to 19-year old pregnant and parenting females, their children, and their male partners or fathers of their babies. The overall goal of the program was to provide quality, comprehensive adolescent pregnancy care services for those who were otherwise overlooked and unintentionally neglected. The Caring Equation connected, enhanced, and expanded programs that were already in place in order to provide outreach and services to this population. Existing programs included

1. Family Education Center, an alternative school program for pregnant teens;
2. Alternatives for Parenting Teens, an alternative school program for adolescent

mothers that included a county-licensed day care center for their infants and preschoolers;

3. Outreach for Parenting Teens, an alternative program to locate and assist pregnant and parenting teens who were not enrolled in school; and,

4. Young Fathers Program, a support group for the males/fathers/significant others involved with a pregnant or parenting adolescent in the aforementioned programs.

Caring Equation assisted adolescent mothers and their male partners to become responsible parents through academic and vocational assistance, caring role models, child health and development knowledge, individual and couples counseling, and referrals for medical treatment and social services. The Caring Equation grant funded 2 full-time, salaried, male bilingual fatherhood specialists, two part-time hourly fatherhood specialists, and 3 other salaried positions as well as program costs. The fatherhood specialists helped young fathers stay in school, enroll in General Educational Development (GED) or English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and vocational skills training programs, and find employment. They made phone calls and invited young fathers to attend workshops on baby care, health care, male/female communication, resume writing, and job interview techniques. In addition, they assisted young fathers to establish paternity, attend medical appointments, comply with child visitation agreements, and make court appearances. Finally, among the numerous workshops designed to educate young fathers about their role in raising a child, the fatherhood specialists also provided counseling and mediation to improve communication in order to help prevent domestic violence and child abuse as well as numerous

workshops to educate young fathers about their role in raising a child. A number of social events were conducted as well, including trips to professional baseball and soccer games, a trip to the beach and a trip to an amusement park; Valentine's Day dinners for couples; and Father's Day family picnics each year. During this five-year period (2003 to 2007), a total of 310 young fathers were served.

In June of 2007, when the Caring Equation grant ended, the Young Fathers Program in Arlington became inactive due to lack of funding. An external evaluation of the Caring Equation grant identified several statistically significant outcomes during the five years. One finding was that working with young fathers increased the likelihood that they and the teen mothers would stay in school, thereby reducing the risk of subsequent adolescent pregnancies (Robbers, 2009). Furthermore, fathers participating in the program decreased inappropriate expectations of children, such as expecting their child to be able to use the toilet by their first birthday or expecting an infant to not cry. Fathers also decreased formerly favorable attitudes toward the use of corporal punishment, and increased interaction time with their children (Robbers, 2008). According to Robbers, findings suggested "the Caring Equation is achieving success in relaying to fathers how important their participation in the child-rearing process is and how their participation is valued by both mother and child" (p. 45). However, the grant-funded positions, which included the fatherhood specialist positions, were not picked up in the operating budget of the school system at the end of the federal demonstration grant funding. No fatherhood program currently exists in Arlington, Virginia.

Research Participants

The participants selected for this study represent a convenience sample of 10 young fathers drawn from the participants during the 2003 to 2007 Caring Equation grant years who still reside in the geographical area, and who were able to be contacted, and were willing to participate. Both the George Mason University and the Arlington Public Schools Human Subjects Review Board procedures were followed. Using the master roster of 310 young fathers in the Caring Equation Fatherhood program from 2003 – 2007, I requested that former project staff members identify young fathers they thought were still living in the geographic area. Only 33 young fathers from the original cohort were identified as potential participants for this study.

Obtaining up-to-date contact information on these young fathers was accomplished by contacting the young mothers or maternal grandparents and by reviewing school system enrollment data on the children of the young fathers. The 310 fathers ranged in age from 16 to 30 ($M=20$) when they began this program (Robbers, 2009). Of the 33 young fathers still thought to live in the area, a total of 26 young fathers, between 17 and 22 years of age when they participated in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program, were targeted as potential candidates for this study. This age range for the young father was selected because they would be closer in age to the mothers who were adolescents. An age difference in the young couple of 3-5 years is more typical as well as more socially acceptable. Of these 26 fathers, 19 were Hispanic (73%) and seven were African American (27%). This smaller group of young fathers was contacted by phone and invited to participate in the study using an approved

telephone protocol (Appendix A). My goal was to obtain an ethnically representative sample similar to the total 310 originally served, which was comprised of African American (12%), Latino (80%), and White (7%) young fathers. Furthermore, my initial inclination was to select only English speaking young fathers since I am not bilingual. Including limited-English-proficient young fathers would require the use of a translator to help complete both the written survey and oral interview. Emotions and other nuances might possibly be lost in the translation and thereby restrict this data source.

Numerous phone calls were made at various times of day and night to contact all 26 fathers; however, five of them were unreachable, three were incarcerated, and one had moved to Pennsylvania. This left 17 potential young fathers. Although repeated attempts were made to invite a representative sample of both African American fathers and Hispanic fathers from the cohort to participate, the 10 Caring Equation fathers who agreed to participate in this study identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino. For eight of the fathers, the written surveys and tape-recorded interviews were conducted in English. Two of the fathers spoke very little English and only agreed to participate if they could speak to someone in Spanish, so the written survey and interviews were conducted in Spanish through the assistance of interpreters who work for the public school system. Although I tried to get an ethnically representative English-speaking sample of 10 fathers, in the end, I was only able to get 10 young fathers, all of whom were Latino, and two who primarily spoke Spanish. I was unable to recruit any of the remaining 7 young fathers to participate.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods included

1. Review of Caring Equation program records;
2. A written follow-up survey (Appendices C and D); and
3. Tape recorded oral interviews of selected young fathers who matched selection criteria (Appendix E).

I used these data points to gain a deeper understanding of each young father's background, their history with the Caring Equation program, their current personal situation, their self-reported fatherhood experience and involvement with their children, and influential factors in the emergence of their understanding of responsible fatherhood.

Review of program records

This data source was used to understand fathers at the time of their involvement with the Caring Equation program in order to include demographic information, employment status, educational level, coparental relationship, and services received. This data provided a more in-depth portrait of each young father. In addition, this data source was used to triangulate data revealed from sources collected at the time of the study. For example, program reports contained the kinds of services used by young fathers, including which services were accessed most often and thereby validated their recollections of services described in interviews. Other program records included information which described each adolescent mother's background and provided a richer picture of each couple's family situation. There were also written case notes in clients' files created by Caring Equation staff members who worked directly with the young

fathers. These case notes described the specific assistance provided to each participant. Case notes contained such information as dates of entry into the Caring Equation fatherhood program and the alternative programs for pregnant teens, country of origin for the adolescent mother and young father, when the child was born, any involvement with the court system, and other interventions provided. These data were used to confirm or invalidate what was obtained through the written surveys and oral interviews. For example, several fathers described how they had been assisted in creating a resume and applying for jobs, and the case notes in their files supported what they stated in the oral interview.

After selection of participants and recovery of program records, it was discovered that not all records were equally complete. Considerable variation existed with respect to the information available in the client files. This variability could be accounted for in several ways. First, fatherhood specialists assigned to each case differed in their record-keeping practices. Second, the needs of each young father were unique and required different levels of service. Third, the length of involvement in Caring Equation varied by participants so that some participants had a much longer history of involvement than others.

Caring Equation fathers written follow-up survey

I developed a written follow-up survey for young fathers to capture descriptive data such as age, ethnicity, residential status, education level, employment situation, relationship with the mother of the child, and frequency of involvement with the child (see Appendix C). This survey also solicited each young father's opinions on influences

or factors that assisted them in their fatherhood roles. There were 44 questions such as current age, age at birth of child, adolescent mother's age at birth of child, ethnic background, highest level of education father completed, current job title, and length of time in current position. There were also 15 questions that used a Likert scale with four or five answer choices, such as Not at all; Little; Somewhat; Mostly; Substantially or Very poor; Poor; Fair; Good; or Very good to elicit responses from participants about how much the Caring Equation improved parenting ability, current relationship with the child's mother, job satisfaction, relationship with grandparents, and current relationship with child.

The last page of the written survey included a chart of typical child-rearing tasks a father might perform for or with his school-age child (see Appendix D). Fathers were required to check the frequency of their involvement in these various activities with or for their child. Twenty-two activities were listed and included such parent rituals as make a meal for your child, play with your child, help your child with homework, provide money, or provide transportation. Frequency choices ranged from *never* to *once a month* to *once a week* to *everyday*, and fathers checked the frequency with which they performed each activity. The Caring Equation Fathers Written Follow-up Survey took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete.

Eight of the participants were able to complete the survey in English. For the two Spanish-speaking participants, translators read each question on the written survey and potential responses first in English then in Spanish, repeating if necessary. Participants

responded in Spanish, and the translator repeated the response in English, and the researcher wrote down the responses.

Interview protocol

The tape-recorded interview with each young father used questions based on the conceptual framework described in Chapter Two (see Appendix E). The goal of this interview was to learn more about the participants' personal fatherhood experience. Questions were designed to learn the most important contextual influences on their fatherhood experience and the factors that contribute to their involvement with their children. There were six major categories of questions with three or four sub questions in each category. Ten young fathers agreed to participate in the interviews.

Eight interviews were conducted in English, and two of the interviews were conducted in Spanish with the assistance of experienced translators. Both translators were school system employees who had previously worked with the Caring Equation fathers. The two interviews conducted in Spanish were stated first in English and then in Spanish, and the young father's response was then translated orally on the tape recording. Both interpreters were further instructed to provide clarification on questions if needed and to probe further in order to attain more in-depth responses from the father. As a further measure to ensure accurate and consistent data collection, the transcriptions of the interviews conducted in Spanish were reviewed by a bilingual colleague listening to the tapes and comparing the written transcriptions. This colleague is a senior level outreach specialist with a master's degree in social work and more than 20 years of translation experience. However, even with the translation assistance that was provided, the

transcriptions of the interviews conducted in Spanish were shorter in length and did not contain as much information as those conducted in English. Anonymity was preserved by labeling each tape using the client number assigned to the father respondents when they participated in the Caring Equation. Each interview required approximately 30 to 45 minutes to conduct.

Data Collection Procedure

Program records and client files were retrieved from storage boxes housed in the building of the former Caring Equation office. Former Caring Equation staff members were requested to share electronic copies of client rosters, noting which fathers still resided in the local area. Addresses and phone numbers of potential young fathers were compiled and verified for accuracy. As the 10 fathers were identified, their client records were reviewed for additional data and memos were created for later analysis.

The written survey (Appendices C and D) was given to each young father to complete in a one-on-one setting at an Arlington school office building. This building was the same building used for Caring Equation staff offices and other fatherhood program activities because young fathers were familiar with it, and it was easy to access. Fathers were offered transportation assistance and free parking validation. Other Arlington school buildings were used for two surveys and interviews in order to accommodate participant needs. One survey and interview was conducted at the father's job site in Maryland, and one survey and interview was conducted in the evening in the father's apartment, per his request. Two young fathers, who spoke little or no English, were assisted in completing the survey by reading it out loud to them in Spanish and

writing down their responses. These two were completed in Spanish with assistance by experienced translators who had formerly worked with the Caring Equation fatherhood program. Anonymity was maintained by using the client number assigned to the young father by Caring Equation.

Immediately after completion of the written survey, each young father participated in an individual, personal interview which was tape recorded and transcribed. Participants were given a copy of the interview questions at the beginning so they could read each question as well as hear it. If a response to a question was short, I probed the participant to expound upon his meaning in order to gain clarity and a deeper understanding of his experience and the meaning he attached to it. The same procedure was used for the interviews conducted in Spanish.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the follow-up survey for young fathers and individual interviews were tabulated and coded. The interview transcriptions were analyzed to determine patterns and insights. The transcripts were also coded using categories and subcategories. Category construction for coding began with reading the first interview transcript (Merriam, 1998). Maxwell (2005) also suggested the “qualitative researcher begins data analysis immediately after finishing the first interview” (p. 95), which I did. Listening to interview tapes prior to transcription gave me an opportunity for further analysis. I coded data as I gathered them, synthesizing them to generate themes and categories. Although certain categories for coding evolved, I began the coding process by using the conceptual framework presented in Chapter Two in order to generate etic codes

related to the contextual factors I believed were most important and contributed to young fathers' involvement with their children. Initial specific categories included: cultural expectations of the importance of fathers to families, institutional practices, providing financial support, caring for the child, marriage or a respectful relationship with the mother of the baby, positive and negative fatherhood role models, and how the young fathers' interpretation of what it means to be a father correlates with perceptions of what their own father was like (see Figure 1). These categories functioned as bins for sorting the data for further analysis.

Conveying an understanding of the case is the paramount consideration in analyzing the data. In case studies, communicating understanding—the goal of data analysis—is linked to the fact that data have usually been derived from interviews, field observations, and documents (Merriam, 1998, p. 193)

Patterns and themes were sought by construction of cross-case displays and matrices. Interview responses provided a better understanding of the most important influences on the young fathers and their relationship with their children. Coding was based on the conceptual framework and included all major categories of factors: Father Factors, Mother Factors, Child Factors, Coparental Relationship Factors, and Contextual Factors. Because fathering is a social construction influenced by contextual forces in the family and in the community, Contextual Factors were further divided into four predominant subcategories: Institutional Practices, Cultural Expectations, Employment Opportunities, and Race/Ethnicity Resources and Challenges. Since all participants in this case study were young and Hispanic with varying levels of English proficiency, data

from the interviews and program records yielded specific examples of these contextual subcategories. The complete list of coding categories used for the interviews is found in Appendix I.

Limitations and Generalizability

A methodological limitation of this study is that the participants were drawn from an earlier cohort and were either recruited through adolescent mothers or grandmothers or directly recruited. As anticipated, because the population is extremely transient, this method was a time-consuming task fraught with many dead ends: contact information had often changed, and some chose not to respond to the numerous messages that I left. Furthermore, potential participants to assist in this research study were difficult to convince unless an appealing incentive, such as a gift card, was provided. However, even with the promise of a \$25 Target gift card as an inducement, recruitment was labor intensive, and it was difficult to secure 10 participants in the desired age range. Nearly 40 percent of the 26 fathers who met the age criteria needed to agree to participate in order to attain 10 fathers in the sample. This excluded older fathers who participated in Caring Equation as well as other young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers who did not have the opportunity to participate in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program.

Another limitation of this study is that it only involved participants in one fatherhood program that ended in 2007. The data captured were based heavily on program records and on the memory of those interviewed. Certain discrepancies exist between program records and what participants remembered and reported. The data were

also based on those who agreed to participate, which may ultimately have been participants who had a favorable experience in the program. Because the study was also dependent on the participants' willingness to be forthright with someone they did not know and/or trust, so their responses may have been somewhat guarded or not as detailed if there had been a more personal relationship between the young fathers and the researcher. The design may further be limited if those interviewed represent a relatively high paternal involvement sample. Young fathers who are highly involved with their children will most likely respond much differently than young fathers who are not very involved with their children because involved fathers spend more time with their children. Perhaps if a much longer period of time were allocated for this study, it may have been possible to recruit some African American young fathers; however, I was unable to talk directly to even one on the phone, despite the fact that two African American grandmothers shared their frustration regarding the lack of father involvement for their grandchildren with me.

This study is aimed at creating analytical generalizability or transferability of the concepts and ideas from this case to other situations. Because the sample size is small and limited to those who could be contacted and were willing to participate, the findings from this study will not inherently generalize to all other young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers; however, others can generalize to this case. Miles & Huberman (1994) stated "we are generalizing from one case to the next on the basis of a match to the underlying theory, not to the larger universe" (p. 29). In this study, each young father

surveyed and interviewed represents an embedded unit within the case based on the conceptual framework presented in Chapter Two.

Validity Threats

One type of validity threat that is often raised in reference to qualitative studies is researcher bias (Maxwell, 2005). One potential validity threat to this study is that I was the overall administrator of the programs for pregnant and parenting teens and their families in Arlington that included the Young Fathers Program when the Caring Equation program existed. Although I was not directly involved with the participants, I was responsible for hiring grant-funded staff, fiscal management of the grant, and submitting reports to funding agency representatives and school system senior administrators and school board members. While I am biased in that it is my opinion that the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program was both well run and valuable to the young men and their families that it served, the Arlington Young Fathers Program no longer exists. I took the precaution of informing research participants that the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program in which they participated no longer existed, so my opinion of the program would not interfere with what I hoped to learn from this study.

A second possible validity threat might include the issue of meta-reflexivity in that I am part of the social world I am studying (Maxwell, 2005). What the young fathers stated during the interviews was influenced by my presence and the interview situation, so that theoretically they may have told me what they thought I wanted to hear as opposed to revealing their honest reality.

In this chapter, I presented the research methods employed to conduct this study. Research methods, including participant selection, data collection, and data analysis techniques, were guided by the research questions. In the following chapter, I present findings related to the research questions for this study. These questions focus on the fatherhood experiences for men who participated in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program as well as on what influenced the emergence of their understanding of responsible fatherhood.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Data came from three sources: program records, written surveys, and oral interviews. Program records included client files, the final evaluation, and program reports. Client files revealed types of services provided by fatherhood specialists, dates services were given, father's age and primary language, country of origin for father and mother, time in US if immigrant, father's employment status, educational level of mother and father, child's date of birth, and specific issues which required assistance. The program reports and final evaluation provided summative data on services provided, ages and ethnicity of participants, evaluation instruments used, and comparison of data based on pre and post assessments. As I studied the client files, I discovered that some were robust and some were skimpy, either because contacts with the young father were minimal, the fatherhood specialist did not keep accurate records, or documents were missing.

Written surveys provided self-reported demographic data such as current age of fathers, age of father and mother at child's birth, ethnicity, current age of child, residency status, current employment status, educational status, length of time in Caring Equation, number and ages of children, marital status, custody status, coparental relationship status, relationship between father and mother, relationship with father's parents and mother's parents, relationship with child, types of Caring Equation services used, extent to which

Caring Equation improved father's parenting ability, and frequency of involvement with child related to 22 parenting tasks.

Oral interviews provided data about the fatherhood experience: how the father learned about fatherhood, the relationship between the young father and his father, the relationship between the father and his child, the relationship between the father and mother, the mother's support or lack of support for his involvement with his child, the kinds of couple or coparental conflict experienced and how conflict is resolved, how Caring Equation helped new fathers, characteristics of fatherhood specialists that were most helpful, biggest challenges with respect to being a father, how Caring Equation helped with expectations experienced by young fathers, future goals related to work and education, information about their job and boss, partner/wife's view of young father's fathering skills, how Caring Equation helped with the couple relationship, which Caring Equation services were most helpful, and what should be included if developing a fatherhood program in the future.

Research Question 1

Research question 1 asked: What has characterized the fatherhood experience for Caring Equation participants? To address research question 1, I begin by providing individual profiles of each young father developed from the three data sources: program records, written surveys, and oral interviews. In my exploration of fatherhood experiences for Caring Equation fathers, I found that participants' backgrounds and life experiences varied extensively. While all 10 young fathers were of the same ethnicity

and relatively similar in age, their family situations and fatherhood experiences were, in many ways, unique.

Participant Profiles

Father #518

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #518 revealed that he is from El Salvador and graduated from high school in that country. He and his girlfriend were married when they came to the United States in April of 2002. At that time, he was 19, and she was 15 and pregnant. Their son was born two months later in Fairfax, Virginia.

Father #518 was 21 years old when he officially entered the fatherhood program. Father #518 was involved with the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program between 2004 and 2006. He only spoke Spanish and was employed as a carpet installer. He participated in several activities, including workshops on child development and baby care, sexual health, and couple communication. Program records show that he was provided information on how to obtain a driver's license, that Caring Equation staff helped him complete an application for a one bedroom apartment, and that legal assistance was provided regarding his son's birth certificate. Program records show that Father #518 was involved on a daily basis in almost every task related to the care of his child both in October of 2005 and August of 2006. He was described as very involved and nurturing toward his son.

The case records also provided information about the adolescent mother. Father #518 and the mother moved to Arlington so she could participate in a once a week after-

school educational program for adolescent mothers. The following school year, in the fall of 2004, the wife of Father #518 enrolled in the alternative school program for teenage mothers and started attending daily classes in order to earn high school credit. At that time, their son was two years old and attended the infant care center for the children of adolescent mothers, located within the school system's vocational-technical center. She continued in this alternative school program until her graduation from high school in 2007. She works as a public school instructional assistant, and the family is offered health insurance through her job.

Written survey. Father #518 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. He reported that he was 17 when his son was born and the child's mother was 15. His self-reported age is different than the case files which stated his age at the birth of their child as 19. He is now 27 years old, and his son is 9 years old and in the 4th grade. Father #518 has remained married to the mother of his child, and a second son was born six months ago. Their family of four all live in the same dwelling.

Father #518 reported that he had a high school diploma and works as a carpet cleaner, a position he has held for three years. He reported that he is "very satisfied" with his hourly wage and that he participated in the Caring Equation fatherhood program for two years (2004 to 2006). The types of Caring Equation services he took part in included: case management, mentor relationship with fatherhood specialist, communication training/couple's mediation, job training, mental health services, child care, transportation, legal services, general education, education about child development and baby care, education about sexual health, and events for families. His responses on

the survey indicated that Caring Equation improved his parenting ability “substantially,” that he is “very satisfied” regarding his relationship with his wife, that she “always” supports his involvement with his children, that they work “very well” together as parents, and that they agree about parenting decisions “all of the time.” He rated his relationship with his parents and her parents as “very good,” although both his father and her father have recently passed away.

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his child, his survey responses rated his relationship with his children as “very good.” On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #518 reported performing 19 of the 22 listed parental tasks six or seven days a week. Of the three tasks not performed on most days, Father #518 reported taking his child to the playground once per week and both putting his child to sleep and reading to his child two or three times a week. As he was completing the survey, he mentioned to the researcher that now that his son is nine, he generally reads by himself and puts himself to sleep.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in English, Father #518 reported that the time he spends with his children is “priceless” and being a father is “one of the best things.” He enjoys spending time with his son whether they are doing homework or going to the park. Because he is married, they spend a lot of time together as a family. They try to have new experiences so that life is not routine. As a couple, they are always planning ahead. When asked by the interviewer to describe a time when he felt really good about being a dad, he responded, “when my kids born.”

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #518 stated that he learned to be a father from his father. He described his father as being in the home all the time, providing for his needs (food, clothing, home), and giving him opportunities to explore, play, and learn in school. He also reported that the Caring Equation program helped him become a responsible father.

When I had my first kid, I had to know that I had to be responsible for it. And then, on the road, I find good people like the Program, the Young Fathers Program, and they helped me through it, to—to understand that the life, it would change as soon as that little one show up. And, um, they help me, too, by explain that she is finishing her school, and then I keep learning at the same time with them, what to deal with.

In addition, he reported that Caring Equation helped him as a new father

for being more responsible than the way I am, and understand the kids, and respect, and understand when they are sad and how [to] deal with them, and obviously love more my wife because she make a big effort to finish her high school and for me to, um, be a better person.

He admired the fatherhood specialists in that they were there all the time to help him, they were nice, they gave good advice, and they suggested strategies that resulted in good solutions. The biggest challenge for him as a father is the responsibility of providing food, clothes, and a home “for the people you love because they’re depending on you.” He admires his boss and has other adults from whom he solicits advice if there is something on his mind he cannot handle. Caring Equation helped him understand his

children and helped him learn to recognize “when they need you and when you can say ‘no’ at the same time, because this is not always fun. At some point you got to act, but they explained to you to get to the point of when you got to act.”

During the interview, he reported that he was a carpet installer for several years, which was confirmed by program records, but that three years prior, he switched to carpet/upholstery cleaning and repairs. He described his boss as being the best boss—someone who understands him as a young father and who is very supportive. For example, he reported that his boss was understanding when he needed to be a little late for work due to dropping his child off at school or if he needed to take time off work to take his infant son to the health clinic.

Father #518 reported that the services he received while in the Caring Equation program included attending Father’s Day picnics and a the trip to Six Flags which “was the most fun.” In addition, when reviewing a list of program services, he stated that “I would say this one with the mentor or relationship with male staff” was the most important. He elaborated: “When I came here, I never get to go to the room and start sharing my experience with somebody else.” He expressed appreciation for the assistance provided for his wife to attend and graduate from high school; he also expressed thanks for the assistance provided to get his son’s name correct on the birth certificate.

He reported that he and his wife were friends before they became romantically involved, and they are still friends so they like to talk a lot. He reported that he is very helpful at home and always assists his wife with whatever she needs so she will give him

a high rating when describing his fathering skills. When asked how the Caring Equation program helped him with his relationship with his wife, he stated that the program's assistance with his wife's education and with childcare were important.

Father #518 reported that his future goals include earning a GED and then attending community college, perhaps to learn skills that would allow him to transition to electrical work. When asked where he saw himself in five years, he replied:

Myself? First I'm going to see my older son in high school. That's my goal.

He's going to be in 5th grade, so he's going to be just getting to high school.

That's my first. And then myself, growing up my little kid and putting him to the bus stop, and then enjoying our life with the two boys that we have with [his wife].

Father #292

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #292 revealed that he is from El Salvador and that in 2005, he was 21 years old. Records indicate that he was a participant in the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program from 2003 to 2005, but there were no specific case notes about his actual participation in the fatherhood activities. The case records provided information about the adolescent mother and the children because the adolescent mother participated in the alternative school programs for pregnant and parenting teens beginning in 2002 when she was pregnant with her daughter. According to his file, the father of the child born in October of 2002 is a different man than Father #292. In 2004 the birth father was shot and killed. Caring Equation worked with the police to prove paternity by the deceased so the child would qualify to receive Social

Security insurance (SSI) benefits. Also in 2004, the young mother had a son with Father #292. Case notes continue in 2006 and 2007, when the daughter was 4 and the son was 2½. At that time, the children attended the infant care center at the school system's vocational-technical center. Caring Equation provided assistance to complete Head Start and Montessori applications, and transportation was provided for the adolescent mother to attend a money and life management simulation. Records show that a meeting was held with the parents, which included Father #292, to discuss health concerns regarding the children, specifically the need to follow up with the doctor's instruction to treat the children's eczema. The mother had a job in a hair salon, and she graduated from high school in 2007 after attending summer school.

Written survey. Father #292 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. He reported that he was 18 when the first child was born, and the child's mother was also 18. He is currently 27, and the little girl is now eight years old and in 3rd grade. He is married to the child's mother, and they have their son who is seven years old and in 2nd grade. Father #292 reported that he has less than a high school diploma but is employed full-time doing electrical work. The position, which he has held for five months, is paid on an hourly basis, but he is "very satisfied" with the job.

Father #292 reported that he participated in Caring Equation for two and one-half years (2003 to 2005). The types of services he took part in included: child care, education concerning child development and baby care, education about sexual health, and events for families. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation "mostly" improved his parenting ability, that he is "very satisfied" with the relationship

between him and his wife, that she supports his involvement with the children “most of the time,” that they work “very well” together as parents, and that they “often” agree about parenting decisions. He rated his relationship with his parents and her parents as “good,” although her mother recently passed away.

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his child, his survey responses rated his relationship with his children as “good.” On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #292 reported performing these three parental tasks six or seven days a week: helping the child bathe, putting the child to sleep, and providing a place to live. Three tasks were reported four or five times a week: eating a meal with the child, helping the child with homework, and taking/picking up child from school. Seven tasks were reported as being performed two or three times per week: making a meal for child, playing with child, dressing child, comforting upset child, talking with child, providing money, and providing transportation. Five tasks were reported as being performed by Father #292 once a week: read with child, help child do chores, provide food, play games with child, and take child to playground. He reported that he cleans up a mess made by his child two times per month, and these three tasks were reported as being performed once per month: taking care of child when sick, taking child to clinic/doctor, and providing clothes.

Oral interviews. During the interview conducted in English, Father #292 reported that he has a lot of fun with his children and “that’s one of the things that I love being a father cause, ah, I can see when they’re happy and I love seeing my kids happy.” He has the most fun with his children in the afternoon after school: “Sometimes we go to

the park or we just take the Wii out and Dance Three...they're doing a lot of exercising and they laugh and they're dancing, so we have a lot of fun.” The one time he identified that he felt really good about being a dad was

three years ago when me and my wife got married on December 9th of 2009. We got married on a Saturday and on Sunday we went to Orlando, FL, to Disney World. I felt really proud 'cause I was making one of my kid's dream come true—that they wanted to go [to] Disney World, so I really felt great about myself that day.

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #292 stated that he learned from people who help him, such as his parents and the school. “Every day that pass, I'm learning new stuff about how to be a father, too. With my kids' reactions or stuff that I see from other parents and their kids.” He reported that he had not lived with his own father for very long. He was born in El Salvador, and his parents brought him here when he was 12,

but at the age of 18, I was out of the house with my wife and the first kid that we had. So I was renting a place to live, separate from them. So I didn't really spend too much time with my parents—my dad.

He reported that the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program helped him as a new father.

It did help me a lot, 'cause like I didn't know nothing about being a father. I mean having a kid at that age, 18, it was really tough, 'cause I had to leave, to forget about my friends, about going out. Now I had a kid.

At that same time, his parents pressured him to get a job instead of staying in school.

When we had the first kid, I was going to school. Then my dad was like, ‘No, you got a kid. You gotta stop going to school and get yourself a full-time job to support that kid and your wife, if you’re going to have a wife and a kid.’ So, it was really, really hard for me.

He was in the 12th grade but dropped out of high school and never went back:

But I did, ah, encourage my wife so she can continue on the high school and I was going to be the one who was supporting the money to the house and bring the food. And we did it—we made it! She got her high school diploma! One of us need to give the example to the kids that you can make it. At least you earn a high school diploma. We did it! She got a high school diploma and I didn’t, but I’m happy she did.

He reported that the fatherhood specialist worked with him a lot on how to be a good father and on improving his character, which he described as bad and really strong. He reported that

if somebody would like speak [to] my wife, [it would] make me get angry...I mean I just start yelling at her and I’d be really, really strong on her, and to the point that I got her to start crying by the way I talk to her.

He stated that he is “more understandable now.” He expressed his thanks to the fatherhood specialist for helping him to improve how he communicated with his wife, and he also gave thanks to God because “I changed a lot. My character went down a lot.” He reported that, “Now I can take stuff more. I can control myself now.” He and his family are very active at a Catholic church and a certain priest gives him advice on how

to be a better dad; in addition, the couple who serve as godparents for his children are helping them a good deal.

Father #292 reported that his biggest challenge as a father is focusing on his children's education to make sure they do well in school.

... 'Cause my parents were not there for me when I needed them. What I hadn't get from my parents, I gotta make sure I give them—I give that to my kids.

'Cause my parents never put attentions on how well I was doing in school. They didn't care how I did—if I was doing good or bad. They didn't. All they wanted me was to be like inside a school. Well, I'm trying to be different. I'm trying to be involved a lot with the schools. I'm trying to be at every meeting they have after school, because I'm the one who picks them up, who do the homework with them every day. And that's one of the most important things that I care about for the moment.

He tells his children that when they are older, they need to finish high school and then go to college so they can afford to buy a nice car, a house, or an iPhone. His children have asked him twice why he does not have a diploma and his wife does. Since he stated that he would like to earn a GED, he was connected with the GED coordinator after the interview.

Father #292 reported that he was a carpet installer for seven years but had difficulty with his knees. Recently, he had knee surgery and had the ligaments in his knees reconstructed. His doctor informed him that he needed to find other employment or his knees were going to be reinjured. He started doing electrical work about five

months ago. He helps to install wiring in new buildings. He installs switches and receptacles and is starting to learn fire alarm installations. The position pays at an hourly rate, but he said it is a much easier job, and he earns more money than at his previous job. He told the researcher that, in time, he can earn his electrician's license and earn even more money. He is very satisfied with his current job. He works six days a week, but twice each month he can request to have a Saturday off to spend time with his family.

Father #292 reported that Caring Equation helped him with his relationship with his girlfriend who is now his wife. He is not the first child's birth father; the little girl was two months old when he met his girlfriend so he is not the child's birth father. He stated that "she knows she had another dad." Caring Equation helped develop a parenting plan for visitation by the birth father with his daughter. At first, the mother would accompany the birth father when he took the infant. This irritated Father #292, because there was no need for the mother to go out with him too, but Father #292 was advised to be patient. The terms of the parenting plan required that the birth father take only the child for visitation. As the child got older, she did not want to go with her real father.

Even though [child's name] never liked him, every time he went to pick her up she was crying. She didn't want to go. She grabbed me, and she start crying, calling me Daddy. 'I don't want to go.' Even though she was crying, he just took her like that.

He reported that after two years, the child's father got killed. He was shot. "Now she says she has two dads—one here with her and one in heaven."

Father #292 reported that parenting information was the most important service provided by Caring Equation. He also reported that the home visits were great “because we always had a social worker come to our home and spend time with us and play with the kids and we learned a lot from her, too.” He enjoyed the Father’s Day picnics because he liked that the opportunity to talk “to people you don’t know—other young guys that you didn’t know—how their life had changed and talk a lot about stuff.” He ended the interview by saying that

young parents need to love their kids ‘cause they might say that their kid is a mistake, but at the time they didn’t have their minds, but the kids are human beings and they need to be loved and be taken care of. If they just leave them with child care...with babysitters, by the time they grow up, and they want to ask their kids for love, don’t be expecting any love from them. Because if you didn’t give them any love, don’t be expecting love from your kids to you.

Father #276

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #276 revealed that he was a 17-year-old bilingual Latino male from El Salvador who was in the 11th grade. His girlfriend was 18 and in the 12th grade. She was from Columbia but her family moved here when she was three months old. When the young father came into the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program in October of 2003, his girlfriend was pregnant, and they attended the same high school. When she was approximately six months into the pregnancy, she decided to attend the Family Education Center, the alternative school program for pregnant teens, during the last nine weeks of the school year. Case records

indicate that she had been on probation in her early teen years but had been off of probation for about two years. She was employed in the after-school child care program.

Records show that Father #276 was instructed by the nurse on parenting skills with a newborn. He was also told to always be involved with the child if a separation of the father and mother were to occur. The young father needed to earn money so the fatherhood specialist assisted him with creating a resume, applying and interviewing for several jobs, and finally securing employment. The baby, a boy, was born in June, and the young father reported being very happy but overwhelmed. The fatherhood specialist talked with him about WIC and Medicaid. According to case records, the young couple lived together at his mother's house because the young father was a senior in high school and his mother wanted him to graduate. Caring Equation monitored and supported his academic progress and provided transportation to clinic appointments for their son. The couple was not married.

Father #276 completed the Father Involvement Assessment when his child was three months old and checked that he was involved in most child care tasks more than once per week. Six months later, when the child was nine months old, he completed the Father Involvement Assessment and checked that he was now involved in child care tasks every day. Records show that he was very involved with his child and contributing financially and emotionally. He graduated from high school in 2005, was living with his girlfriend's family, and by the end of the summer he was working full-time as an assistant manager at Domino's Pizza. He and his younger brother attended a Caring Equation Young Fathers outing to the DC United soccer game and his case was closed.

Written survey. Father #276 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. He reported that he was 17 when his son was born the child's mother was 18. He is now 24 years old, and his son is 7 years old and in the 1st grade. For the past five years, Father #276 has lived with another woman, whom he identified as his significant other, and together they have a six-month-old daughter. He brought the infant with him to the interview.

He reported that he has taken some community college courses and has been working for five months at a national chain automotive repair and tire shop. The position is paid on an hourly basis but includes some benefits. He rated his satisfaction with the position with the statement that "it is OK." His self-reported time in Caring Equation of one year is different than the case files which stated he entered the program in October of 2003 and that his case was closed at the end of August 2005. The types of Caring Equation services he took part in included mentor relationship with specialist, job training, medical care, transportation, and events for families. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation improved his parenting ability "mostly," that he has a "fair" relationship with his son's mother, that she supports his involvement with his son "sometimes," that they work "well" together as parents, and that they "often" agree about parenting decisions. He rated his relationship with his mother and her mother as "very good" but reported "none" for the relationship with his father or her father.

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his child, his survey response rated his relationship with his child as "very good." On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #276 reported performing all 22 parental tasks two or three

times per week. He wrote on the survey that the child lives with the mother and that she has custody.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in English, Father #276 reported that becoming a father “changes your whole life around.” He stated that he never had a father figure in his life, “but I’m glad that I can show [son’s name] my love, and he really made me step up.” He stated that it felt really good to be a dad “when he was born, ‘cause I seen him come out. He was a little blue, cone-headed baby. He cried for a while. It felt good.”

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #276 stated that since he was the oldest child, he helped his mother raise his younger siblings.

I had to learn how to change diapers on my little brother and little sister. When my mother wasn’t home, I’d cook them little small meals. I’d bathe them when she wasn’t there. I had a little experience with them before my son was born.

When asked about qualities of his own father he admired, he shared, “The fact that he’s not there...that makes me...makes me be in a better position to **not** be like him.” He then continued:

I met him when I was 13. He thought buying a bike would show me all the love that he hadn’t given me since he was gone. Then I didn’t see him again until I applied to Whole Foods across the street, as he currently works there, and I told him about [son’s name]. He didn’t seem to care, so I really...we never had a.... Basically we just never bonded. I don’t keep in contact with him.

In addition, he reported that Caring Equation helped him as a new father. “They showed me that no matter what, you can always be there for your kids, you know, if you got money or you don’t. They showed a lot of ways to have fun. They showed a lot of ways to show love.”

He described characteristics about the fatherhood specialist that helped him.

Even if there were times that I was down or struggling, you know, he always gave me this vibe that don’t be like that. No matter what, you’ll get through it.

Everything’s going to be fine. If anything, I don’t mind helping you. I don’t mind giving you a hand. If you need a ride, let me know. I’ll take you there. I’m here to help you out. That made me feel a lot better.

Father #276 stated that Caring Equation

definitely is a good program. They open your eyes to a lot of decision that you can make, and also give you a heads-up on how life really is. They show you how to look for a job. They give you a couple of advices on how things are.

Basically, get you ready.

He was shocked to learn that Caring Equation no longer exists. When it was explained that it was a grant-funded program and that the school system did not pick up the funding when the grant ended, he said, “That really sucks!”

His biggest challenges as a father are trying to satisfy his son and giving him everything he needs. He took auto body and auto mechanics courses in high school and he hopes to become a master mechanic in the future. “My job that I’m doing now...I don’t work on the cars—I just clean the shop, but they do offer programs to get your ASE

certification. After three years of being in the company, you slowly move up.” He reported that his employer is supportive and recently granted him time off to care for his son when he was sick. He stated that “I like working with my hands.” He went on to say, “I always had an old vehicle and if something went wrong with it, I would fix it myself. I would good it up and find out how to fix it.” In his current position, he enjoys seeing mechanics work on vehicles. “They point out to me this is the brake, this is what a solenoid is, this is how you take it out, this is how you put in it. I like getting my hands dirty. It’s pretty...it’s pretty cool.”

He reported that his contact with the mother of his son is “just about his son,” and what he needs, such as a haircut, to be picked up from school, or dropped off somewhere. Communication is limited to text messages and phone calls. He does not feel that his son’s mother makes their son’s school education a priority: “He’s struggling in math and I feel like she’s letting that slide by buying him a PlayStation 3 instead of paying more attention, focusing more on his downfall in math. I disagree with that.” He described her as “a hardball” and said, “I can’t tell her anything. She has him more days and hours than I do, so I really can’t go against that. She’s just going to say ‘I have him more than you do.’” When asked about how Caring Equation helped him with his relationship with her, he reported that it helped them communicate a lot more as a couple and that the program had helped their self-esteem: “It made us feel like we are going to get through it. Everything would be OK. Our limited choices would get better. Our financial situation would get better. It just made us feel very comfortable with each other.” He also reported that Caring Equation helped the males understand what the girls went through

during pregnancy by having them wear the Empathy Belly, which is a heavy device you wear that simulates being pregnant. “It’s that thing that makes you feel, how the weight—tie your shoes and all that stuff. That right there made a lot of the guys realize that it’s not easy to be a pregnant mother and try to do things on your own.”

Father #276 reported that the most important service provided by Caring Equation was help in getting a job. “They started with resume. They started with interviews—how to dress up, how to talk. They really helped us out a lot.” He reported receiving advice about budgeting his money:

but my favorite thing about the program was the events that we would have. I remember we went to a baseball game. I missed the soccer game one time, but we had a blast when we went to the baseball game. And we had other events at TJ [recreation center]. I mean we had fun!

Father #276 ended the interview by saying,

I really think that you guys should bring the program back. You don’t understand how many lives you guys could change. It was a great program, especially in high school for the young fathers. The program is definitely good, especially for the guys to make them realize a lot of things and to help prepare them for what’s coming up.

Father #524

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #524 revealed that he was a 19-year-old Latino from Peru who came to the United States when he was 16. He graduated from a Virginia high school and was working in the maintenance field. He

lived in Dale City. His girlfriend was 17 years old and from Puerto Rico. She had lived in the United States for 10 years. They dated for two years before she became pregnant. They are currently married. She reported sexual and physical abuse, depression and suicide attempt, occasional alcohol use, not taking prenatal vitamins, and losing the prescription for a urinary tract infection. She received a referral for Women Infants Children (WIC) and an evaluation for mental health counseling.

Case records showed that the young mother had entered the alternative program for pregnant teens the first week of March 2005 and took home a flyer about the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program. Father #524 attended the workshop for young fathers that next week. The fatherhood specialist followed up with the young father who was taking evening classes to update his skills as an HVAC technician; he also provided general information about Caring Equation services. Father #524 reported that he was uncomfortable at his current place of employment and requested assistance in searching for a new job. Information about an upcoming job fair was shared, and the young father told the fatherhood specialist he would request the day off. Father #524 attended the job fair, and spoke to many employers, and obtained information regarding training and employment requirements. The fatherhood specialist helped Father #524 create a resume, which he posted (his resume) online. He was shown how to use the Internet and telephone to find employment, and he was provided transportation to the county employment center for job help. A couple of job interviews were set up for the following week.

Case files showed that the young father was given general information related to

childbirth, including what to be prepared for with respect to the hospital experience, such as the epidural and C-section. He was given information about childbirth classes which the couple could attend before the birth. Staff discussed general baby care, needs of the mother, breastfeeding, sharing work in the home, and domestic violence. The father denied use of drugs, excessive alcohol, and smoking for himself and his wife. He and his family were covered under his work's private medical insurance. Case notes stated that "he appears confident and excited about the birth."

The baby, a girl, was born in July of 2005. The couple was living with her mother. According to case files, Father #524 was involved with the child, financially supportive, emotionally supportive, and employed full-time. The father was very responsible; he had attended several workshops for young fathers, and he was described as a hard worker.

Written survey. Father #513 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. He reported that he was 19 when his daughter was born and that the child's mother was 17. He is now 26, and his daughter is 6 and in the 1st grade. Father #524 has remained married to the mother of his child. He and his wife have a second daughter who is four and attending preschool as well as a two-year-old son. The family of five live in the same dwelling.

Father #524 reported that he has completed vocational training beyond high school, and that he is employed full-time in a salaried position as an operating engineer for a public school system. He has held this position for seven months and is "very satisfied" with his job. He reported that he was involved in the Caring Equation

Fatherhood Program for two years. The types of Caring Equation service he took part in included communication training for couples, job training, child care, education about child development and baby care, education about sexual health, and events for families. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation improved his parenting “substantially,” that he is “very satisfied” regarding his relationship with his wife, that she “always” supports his involvement with his children, that they work “very well” together as parents, and that they agree about parenting decisions “all of the time.” He rated his relationship with his parents and her parents as “good,” although her father recently passed away.

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his children, his survey responses rated his relationship with his children as “very good.” On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #524 reported performing all 22 parental tasks six or seven days a week.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in English, Father #524 reported that he “loves” being a father. “Everything that I was not able to do with my dad, I try to do that with my daughter. [I] make sure she plays around, make sure that she’s comfortable, make sure she gets everything that I didn’t have.” He reported that “we have a lot of fun in different ways. We go to the park, we study and engage in the house...house clean. We play Wii together. We do homework together. So every time it’s having fun with her.” As a couple, they spend time together as a family. “It’s awesome! We’ll prepare popcorn...juice. We’re watching a movie with them. We play

Wii, we go to the park or play together. We spend a lot of times together—involved.”

He described a time when he felt really good as a dad:

My daughter was doing really bad at this math subject. So I took the time to sit down with her for almost a week, explaining to her how to break down the problems and the solution to it—how to find the trick to the answer. She’s have like four wrong, five wrong in one test, but after that, she only have one wrong. So that made me happy because she was able to understand me and I was clear enough for her to overcome that situation that was difficult for her.

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #524 stated:

That’s tough...being a dad. I just went alone when I was a little kid. I didn’t live with my dad, so I had to be [by] myself. I don’t want my kids to go through the same that I went through, so being a dad for me is a big evolution. And everything that I see that my dad did wrong, I just try to compensate it and just make it better.

He said that his father was a “good father,” but “he was not around with us a lot.” He reported that he had an uncle who supported him for three years by sending him to an English school and by sending money: “He’s like a father to me, too.”

Father # 524 reported that Caring Equation helped him as a new father in a number of ways:

Both of the guys—[fatherhood specialists]—both were very helpful. And I needed help because I had problems with my job. I didn’t get along with the boss. They were able to help us. We wrote resumes. They were able to provide

transportation if we needed it. They were able to always talk to us or see if we needed assistance with anything. They would just come to us or to our house, in their own time, just to help us, explain things or have this development for fathers. 'There's going to be a class and it's going to be good.' They would always call us. They would always interact with us. Always.

He admired how humble the fatherhood specialists were in their willingness to help people without even knowing them. "They based themselves in the problems that we have. We talked to them and they immediately open up to you, and they want to help you." Their availability was amazing.

They were always available for you...no matter if it was a weekend, if it was after working hours, you had a question, they always were able to pick up. If they weren't able to pick up, you leave them a message and they would call you right back. And they'll try to get with you as soon as they can to solve any issues or any problems. Both guys were just...they love you.

During the interview, Father #524 reported that the fatherhood specialist helped him create a resume and get involved in heating and air conditioning because he was doing building maintenance for a year after he got out of high school. Because of Caring Equation, Father #524 was able to get a job as a heating and air conditioning helper with a northern Virginia HVAC mechanical service company: "That was great for me. I worked with them for almost four years. I finished my four years apprenticeship. Now, I'm a journeyman licensed HVAC. I'm getting my master." He attributed his career success to the fatherhood specialists as they pointed him to every place that was hiring

helpers for HVAC. “I got to thank them a lot. I mean, they helped me out. So they were part of me—who I am right now.”

He reported that becoming a young father was difficult.

It’s difficult—it’s not easy. Everybody thought because I had a child...you know, that’s going to [be] it for me. It was difficult. I just bought me a new car and I happen to find out that I’m going to be a father. I tried to turn it in but I wasn’t able to. Because the interest was going to be too high, I had to get something cheaper, but I tough it up. I kept the car. It’s very challenging, but anybody can do it. I was working, at one time, three jobs, but I never stopped going to school for HVAC. It was hard for me. My wife [was] working overnight. I was working in the mornings...working weekends...ah...but I had to miss soccer in between, but I never stopped working and going to school. I’m the first one in my family that actually graduated from an apprenticeship program—vocational training. I proved everybody wrong because having a child made me overcome everything. And now it has everything paid off. Now I can spend time with my kids and I have a very good career. So being a father is not a rope for anybody. It just helps you more because it develops you...your feelings you have for your child and trying to give them more. So having a child is not as difficult at all as long as you want to progress in life.

At this point in his life, one of the biggest challenges for him as a father is trying to make his oldest daughter “understand and speak English and Spanish at the same time, because

I want her to be bilingual. I want her to understand that, where we come from, and not to forget that.”

When asked about his plans for further education, Father #524 reported that he wants to learn more about computers.

I want to be willing to solve any computer issues that I might have because I’m a handy man. I can do anything in the house. I can repair from plumbing to HVAC to electrical. I can do everything but I’m still lacking a little bit in computers.

Father #524 reported that the most helpful services he received while in the Caring Equation program included the mentor relationship with male staff persons, the training to improve communication or couples mediation, help getting a job, the phone calls, and events for the family like the Father’s Day picnics. Transportation assistance was especially helpful for his wife to get to her medical appointments and “parenting information is also helpful to understand how to raise your child, how to take care of your child.” He spoke appreciatively about how he had been helped to improve communication with a difficult boss and that he had learned how to communicate with his wife so they could solve problems together as a team. He also shared that he spoke at a school board meeting five years ago in an attempt to get funding to preserve the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program because he really enjoyed it, and it helped him a lot.

Father #189

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #189 revealed that he was 18 years old when he became involved with the fatherhood program in May of 2004, and his girlfriend was 16 years old. He wanted to get married but her parents felt she was too

young. Her parents gave her permission to move in with him with the promise that she would **not** get pregnant. Approximately six months after moving in with him, his girlfriend became pregnant and feared telling her parents. The couple lived with his mother, his step-father, his brother, and his brother's companion. Father #189 worked as a prep cook at a restaurant and wanted to find a higher paying job. Caring Equation assisted Father #189 to create a resume and to fill out different employment applications; they had spoken with several managers. He also received assistance with Medicaid information.

Early in the pregnancy, the young father called Caring Equation for emergency assistance. He had a verbal confrontation with his girlfriend's mother, she had shown up at his house with the police, and she had taken her daughter back to her home. He feared that the mother's parents might send her back to their country or do something to terminate the pregnancy. According to the case records, Caring Equation staff assisted Father #189 in decreasing his level of anxiety; they also provided intervention to improve communication between the young father and maternal grandparents, who were not happy with how he was treating their daughter. He was, according to them, very controlling, and he had been rude to them on the phone. After the young father agreed to comply with the grandparents' stipulations which included respecting them and not driving their daughter in his car since he only had a learner's permit, the maternal grandparents agreed not to press charges against him. The pregnant teen was allowed to return to the young father's home, and transportation was provided for the young father

to see a domestic violence prevention counselor. Communication improved among the young couple and both sets of grandparents.

In mid-December of 2004, their healthy baby boy was born. The young mother returned to school after the winter holidays, and a family day care provider cared for the baby during school hours. In early January, Father #189 completed the Father Involvement Assessment and reported that he was performing most tasks (changing diapers, giving a bath, holding when crying, putting to bed) more than once a week and some parental tasks were performed everyday (providing money, a place to live, providing transportation). At the end of January, 2005, the teenage mother was at school and doing well, and the young father continued to be supportive. In mid-February, a Caring Equation staff member received a call from the family day care provider that the baby had stopped breathing, and the family day care provider did not know what to do. The staff person immediately called 911, and although the two-month-old baby was taken to the hospital via ambulance, he was pronounced dead on arrival. Caring Equation staff assisted with funeral arrangements and connected the couple with a grief counselor. The young mother returned to a program for English language learners that was located in a different school building, continued with counseling, and completed her junior year in high school.

Written survey. Father #189 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. He reported he was 18 when his son was born, and the mother now his wife, was 16. He is currently 27 years old and married to the mother of his son who would be seven, if he had lived. They have a two-year-old daughter and are expecting

another baby in September. He completed vocational training in electricity after high school and has been working as a master electrician. He has been employed by a public school system for seven years. He reported he is “very satisfied” with his job.

He was involved with the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program for two years between 2003 to 2005. The types of Caring Equation services he took part in included case management, mentor relationship with specialist, job training, child care, housing counseling, general education, education about child development and baby care, and events for families. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation improved his parenting ability “substantially,” that he is “satisfied” with his relationship with his wife, that she “always” supports his involvement with his child, that they work “very well” together as parents, and that they “often” agree about parenting decisions. He rated his relationship with his mother as “good” and with his father as “fair.” He rated his relationship with her mother as “good” and with her father as “very good.”

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his two-year-old daughter, his survey responses rated his relationship with his child as “very good.” On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #189 reported performing 16 of the 22 parental tasks six or seven days a week. He reported reading to his child four or five times a week, dressing his child and taking his child to playground two or three times a week, and making a meal for his child once a week. Helping his child with homework and taking his child to school were reported as “never” because his child is only two years old.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in English, Father #189 reported that being a father “change[s] your whole life. It motivates you to do better for you and for your family. It’s just something that is great! It’s awesome!” He reported that he has the most fun with his daughter “every day and every single minute that I have the chance to see and play with my daughter.” He felt really good about being a dad “from the first moment that my wife gave birth to my child. It just felt good. And I remember when my daughter was born. I cried from the first moment I saw her...and the same thing with my boy. It just felt so good.”

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #189 reported that he learns from his mistakes and that every day is a different learning experience. When asked about things he admires in his own father, he reported, “I wasn’t around my father, so I couldn’t tell you that. My father was never there for us. I know my father, but he was never there for us.” He reported that “my Mom was always there for me. My wife’s parents—they help me a lot.” He also reported that Caring Equation helped him as a new father a lot.

Because I was a teenager, I thought I knew it all, but I was wrong. By going there [to the fatherhood program], you just hear so many stories. And if you’re smart, you can learn from it. And that’s what I did. I learned from it...from a lot of people and their different experiences that they had in the past. And by getting to know the people and listening to them. They just help you a lot.

He admired the fatherhood specialist and reported that

JM was one of the most, great person I ever met. He was there for me. Every time I called him, he would answer the phone. Every time I asked him for a favor, he was there for me. He helped me tremendously. I couldn't finish thanking him enough. He helped me to put my resume together because I didn't know what a resume was. He helped me on getting prepared for the interview—how to talk and how to go and get prepared for the interview. He helped me...going with me to jobs and filling out the application forms, and many other aspects.

In terms of his advice for other young guys who are about to become fathers, Father #189 said,

if your girlfriend is pregnant, I guess you got to step up to the plate. I figure it's your responsibility. And that it's not an easy road. It just takes a lot of time and effort and a lot of sacrifice. Once you're there, you've got to take responsibility. I think that's the key work—take responsibility.

When asked what the biggest challenges for him as a father were he said,

Wow. Let me tell you something. The first two year were terrible financially—one of the hardest part of my life. I was working, but I was working and going to school at the same time. It was just a part-time job. [Wife's name] was my wife. At that time, she was just only going to school. She didn't have a job. It was just me providing the money for the household. It was hard.

He continued by saying that the Caring Equation

helped me with what I was going to go with my life. They helped me find out who the real person that it was inside of me. I didn't know. I think I was lost. I thought the whole world was crashing in on me and landing right on top of me. I felt real bad, but with their guidance and advice, I got through it.

During the interview, he reported that he became a master electrician and works for a public school system. "This is what I like to do. I'm happy with my job right now. I **love** working with my hands. I like making people happy. One of my goals is to become an electrical supervisor. I think I have everything I need right now." Because the position is salaried, he has sick leave and annual leave. "If there's an emergency, honestly I don't care who it is. I got to take off for my child. My family always comes first."

Father #189 described his relationship with his wife. "Oh it is great! I think I have the most beautiful wife. I love her to death." He explained how Caring Equation helped him with his relationship with his wife:

To make a long story short, when my son passed away, I just wanted to be alone. Again, my wife felt the same way. I didn't want to know about my wife. I just wanted to be alone 'cause I felt bad at that moment. We went through a lot of counseling. At that time, I was a teenager. I was growing up kind of more jealous. I wanted to be, I guess, the macho man, at that time, if you want to call it that way. We did have a lot of arguments and disagreements and they helped us because they gave us a lot of conflict [mediation]. And I just realize that I didn't know it all—that I was just a teenager. And that the jealousy and being the

macho man that I thought I was, wasn't going to get me anywhere. It was going to get me to end my relationship with my wife but that was about it. So it [Caring Equation] did help me a lot.

He reported that the services he received that were most important were help getting a job, job training, and assistance to learn English. "I came from a little country. I came from El Salvador. When I came here, I didn't know how to speak English, so that helped me a lot." Other services he identified as important were transportation, help getting child care or day care, and parenting information such as how to care for a baby. "I went to a picnic and I also went to a conference, and I went to a lot of job fairs." He finished the interview by saying, "I didn't know the program ended. I thought it was still existing. It would benefit the young people, especially the teenagers. They helped me so why not help other people?"

Father #210

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #210 revealed that he is from Mexico and came to the United States when he was nine years old. He was in a relationship with his 16-year-old girlfriend for two years before she became pregnant. He was 18 years old and in his junior year in high school when he became involved in the fatherhood program. At that time, he lived in Montgomery County, MD. Their son was born in early June of 2004, and Father #210 visited his girlfriend and son a couple times per week and on weekends. She and the baby occasionally spent the weekend in Maryland with him. She wanted him to move into her mother's house in Arlington so they could both live together and, because he had a car, he could take her and their son to

clinic appointments. The mother of his child entered the Family Education Center, the alternative school program for pregnant teens, in November of 2003, but her attendance was poor.

When their son was about three months old, Father #210 obtained a full-time job at an apartment complex near his high school. The following month the fatherhood specialist met with him to discuss child development and parenting skills. The case records state that Father #210 reported enjoying his current employment as it is paying a higher rate; he also expressed appreciation for all the support that his girlfriend was receiving from her school. Two months later, the adolescent mother reported that he is helping with child-care responsibilities. He saw his child mostly on the weekends, he contributed financially, but due to his work schedule, he was not been able to attend Caring Equation Young Fathers Program events and workshops. He graduated from high school in 2005 and told the fatherhood specialist he planned to pursue higher education in the fall. The mother graduated from high school in 2006 after attending summer school.

Written survey. Father #210 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. He reported that he was 17 when his son was born and that the child's mother was also 17. His self-reported age was different than the case files, which stated his age as 18 prior to the child's birth. He is now 25 years old; his son is 7 years old and in the 2nd grade. Father #210 lives with a different woman with whom he has fathered two children (ages one year and two years). His son lives with him on the weekends.

Father #210 reported that he has completed some college courses and is employed full-time. He has been with this company for eight years in the position of front desk concierge staff manager at different apartment complexes. He reported that he is “very satisfied” with this position and that he participated in the Caring Equation fatherhood program for less than one year. The types of Caring Equation services he took part in included mentor relationship with specialist, job training, child care, transportation, education about child development and baby care, and events for families. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation “mostly” improved his parenting ability, that his relationship with the child’s mother is “fair,” that his satisfaction with the relationship is “neutral.” In addition, she supports his involvement with his son “most of the time,” that their work together is “fair” as parents, and that she “sometimes” agrees about his parenting decisions. He rated his relationship with his mother as “very good” and “good” with his father. He reported “none” for the relationship with the maternal grandparents.

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his child, his survey responses rated his relationship with his child as “very good.” On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #210 reported performing 13 of the 22 parental tasks two or three times a week. The parental tasks of providing money and providing clothes were performed six or seven days a week and talking with child was reported as four or five times a week. The parental tasks of dressing the child and reading to the child were performed once a week. Helping the child do chores and helping with homework were

activities performed once a month. Father #210 reported that he never takes his child to the doctor because his child lives with the child's mother.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in English, in response to the best things about being a father, Father #210 reported that "I enjoy very much knowing that my son is a product of me. He's very funny and we joke and we play around. Just having him be happy makes me very happy to be a father." They have the most fun when they go to the pool or to an amusement park like Six Flags. Talking about his son, Father #210 said,

He's just very brave with things. He usually likes to play games and he'll play 10 times and he'll win. We just combine so much time and a lot of the same interests. We watch movies together and a bunch of stuff and we have a blast doing it.

When asked if he spends any time with his son's mother, he replied,

No, not at all. We speak every now and then on the phone. She'll keep me kind of in the loop—what's going on with him at school and with his health and all that kind of stuff, and really that's as far as we take it.

He described a time when he felt really good about being a dad:

On Father's Day, around when [son's name] was like maybe about five years old, he came home and he called me and he told me that if I could go see him. And I said 'OK; of course.' So I went to go see him, and he told me that when he was in school, a lot of his friends were crying because they didn't have a dad—either maybe they had passed away, don't live with them, were incarcerated and any of

those kinds of things—of course in child’s languages, and he told me that he was just very happy that I was there for him. So that was very special.

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #210 stated that I kind of just taught myself. My father...was never really a one-on-one kind of guy for me. A lot of my raising came from my mother. A lot of things that I found out were just kind of on self-experiencing and maybe some little bit of research and seeing what’s the best route to go and just kind of using common sense...what works and what doesn’t.

Father #210 reported that he admired his father’s support. “He has been an excellent provider for me throughout my life. I can say he was always very financially reliable.” His father was also available if he and his younger brothers got into trouble at school or to talk to, but “me and my brothers didn’t see too much of him. He was always out. When we saw him, it was great, and when we didn’t we had to kind of figure it out.” He also reported that the Caring Equation program helped him as a young father:

The day care program was amazing. The child care that they provided was awesome. Never had **any** complaints about it. They did a very good job. And what I liked about it was that they gave a chance for the mothers to go be with their children. It was great.

He continued by reporting that a male staff person would call him to make sure that I was OK, if I needed to talk to anybody, if I needed anything, and if there was any kind of help that he could assist with, he’d be happy to deliver it, and he called me quite often. So I enjoyed that very much.

He remembered that JM [fatherhood specialist] was “more down to earth. He’d kind of give it to you real. He kind of gave it to you really real, how it was, what he thought about it. He’d give you really good advice.”

Father #210 shared some of his own advice for expectant fathers, because before he became a father, he was used to making himself the priority. “I was really used to me being about me.”

The only advice that I could give is that selfishness has to be out the window completely. You cannot think about yourself anymore before you think of your child. And if you’re with the mom, that’s great. They come before you. And at the end of the day if they are 100% satisfied, then maybe you have time or enough to do whatever you want for yourself, but don’t be selfish. Do not be selfish at all because your children need you badly. You don’t know how much they need you ‘til you’re getting up at 3:00 in the morning to help out with some stuff.

He admitted that he was “terrified” about being so young: “I was with a young girl that was pregnant and my age really frightened me.” He also reported that his mother was disappointed because she had a lot of expectations for him. “I am the oldest of three and she’s saying, ‘I can’t consider you your brothers’ role model anymore because I don’t want them to be in this situation.’ He and his mother had a difficult relationship for about a year until she said “OK: let’s just make it work.”

Father #210 reported that now the hardest part about being a father is that he does not live with his son so “I don’t share day-to-day things with him. I’m not there if he’s scared at night.” He acknowledged certain things he could not do, which were sources of

frustration, but he does not want his child to experience the parental fighting he endured as a child.

I don't want to be in a situation where he sees his mother and me argue every day...fight every day...don't agree...she leaves...I leave.... I don't want to put him through that because I've live in a very aggressive home where there was a lot of arguing, a lot of fighting, a lot of all that kind of stuff. And there were times when I wish that my parents were divorced. I'd rather get him used to the fact that I'm not going to be with his mother now opposed to 10 years down the road when it might be harder on him.

Father #210 described his job as a multiple-site concierge manager. This position involves scheduling and overseeing the front desk staff at each property to ensure coverage 24 hours each day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. He has been working with this company for eight years and sees himself progressing with the company. He reported that he wants to go to business school or take some community college courses to learn how to run a business.

He described his relationship with his son's mother:

We talk. We can actually carry a conversation. Our relationship ended on a very bad note. So ever since then, it's just been bad, bad, bad. But we are trying to be mature, and know that when we speak, it's about [son's name], not about her or about me. The couple never married. At the age of 25, he now lives with another woman with whom he has fathered two children (ages one year and two years). His son, who is seven and in 2nd

grade, resides with Father #210 every weekend. He only talks to his son's mother on the phone and keeps conversations short and focused on his son's needs. He elaborated that

There's been times when she'll call me and I really don't even want to take the conversation anywhere. 'What do you need? What do you want?' 'Oh nothing.' 'Then OK, bye.' I hang up. I don't want to take it anywhere. She's nuts, and for [son's name] sake and well-being, I don't want him to see his mother and me, even on the phone, fighting and doing that.

In responding to how she would describe his fathering skills, Father #210 reported,

She knows that I'm a good dad. She knows that I love my son very much. I'm sure she doesn't like the fact that I'm not with him and that maybe I could be a little more involved in his day-to-day activities and school, in parent/teacher conferences and stuff like that. I'm sure that's maybe a complaint of hers, but other than that, I'm sure she can't have any complaints with me.

He reported that they disagree on their son's bedtime as she lets him be up later than what he should be. Father #210 also does not agree with everything his son is allowed to watch on TV. He reported that Caring Equation tried to support them as a couple, trying to keep them united, and "letting us know that if we were separated, it's going to be bad. If we unite throughout pregnancy, birth, and all that, then it was going to be much easier for us."

Father #210 reported that the services he received while in the Caring Equation program included phone calls, job training, resume training, transportation, events for

families, events for couples, trips to the beach, Father's Day picnics, and child care. He expressed his appreciation for all the staff members who helped out:

I think that if I didn't have that help through my son's mother, I don't know what kind of a start I would have had. I had a rocky start already **with help**, so I could imagine that I would have had a disastrous start **without**. How you going to be a good parent without any help?

Father #690

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #690 revealed that he was 18 years old when he participated in the Caring Equation program. He was born in the United States, and his parents are from El Salvador. When he was in high school, he attended an alternative school program for adjudicated students due to truancy issues and gang affiliation. He was on probation. His girlfriend was 17 years old and had entered the Family Education Center, the alternative school program for pregnant teens, during the last trimester of her pregnancy. The couple's daughter was born on St. Patrick's Day in 2006. She is six years old and enrolled in Kindergarten.

Case records revealed that Father #690 was involved in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program for less than one year and did not attend any of the family events, sports outings, or workshops; however, he was assisted in creating a new email account so he could apply for several jobs online. The fatherhood specialist met with him at his school and at the Caring Equation office in order to help him prepare for job interviews. Transportation was provided to take the baby to medical appointments.

Written survey. Father #690 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. He reported that he was 18 when his daughter was born and that the child's mother was 17. He is now 24 years old, and his daughter is 6 years old and in Kindergarten. He lives by himself; the couple never married.

Father #690 reported that he earned a high school diploma and is employed full-time in a cleaning business, a position he has held for five years. He reported that he is "very satisfied" with his job. He reported that he was involved in Caring Equation for one year. The types of services he took part in included mentor relationship with specialist, medical care, and general education. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation improved his parenting ability a "little," that the current relationship with the child's mother is "very good," that he is "very satisfied" with the current relationship with her, that she "always" supports his involvement with his daughter, that they work "very well" together as parents, and they "always" agree about parenting decision. He rated his relationship with his parents and her parents as "good."

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his child, his survey responses rated his relationship with his child as "very good." On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #690 reported performing 19 of the 22 parental tasks four or five times a week. He talks with his child every day, provides a place to for her to live two or three times a week, and helps his child bathe once a week.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in English, Father #690 reported that "seeing your child develop from when they're born, to when they start speaking, to how they start writing and interacting with other kids—it's amazing!" The best thing

about being a father is “to see how they develop over time.” He reported having the most fun with his daughter when they are doing sports activities: specifically, when she is in her swim class. “She loves me taking pictures of her. I love taking pictures and she just loves the water, so that’s probably the most fun we have.” When asked if he spends time with the mother of his child, he reported “No, I can’t say I do. We see each other when we need to. Other than that, we don’t. We don’t see each other.” The time he described feeling really good about being a dad was also related to his daughter’s swimming class:

When my daughter accomplished her first swimming class, she was really happy and I was really proud. She’s on the third level now. To be honest, I didn’t think she was going to be able to do it, but she did it, and she made me proud. We’ve tried a whole bunch of things—a whole bunch of activities, but swimming is probably her most favorite activity and she’s going to stick to it. That part of it makes me happy—knowing that she’s actually going to stick to something she likes.

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #690 said, “Well I’m not done. I’m learning actually, so I’m not completely finished. I’m learning as I go.” He shared that it’s very tough at the beginning, especially being a young father...having so much responsibilities at once, and being a young father. At the beginning, it doesn’t really hit you. You don’t really realize it. You get her to eat, you put her to sleep, and that’s fine, but there’s a lot more to it. It’s a lot more. Definitely still learning.

He reported that his father showed him how he felt when he accomplished things as a child:

My family is really big on sports, so when we accomplish something in sports or any type of activity, we really interact very closely to each other. My father...whenever I accomplished something, he showed me that he was proud of me. He showed me that it made him proud, so it made me proud. And that's what I see with my daughter. Every time she does something that makes me proud, it makes her proud. It makes her very happy. 'Daddy, look at this.' She repeats it and repeats it, and as a father, you just don't get tired of hearing this. So it's great. It's part of interacting...the way we interacted...me and my father. I guess that's continuing with my daughter.

He reported that his father has "guided me through a lot of things...when I have questions or I don't know what to do." He continued by saying

Especially being a young father, one of the scariest things you go through as a young father, probably all parents do, it's when your child gets sick. If your child gets sick and your kid can't talk yet, you just don't know what it could be. What is it?

In addition, he reported that Caring Equation helped him as a new father. Referring to the fatherhood specialists, he reported that

They were really nice. They were always there for you to talk to. They [would] stop by my school, pull me out of a class, say 'How are you doing? How's your kid?' They would stop by the house. It was great. Just a mentor...somebody to

talk to. Being able to talk to them was probably the best things because they understood where we were coming from. And JM [fatherhood specialist], me being Latino and him being a Latino, we had a lot to relate to, so that was very great. He could related to me a little more. When he grew up, you know, it was the same way. Latino parents are...they don't change. When it comes to speaking to somebody, I could always count on him. He was always there. He was always stopping by to check on me, see how I was doing, see if I was in school, see if I had a job. Yeah, that was pretty cool.

He shared that the fatherhood specialists impressed upon him the importance of being a good father: "They want you to **be there** for your kid. They **want** you to be there for your kid." He continued by saying,

I'm proud to say that my daughter...she's seen me every day of her life. Even though I may not live with her, she sees me every day of her life. And that's something JM [fatherhood specialist] pushed. 'Hey, man, make sure that your daughter just sees you. Just be there with her. Even if it's 30 minutes, if you stop by just to say hello, just to stop by, give her something to eat, or take her to the park for half an hour. Just try to spend what time you can with your child.' I took that to heart and I promised myself that no matter what, I will try to make my daughter, even though I don't live with her, as long as she sees me every day for a few minutes. 'Hello. How you doing? Let's read a book.' It's being there. JM just told me that as long as your child sees you, doesn't just hear you on the phone. She needs to see...she needs to see who is that person talking to her.

He stated that Caring Equation helped him get his first job which was at the AMC Movie Theater. He reported that he is now running a residential maid cleaning service that his parents started in 2003. "It's going well. I have no complaints. I love my job." He wants to expand to include commercial cleaning, and he wants to obtain further education. He reported taking one community college course each summer, trying to complete the required general studies courses.

Although Father #690 lives in a neighboring county and his daughter lives in Arlington with her mother, he physically sees his daughter every day. He described his relationship with his child's mother:

Oh we're great. It's rocky. I'm not going to say it's not, but we're doing good. We don't have no relationship as in a couple. None of that. We came to an agreement. Me and her weren't gonna work out, but we're gonna act as civil as possible **for** our kid. We have a great routine going on now and I would not change it.

Father #614

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #614 revealed that the teen mother reported living with the father of her baby, but she did not know his age. He has less than a high school education, and they were renting one bedroom in an apartment from someone. She entered the alternative school program for teenage mothers in January of 2005, and their two-month-old son attended the infant care center located in the school system's vocational-technical center. Because their son had severe food allergies, was frequently sick, had a history of chronic diarrhea, and was developmentally

delayed, so he was receiving both physical and speech therapy. When the child was a little older, he attended a preschool for special needs children. The young couple also had a daughter. The adolescent mother did not complete requirements to graduate from high school.

According to case records, Father #614 was 18 years old when he became a father. His girlfriend was 17 years old at the birth of their son. Father #614 does not speak English. Before his son turned one, Caring Equation visited the young father at his job site and encouraged him to enroll in English classes. According to program records, he was interested in going to school and learning English, but his busy schedule did not allow him to attend school or any fatherhood workshops. He was also offered couple's counseling with male and female bilingual counselors but he rejected the idea due to his lack of time. Caring Equation talked to him about the importance of keeping a healthy relationship with his partner as well as talked to him about how he was not spending enough time with his child. The couple had relationship problems, and the young father had been told that he may have to pay child support. He moved out but returned when he became unemployed. Help was provided regarding how to apply for food stamps, how to receive rent assistance, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).

Written survey. Father #614 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. An interpreter read the questions and possible answers in Spanish and then translated the father's responses for the researcher to record. Father #614 reported that he was 18 when his child was born, and that his girlfriend was 17. Their son is now six years old and in 1st grade; their daughter is four and one-half years old but

not enrolled in preschool. . He reported that although they are not currently married, they had lived together for 10 years. They are not in a romantic relationship now, and they no longer live together. Father #614 is now 24 and lives with another woman who is currently pregnant.

Father #614 reported that he has less than a high school diploma and has been unemployed for four weeks. His previous job was doing construction work where he performed demolition. He held that job for six months, and it paid an hourly rate. His satisfaction with the job was reported as “OK.” He stated that he had participated in the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program for approximately six months. The type of Caring Equation services he reported that he took part in included case management, mentor relationship with specialist, communication training/couple’s mediation, job training, mental health services, child care, transportation, housing referral, general education, education about child development and baby care, and education about sexual health. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation improved his parenting ability “substantially,” that he has a “good” relationship with the mother of his children, that he is “satisfied” with their relationship, that she “always” supports his involvement with his children, that they work “well” together as parents, and that they agree “all the time” about parenting decisions. His parents are deceased. He rated his relationship with her mother as “good” and rated his relationship with her father as “none” because he lives in El Salvador.

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his child, his survey responses rated his relationship with his children as “very good.” On the Father Involvement Chart

at the end of the survey, Father #614 reported performing two parental tasks four or five times a week: namely, providing a place to live and providing food. He reported performing 11 of the 22 parental tasks two or three times a week. Six parental tasks were reported being performed once a week including making a meal for child, eating a meal with child, taking care of child when sick, taking child to clinic, providing money, and picking up child from school. He reported buying clothes two times a month; and that he never helps his child with homework or reads to his child. As he was completing the survey, he mentioned to the researcher that his son reads by himself.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in Spanish with the assistance of an interpreter familiar with the fatherhood program, Father #614 reported that he likes to spend time with his children, and that he likes to play with them. He sees his children two or three times each week. He has the most fun with them “when we go Chuck E. Cheese on the weekends.” He does not spend time with their mother. He pays her \$400 per month for child support and keeps in close contact with her because of the children. He described a time when he felt really good about being a dad by saying, “When I learned I was going to be a father, I was very, very happy about it.”

He learned how to be a father from his parents. The thing he admired about his father was “the way he used to treat me. I used to get along with him. Every time he used to go to work, after work, he usually took me out to eat.” He reported that Caring Equation helped him to be a responsible father. “They provided a lot of information...how to treat my child, parenting, and how to take care of them.” He reported that he liked the fatherhood specialist “because he used to give a lot of advice

about how to treat the children. I could talk to him about how to change diapers and how to take care of the kids.” He remembered that Caring Equation used to tell them “the children don’t need to be around when [parents] they’re having problems. Keep the children away when they [the parents] are having some kind of arguments.” He reported that “We don’t have any disagreements.” He also remembers that Caring Equation told him to spend more time with the mother of his children, not to go out, and to stay home. When asked about his biggest challenges as a father, he replied, “There isn’t a difficulty. It’s not very challenging.”

Father #614 reported that the Caring Equation services he received that were the most important were, as number one, mentoring relationship with a male staff member; phone calls, home visits, and job visits as number two; health information as number three; transportation assistance as number four; parenting information as number five; and help getting child care as number six. “I also got all the information to learn English but I couldn’t do it.” He is currently unemployed but he likes electricity and used to work in electricity. He reported that he does not have any plans for further education. The mother of his children calls him about the children and “[wife’s name] always tells me that I’m doing a good job as a father.”

Father #299

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #299 revealed that he is from El Salvador, spoke only Spanish, and came to the United State in 1999. He was 19 years old when he became a father. Program records show that he had graduated from high school in El Salvador, lived in Woodbridge, and had dropped out of his Virginia

high school because he did not like school. His girlfriend was born in the United States; she was 15 years old when their child was born. They were in a relationship for two years before she became pregnant.

She started attending school at the alternative program for pregnant teens in January of 2004 and was on probation due to truancy and parent/child conflict. When the young couple's child was born in May of 2004, that summer the young mother wanted her custody transferred from her mother to her sister who lived in Woodbridge. Child Protective Services (CPS) became involved. She moved to her sister's house, started the school year in the other school division, but by November, she violated the custody order and moved back to her mother's house. The court later ordered her to live with her mother in Arlington and attend school every day. The young father was also mandated to participate in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program. The young couple was also court ordered not to see each other. She was ordered to receive counseling however, she never contacted the counselor.

A year later, in order to obtain legal custody of his child because of relationship problems with his partner, the young father sought assistance from Caring Equation. He was referred to couple's counseling with a bilingual domestic violence prevention counselor, but he declined this offer for free counseling. One year later, the teen mother graduated from high school—a month after her daughter turned three.

Written survey. Father #299 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. An interpreter read both the questions and possible answers in Spanish and subsequently translated the father's responses for the researcher to record.

He reported that he was 19 when his daughter was born, and that the child's mother was 14. He is now 27 years old, and his daughter is seven years old and in 2nd grade. The young couple had a second daughter, who is now three years old, and although they are not married, they live in the same apartment.

Father #299 reported that he had a high school diploma from El Salvador and works in construction, building bridges. He rated his satisfaction with his job as "OK." The job pays at an hourly rate, and he has been in this position for five months. He reported being involved in the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program for three years, and the types of services he took part in included case management, mentor relationship with specialist, communication training/couple's mediation, job training, medical care, mental health services, child care, transportation, financial counseling, education about child development and baby care, education about sexual health, and events for families. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation improved his parenting "substantially," that he and the mother of his children have lived together for two years, that they are now in a romantic relationship, that the current relationship is "good," that he is "satisfied" with their relationship, that she "always" supports his involvement with the children, that they work "very well" together as parents, and that they agree "all the time" about parenting decisions. He rated his relationship with his mother as "very good;" his father is deceased. His relationship with her mother was rated as "none," while the relationship with her father is "good." When completing the survey, Father #299 mentioned that there is a six-month-old child in their home whom he did not father because his girlfriend got pregnant by another man during a period of partner conflict.

When asked about his fatherhood experiences with his children, his survey responses rated his relationship with his children as “very good.” On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #299 reported performing 16 of the 22 parental tasks six or seven days a week. Three tasks were reported as being performed four or five times a week and included reading to child, helping child with homework, and taking child to playground. Picking child up from school was reported as being performed two or three times a week; and, because the children’s mother usually takes them to doctor appointments, taking care of child when sick was reported as once a month. The parental tasks of dressing the child and helping him or her bathe were reported as “never” because the child performs these tasks by herself.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in Spanish with the assistance of an interpreter familiar with the fatherhood program, Father #299 reported that he has the most fun with his daughter “on the weekends, when I’m off.” The best thing about being a father is that “I feel happy” and “I try to do the best for them always.” He reported feeling really good about being a dad “when [child’s name] was born. I felt really good.”

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #299 stated that he learned by working with JM [fatherhood specialist] and the Caring Equation program. What he admired in his own father was reported as “I saw that my father was very supportive of my mother so that we could move ahead in life.” In addition, he reported that Caring Equation helped him as a new father:

They helped me to be a little bit more responsible with my family. They used to educate me about being a responsible father and taking care of my child. And one

of the lessons that I took was that one of the good things in life is spending time with your family.

He stated, “These are some of the things I’m doing because I feel I’m a good dad.” In terms of the biggest challenge for him as a father, Father #299 reported, “One of the difficult challenges has been being unemployed at times. I feel like I have to provide for my family.”

He reported that the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program “helped me be the person I am today and be a good person.” Today when he needs help as a dad, he asks his sister for advice and says she is very helpful. He described his job as building bridges from scratch, which includes “putting the concrete, iron, steel reinforcements, and all that good stuff until the job is done.” His dream job would be operating cranes, and he would like to go to a vocational school to further his education.

He described his relationship with the mother of his children by saying “We’re always happy. We get along well.” He also said, “If you ask her, she would tell me that I’m a good dad, a very responsible person. I help out a lot with the kids, with the expenses, and I stay home and spend time with them.” He reported that they “do not have disagreements.” He pays the housing bills, and his car is paid off. They still owe on her car but “other than that, they get along pretty well.”

On the list of services that Caring Equation provided, the ones Father #299 found to be most helpful included training to improve communication or couple’s mediation, providing information about how to care for a baby and how to be a better father, and the child care subsidy or day care for the child. He reported although Caring Equation did

offer him English classes, that he did not have time for them. However, “the young fathers’ workshops were very helpful. We had like a circle or a gathering and I learned from other fathers who were younger or older, so that was helpful.”

Father #500

Case records. A review of the case records for Father #500 revealed that he is from Bolivia and was 21 years old when he became a father. He led one of the gangs in Arlington and has served jail time for incidents relating to gang involvement. His girlfriend ran away from home twice when she was 14 years old, and the police found her and Father #500 together in the shower at his apartment. She was 15 years old when their son was born. She is from El Salvador but came to the United States when she was five years old. She had poor school attendance and was court-ordered to receive counseling.

In February of 2004, she came to the Family Education Center, the alternative school program for pregnant teens; however, one month later, she had a miscarriage. By October, she was confirmed to be pregnant again. Because of her probation case, the teen mother and the father of the baby were court-ordered not to see each other. In December, she enrolled in an alternative high school program for adjudicated youth, and the program coordinator served as her childbirth coach, transporting her to childbirth classes. In February, their son was born. Though the couple had been court-ordered not to see each other, she contacted him, and he came to see them at the hospital.

When the baby was eleven months old, Caring Equation was informed that the teen mother was pregnant again. Their second child, a girl, was born in early June, and the teen mother graduated from high school later that month. The young father reported

providing money to the mother for the care of his children, but the maternal grandmother complained that he was not paying. In January of 2007, the teen mother and young father filed paternity recognition papers. Three years later, the police wanted the teen mother to testify against Father #500; instead, she agreed to marry him in order to avoid his impending deportation.

According to records Father #500 worked full-time and attended several Caring Equation fatherhood workshops. He is financially responsible for his children and expressed willingness to go to counseling sessions to get along better with the mother of the baby. He was working on obtaining a GED. Records show he completed an assessment of his involvement when his son was eight months old and checked that he performs a few parental tasks more than once a week. However, several tasks are checked as being performed only “once a month” and some as “never.”

Written survey. Father #500 was asked to complete a written survey prior to the scheduled interview. He reported that he was 21 when his son was born, and the child’s mother was 15. He is now 28 years old, and his son is 7 years old and in the 1st grade. He also has a five-year-old daughter with the child’s mother. He reported being married for three years to the mother of his children, but they do not live together, nor is theirs a romantic relationship.

Father #500 reported that he had less than a high school diploma and works as a self-employed electrician. He reported that his satisfaction with his job is “OK.” He was involved with the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program for approximately two years. The types of Caring Equation services he took part in included mentor relationship

with specialist, communication training/couple's mediation, child care, education about child development and baby care, education about sexual health, and events for families. His responses on the survey indicated that Caring Equation "mostly" improved his parenting ability, that his relationship with his children's mother is "very poor," that he is "very dissatisfied" with their relationship, that she "rarely" supports his involvement with his children, that they work "poorly" together as parents, and that they "rarely" agree about parenting decisions. On the other hand, he rated his relationship with his mother as "very good," and his relationship with his father as "none." His relationship with her mother was rated as "very poor," and his relationship with her father was rated as "none."

When asked about his fatherhood experience with his children, his survey responses rated his relationship with his children as "fair." On the Father Involvement Chart at the end of the survey, Father #500 reported performing 14 of the 22 parental tasks two times a month. He reported performing the tasks of providing money and providing clothes four or five times a week. The four parental tasks of comforting child when upset, talking with the child, reading to the child, and taking care of child when sick were reported as being performed once a month. He "never" takes his child to the doctor or picks up his children from school.

Oral interview. During the interview conducted in English, Father #500 reported that he has the most fun when his children "come over to the house. Whenever I can see them because I don't have a really good relationship with their mother, so that's why, you know. Sometimes I do get to be with them...sometimes I don't." He stated that

when I didn't have my kids at all, it was just like I didn't have nothing to care about. Like I would just do things without even thinking. And even when my son was born, I was still kind of like that, because I was young. But once my daughter was born, oh my God. That was...I don't even know how to explain it. It's just this little thing that that I had to protect and all that so I definitely changed everything—the way I think and everything...mostly everything.

He reported that he felt really good to be a dad “when my daughter called me ‘Daddy.’ I felt so proud. I thought I was the **man**. I was like, ‘Wow! That felt so good.’”

In terms of how he learned how to be a father, Father #500 stated, “Actually my kids are still teaching me how to be a dad because I learn the hard way that the main thing you need to be a father is to have patience. And that's something I'm not blessed with, but the kids are teaching me and they're patient with me. I'm trying to be patient with them. I kind of enjoy it, though.”

He reported that his father

was a pretty abusive dad. He would just hit us for no reason sometimes, and he'll hit us with a big vase sometimes. He was way too aggressive.” He also reported that “sometimes he would take us fishing and he'll teach us how to do stuff for fishing like what hooks to use. I guess that's the only thing I remember about him that he was good with.”

The maternal grandmother would not allow the young father to see her daughter or come into her house because of his violent behavior. His own mother also banned him from her house for the same reason. In addition, he reported that Caring Equation helped him

as a new father by providing “classes about the kids like how to change the diapers and how you got to be patient with them and some other health stuff.”

He admired the fatherhood specialist in that they would listen to you. “They would sit you down and ask you what’s wrong, you know. If you need some help, we can help you. Just give us a call. You need to talk to somebody, here’s my number. Call me. I’ll be there for you.” His biggest challenge as a father is “getting along with the mother of the kids...being together. Since we’re from different countries, different cultures, and that really messed us up a lot.”

He reported that he is an electrician:

That is something that...I just love it. I guess I’ve got the brain for it because most of the people hate it. They think it’s dangerous and it’s not. I just love it. Everything just makes sense when I’m working there, but I can’t do all I want because of the work permit.

He wishes he could go back to school “because [the] diploma really has a lot to do with some payments, with the job. If you don’t have that diploma, you get paid less.” He was given information about the upcoming GED assessment tests, and his contact information was forwarded to the GED coordinator.

He reported that his relationship with the mother of his children is “very poor” and stated:

I wish it was better because we really need to start talking about the kids and all of that. When I call and ask for the kids so I can talk to them, she says they’re sleeping and they’re just playing around and I can hear them, so she’s lying to me.

Or whenever I want to have the kid, she just tells me ‘no’ because she got plans. She’s doing whatever she wants, like to get me back for some reason. She thinks I’m guilty of every bad decision she makes. So nothing is going to make her happy.

He sees his children every other week, but only when the mother permits it. They argue because she buys them video games or gives them whatever they want so they will not bother the mother and maternal grandmother.

When I have my kids, I try to go out with them, take them to the park, take them fishing, because I love that they love it too. But my son right now, he has so many games that all he talks about is games. When I try to have a normal conversation with him, he just asks, ‘Do you know about his game?’ ...like Mario this, Mario that.

When asked how they work through these various problems to make things better, he replied,

We can’t. We just can’t. Everything I tell her just goes in this ear and comes out that one. I don’t know. I wish we had more communication about the kids because that’s all I care about. She doesn’t understand the kids and how they’re being raised. But she doesn’t understand that—she’s still so young. I was her age once. I was crazy too. I mean, it’s different now—you have kids, but I guess she just doesn’t understand that.

Father #500 reported that the Caring Equation services he found most helpful were the mentor relationship with male staff person “since I have had a dad, I guess I

needed a male...somebody to guide me...somebody who already knew about this and was old enough to tell me what to expect.” The second most helpful service was the training to improve communication or couple’s mediation: “That also kind of helped for a little bit.” Also valuable was the parenting information, such as how to care for a baby and what can help your child.

The individual profiles of participants presented above illustrate details regarding their backgrounds and their personal fatherhood experience. Clearly, no such thing as a “typical young father” exists. Each had his own story to tell. All the participants in this study brought their unique experiences with them, which frame their understanding of and emergence as a responsible father.

Caring Equation fathers reported participating in the fatherhood program between stints as little as six months to the longest at three years, but records document the shortest time frame was one year. The actual level of participation varied in that some fathers had frequent contact with the fatherhood specialists, attended several workshops and family events, and utilized the available services to improve their family situation; while other fathers did not attend any educational workshops due to conflicts with working or lack interest. Nor did they take advantage of the services offered to them. In these cases, the young fathers’ contact with the fatherhood specialists consisted of a few monthly phone calls or a visit to his job site.

The specific Caring Equation services used by each father were listed in the profiles. Analysis of the written surveys indicated that four of the Caring Equation services were used the most, with eight of the ten fathers reporting them. These four

services were mentor relationship with fatherhood specialist, child care, education about child development and baby care, and events for families. Seven of the ten fathers also reported using vocational or job training, and six reported using education about sexual health, communication training/couple's mediation, and transportation. Five fathers reported using transportation, and four reported using case management and general education.

Some fathers participating in the research explicitly acknowledged the family value or cultural expectation of father as breadwinner—how the pressure to provide for the family may take precedence over learning how to care for a baby or how to improve communication with the mother of their child. The data also indicated that fathers in this study were committed to the coparental relationship for the benefit and the well-being of their children. Some participants have experienced nurturing from their own parents and draw upon this support in determining how to raise their children. A few used the poor example set by their own father to spur them to be different for their own children. All participants demonstrated a deep passion for loving and enjoying their children to the best of their ability.

The demographic data from the 10 survey participants captured on the Caring Equation Written Follow-up Survey yielded the following data (see Tables 1—8 below). The ages of the 10 Caring Equation fathers at the time of their participation in the fatherhood program was one 17-year-old, four 18-year-olds, two 19-year-olds, and three 21-year-olds. This was also their age at the birth of their first child with the exception of

one father who entered the program when his child was already two years old. He was 19 at his child's birth and entered the Caring Equation fatherhood program when he was 21.

Table 1

Age of Father Participants at Birth of Child

Age	Count	Percentage
17 years old	1	10%
18 years old	4	40%
19 years old	2	20%
20 years old	0	0%
21 years old	3	30%

Their girlfriends/wives/partners were all teenagers between 15 and 18 years of age at the time of the birth of their first child as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Age of Adolescent Girlfriends/Wives/Partners at Birth of Child

Age	Count	Percentage
15 years old	3	30%
16 years old	2	20%
17 years old	3	30%
18 years old	2	20%

The age difference between the young fathers and adolescent mothers ranged from one year to six years and is depicted on Table 3. In one couple, the adolescent mother was one year older than the young father; she was 18, and he was 17 years old. In the other nine couples, the father was older than the adolescent mother, which is more typical in dating relationships. There was a six-year difference in one couple: she was 15, and he was 21 years old.

Table 3

Age Difference between Young Father and Adolescent Mother

Number of Couples	Difference in Age	Percentage
3	1 year	30%
3	2 years	30%
1	3 years	10%
2	4 years	20%
1	6 years	10%

The current ages of the Caring Equation fathers in this study is shown in Table 4. All mothers are now in their early to mid-20s.

Table 4

Current Age of Fathers

Age	Count	Percentage
24 years old	3	30%
25 years old	1	10%
26 years old	1	10%
27 years old	4	40%
28 years old	1	10%

Although one child died at two months of age, twenty-one children have been born to the fathers who participated. The oldest children of these fathers are now six- to nine-years-old, so often, the current father-child activities are based on the interest of the child. The school-age children are enrolled in Pre-K, Kindergarten, first, second, third, and fourth grades in six different Arlington elementary schools. These men have fathered additional children since their first child: some with the partner from the time of the Caring Equation program, and some with other women. Two reported a current pregnancy by their wife or partner. The data for living children are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Ages of Living Children

Age	Count	Percentage
6 months	2	10%
1 year old	1	5%
2 years old	3	15%
3 years old	1	5%
4 years old	1	5%
5 years old	2	10%
6 years old	4	20%
7 years old	4	20%
8 years old	1	5%
9 years old	1	5%

The coparental relationship directly affects the father-child bond. This includes whether or not the couple is married as well as their commitment to the coparental relationship. Five of the fathers are married to the mother of their first child, though one marriage occurred both to avoid deportation of the young father and so that the children could grow up seeing their father. In this case, the father does not reside in the same household as his wife, and he reported that he was very dissatisfied with the coparental relationship. The other four married fathers were happy with their relationship and their wives, and three of the four selected the highest satisfaction level as shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Married Fathers' Satisfaction with Coparental Relationship

Relationship for Married	Count = 5	Percentage
Very Satisfied	3	60%
Satisfied	1	20%
Neutral	0	0%
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Very Dissatisfied	1	20%

The five fathers who were not married to the mother of their first child were still relatively satisfied with the coparental relationship as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Unmarried Fathers' Satisfaction with Coparental Relationship

Relationship for Unmarried	Count = 5	Percentage
Very Satisfied	1	20%
Satisfied	2	40%
Neutral	2	40%
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0%

These five fathers, who were not married to the mother of their children, described a workable relationship with the mother of their children; the major focus of the relationship concerned the upbringing of the children. Three of these five unmarried fathers are living with another woman and have a child with that woman.

The Caring Equation fathers are deeply involved in their children’s lives, and this level of engagement is influenced by the custodial arrangement, the cooperation between the couple, and how conflict is addressed. For example, the four happily married fathers and one unmarried father live with their children so they are with them every day. These same five reported currently being in a romantic relationship with the mother of their children. The remaining four unmarried fathers live in Arlington or within 10 miles so they see their children frequently or have their children live with them on the weekends. The tenth father is married but not romantically involved with the mother, does not live with the family, and sees his children twice a month at best. These data are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8

Child Lives with Father

Time of Week	Count	Percentage
Full-Time	5	50%
Weekends Only	4	40%
Does Not Live with Father	1	10%

Seven of the ten fathers have joint custody of their children. According to survey data, nine of the ten fathers described a very high level of involvement with their children. The tenth father expressed his desire to spend more time with his children, but the mother of his children only allows minimal visiting privileges. This same father described his relationship with his children as “fair,” as opposed to the other nine fathers who were pleased with the relationship they had with their children. Of these nine fathers, one father rated his relationship with his child as “good,” and eight fathers rated their relationship with their child as “very good”—the highest rating.

With respect to the father factor regarding educational attainment, five of the fathers graduated from a high school in Virginia or Maryland, and two fathers reported that they graduated from high school in their native country, though one of these two fathers experienced difficulty understanding and responding to questions in his native language during the interview so he may not have actually graduated in his country. The remaining three fathers have less than a high school education. Three of the U.S. high school graduate fathers have taken some community college courses. The other two U.S. high school graduate fathers have completed training at vocational schools and have earned certifications in the trades of electricity and heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC).

During the interviews, three of the fathers who had not earned a high school diploma in the United States, expressed their desire to earn a GED. Consequently, they were connected with the GED Coordinator and given dates for the GED assessments scheduled for April, 2012. A GED study guide was loaned to one young father. None of

the three followed through and participated in these free pretests in order to determine if they were ready to sit for the actual exam. Nine of the ten adolescent mothers graduated from high school between 2004 to 2007.

Seven of the Caring Equation fathers reported a positive relationship with their own fathers. In fact, their current relationship with their fathers was rated very highly, though two reported that their fathers are deceased. The other three young fathers articulated that they wanted to make sure that they did not repeat the same absent or violent behaviors they observed in their own fathers. One did not even meet his father until he was 13 years old. Another one said his father was “never there for him and his siblings,” and the third one, although he did fondly remember times spent fishing with him, described his father as very violent and abusive. This last father shared that he currently enjoys teaching his children to fish. All ten fathers reported a good relationship with their own mothers.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 asked: What factors—contextual, father, coparental, mother, child—do Caring Equation participants report as influential in the emergence of their understanding of responsible fatherhood, as defined by legal paternity, economic support, presence in child’s life, and personal involvement with mother in providing care for children?

To address research question 2, I analyzed the interviews and identified themes that emerged in the dominant factor domains based on the Influences on Fatherhood

Conceptual Model (Figure 1). Mother factors and child factors did not emerge as dominant influences. Although contextual, father, and coparental factors did impact residential status, the coparental relationship, and the father's access to his children, it was found that child factors had no major influence as to young fathers' emergence as responsible fathers. The major influences on young fathers in this study were in the areas of contextual factors, father factors, and coparental factors.

Mother Factors

The mother factors that influenced the fatherhood experience for the young fathers included the mothers' attitude toward the fathers, their expectations of the fathers, and their support of the fathers in their fathering roles. During the interviews, most fathers stated that the mother of their child would rate them highly as fathers. This meant that they were meeting her expectations of what a father should be like or what a father should do. Father #518 stated, "She will say I am always helpful. I always help her to work and help in whatever she needs." Similarly, Father #292 said,

...she says a lot of stuff that she likes about me. She likes that I'm always with my kids. I don't work in the afternoons when they come out of school. When she comes home, they [have] already showered. Their homework is done. That's one of the things she didn't expect of me when we got together.

While a couple fathers remarked that their child's mother was either too lenient in terms of their child's behavior or not adequately focused on their child's academic needs, for all other couples, the mothers were very supportive of the fathers' involvement with their children. Keeping in mind that all the mothers in these couples were adolescents at

the birth of their first child, mother factors clearly influenced the fatherhood experience for the young fathers in this study. The mothers all participated in alternative school programs for pregnant and parenting teens, used ancillary Caring Equation services provided to young mothers, and most of them enrolled their children in the infant care center housed within the school system.

Child Factors

This domain had relatively little or no influence on the young fathers in this study. The children of Caring Equation fathers are now 5 to 9-years-old, so father-child activities include recreational activities, sports, homework, household chores, and daily living routines such as eating, dressing, shopping, and sleeping. The gender of the child did not appear to affect the fathers' level of involvement. However, one father stated in his interview that his violent behavior changed for the better when his second child, a girl, was born. His voice softened as he described how he needed to care for his daughter, and how the fact that this child was a girl affected his behavior as a father:

I would just do things without even thinking. And even when my son was born, I was still kind of like that, because I was young. But once my daughter was born, oh my God...that was...I don't even know how to explain it. It's just this little thing that I had to protect and all that, so I definitely changed everything—the way I think and everything.

Contextual Factors

Contextual factors are aspects in the greater community or beliefs and behaviors within groups of people regarding the understanding of fatherhood and father-child

relationships. As such, contextual factors include institutional practices, employment opportunities, economic factors, race/ethnicity resources and challenges, cultural expectations, and social support. The two themes which emerged within the contextual factors domain are ones relating to institutional practices: specifically, provision of services and importance of the fatherhood specialist as a role model/mentor.

Provision of services. The Caring Equation Young Fathers Program was a grant-funded program administered by Arlington Public Schools that targeted the fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers in Arlington. Services provided to young fathers by the program included couple's counseling and conflict mediation in order to help improve communication between the young parents; a variety of parenting education, health education, and employment-related workshops; outreach and case management; home visits; transportation; nutritious food; on-site child care; and English/Spanish translations. The Caring Equation Young Fathers Program also hosted several social events such as picnics, outings to professional baseball and soccer games, trips to the beach, and an excursion to an amusement park. Both the written surveys and oral interviews confirmed that these activities were highly valued by the participants.

Because employment of fathers influences the father-child bond, their level of involvement with their children, the coparental relationship with the mothers of their children, and the lifestyle and future they are able to provide for their families, Caring Equation services which supported the fathers in locating work, increasing their job skills, or improving their English proficiency were of particular interest to these young fathers.

Caring Equation emphasized assisting young fathers with employment so that they could become responsible fathers. One father stated, “I guess help getting a job and job training was one of the biggest things that they helped me with.” Helping another father included transporting him to the county employment center, transporting him to a job fair at the campus of the community college, helping him to create a resume and apply to several jobs online, helping him to complete employment applications, accompanying him with visits to various businesses (i.e., Harris Teeter, Staples, Enterprise, FYE, Regal Cinema, Container Store, Footlocker, Dunkin’ Donuts), and talking with store managers on his behalf. For another father, the fatherhood staff provided him with assistance to change jobs because he had difficulties with his boss. On this subject, the young father stated,

I got involved into heating/air conditioning because I was doing building maintenance for a year after I got out of high school, but I was not happy because I didn’t have a good supervisor. I spoke to JM [fatherhood specialist]. He helped me build my resume. I found a job.

Having a driver’s license was a recognized form of identification for applications and also qualified young fathers for certain jobs. Fatherhood specialists gave fathers without licenses a list of schools in which to register for a driving course so they could obtain a driver’s license.

All the Caring Equation fathers were Hispanic, several were limited-English-proficient, and two had gang involvement. They were also classified as low-income and their housing situations consisted of living with either their parents or possibly the young

mother's parents or renting a room from someone because they could not afford to rent an apartment. Assistance to learn or improve their English and having bilingual staff in the fatherhood program was appreciated by several young fathers. For example, when asked what Caring Equation service was really helpful during the interview, Father #189 stated, "Assistance to learn English. When I came here, I didn't know how to speak English, so that helped me a lot." Both fathers who only spoke Spanish had been encouraged to take English classes when they were in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program but, according to the case records for Father #614 and Father #299, both were too busy working to go to school to learn English.

Fatherhood specialist as role model/mentor. The bilingual male fatherhood specialists served as role models/mentors for the young fathers. Crediting the Caring Equation fatherhood program for substantially modeling good parenting, Father #518 stated that

The first thing that the program helped with was [to] understand the kids first, and get to know when they need you and when you can say 'no' at the same time, because this is not always fun. At some point you got to act, but they explained to you to get to the point of when you got to act.

The fatherhood specialists made home visits, called young fathers frequently, and visited them at their schools or job sites. They gave advice to the young fathers in a low-key manner. As Father #276 stated,

JM [fatherhood specialist] was a big help. He showed me how to have fun. I remember the time we just went to TJ [recreation center] and played basketball.

We'd talk about music. We would talk about movies. He was like a big brother.

He was a good person.

The fatherhood specialists wore casual clothes and often came across as a knowledgeable big brother to the young fathers. Father #210 stated,

I think that professional help is always best, and down to earth people like the ones you had there. They weren't a tie and suit person—they would come down in their jeans and a tee shirt and say, 'Let's go to the park and have a cookout or something,' you know.

If they had worn more formal or business-style clothing, the young fathers, some of whom were undocumented, may have thought they worked for some government authority such as the INS and may have feared possible deportation as some fathers were undocumented. Father #276 described how JM [fatherhood specialist] was always very positive in his approach:

Even if there were times that I was down or struggling, you know, he always gave me this vibe that [said], 'Don't be like that. No matter what, you'll get through it. Everything's going to be fine. If [you need] anything, I don't mind helping you. I don't mind giving you a hand. If you need a ride, let me know. I'll take you there. I'm here to help you out.'

Father #276 stated, "They showed me that no matter what, you can always be there for your kids, you know, if you got money or you don't." Overall, Caring Equation fathers received assistance from the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program that helped them become responsible fathers.

The program helped Father #518 adjust his focus with respect to what was most important now that he was a father. He was working and was given some advice from the fatherhood specialist that helped him a lot. He reported that the fatherhood specialist advised him to pay attention to his family, helping him understand that it was important to

take the time to know that you have a family before you have a job. Before I was always thinking about work, work, work. They helped me understand that your kids need you, and because of them, you need to be there for them. You need to have time for them at the same time.

Father Factors

Father factors refer to the personal meanings, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of a father related to his understanding of fatherhood. Father factors include role identification, knowledge, skills, commitment, psychological well-being, relations with own father, employment characteristics, and residential status. The major themes within the father factors domain that emerged included the impact of fathers' past experiences and relationship with their parents, personal attributes such as knowledge and skills, pride in parenthood, and commitment to fathering.

Past experiences and relationship with father. A young father's relationship with his own father as well as other family members such as his mother influenced the young fathers in this study, both in terms of how they learned to be a father via their role identification or the meaning they associate with that title. Although two participants said they were still learning to be fathers, some mentioned that they learned how to be a

father from their own father or uncle or even from their mother if their father was not in the picture. Some parents pressured their son to get a job to support his young family. This was the situation for Father #292 who dropped out of high school during his senior year because his own father told him that is what he had to do.

Recognizing the value of education, some parents, on the other hand, urged their sons to stay in high school even though it was extremely difficult to maintain and balance both school and work responsibilities. In one situation, a young father's newborn son and girlfriend moved in with him, and they all lived at his mother's house. The young father decided to continue in high school and was given ongoing support by both the fatherhood staff and his mother. In his words, "My mother's like, you've got a big responsibility now. You've got to work hard and you've got to finish school." He was still a senior in high school, and his son's mother had just graduated:

I was doing full-time work and full-time school, so I won't get home 'til like, 2:00-3:00 in the morning and wake up at 7:00 to get ready to go to school. There was a point when I wanted to give up but my mother always said, 'Don't—don't be a fool. Keep doing it. I know it's going to be hard, but you decided to make this decision. You know the consequences that you'll get out of it, so keep pushing yourself through it.' And I did!

This same young father shared that he did not admire his own father. This young father was determined to make sure he spent as much time with his son as possible. He also chose his words carefully when he described this non-existent relationship with his own father:

The fact that he's not there—that makes me...makes me be in a better position to not be like him. I met him when I was 13. He thought buying a bike would show me all the love that he hadn't given me since he was gone. Then I didn't see him again until I applied to Whole Foods across the street as he currently works there, and I told him about my son. He didn't seem to care, so I really...we never had a...basically we just never bonded. I don't keep in contact with him.

There was disappointment in his voice when he shared this story, but any anger toward his father, which he surely had at some point in his life, did not show in his voice or facial expressions. He has been able to move forward in his life as a young father and use this lack of a relationship with his own father to create a strong relationship with his children.

Personal attributes. Each young father possessed different skills and knowledge related to fatherhood. These, in turn, contributed positively to their ability to find employment, to the kind of jobs they could obtain, their level of satisfaction with the job, and the length of time they stayed in a position. Having pride in one's work often depends on the individual's being able to work in a field directly relating to interest and that plays to one's strengths. For example, Father #276 works at a car repair store and stated,

I like working with my hands. I always had an old vehicle and if something went wrong with it, I would fix it myself. I would Google it up and find out how to fix it. I applied for this job and I got the job. I like seeing every mechanic work on vehicles. And they point out to me, this is the brake, this is what a solenoid is,

this is how you take it out, this is how you put it in. I like getting my hands dirty.

It's pretty...it's pretty cool.

He hopes to become a master mechanic in the future. His company offers programs to get the ASE certification. Because he can slowly move up after being with the company for three years, he felt like he was on a good career path.

For those non-English speaking young fathers, their lack of English ability bore substantial impacts on their fathering. The colleague who verified the accuracy of the translations for this study noted that both fathers who were interviewed in Spanish were operating at a concrete developmental level in their native language. Both asked for questions to be repeated if the question was more than a few words long. Neither of them understood what was being asked when unfamiliar words such as “advice,” “expected,” “relationship,” “challenges,” “disagreements,” or “characteristics” were used in the question. Therefore, both translators/interviewers ended up rephrasing some questions so that these two fathers could better understand what was being asked and, in turn, could respond with a short answer. If individuals have difficulty grasping concepts and conversing in their native language, being able to function well and assimilate into an English-speaking culture concomitant to becoming a new father who must earn money but can only qualify for temporary, manual labor jobs creates additional challenges for them as young fathers. As young fathers, they are operating in survival mode; taking time for education is not a priority in their lives.

For the two young fathers who have not learned some English, the future options for their families are limited. One Spanish-speaking father was covered with tattoos,

unemployed, expecting another child with another woman, and the mother of his children was the only young mother who never finished high school. This was also the family with the special needs child and the preschooler who is not attending an early childhood education program.

Parenthood and commitment to fathering. Fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers often disappear, leaving the mother to deal with the consequences. Similar to findings by Lerman (1993), this was not the case for any of these young fathers. In the words of Father #690:

They **want** you to be there for your kid. They want you to **be there** for your kid. And a lot of young fathers, unfortunately, are not. I'm proud to say that my daughter...she's seen me every day of her life. Even though I may not live with her, she sees me every day of her life. And that's something JM [fatherhood specialist] pushed.

All young fathers in this study believed it was their responsibility to provide financially for their children and the mothers of their children, regardless of whether or not they were married. As Father #189 said, "When my baby was born, I was going to school. I mean, it wasn't planned. So I guess I got to step up to the plate and get a job, and at the same time continue with my education." Having a job was very important to these young fathers because they needed to "step up to the plate" and be financially responsible for their new family. Actually, earning money was a necessity since they were fathers and providing for one's family is often viewed as a cultural expectation among Hispanic families. Latino men's role as head of household includes being a

provider for the family (Taylor & Behnke, 2005). Father #292 parlayed that his father told him, “You gotta stop going to school and get yourself a full-time job to support that kid and your wife, if you’re going to have a wife and a kid.” Because his father had deserted them, one young father was the oldest male in the family; he helped raise his younger brother and sister because he was the “man” of the house. He considered this to be his role in the family. This strong sense of responsibility, to be the provider, is certainly a traditional role for fathers; moreover, it is also a strongly-held value that each young father in this study possessed. The father who has been married for ten years claimed, “There is not a school to learn how to be a dad. When I had my first kid, I had to be responsible for it.” It was also evident that these young fathers were vested in their children, committed to having a positive relationship with their children. Each took his role as a father very seriously by being there for his children, spending time with them, and having fun with them. As Father #276 stated regarding the fruits of his relationship, “They showed a lot of ways to have fun. They showed a lot of ways to show love.”

Through analysis of the Father Involvement chart (Appendix D) on the written survey, Caring Equation fathers reported being actively involved with their child by checking most child care tasks with high frequency ratings. More than 75 percent of the responses were rated between “more than once per week” to “daily,” in terms of frequency. Even those fathers who did not live with their child during the weekdays were actively engaged in daily routines on the weekends that included feeding, bathing, dressing, playing, putting to sleep, comforting, providing transportation, cleaning up messes, and visiting playgrounds with their child.

Each young father expressed pride and joy in being a father—a new role for them. As Father #189 remarked, “It’s just something that is great! It’s awesome!” Another reflected, “The time you spend with them is priceless.” It was difficult for some to actually find the words to express how wonderful fatherhood made them feel, “to know that your child is a part of you.” For those who talked about seeing their child being born, there was almost a reverence expressed by them of witnessing that event. In the words of Father #500:

When I didn’t have my kids at all, it was just like I didn’t have nothing to care about.... The kids are the magic. Once they grow up, you’re gonna start seeing it. They’re going to hug you, kiss you and all that, and it’s just gonna break your heart. And then you just gonna fall for them.

Three fathers (#518, #292, and #524) stated that their child did well in school, which germinated further pride in being a father. One father explained how he had used his knowledge and skills to help his daughter understand her math. She was having trouble with her math so he took the time to sit down with her for a week and explain how to solve the problems. On the next math test, she only got one wrong. This made him feel really good as a dad because “she was able to understand me and I was clear enough for her to overcome that situation that was difficult for her.” Father #690 described how he is filled with pride when his daughter does well in her swimming. Father #210 described a time when he felt really good being a dad that underscores how he viewed his role as a father. Although his oral interview narrative has been already reported *in toto* in Chapter Four, I extrapolate it here by way of emphasis. The event

was, indeed, Father's Day, around the time his son was about five years old. His son called and asked if he could come see him since they did not live in the same house:

I went to go see him, and he told me that when he was in school, a lot of his friends were crying because they didn't have a dad—either maybe they had passed away, don't live with them, were incarcerated, and any of those kinds of things—of course in child's languages. And he told me that he was just very happy that I was there for him. So that was very special.

The young fathers recognized the importance of learning to be fathers. Father #518 stated that sometimes when a young father came to the program for the first time, “you don't want to come back because you feel you don't need that. I don't need that. That's not me. I'm really occupied.” He remembered that some guys were not very interested with the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program and only showed up once or twice and then they did not return:

I remember a guy, the last time he stopped by, and he said, ‘I don't need this.’

But I said, ‘Yeah, you do. We need it. We're young. We don't know what to do.

Trust me.’ But who's going to feed my family and stuff like that because all the time [he's] thinking about work and stuff?

This father, Father #518, stayed with the program and learned that his relationship with his child and the child's mother was just as important as his job. This contributed to his overall psychological well-being. He is a young father who is happily married and enjoys his family. In his words, “I'm very happy with my family and we're still together and strong.” Caring Equation influenced his development as a young father.

Coparental Factors

Coparental factors focus on aspects of the parental relationship or the relationship between the father and mother that influence the father's interaction with his child. These include marital/nonmarital status, dual versus single earner, custodial arrangement, relationship commitment, cooperation, mutual support, and conflict. The father-child relationship and the father's ability to be involved with his child are dependent on the coparental relationship—the relationship between the mother and the father—particularly in couples that do not marry. The kind of relationship a non-custodial father is able to establish with his child is particularly dependent on having a good relationship with the child's mother, to the extent that cooperation and mutual support in the coparental relationship can be maintained. Coley and Hernandez (2006) found that maintaining a cooperative and relatively low-conflict father-mother relationship is central to fathers' continued paternal involvement. Three patterns of the coparental relationship—marriage and co-residency, relationship boundaries, and absence of coparental relationship—emerged from the data and impacted the father-child bond in significant ways.

Marriage and co-residency. Those young fathers who chose to get married or live with the mother of their child both demonstrated commitment to a strong father-child relationship while assigning a high value on the importance of being a family. A relatively recent, major shift in American culture is the trend of adolescent mothers to have a child out of wedlock. For Hispanic adolescents, the rate is 70 percent which mirrors the Virginia adolescent out of wedlock births. Now, fewer than 10 years after the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program, 50 percent of this group of fathers is married to

their child's mother. It is possible that the Latino culture exerts a strong influence on the male's sense of responsibility to form a family when a child is involved. One young father, who is married, dropped out of high school to support his family and said,

I never went back, but I did encourage my wife so she can continue on the high school and I was going to be the one who was supporting the money to the house and bring the food. And we did it—and we made it! She got her high school diploma!

The pride in his voice was evident. He just beamed when he talked about how they had worked together as a couple. They were a team.

Father #524, who is also married, enthusiastically and positively described his family situation in this manner:

I live happy. We both make good money. Five or six years ago, we used to struggle a lot. We barely had money into our bank accounts, and now, we're able to plan vacations. We're able to do a lot of things that we weren't able to do. It was hard.

Relationship boundaries. Couples who do not marry or live together must determine how they will coparent their child. One father shared that he was told by Caring Equation staff to always be involved with the child if a separation between the couple were to occur. While his relationship with the child's mother did end, the importance of the advice to stay involved with his child enabled him to maintain his involvement even after his relationship with the mother ended. His child lives with him every weekend. Another father stated,

Our relationship ended on a very bad note. So ever since then, it's just been bad, bad, bad. But we have both [been]...are trying to be mature, and know that when we speak, it's about our son—not about her or about me.

Resolving conflict or disagreements is a part of any relationship, and how these are handled affects the coparental relationship. Two unmarried, non-residential fathers expressed concern related to the child's mother's lack of attention to school academic problems. One expressed that his son's mother does not focus on the difficulties their son is having in math at school. She is letting him slide by buying him a PlayStation 3 instead of paying more attention to his grades and focusing more on his math. He disagrees with her on this issue, but "she's a hardball. I can't really tell her anything. She has him more days and hours than I do, so I really can't go against that. She's just going to say I have him more than you do."

The most common message that several fathers shared in the interviews regarding the coparental relationship and resolving conflict was not to argue or fight in front of the child. This was one of the caveats they remembered hearing from Caring Equation staff. Any serious discussion or conflict needed to be resolved by the parents but away from the ears of the children. Father #518 described how he and his wife take the time to talk about issues when something is not going well, "but never, because of the kids, they never see it...that we [are] discussing something—at least the big ones." Father #210 described how his parents fought constantly, and this made him very unhappy when he was a child. He is determined that his child will not endure that same experience. Since he now is in a relationship with a different female partner, the current conversations he

engages with the mother of his child are related almost exclusively to his son and his son's needs. He keeps phone calls and face-to-face conversations with her short; he even refuses to argue over the telephone to avoid any chance of his child overhearing parental disagreements. As he stated, "...For my son's sake and well-being, I don't want him to see his mother and me, even on the phone, fighting and doing that." When asked how he and the mother of his child resolve disagreements, Father #690 replied:

We never talk about them in front of my child. We don't talk about it in front of her. Either somebody [sic] will take care of my daughter. If we have to step out, go out, make it a dinner, I guess, we'll all go out and we'll use code. We'll use code if we have to speak in front of my child.

Maintaining a cooperative and relatively low-conflict father-mother relationship has been key to paternal involvement for the fathers who are not married to the mothers of their children. Even though Father #210 does not live with his child and is not married to his child's mother, he expressed her support of him by saying, "She knows that I'm a good dad. She knows that I love my son very much. I'm sure she can't have any complaints with me." Father #690 reported that the mother of his child is proud of him as a father. This contributes to her positive attitude toward him and her support of him as a father, which are both important since he does not live with his child.

Absence of coparental relationship. On the opposite end of the coparental relationship continuum, Father #500 gave the lowest rating of "very poor" with respect to his relationship with the mother of his children. Even though he is married to her, he does not live with her and only sees his children a couple times each month. He reported

that they rarely agree as a couple about parenting decisions, and that she rarely supports his involvement with his children: “I don’t have a really good relationship with their mother. Sometimes I do get to be with them [his children]. Sometimes I don’t.” He also said that she lies to him when he calls to talk to his children or to see them, because she tells him they are sleeping, even though he can hear them playing in the background. He complained that the mother of his children was immature, and that her attitude toward him did not support his involvement with his children. “She just doesn’t understand. She’s still so young. I was her age once. I was crazy, too. I mean, it’s different now. You have kids...but I guess she just doesn’t understand that.” For him, her attitude toward him, coupled with her lack of support of him as a father, contributes to his lack of involvement with his children. Furthermore, whenever he wants to have the children, she just says no. “She’s doing whatever she wants, like to get me back for some reason. She thinks I’m guilty of every bad decision she makes. So nothing is going to make her happy.” He has resigned himself to the fact that the mother of his children is controlling when and if he will spend time with his children.

Summary

The findings of this study of 10 young fathers’ fatherhood experiences covers a broad range with respect to what might be perceived as traditional as opposed to what might be viewed as nontraditional—if not quite unusual in the parenting/relationship nexus. Some fathers married early in the relationship, others married later, and still some never married the mother of their child. One young father convinced his children’s mother to marry him to avoid deportation. Yet, his coparental relationship and his access

to his children were adversely affected by the marriage. Some fathers live with their children, others have their children live with them on the weekends, and one only visits with his children when the children's mother deems it so. Nine of the ten fathers were highly involved with their children, and the tenth one is involved with his children even though it is at a much lower level than he desires.

The results of this study reveal that the most important factors reported as influential in the emergence of young fathers' understanding of responsible fatherhood were contextual factors, father factors, and coparental factors. Mother factors contributed to the fathers' experiences and still do continue to do so, but not nearly as much as contextual, father, and coparental factors. When critical services such as those provided by the Caring Equation were in place, including assistance finding employment, training to maintain low-conflict in the coparental relationship, and education to develop a solid understanding of and commitment to responsible fatherhood, young fathers, young fathers were able to develop a strong father-child bond. Caring Equation served as a catalyst that nurtured and developed father factors and the coparental relationship, thereby contributing positively to the fatherhood experience for young fathers in this study. The Influences on Fatherhood Conceptual Model was the ideal lens for understanding the participants in this study. The next chapter of this study discusses further implications of the data and provides recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This section revisits the purposes of this study and attends to the areas of significance outlined in Chapter One of this research project. It reexamines how the conceptual framework serves as a comprehensive model for studying young fathers' development toward responsible fatherhood. I present notable findings related to the research questions and highlight implications for further research based on the results of the study. Finally, I offer recommendations for future actions by educators and policy makers as well as further research.

Discussion of Purposes

Little is known about fathers of infants born to adolescent mothers due to sampling issues and lack of involvement with social service agencies (Larson et al., 1996; Thompson & Walker, 2004). This study specifically focused on the target population, seeking their stories firsthand. Every community and school system has pregnant teens, although most ignore this societal problem and do not offer special programs for this population. The fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers, regardless of their age, need to be educated and assisted in developing a relationship with their child so they can become responsible parents (Miller, 1997). Young fathers should not be a forgotten element of the adolescent pregnancy equation. Their "voice" needs to be heard and

services deemed essential for young women need to be provided for young men as well (Hardy et al., 1989; Landry & Forrest, 1995; Weinman et al., 2002). This study addressed this gap in the research by focusing on fatherhood experiences of Caring Equation fathers.

Educational leaders can play a pivotal role in advocating for the young fathers, both locating and educating them, as well as collaborating with other service providers to coordinate services that will strengthen vulnerable, young families that began when the mother was an adolescent. Fathering programs must become a standard component of programs for adolescent mothers because early father involvement may lay the foundation for continued involvement (Futris, 2010). Furthermore, young fathers' positive engagement is beneficial to children, particularly for children born to adolescent mothers (Cutrona et al., 1998; Doherty et al., 2006; Fagan et al., 2007; Marsiglio & Cohan, 2000). Research by Coley and Chase-Lansdale (1999) has suggested that fathers who are supportive to mothers during pregnancy and birth may create a sense of coparenting and cooperation that leads to positive patterns of engagement in the coming months and years. In no small manner can educational leaders become instrumental in educating young fathers and facilitating their involvement with their children.

Discussion of Significance

This study provides valuable insight into the parenting behaviors of young men who have fathered a child with an adolescent mother. It also supplies firsthand knowledge about young fathers' real life experiences because the information was provided by them via primary texts. These data give "voice" to an otherwise

underrepresented population, and provide valuable information about a sector about which precious little is known. Using an effective conceptual framework with Doherty et al.'s Influences on Responsible Fatherhood Conceptual Model (1996), this study offers a better understanding of the important influences on the lives of young fathers and on their relationships with their children and the mothers of their children. This conceptual framework focuses on the factors that create and maintain the father-child bond, which is at the core of responsible fatherhood.

Caring Equation fathers reported receiving various kinds of targeted assistance that helped them in their roles as new fathers. Through education and support, they developed an understanding of the importance of being involved in their children's lives and of maintaining a relationship with their children—even if they did not remain in a romantic relationship with the mother of their children. Similar findings were found by Krishnakumar and Black (2003) and Lamb and Elster (1985). Young fathers understood the importance of enabling the adolescent mother to complete her secondary education. They assumed financial responsibility for their children. Interpersonal relationships with male fatherhood staff members who focused on fatherhood responsibilities, such as job seeking skills and healthy couple communication, contributed to increased confidence of young fathers in their fathering roles. The Caring Equation fatherhood program contributed positively to increased parenting education, improved employment options, viable coparental relationships, and high levels of father-child involvement for the young fathers in this study. Such results are consistent with similar findings from Lerman and Sorensen (2000).

Summary of Findings

On the one hand, program records, written surveys, and oral interviews revealed personal narratives of individual situations and challenges faced by participants; and on the other, these primary sources identified influences that were most important in terms of perceived fatherhood experiences. These data sources documented services and assistance provided to young fathers by the Caring Equation program and disclosed influential factors with respect to young fathers' emergence into the realms of responsible fatherhood. To that end, the Influences on Responsible Fatherhood Conceptual Model (Doherty et al., 1996) was used to analyze data gathered in this study of young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers.

Within the sample of 10 different Latino fathers in this case study, much diversity emerges in terms of their individual situations. Some had nurturing parents who served as positive role models that enabled young fathers to identify with their fatherhood roles; some never really knew their own fathers; and for still others, their fathers represented negative role models, thereby inciting these young fathers to be different, as they strove to be there for their children. Some have been able to gain the education needed to secure well-paid jobs that provide for their families; some are still moving in that direction; and some are struggling in terms of employment. Certain fathers only have one child, some have two children, some have three children, and one has experienced the death of his child during early infancy. Although several have been involved in gangs and have experienced situations with the legal system, they have learned to move forward in their

lives, for themselves and for their children. Some are happily married, some are not, and others have recognized that even though a lasting romantic relationship with the mother of their first child was not going to happen, they have managed to maintain a respectful relationship for the sake of the children: they work together as parents to meet each child's needs. Overall, these 10 young fathers are actively involved in their children's lives, and data confirmed that the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program was an important influence in each young man's fatherhood experience and relationship with his children and the mother of his children.

Fatherhood Experiences

The first research question sought to describe fatherhood experiences of young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers. Study participants were drawn from those who were part of the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program that existed between 2003 and 2007. Thus, the current study highlights the fatherhood experience of 10 young fathers who were involved in the program.

The young fathers in this study developed strong personal relationships with their children through their participation in educational workshops, family events, and individual counseling. Bilingual fatherhood specialists helped young fathers overcome barriers and navigate various institutional systems in order to participate in job-related training and obtain employment. Only one father reported being unemployed at the time of his interview, but this was described as a temporary situation and not of major concern to him. Five to ten years after their initial involvement in the Caring Equation Young Fathers Program, these young fathers were providing ongoing financial support to meet

the needs of their children, and they all reported that they enjoyed spending time with their children. The personal experiences of the young fathers in this study were extremely positive in terms of their commitment to step up and be responsible fathers.

Caring Equation young fathers reported a very high frequency of involvement in activities with their children. Activities with the highest frequency included eating a meal with the child, playing with the child, comforting the child, talking with the child, putting the child to sleep, cleaning up messes made by the child, helping the child do chores; providing money, providing clothes, providing a place to live, providing food, providing transportation; playing games with the child, taking to or picking up the child from school, and taking the child to the playground. Eight fathers reported a “very good” relationship with their children, one reported a “good” relationship, and the final father rated the relationship with his children as “fair.” All ten fathers reported that Caring Equation improved their parenting ability, with nine of the ten selecting the rating of “mostly” or “substantially” to identify how much their skills had improved.

Factors Influential in the Emergence of Responsible Fatherhood

The second research question sought to identify the factors that influenced the emergence of young fathers’ understanding of responsible fatherhood. The Influences on Fatherhood Conceptual Model (Doherty, et al., 1996) included five categories of factors which affect the father-child bond at the core of responsible fatherhood. The five categories of factors in the model are: father, mother, child, coparental, and contextual. Father factors include how he identifies with his role as a father, his commitment to fathering, his knowledge and skills, and his residential status. Mother factors include the

young mother's attitude toward the father of her child, her expectations of him as a father, and her support of him in fulfilling his fathering roles. Child factors include specific aspects about the child such as temperament, age, gender, or attitude toward the father that influence the father-child bond. Child factors, it is found however, were not a significant influence in this study. Mother factors influenced the young fathers' emergence of responsible fatherhood because many of the Caring Equation services and activities focused on the couple or the family unit. Although contact with the fathers originated with the adolescent mothers, mother factors also did not emerge as a major influence in this study. The categories of factors that were most influential in this study then, were contextual factors, father factors, and coparental factors.

Contextual Factors. This category of factors included aspects in the greater community that exerted some level of influence on the father-child bond. Contextual factors are broad and include institutional practices, employment opportunities, economic conditions, race/ethnicity resources and challenges, cultural expectations, and social support. In this study, the contextual factors that emerged centered on the importance of institutional practices that provided services for young fathers and mentoring relationships with fatherhood specialists.

While more than 50 percent of children born to adolescent mothers never live with their biological fathers (McGrew & Shore, 1991), and because many males who father a baby with an adolescent mother disappear, leaving the mother to raise the child by herself, Caring Equation fathers received assistance that helped them become responsible fathers. They received communication and mediation counseling that helped

them develop and maintain low-conflict relationships with the mothers of their children. Similar results of the value of maintaining a low-conflict relationship with the birth mother for increased father involvement were reported by Cutrona et al., 1998; Fagan et al., 2003; Futris & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2007; Gee & Rhodes, 2005; and Kalil, 2005.

Program records gave specific examples of truancy on the part of certain adolescent mothers; ironically, these cases also happen to be the mothers in the unmarried couples. All ten fathers reported that specific assistance provided to them related to employment and the two who pursued careers in the vocational trades stated that their decision to do so was based on guidance received from the fatherhood specialists. Overall, the interviews revealed a great deal of appreciation for the support that had been given by the fatherhood specialists in helping young fathers resolve problems, complete high school, obtain health care, improve couple communication, attain employment, and learn how to care for and have fun with their children.

Father Factors. This category of factors encompasses the personal meanings, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of a father related to his understanding of fatherhood. Father factors include how the father identifies his role, his knowledge and skills, his commitment to fatherhood, his psychological well-being, his relationship with his own father, his employment characteristics, and his residential status. Father factors that emerged in this study centered on the importance of the fathers' relationship with their parents, their knowledge and skills, and their commitment to fatherhood.

Data sources revealed that all 10 fathers increased their fathering skills and were committed to being a responsible father. Even the young fathers who did not have a

positive relationship with their own father (e.g., Father #276, Father #189, and Father #500) were able to develop a bond with their children and become responsible fathers. Nine of the ten young fathers live with their children either every day or on the weekends.

Coparental Factors. The relationship between the father and mother in terms of how they parent their child is referred to as the coparental relationship. Coparental factors include marital status, dual or single income status, custodial arrangement, male/female relationship commitment, cooperation, mutual support, and conflict. The patterns that emerged as most influential among coparental factors included marriage and co-residency, relationship boundaries, and the absence of a strong coparental relationship.

Survey results reveal that all young fathers in this case study are actively involved with their children. While half live with their children every day, an additional 30 percent have their children live with them on the weekends; therefore, 80 percent live with their children on a weekly basis. Half are married to the mother of their children, and 80 percent of the married fathers reported satisfaction with the coparental relationship.

Only one father reported dissatisfaction with the coparental relationship, but this rating could be related to the fact that this couple has a six-year age difference. Another source of dissatisfaction centered on practical as opposed to romantic reasons for marriage. For example, one young father married to avoid impending deportation while the mother agreed to the marriage both to ensure financial support from the father and so that the children would be able to see their father as they got older. This young father and

the mother of his children did not have a positive coparental relationship. No romance germinated in the couple relationship at the time of the marriage nor does any exist today. Conversely, for the four married and one unmarried young fathers involved in a romantic relationship or marriage, coparental relationships were perceived as positive. For those who are not married, 60 percent reported satisfaction with the coparental relationship. Even though neither marriage nor romantic relationship existed, the young fathers and the mother of their children were able to work out a satisfactory coparental relationship.

In summary, the findings of this study suggest that fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers can become responsible fathers when a number of factors are in place to assist them in fulfilling their fatherhood roles, even though barriers and negative influences exist. Contextual factors, father factors, and coparental factors were most important for young fathers in this study, as these factors influenced the father-child bond. Specific assistance included supportive institutions with parenting education services geared toward their needs, including caring male fatherhood specialists with whom they could relate, ongoing cooperation and support from the mother of their children, and opportunities to be gainfully employed so they can provide financially for their child. These findings were consistent with a study conducted by Weinman et al., (2002).

Limitations

There were limitations in this study worth noting. These included:

1. Limits with sample – A total of 310 young fathers participated in the Caring Equation Fatherhood Program before the program ended in 2007. There has not

been any contact with these young fathers since then. This study included only 10 young fathers. Since all 10 were involved with their children, the sample did not include any fathers who are not involved with their children. All fathers in this study were Hispanic so the views of young fathers of other ethnicities are not included. Two of the young fathers in the sample were non-English speaking and their Spanish was not strong either so the researcher is not sure that she obtained the full story for these two participants.

2. While the purpose of this study was to collect data from young fathers and allow the voice of young fathers to be heard, there was no triangulation of data from the adolescent mothers, the grandparents, or the children to verify accuracy of the information provided by the young fathers.
3. The conceptual model had limitations in that the contextual factors were too broad. With all participants being Hispanic, the model did not provide insights into the depth of cultural factors. Additionally, given that all the mothers were adolescents, the model did not include her parents or his mother, the grandparents, and many of them were influential in the young fathers' emergence of responsible fatherhood.

Recommendations for Practice

Three recommendations resulted from this study:

1. Findings from this study suggest that young fathers want to be involved with their children but may not know the important role they play or how to be a responsible father. Consistent with Landry and Forrest (1995), because of the age

of the young mothers in this study, the findings further suggest that institutional practices and mentoring support are critical to addressing the needs of fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers so that young fathers can become responsible fathers, thereby benefiting their children and the school community. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that educational leaders advocate for and develop programs for fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers as an integral part of all programs for adolescent mothers. Because of their educational mission, school systems can be instrumental in facilitating collaborative community services for pregnant and parenting teens, their children, and the male partners or fathers of the babies (Healthy Teen Network, 2006).

2. Father-friendly practices must be the delivery method of all institutions serving young children. With the ultimate goal of responsible fatherhood for all fathers, emphasis should be on strengthening those factors which influence a strong father-child bond; specifically, father factors, mother factors, coparental factors, and contextual factors. Due to the increased rate of nonmarital births to teens, which exceeds 80 percent (Horn, 2007; Marsiglio, 1987), aggressive efforts must be conducted to reach and connect with all fathers of infants born to adolescent mothers.
3. Caring male role models who are passionate about fatherhood should be sought for key positions in educational and social service agencies that serve families with young children (Lane & Clay, 2000). These males should possess counseling and mediation skills in order both to assist young fathers in

communicating effectively with the mothers of their children and to strengthen family relationships. Knowledge of employment services and job-seeking skills would also be beneficial so young fathers can be supported in providing financially for their children (Johnson, 2001). Young fathers need caring males to model appropriate behavior and encourage them in fulfilling their fatherhood roles.

Recommendations for Further Research

The current study provides an important portrait of young, low-income fathers' involvement with their children throughout early childhood and has identified salient influences on that involvement. Several areas would be important for further examination:

1. Further research should expand attempts to locate, survey, and interview additional Caring Equation fathers. In addition, replicating a similar study with young fathers who have participated in fatherhood programs in other regions of the country would increase our knowledge on this population.
2. Because much of what we know has not been obtained from the young fathers themselves (Howard et al., 2006), a similar study should be conducted with young fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers not involved in programs such as the Caring Equation program in order to give a voice to young fathers without the advantage of special needs assistance.
3. As reported by McLanahan and Carlson (2002), involving expectant fathers in responsible prenatal and birth behaviors were important contextual factors toward

promoting a father-child bond, increasing father involvement as children age. A similar finding was. Therefore, further investigation into how to involve young fathers during the pregnancy phase should be explored.

4. Young fathers in this study reported the importance of mentorship in the emergence of their understanding of responsible fatherhood and their ability to be responsible fathers. Mentoring relationships should be an integral part of assistance to young fathers. One direction for research in providing young fathers a mentoring relationship might be to explore how young fathers who have demonstrated responsible fatherhood could be used to help educate other young fathers. Moreover, it would be valuable to study how young fathers might help other adolescent males avoid pregnancy with an adolescent female, thereby postponing parenthood until youths are more educated and financially able to provide for young children.
5. The current study reaffirmed the importance of a strong coparental relationship in maintaining the father-child bond (Coley & Hernandez, 2006). Study findings demonstrated that the couples' counseling and conflict mediation provided by Caring Equation helped young parents cope more effectively with stressful situations and develop respectful ways of communicating. Whether or not these activities contributed to young couples choosing to marry or whether ethnicity played a significant role in marital status could be explored, as well as the ultimate reasons regarding why these young fathers chose to become responsible fathers.

6. Final questions that could be explored would be the interest and level of support within the community for a fatherhood program similar to Caring Equation, sources for potential funding of such a program, program goals and outcomes that are most important, and key stakeholders to engage in this sort of initiative.

Every school and community has pregnant teens, and data from this study could be valuable for meeting the educational needs of the forgotten participants in these fragile families—those of the young fathers. If society is going to change the picture for all fathers of babies born to adolescent mothers, aggressive efforts must be made to reach out to the males involved in adolescent pregnancy and to assist them in fulfilling their fathering roles. Such efforts must be extended early in the pregnancy, at the birth of their child, during the early childhood years, and during the elementary school years in order to lay a strong foundation for life-long learning and success for all children.

APPENDIX A

Young Fathers Telephone Protocol

January 26, 2012

1. Hi, my name is Marilyn Scholl and I was given your name because you participated in the Caring Equation program for young fathers in _____ (insert year) when your _____ (insert son/daughter) was born.
2. We are following up with some of the young fathers. Are you willing to participate in research by completing a survey and being interviewed? This will only take about 1 ½ hours and you will receive a \$25 Target gift card as a thank-you for your participation.
3. This process is being conducted at the Clarendon Education Center which was the same location of the Caring Equation Office when you were in the program. Did you ever go there with Miguel or Jose? (They were the fatherhood specialists.) The building is in Clarendon, right next to Baja Fresh. We'll meet on the 3rd floor. Would you be able to get to this building? Do you need assistance with transportation? (Offer a taxi cab voucher if needed.)
4. When would be a good time for you to be interviewed? (Agree on date and time.)
5. O.K. your interview will be _____ (confirm date and time). I'll call you the day before to remind you about our meeting. Between now and then, if your schedule changes for any reason, please call me so we can set up another time to meet. I'd really like you to participate in this study.
6. Thank you. I'll be in touch as it gets closer to _____ (insert the date).
7. Again, my name is Marilyn Scholl. I can be reached at 703-228-7214, which is my work number, or 703-589-6648, which is my cell phone number.
8. Thank you for speaking with me. Enjoy the rest of your day.

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form

Caring Equation Fathers

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This research is being conducted to gain a better understanding of the factors which influence fatherhood among Caring Equation fathers. We are seeking your consent to participate in a one-hour recorded interview and completion of a written survey, which should take one-half hour.

RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks for participating in this research.

BENEFITS

There are no benefits to you as a participant other than to further research about young fathers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The data in this study will be confidential. The process will be: (1) your name will not be included on the surveys and other collected data; (2) a code will be placed on the survey and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your survey to your identity; and (4) only the researcher will have access to the identification key.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason. If you decide not to participate or if you withdraw from the study, there is no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no costs to you or any other party.

CONTACT

This research is being conducted S. David Brazer, Associate Professor at George Mason University and Marilyn Faris Scholl, graduate student at George Mason University. He may be reached at 703-993-3634 and she may be reached at 703-589-6648 for questions or to report a research-related problem. You may contact the George Mason University

Office of Research Subject Protections at 703-993-4121 if you have questions or comments regarding your rights as a participant in the research. This research has been reviewed according to George Mason University procedures governing your participation in this research.

CONSENT

I have read this form and agree to participate in this study.

_____ I agree to be audio taped.

_____ I do not agree to be audio taped.

Participant Signature

Printed Name

Date

APPENDIX C

Caring Equation Fathers Written Follow-up Survey

Client Number: _____

Hello, Mr. [Participant's name], I would like to ask you some questions about your experience with the Caring Equation program, which you took part in through the Arlington Teenage Parenting Programs about 4 years ago. I would also like to ask you about what it has been like being a father, specifically related to the child you had as part of the Caring Equation Program [ask for the child's name and try to integrate the name when asking questions about this child]. We would like to learn about your experiences in order to develop and begin a new fathers' program. Please know that all of your responses will remain confidential. All we ask is that you be as honest as possible when answering.

1. How old are you currently?
2. How old were you at [child's name] birth?
3. How old was [child's name] mother at the time of [his/her] birth?
4. How old is [child's name] currently?
5. What is the gender of [child's name]?
6. What is your ethnic background?
 - a. African American
 - b. Latino/Hispanic
 - c. Multi-racial
 - d. Asian
 - e. Caucasian
 - f. Other
7. Where/with whom do you currently reside?
 - a. Live by myself
 - b. Live with my mother
 - c. Live with my father
 - d. Live with relatives
 - e. Live with roommates/friends

- f. Live with my significant other
8. How many people live in your household, not including yourself?
 9. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?
 - a. Less than high school diploma b. High school diploma c. GED
 - d. Vocational training e. Some college f. Associate Degree
 10. Are you currently employed full time? [if no go to 11, if yes go to 12]
 11. Are you currently employed Part-time? [if no go to 13, if yes go to 12]
 12. What is your job?
 - 12a. What kind of things do you do on your job?
 - 12b. How long have you been in this position?
 - 12c. Is the position hourly or salaried with benefits?
 - 12d. How satisfied are you with your job? Very Satisfied It is OK

Not Satisfied
 13. Are you currently a student? [if no go to 17, if yes go to 14]
 14. Are you a full time or part-time student?
 15. What subject are you studying?
 16. What goal do you hope to achieve as a result of this education?
 17. When did you begin taking part in the Caring Equation program (month/year)?
 18. How long did you take part in the Caring Equation program (months)?
 19. What types of services did you take part in?
 - a. Case management: for example, assistance with obtaining other community services, such as housing or assistance with medical or utility bills; working with someone to create a plan for services at the CE
 - b. Mentor or relationship with specialist

- c. Communication training/couple's mediation
- d. Vocational or job training
- e. Medical care
- f. Mental health services or referrals
- g. Child care
- h. Transportation
- i. Legal services
- j. Financial counseling
- k. Referral for U.S. Immigration and naturalization services
- l. Housing referral/counseling
- m. Domestic violence counseling/referral
- n. General education
- o. Education about child development and baby care
- p. Education about sexual health
- q. Events for families (i.e. Father's day picnic, Fall Festival, Trip to beach)

20. Overall, how much did the Caring Equation improve your parenting ability?

Not at all Little Somewhat Mostly Substantially

21. Who currently has custody of [child's name]?

- a. Father b. Mother c. Maternal grandparent
- d. Paternal grandparent e. Other family f. Foster care

22. How many children do you have, including [child's name]? [If more than 1, go to 23, if only 1 go to 24]

23. What are their ages?

1. Age:

2. Age:

3. Age:

24. Do any of your children live with you? [if YES go to 25, if NO go to 26]

25. What are the ages of the child/children who live with you?

1. Age:

2. Age:

3. Age:

4. Age:

26. Are you currently married to [child's name] mother? [if YES go to 32, if NO go to 27]

27. Were you ever married to your [child's name] mother? [if YES go to 28, if NO go to 29]

28. How long were you married to [child's name] mother?

29. Have you [child's name] mother ever lived together?

30. Are you currently in a romantic relationship with your child's mother?

31. Describe your current relationship with your child's mother?

Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good

32. How satisfied are you with the relationship between you and [child's name] mother?

Very Dissatisfied Dissatisfied Neutral Satisfied Very Satisfied

33. Does your child's mother support your involvement with [child's name]?

Never Rarely Sometimes Most of the Time Always

34. How well do you and [child's name] mother work together as parents?
 Very Poorly Poorly Fair Well Very Well
35. How often do you and [child's name] mother agree about parenting decisions?
 Never Rarely Sometimes Often All of the Time
36. How would you characterize your current relationship with your mother?
 None Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good
37. How would you characterize your current relationship with your father?
 None Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good
38. How would you characterize your current relationship with [child's name] maternal grandmother?
 None Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good
39. How would you characterize your current relationship with [child's name] maternal grandfather?
 None Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good
40. How supportive is your mother of your involvement in [child's name] life?
 Not at all Little Somewhat Mostly Substantially
41. How supportive is your father of your involvement in [child's name] life?
 Not at all Little Somewhat Mostly Substantially
42. How supportive is [child's name] Maternal Grandmother of your involvement in [child's name] life?
 Not at all Little Somewhat Mostly Substantially
43. How supportive is [child's name] Maternal Grandfather of your involvement in [child's name] life?
 Not at all Little Somewhat Mostly Substantially

44. Describe your relationship with [child's name].

Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good

APPENDIX D

Father Involvement w/ School-age Child

Client #: _____ **Child's Age:** _____

Use this scale to answer the following questions which relate to the first child you had which was the focus of your involvement in the Caring Equation. How often do you do the following activities with or for your child?

0 = Never **1** = Once a month **2** = Two times a month **3** = Once a week

4 = Two or three times a week **5** = Four or five times a week **6** = Six days a week or everyday

Activity	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
a. Make a meal for your child							
b. Have or eat a meal with your child							
c. Play with your child							
d. Dress your child							
e. Help your child bathe							
f. Comfort your child when child upset							
g. Talk with your child							
h. Put your child to sleep							
i. Read with or to your child							
j. Take care of child when he/she is sick							
k. Take your child to the clinic/doctor							
l. Clean up messes made by your child							
m. Help your child do chores							
n. Provide money							

o. Provide clothes							
p. Provide a place to live							
q. Provide food							
r. Provide transportation							
s. Help your child with homework							
t. Play games with your child							
u. Take to/pick up child from school							
v. Take your child to the playground							

APPENDIX E

Interview Questions for Fathers

1. What are some of the best things about being a father?
 - When do you have the most fun with your son/daughter?
 - Do you spend time with your child and her/his mother? What is that like?
 - Describe a time when you felt really good about being a dad.
2. How did you learn how to be a dad?
 - What are some of the things about your father that you admire?
 - In what ways did the Caring Equation assist you as a new or young father?
 - What characteristics of the Caring Equation staff helped you the most?
 - What advice do you have for other young guys who are about to become fathers?
3. What are some of the biggest challenges for you as a father?
 - Who can you turn to when you need help as a dad? Any others?
 - How did the Caring Equation help you with what others expected of you as a father?
 - Describe how you see yourself and what you'd like to be doing 5 years from now.
4. Tell me about your job.
 - How supportive is your employer if you need time off related to your child?
 - Describe your dream job.
 - What are your plans for further education?
5. Describe your relationship with your child's mother.
 - How would she describe your fathering skills?
 - What are some of things about which you and she have disagreements?
 - How do you work through these issues and make things better?
 - How did the Caring Equation help you with your relationship with her?

6. Describe your participation in fatherhood activities when we had the Caring Equation.
- Of the services that were provided, which 5 did you find to be the most helpful? (see page of services)
 - Why or what about each service was helpful to you? (see page of services)
 - If we were to start a fatherhood program for young fathers, what things must we be sure to include?

APPENDIX F

Caring Equation Services – Of the services that you received, which are the top 5 services that you found to be the most helpful? Why or what about each service was helpful to you?

- Case Management: for example, assistance with obtaining other community services such as housing or working with someone to create a plan for services
- Mentor or relationship with male staff person (fatherhood specialist)
- Training to improve communication or couple's mediation
- Help getting a job and/or job training
- Phone calls/Home visits/Jobsite visits
- Legal services such as accompanying for a court appearance
- Health information and/or assistance from nurse
- Events for families (Father's day picnic, Fall Festival, Trip to beach)
- Transportation assistance
- Parenting information such as how to care for a baby and what can help you child
- Help getting childcare subsidy or daycare for your child
- Assistance to learn English
- Assistance getting a GED
- Food at gatherings
- Something else (describe)

APPENDIX G

Caring Equation Fathers Data Summary Chart

Client Number	518	292	276	524	189	210	690	614	299	500
Current Age of Father	27	27	24	26	27	25	24	24	27	28
Father's Age at Birth of Child	19	21	17	19	18	18	18	18	19	21
Mother's Age at Birth of Child	15	18	18	17	16	16	17	17	15	15
Couple Married	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Romantic Pair	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Relationship w/ Child's Mother	VS	VS	F	VS	S	N	VS	S	S	VD
Live w/ Child	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Live w/ Child on Weekends	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Relationship Rating w/ child	Very Good	Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Fair
1 st Child's Age	9	8	6	6	2 mo	7	6	6	7	7
School Grade	4 th	3 rd	1 st	1 st	SIDS	2 nd	K	1 st	2 nd	1st
2 nd Child's Age	6mo	7	6mo	4	2	2		5	3	5
School Grade				Pre				K	Pre	K
3 rd Child's Age				2	Exp.	1		Exp.		
Mother did Graduate HS	Yes 2007	Yes 2007	Yes 2004	Yes 2005	Yes 2006	Yes 2006	Yes 2007	No	Yes 2007	Yes 2007
Father's HS Education	HS Ctry	Less HS	HS Grad	HS Grad	HS Grad	HS Grad	HS Grad	Less HS	HS Ctry	Less HS
Some College			Yes			Yes	Yes			
Vocational Cert				Yes	Yes					
Job FT+benefits				Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Job FT-hourly	Yes	Yes							Yes	
Employed PT			Yes							Yes

Unemployed								Yes		
Time in This Job	3 yr	5 mo	5 mo	7 mo	7 yr	8 yr	5 yr	4 wks	5 mo	10 yr
Rating of Job	VS	VS	OK	VS	VS	VS	VS	P-OK	OK	OK
Father Positive Role Model	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Parenting Better	S	M	M	S	S	M	L	S	S	M
Years in C. E.	2.5	2.5	1.5	2	2	1.5	1	1	3	3

APPENDIX H

Father Involvement w/ School-age Child Tally

Client #: _____ **Child's Age:** _____

Use this scale to answer the following questions which relate to the first child you had which was the focus of your involvement in the Caring Equation. How often do you do the following activities with or for your child?

0 = Never **1** = Once a month **2** = Two times a month **3** = Once a week

4 = Two or three times a week **5** = Four or five times a week **6** = Six days a week or everyday

Activity	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
a. Make a meal for your child	3	1	3	2	1		
b. Have or eat a meal with your child	4	2	2	1	1		
c. Play with your child	4	1	4		1		
d. Dress your child	2	1	4	1	1		1
e. Help your child bathe	4		3	1	1		1
f. Comfort your child when upset	4	1	4			1	
g. Talk with your child	4	1	3			1	
h. Put your child to sleep	4	1	4		1		
i. Read with or to your child	1	3	2	2		1	1
j. Take care of child when he/she is sick	4	1	1	1		2	1
k. Take your child to the clinic/doctor	3	1	1	1		2	2
l. Clean up messes made by your child	4	1	3		2		
m. Help your child do chores	4	1	2	1	1	1	
n. Provide money	5	2	2	1			

o. Provide clothes	5	2	1		1	1	
p. Provide a place to live	5	1	3		1		
q. Provide food	4	2	2	1	1		
r. Provide transportation	4	1	4		1		
s. Help your child with homework	2	3	1		1	1	2
t. Play games with your child	4	1	3	1	1		
u. Take to/pick up child from school	2	2	3	1			2
v. Take your child to the playground	1	2	4	2	1		

APPENDIX I

Coding Categories for Caring Equation Fathers Interviews

Contextual Factors of Institutional Practices (CFIP) (included social support)

Latino male staff

Bilingual staff

Special programs for mothers

Infant care and child care subsidy

Collaboration with DHS for health care

Various workshops

Individual assistance whenever needed

Visits to home, school, or job site

Counseling and referrals (good listeners and very approachable)

Help finding jobs (resume creation, interviewing, help with applications)

Transportation assistance

Social events like sports outings and picnics

Contextual Factors of Cultural Expectations (CFCE)

Father as breadwinner

Being responsible or stepping up to plate

Marriage

Providing for child's needs

Contextual Factors of Employment Opportunities (CFEO)

Service industry jobs available (cook, construction, movie theaters, grocery store clerk)

Arlington Employment Center

Access to transportation and bus tokens

Low unemployment rate in Arlington

Online applications

Scholarships for vocational skills training or GED or ESL classes

Choice of jobs in same field (many restaurants, HVAC businesses, and construction)

Contextual Factors of Race/Ethnicity Resources & Challenges (CFRE)

Hispanic
Immigrant status
Limited-English-Proficiency
Undereducated
Gang affiliation
Need to live with relatives or rent a room

Father Factors (FF)

Role identification & role models
Relations with own father (make sure child knows you as Daddy)
Commitment (effect of becoming a father, not being a failure, see every day)
Knowledge and skills
Residential status
Employment characteristics (education, job choice)

Coparental Relationship (COR)

Marital status
Custodial arrangement
Relationship commitment (make work for child's benefit)
Cooperation
Mutual support
Conflict

Mother Factors (MF)

Attitude toward father
Expectations of father
Support of father
Employment characteristics

Child Factors (CF)

Gender
Age
Developmental status
Attitude toward father
Behavioral difficulties

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- Adams, C. F., Landsbergen, D., & Hecht, D. (1994). Organizational impediments to paternity establishment and child support. *Social Science Review*, 72, 109-126.
[doi:10.1086/604035](https://doi.org/10.1086/604035)
- Allen, W. D., & Doherty, W. J. (1996). The responsibilities of fatherhood as perceived by African American teenage fathers. *Families in Society*, 77, 142-155.
- Allen, W. D., & Doherty, W. J. (2004). "Being there": The perception of fatherhood among a group of African American adolescent fathers. *The Prevention Researcher*, 11 (4), 6-9.
- Amato, P. R., & Gilbreth, J. G. (1999). Nonresident fathers and children's well-being: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61 (3), 557-573.
[doi:10.2307/353560](https://doi.org/10.2307/353560)
- Anderson, E. A., Kohler, J. K., & Letiecq, B. L. (2002). Low-Income fathers and "responsible fatherhood" programs: A qualitative investigation of participants' experiences. *Family Relations*, 51, 148-155. [doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2002.00148.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2002.00148.x)
- Blankenhorn, D. (1995). *Fatherless America: Confronting our most urgent social problem*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Bunting, L., & McAuley, C. (2004). Research Review: Teenage pregnancy and parenthood: The role of fathers. *Child and Family Social Work*, 9, 295-303.
[doi:10.1111/j.1365-2206.2004.00335.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2206.2004.00335.x)

- Cabrera, N., & Peters, H. E. (2000). Public policies and father involvement. *Marriage and Family Review*, 29 (4), 295-314. [doi:10.1300/J002v29n04_04](https://doi.org/10.1300/J002v29n04_04)
- Carlson, M. J., & McLanahan, S. S. (2004). Early father involvement in fragile families. *Conceptualizing and measuring father involvement* (pp.241-271). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Coley, R. L. (2001). (In)visible men. *American Psychologist*, 56 (9), 743-753. [doi:10.1037//0003-066X.56.9.743](https://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066X.56.9.743)
- Coley, R. I., & Chase-Lansdale, P. (1998). Adolescent pregnancy and parenthood. *American Psychologist*, 53, 152-166. [doi:10.1037//0003-066X.53.2.152](https://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066X.53.2.152)
- Coley, R. L. (2001). (In)visible men. *American Psychologist*, 56 (9), 743-753. [doi:10.1037//0003-066X.56.9.743](https://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066X.56.9.743)
- Coley, R. L., & Hernandez, D. C. (2006). Predictors of paternal involvement for resident and nonresident low-income fathers. *Developmental Psychology*, 42 (6), 1041-1056. [doi:10.1037/0012-1649.42.6.1041](https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.42.6.1041)
- Cowan, P. A., Cowan, C. P., Pruett, M. K., Pruett, K., & Wong, J. J. (2009). Promoting fathers' engagement with children: Preventive interventions for low-income families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71, 663-679. [doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2009.00625.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2009.00625.x)
- Cox, J., & Bithoney, W. (1995). Fathers of children born to adolescent mothers: Predictors of contact with their children at 2 years. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, 149 (9), 962. [doi:10.1001/archpedi.1995.02170220028003](https://doi.org/10.1001/archpedi.1995.02170220028003)

- Cutrona, C. E., Hessling, R. M., Bacon, P. L., & Russell, D. W. (1998). Predictors and correlates of continuing involvement with the baby's father among adolescent mothers. *Journal of Family Psychology, 12* (3), 369. [doi:10.1037//0893-3200.12.3.369](https://doi.org/10.1037//0893-3200.12.3.369)
- Dallas, C. M. and Chen, S. C. (1998). Experiences of African American adolescent fathers. *Journal of Nursing Research, 20* (2), 210-223. [doi:10.1177/019394599802000206](https://doi.org/10.1177/019394599802000206)
- Dallas, C., Wilson, T., & Salgado, V. (2000). Gender differences in teen parents' perceptions of parental responsibilities. *Public Health Nursing, 17* (6), 423-433. [doi:10.1046/j.1525-1446.2000.00423.x](https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1525-1446.2000.00423.x)
- Darroch, J. E., Landry, D., & Oslak, S. (1990). Age differences between sexual partners in the United States. *Family Planning Perspectives, 31* (4), 160.
- Doherty, W. J., Erickson, M. F., & LaRossa, R. (2006). An intervention to increase father involvement and skills with infants during the transition to parenthood. *Journal of Family Psychology, 20* (3), 438-447. [doi:10.1037/0893-3200.20.3.438](https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.20.3.438)
- Doherty, W. J., Erickson, M. F., & Kouneski, E. F. (1996). *Responsible fathering: An overview and conceptual framework*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Doherty, W. J., Kouneski, E. F., & Erickson, M. F. (1998). Responsible fathering: An overview and conceptual framework. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 60*, 277-292. [doi:10.2307/353848](https://doi.org/10.2307/353848)

- Elo, I. T., Kino, R. B., & Furstenberg, F. F. (1999). Adolescent females: Their sexual partners and the fathers of their children. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *61*, 74-84. [doi:10.2307/353884](https://doi.org/10.2307/353884)
- Fagan, J., Bernd, E., & Whiteman, V. (2007). Adolescent fathers' parenting stress, social support, and involvement with infants. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *17* (1), 1-22. [doi:10.1111/j.1532-7795.2007.00510.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2007.00510.x)
- Fagan, J., Barnett, M., Bernd, E., & Whiteman, V. (2003). Prenatal involvement of adolescent unmarried fathers. *Fathering*, *1* (3), 283-301. [doi:10.3149/fth.0103.283](https://doi.org/10.3149/fth.0103.283)
- Florsheim, P., Sumida, E., McCann, D., Fukui, R., Seefeldt, T., Winstanley, M., & Moore, D. (2003). The transition to parenthood among young African American and Latino couples: Relational predictors of risk for parental dysfunction. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *17* (1), 65-79. [doi:10.1037//0893-3200.17.1.65](https://doi.org/10.1037//0893-3200.17.1.65)
- Forste, R. (2007). "Just like his dad": Family background and residency with children among young adult fathers. *Fathering*, *5* (2), 97-110. [doi:10.3149/fth.0502.97](https://doi.org/10.3149/fth.0502.97)
- Furstenberg, F. F., & Harris, K. M. (1993). When and why fathers matter: Impacts of father involvement on the children of adolescent mothers. In R. I. Lerman & T. J. Ooms (Eds.), *Young unwed fathers* (pp. 117-138). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Furstenberg, F. F., & Weiss, C. C. (2000). Intergenerational transmission of fathering roles in at risk families. *Marriage and Family Review*, *29* (2), 181-201. [doi:10.1300/J002v29n02_11](https://doi.org/10.1300/J002v29n02_11)

- Futris, T. G., & Schoppe-Sullivan, S. J. (2007). Mothers' perceptions of barriers, parenting alliance, and adolescent fathers' engagement with their children. *Family Relations*, 56, 258-269. [doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00457.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00457.x)
- Futris, T. G., Nielsen, R. B., & Olmstead, S. B. (2009). No degree, no job: Adolescent mothers' perceptions of the impact that adolescent fathers' human capital has on paternal financial and social capital. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 27, 1-20.
- Gavin, L. E., Black, M. M., Minor, S., Abel, Y., Papas, M. A., & Bentley, M. E. (2002). Young, disadvantaged fathers' involvement with their infants: An ecological perspective. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 31, 266-276. [doi:10.1016/S1054-139X\(02\)00366-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1054-139X(02)00366-X)
- Gee, C. B., & Rhodes, J. E. (2003). Adolescent mothers' relationship with their children's biological fathers: Social support, social strain, and relationship continuity. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 17 (3), 370-383. [doi:10.1037/0893-3200.17.3.370](https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.17.3.370)
- Goodyear, R. K., Newcomb, M. D., & Allison, R. D. (2000). Predictors of Latino men's paternity in teen pregnancy: Test of a mediational model of childhood experiences, gender role attitudes, and behaviors. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 47 (1), 116-128. [doi:10.1037//0022-0167.47.1.116](https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-0167.47.1.116)
- Guttmacher Institute. (2011). Facts on American teens' sexual and reproductive health. Retrieved from <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/FB-ATSRH.html>

- Hardy, J. B., & Duggan, A. K. (1988). Teenage fathers and the fathers of infants of urban, teenage mothers. *American Journal of Public Health*, 78, 919-922.
[doi:10.2105/AJPH.78.8.919](https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.78.8.919)
- Hardy, J. B., Duggan, A. K., Masnyk, K., & Pearson, C. (1989). Fathers of children born to young urban mothers. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 21 (4), 159-163+187.
[doi:10.2307/2135806](https://doi.org/10.2307/2135806)
- Healthy Teen Network. (2006). Supporting young fathers. Retrieved from
<http://www.healthyteennetwork.org/>
- Herzog, M. J., Umana-Taylor, A. J., Madden-Derdich, D. A., & Leonard, S. A. (2007). Adolescent mothers' perceptions of father's parental involvement: Satisfaction and desire for involvement. *Family Relations*. 56, 244-257. [doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00456.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00456.x)
- Horn, W. F. (2007). *Father facts*. Gaithersburg, MD: National Fatherhood Initiative.
- Howard, K. S., Burke Lefever, J. E., Borkowski, J. G., & Whitman, T. L. (2006). Fathers' influence in the lives of children with adolescent mothers. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20 (3), 468-476. [doi:10.1037/0893-3200.20.3.468](https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.20.3.468)
- Jaffe, S. R., Caspi, A., Moffitt, T. E., Taylor, A., & Dickson, N. (2001). Predicting early fatherhood and whether young fathers live with their children: Prospective findings and policy reconsiderations. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 42 (6), 803-815.
- Johnson, W. E. (2001). Paternal involvement among unwed fathers. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 23 (6/7), 513-536. [doi:10.1016/S0190-7409\(01\)00146-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0190-7409(01)00146-3)

- Kalil, A., Ziolo-Guest, K.M. and Coley, R.L. (2005). Perceptions of father involvement patterns in teenage-mother families: Predictions and links to mothers' psychological adjustment. *Family Relations*, 54, 197-211. [doi:10.1111/j.0197-6664.2005.00016.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0197-6664.2005.00016.x)
- Kirby, D. (1997). *No easy answers: Research findings on programs to reduce teen pregnancy*. Washington, D.C.: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.
- Krishnakumar, A., & Black, M. M. (2003). Family processes within three-generation households and adolescent mothers' satisfaction with father involvement. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 17 (4), 488-498. [doi:10.1037/0893-3200.17.4.488](https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.17.4.488)
- Lamb, M. E. (Ed.), (1997). *The role of the father in child development*. New York: Wiley.
- Lamb, M. E. (2000). The history of research on father involvement: An overview. *Marriage and Family Review*, 29 (2), 23-42. [doi:10.1300/J002v29n02_03](https://doi.org/10.1300/J002v29n02_03)
- Lamb, M. E., & Elster, A. B. (1985). Adolescent mother-infant-father relationships. *Developmental Psychology*, 21 (5), 768-773. [doi:10.1037//0012-1649.21.5.768](https://doi.org/10.1037//0012-1649.21.5.768)
- Landry, D. J., & Forrest, J. D. (1995) How old are U.S. fathers? *Family Planning Perspectives*, 27, 159-171. [doi:10.2307/2136260](https://doi.org/10.2307/2136260)
- Lane, T. S., & Clay, C. M. (2000). Meeting the service needs of young fathers. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 17 (1), 35-54. [doi:10.1023/A:1007515625838](https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1007515625838)

- Larson, N. C., Hussey, J. M., Gillmore, M. R., & Gilchrist, L. D. (1996). What about dad? Fathers of children born to school-age mothers. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, 279-289.
- Lerman, R. I. (1993). A national profile of young unwed fathers. *Young unwed fathers: Changing roles and emerging policies* (pp. 27-51). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Lerman, R. I., & Sorensen, E. (2000). Father involvement with their non-marital children: Patterns, determinants, and effects on their earnings. *Marriage and Family Review*, 29 (2), 137-158. [doi:10.1300/J002v29n02_09](https://doi.org/10.1300/J002v29n02_09)
- Levine, J. A., & Pitt, E. W. (1995) *New expectations: Community strategies for responsible fatherhood*. New York: Families and Work Institute.
- Manning, W. D., & Lichter, D. T. (1996). Parental cohabitation and children's economic well-being. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 998-1010. [doi:10.2307/353986](https://doi.org/10.2307/353986)
- Marsiglio, W. (1987). Adolescent fathers in the United States: Their initial living arrangements, marital experience and educational outcomes. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 19 (6), 240-241; 243-251.
- Marsiglio, W., & Cohan, M. (2000). Contextualizing father involvement and paternal influence: Sociological and qualitative themes. *Marriage and Family Review*, 75-95. [doi:10.1300/J002v29n02_06](https://doi.org/10.1300/J002v29n02_06)

- Marsiglio, W., Amato, P., Day, R. D., & Lamb, M. E. (2000). Scholarship on fatherhood in the 1990s and beyond. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62 (4), 1173-1191.
[doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.01173.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.01173.x)
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McGrew, M., & Shore, W. (1991). The problem of teenage pregnancy. *Journal of Family Practice*, 32 (1), 17-22.
- McLanahan, S. S., & Carlson, M. J. (2002). Welfare reform, fertility, and father involvement. *The Future of Children*, 12 (1), 146-165.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Miller, D. B. (1997). Adolescent fathers: What we know and what we need to know. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 14 (1), 55-69.
[doi:10.1023/A:1024544930648](https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024544930648)
- Moore, K. A., Romano, A., & Oakes, C. (1996). *Facts at a glance*. Washington, D.C.: Child Trends.
- National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (2006). Why it matters: Teen pregnancy, Out-of-Wedlock Births, Healthy Relationships and Marriage. Retrieved from <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/>

- National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (2010). Teen Pregnancy and Education. Retrieved from <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/>
- Nock, S. L. (1995). A comparison of marriages and cohabiting relationships. *Journal of Family Issues*, 16, 53-76. [doi:10.1177/019251395016001004](https://doi.org/10.1177/019251395016001004)
- Palm, G. F. (1998). *Developing a model of reflective practice for improving fathering programs*. Philadelphia, PA: National Center on Fathers and Families.
- Parke, R. D. (2000). Father involvement: A developmental psychological perspective. *Marriage and Family Review*, 29 (2), 43-58. [doi:10.1300/J002v29n02_04](https://doi.org/10.1300/J002v29n02_04)
- Parke, R. D., Coltrane, S., Borthwick-Duffy, S., Powers, J., & Adams, M. (2004). Assessing Father Involvement in Mexican-American families. *Conceptualizing and Measuring Father Involvement*, 17-38.
- Paschal, A. M., Lewis-Moss, R. K., & Hsiao, T. (2011). Perceived fatherhood roles and parenting behaviors among African American teen fathers. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. 26 (1) 61-83. [doi:10.1177/0743558410384733](https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558410384733)
- Pirog-Good, M. A., & Good, D. H. (1995). Child support enforcement for teenage fathers: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 14, 25-42. [doi:10.2307/3325431](https://doi.org/10.2307/3325431)
- Rangarajan, A., & Gleason, P. (1998). Young unwed fathers and AFDC children: Do they provide support? *Demography*, 35 (2), 175-186. [doi:10.2307/3004050](https://doi.org/10.2307/3004050)

- Rhein, L. M., Ginsburg, K. R., Schwarz, D. F., Pinto-Martin, J. A., Zhao, H., Morgan, A. P., & Slap, G. B. (1997). Teen father participation in child rearing: Family perspectives. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 21* (4), 244-252. [doi:10.1016/S1054-139X\(97\)00115-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1054-139X(97)00115-8)
- Robbers, M. L. P. (2008). The caring equation: An intervention program for teenage mothers and their male partners. *Children and Schools, 30* (1), 37-47. [doi:10.1093/cs/30.1.37](https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/30.1.37)
- Robbers, M. L. P. (2009). Facilitating fatherhood: A longitudinal examination of father involvement among young minority fathers. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 26*, 121-134. [doi:10.1007/s10560-008-0157-6](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-008-0157-6)
- Sander, J. H., & Rosen, J. L. (1987). Teenage fathers: Working with the neglected partner in adolescent childbearing. *Family Planning Perspectives, 19* (3), 107-110. [doi:10.2307/2135176](https://doi.org/10.2307/2135176)
- Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., & Cabrera, N. (2002). *Handbook of father involvement: Multidisciplinary perspectives*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Taylor, B., & Behnke, A. (2005). Fathering across the border: Latino fathers in Mexico and the U.S. *Fathering, 3* (2). [doi:10.3149/fth.0302.99](https://doi.org/10.3149/fth.0302.99)
- Thompson, S. D., & Crase, S. J. (2004). Fathers of infants born to adolescent mothers: A comparison with non-parenting males peers and adolescent mothers. *Children and Youth Services Review, 26*, 489-505. [doi:10.1016/j.chilyouth.2004.02.009](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2004.02.009)

Thompson, S. D., & Walker, A. C. (2004). Satisfaction with parenting: A comparison between adolescent mothers and fathers. *Sex Roles, 50* (9-10), 677-687.

[doi:10.1023/B:SERS.0000027569.27653.8e](https://doi.org/10.1023/B:SERS.0000027569.27653.8e)

Thornberry, T. P., Smith, C. A., & Howard, G. J. (1997). Risk factors for teenage fatherhood. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 59* (3), 505-522

[doi:10.2307/353942](https://doi.org/10.2307/353942)

United Nations Statistics Division. (2009). *Demographic Yearbook 2009*. New York: United Nations.

Walker, A. J., & McGraw, L.A. (2000). Who is responsible for responsible fathering?

Journal of Marriage and the Family, 62 (2), 563-569. [doi:10.1111/j.1741-](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00563.x)

[3737.2000.00563.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00563.x)

Weinman, M. L., Smith, P. B., & Buzi, R. S. (2002) Young fathers: An analysis of risk behaviors and service needs. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 19* (6),

437-453. [doi:10.1023/A:1021193629472](https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021193629472)

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Zavodny, M. (2001). The effect of partners' characteristics on teenage pregnancy and its

resolution. *Family Planning Perspectives, 33* (5), 192. [doi:10.2307/2673781](https://doi.org/10.2307/2673781)

CURRICULUM VITAE

Marilyn Faris Scholl graduated from Globe High School, Globe, Arizona, in 1972. She received her Bachelor of Science from Northern Arizona University in 1976 and received her Master of Arts in Education from Northern Arizona University in 1981. She was a Home Economics teacher for six years at Winslow High School in Winslow, Arizona, where she also taught at Northland Pioneer College.

She then spent three years at the Arizona Center for Vocational Education in Flagstaff, Arizona, assisting 103 Home Economics teachers at 77 schools throughout the five northern counties of Arizona. During these same years, she assisted the Arizona Department of Education in planning and conducting state-wide conference for vocational educators.

Relocating to Virginia in 1985, Marilyn Faris Scholl served as an Extension Home Economist in Fairfax County with the Virginia Extension Service. Since 1987 she has been employed by the Arlington Public Schools, Arlington, Virginia, as the Supervisor of Family and Consumer Sciences and Teenage Parenting Programs.

During her 25-year tenure with Arlington Public Schools, she has procured over 200 grants and administered more than \$11 million in grant funding, starting new programs for pregnant and parenting teens, young fathers, infants and toddlers, adolescent pregnancy prevention, parenting education, mediation, and family literacy. Her programs strengthen families by empowering individuals as consumers, parents, and employees.