



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance

National
Responsible
Fatherhood Clearinghouse



NRFC Webinar Series

Working with Dads: Encouraging and Supporting Father Involvement from Birth through Adolescence

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Webinar Transcript(Provided by PGI Global)

Moderator:

- Nigel Vann, National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

Opening Remarks

- Lisa Washington-Thomas, NRFC COTR, Office of Family Assistance

Presenters:

- Armin Brott, Ask Mr. Dad columnist and author of *The Expectant Father*, Oakland, CA
- David Miller, NRFC Social Media Manager and author of *Khalil's Way*, a children's book about bullying through the eyes of an 11-year old boy, Washington, DC
- Carl Pickhardt, Ph.D., Psychologist and author of *Surviving Your Child's Adolescence*, Austin, TX

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen please stand by. The Webinar is about to begin.

Good day and welcome to the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse Webinar. Today's webinar is being recorded.

At this time I'd like to turn the Webinar over to Mr. Nigel Vann. Please go ahead sir.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much. Good morning, good afternoon everybody wherever you're listening to us from. And thank you everybody for joining us for the Webinar.

My name is Nigel Van. I am sitting in today for Patrick Patterson who's the Manager of National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse.

He's been whisked away to some exotic Caribbean location by his wife so he couldn't be here with us today.

The title of the Webinar today is working with dads, encouraging and supporting father involvement from birth through adolescence.

I think all of us involved in this fatherhood work know the importance of father involvement in the lives of their children. And that's why we do this work.

What we're going to do today is look at some tips for dads and particular ways we can connect with our children throughout their lifecycle.

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And we're going to consider strategies that fatherhood programs can use to support father engagement at particular stages of child development.

We've got three great presenters lined up for you. They're coming to you today from three different time zones - Eastern, Central and Pacific.

I'm in the Mountain Time Zone so we're truly talking from across the country today.

You know, one of the great things for me in doing this fatherhood work over the years has been the opportunity to meet and get to know so many caring, passionate, professional and knowledgeable people working to help fathers, strengthening families and improve the lives of children. And so it's a really great pleasure to have three particularly strong presenters for you today.

We've got Armin Brott who's going to focus on tips to help new dads bond with their babies and infants. David Miller's going to present strategies that dads can use to ensure they're engaged in the lives of their school aged children.

And Carl Pickhardt will share ideas to help dads better communicate with their adolescent children.

I'll introduce each of them a bit more before their individual presentations. They've certainly got a lot of information to share. So to make it easier for those of you would like to take notes we'll be recording the Webinar. And in the recording, all presentation materials and transcripts will be posted on our Web site fatherhood.gov within seven to nine business days.

As usual we'll have a question and answer session at the end of the Webinar to respond to your questions. And so at the very end of the Webinar we're going to have a special message for all the fathers out there so we encourage you to stick around for that.

So now let me turn it to Matt Crews who's going to remind you of how to ask questions during the presentation. And we are using a slightly different platform now so it is a little bit different than it has been for those of you who've joined us before. Matt?

Matt Crews: Thank you Nigel and thank you for everyone who has joined us today.

As Nigel mentioned we are using a new software. This is called Adobe Connect and we're really excited about some of the features it has on here to make our Webinars more interactive.

During the call we will be taking question and answer as we always do. However you can submit a question right at the bottom left-hand corner of your screen which is a little bit different location than the last software that we used.

But feel free to enter a question. We will not answer it during the Webinar but at the duration of it.

In addition, we will still be doing poll questions. They will pop up on your screen after we do our Q&A. You can simply pick one of the options of the poll that you feel is the best answer suitable to your experience and we'll take it from there.

So if at any point you have a question during the Webinar go ahead and enter it and we'll try to address any needs and concerns you all may have. Thank you.

Nigel Vann: Thanks Matt. Let me now turn to Lisa Washington-Thomas, our fearless leader at the Office of Family Assistance to offer a few words of welcome. Lisa?

Lisa Washington-Thomas: Hi. Thank you very much Nigel. I just want to thank everyone for participating in our Webinar. We are so pleased that you took time out of your busy schedule to talk about the importance of fatherhood.

We just finished a fatherhood buzz tour. And during the preparation for the fatherhood buzz we found some - we found some things from - found out some things from research about the importance of dad's spending quality time with their children.

For instance, did you know that changing diapers helps dads to bond with their baby and provides moms with a welcome break?

Also, the holding, gazing, smiling, kissing, singing and laughing all cause causes positive activities in the babies brains.

Babies with highly involved fathers have improvement to speak earlier and better when they start school as toddlers. And children with actively involved fathers display less behavior problems in school.

And finally the amount of time that fathers spend with his children is less important than what they do with that time.

And the final tip that we have is that teenagers still need a great deal involvement with their dads.

So what we learned that all - and as I know that you know that at all stages of child development it is important for fathers to be involved and that the children benefit. And it just makes our life and our work rewarding knowing that we are helping children to reach their potential.

So we have some great speakers today who will go into more detail of explaining and discussing the importance of fatherhood involvement at different stages of a child development from birth to adolescent.

And I thank you so much for listening and I hope that you will learn something as I'm expecting to learn something myself. Thank you. Nigel?

Nigel Vann: Thank you Lisa. Now Matt if we can go to the next slide I'm just going to briefly provide a few overview details on the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse.

I think most of you are probably quite familiar with us for now. But as you see on the screen we are funded by the Office of Family Assistance. Our director is Kenny Braswell. And the manager I mentioned earlier is Patrick Patterson.

And Kenny was going to actually originally sit in for Patrick on this Webinar but then he got pulled away to an important appointment with his granddaughter I believe it was. So that's why he's not with us today. So can - let's go to the next slide Matt.

And as you can see here you find us at www.fatherhood.gov. And you can contact us at info@fatherhood.gov. We particularly encourage you to take note of that phone number there. That's our national call center. And dads and moms and practitioners can call that number and there's somebody manning the phone in working hours from Monday, Friday.

And if you don't get a person you can leave a message but someone will get back to you soon as they can and they can help people deal with, you know, issues to do with mediation, child support.

If a couple's trying to work out issues around access and visitation they can talk to both of them on the phone. They can refer you to local resources. It really is a useful resource for parents and practitioners.

We're doing a lot of social media work. David Miller is on - is one of our presenters today is leading a lot of these efforts.

We do on the Web site have information on the President's Fatherhood Mentor Initiative and also Fatherhood Buzz which Lisa mentioned briefly.

We just had events of various barbershops around the country where the tips that Lisa was referring to were handed out on tip cards. And we're really trying to connect with men in the community in those kind of ways.

And you also may have seen some of the PSAs out of our annual media campaign. You can see that picture in the bottom of your screen there which is from the cheerleader ad which has been one of the most popular (ad).

It's another effort to really spread the word about responsible fatherhood and the importance of fathers. Next slide Matt.

And basically, you know, if your dad you can go to the Web site and look for tips. If you're a fatherhood program you can go and look for all sorts of strategies and ideas and resourceful information for researchers and policymakers. Next slide Matt.

And finally we just wanted to let you know about we're going to have a Twitter Town Hall which I've been learning a little bit about on Wednesday, next Wednesday from 6:00 to 7:00 Eastern Time.

And our conversation's going to be around our latest product which is called Responsible Fatherhood toolkit resources from the field.

It's - we've gathered information from a lot of people who've been doing this work for 15 years or more and the toolkit's going to have information which we believe is going to be useful to not just new practitioners but also experienced practitioners.

And the volume's going to be available online by the end of this month which you can print or just access online in quick view. You can download various activities and resources.

And this is the first volume of a number to come. So please do check father.gov for that. If you're on our listserv you'll get more information as that becomes available.

But if you'd like to join us for the Twitter Town Hall that tells you how to do it on there. So now let's move on to the next slide Matt. And I will introduce our first speaker Mr. Armin Brott.

Many of you have probably heard Armin's name. He's besides being the proud father of three a former US Marine, one of the country's leading experts on fatherhood. And you probably know him for his Ask Mr. Dad column which appears in various newspapers and online.

He's also the host of Positive Parenting, a weekly radio program which airs in the San Francisco Bay area and a number of other markets and also Positive Parenting for Military Families which airs on the American Forces Network.

He's been hailed by Time magazine as the super dad, super dad. He's the author of eight best-selling books on fatherhood and has written various publications - has written for various publications including the New York Times, Newsweek, Parenting, Men's Health and the Washington Post.

He's been a best guest on many radio and TV shows and lives with his family in Irvine, California where I believe he's speaking to us from today.

So Armin, share some wisdom with us please.

Armin Brott: Nigel thank you very much. And thanks Matt and Lisa and everybody else from the Clearinghouse. It's really great to be here.

As Nigel said I live in Oakland, California which is just right exactly next-door to Berkeley. And I think having spent many, many years living near Berkeley and in Berkeley actually I think I developed a strong nonconformist streak.

So even though we're talking about engaging dads, the title of the conference was engaging dads at birth through age 12 I need to start a little bit before that during the pregnancy period which is a time that often gets left off of the whole equation about father involvement because you think father involvement you've got to have a baby to be involved.

Well the reality of it is the research shows us pretty conclusively that when dads are involved during pregnancy they will be more involved after the baby comes.

And the involvement in pregnancy is not only for the dad. Those of you who are dealing with Title X issues in your practices you know about the reproductive things that are going on in a lot of the maternal child health.

One of the biggest predictors of low birth weight babies -- and we all know that low birth weight babies are at risk for all sorts of health issues, intellectual issues, higher risk of death upon birth and it's not a very good thing, the whole low birth weight babies. But the biggest predictor of low birth weight babies is maternal stress.

And when dads are involved in the pregnancy -- and I think Lisa sort of mentioned this too that it, although a little bit later that it relieves some of the stress to have dad there.

He can take on some of the responsibility when he's there, he's involved, he's encouraging. She's going to go and be much, much more likely to get prenatal care which is going to be very much involved in helping her through the pregnancy, helping the baby come out as well as possible increasing health outcomes for mom and baby.

So getting the dads involved again during the pregnancy is fantastic for the moms. It's fantastic for the babies and also sets the stage for the dads about how to be involved afterwards so they begin to kind of make the pregnancy their own, they get connected so when the baby's born he's not quite the stranger that you might expect.

So let me take you through a little bit starting at the beginning Matt if we can go to the next slide. There we go.

So going to talk about various stages of early fatherhood, so just going to talk a little bit about the expectant father stage.

Then I'll talk about the first year which I think is absolutely critical to the entire process of being a father.

And there's going to be the ages 1 through 5 and then I'm going to just really very, very briefly talk about ages 6 to 9 because that's going to be covered a little bit later in a lot more detail rate after this.

So let's start with the expectant father. Again it's being there involved, it's incredibly important to be there.

And what a lot of people don't really realize is that the dad's involvement in pregnancy, the emotional involvement, certainly moms are going through more physically, but the dad's emotional connection to the pregnancy is just as profound as moms.

They could go through just as much stress psychologically. They go through just as much soul-searching about how can we afford this, what can we possibly do, how am I ever going to do this, do we need to get another job, oh my God how's my life going to change -- just a lot of that going on.

And what happens unfortunately is that dads kind of put that aside in the interest of focusing on the mom which is not a bad thing to do but it's important for dads to focus on themselves as well.

And then in the first year I kind of look at that as being really the most important year of all. And I think I thought I sent you some slides.

The slides actually are more of my notes than the actual thing. But I always - I have the image of the first year of when the baby's born can't do anything -- can't walk, can't talk, can't crawl.

At the end of the first year you've got a baby who can stand up and take a couple of steps and say a few words. In a way that's kind of like what fatherhood is about in the first year.

You've got a brand-new baby as a dad. You don't know what you're doing. You probably have never held a baby and don't know how to change diapers. You don't know how to respond to what the babies doing.

And by the end of the first year you kind of got a pretty good handle on it. You can do stuff. You can change those diapers with your eyes closed but you have a long way to go.

And the long way to go starts after the first year moving on to the preschool years and kindergarten where you're really kind of beginning to make a strong relationship with the child.

It's hard especially for dads in the first year to connect with their kids because they aren't as responsive to our jokes and attempts to connect with them. So that's really what's going to be going on.

Plus you're figuring out a little bit more what your role is. In first year there's all sorts of stuff you need to do and that it changes a little bit, the relationship with the mom back up in the ages 1 through 5.

And then the ages 6 and above you're really starting to deal with some of the things you'll see later on in the teenage years. You realize that your child is beginning to separate you. And it's hard for dads to deal with that.

And you really have to learn that your role is changing from kind of the dad who can do everything and is the most fantastic guy in the world to a dad who needs to stand back and just respond and give offers of help when he's asked for it.

So all right Nigel let's - I'm sorry Matt let's go to the next slide if we can.

Okay yes, this was the notes. You're getting all my secret information is there. I was going to tell you all this but what's really - I want to talk about it from both sides of this. And what the dads can do and what the practitioners can do.

And what the practitioners kind of look at the what dads can do side also because you need to be presenting this information to them to give the dads the hints.

But dads really need to be involved in pretty much every aspect of the pregnancy. Looking at it from the perspective of the partner they - if they can get involved in helping her get exercise, get nutrition, make sure that she's eating right, those are going to be very, very important things.

Show her that you really love her particularly as the pregnancy develops. She needs to know that. She needs to know that you're there, that you want to be a dad, that you're interested in the whole process and particularly you're still going to love her as her body is changing. Those are critical things to do.

It's also important for dads as the pregnancy develops to start doing stuff without being asked to do it, pick things up, clean the house, make some meals, go shopping -- that sort of thing, just the simplest things but start taking on some of the responsibilities.

And then one of the big things I think is absolutely critical is to have some discussions with your partner about expectations. She's - what is she expecting from you as a dad and what are you expecting from you as a dad? Those things are probably not the same.

Them from the perspective of the dad himself take a childbirth class, you've got to do that. It's very important to understand what could possibly happen, what could never happen but just to be prepared.

I strongly suggest to dads that they go to every OB obstetrician visit that they can possibly can. That's the way that you're going to connect with the people who are going to be delivering your baby. And it's important to show them that you want to be involved as well.

At work you've got to resolve family leave issues and workplace issues.

From the perspective - I'm sorry the practitioner point of view really you need to encourage questions and participation.

So if you are the OB or if you are a social worker you've got to actually come out there and ask the dads do you have any questions? Hey what do you think about this because dads are often going to sit there and not us questions because they don't want to be embarrassed that they don't know anything.

That's kind of a category of redecorating. It's important - you would think that this is a big deal but the environment that dads are in makes a tremendous amount of difference.

So if your - if the dad is going to a pediatrician's office for example or an obstetrician's office and there are nothing but women's magazines and parenting magazines that are filled with ads for nursing bras dads are not

going to be too terribly excited about that. They may actually feel alienated and excluded and that will - you need to change things around.

Have a couple of Sports Illustrated subscriptions or some men's health. Things like that that can really encourage dads, let them know that they really are welcome here.

It's also important to recommend as many books and resources as you possibly can. And that could be online, it could be print resources, that could be apps. It doesn't matter what it is but just to let them know that there are lots and lots of places and lots of options to do.

And then important for the practitioners to talk to the dads about their important role.

And you can go back I think and take a look at those tips that Lisa mentioned. Those are great things but to let the dads know well so many dads don't realize if your involved during pregnancy you're going to have lower chance of birth, low birth weight babies later on.

If your involved after the pregnancy comes you're going to have a more social child, you're going to have a more intellectually competent child.

And if possible offer classes that are for dads and particularly for dads only. This is another one of these things that dads need to feel welcome and teach classes for expectant fathers. And it's called Expectant Fathers Only because every once in a while we get a mom in the class and the dynamic changes completely. Dads will not talk if there's a woman there.

So if you want dads to be involved you've got to approach them that way.

Okay let's go to the next one if we can.

Okay so talking about the new fathers in the first year. I think the most important thing I need to tell this to dads constantly is you've got to just close your eyes and jump in.

Yes you're going to make a ton of mistakes. That's how you get good at this stuff. You learn to make mistakes. You do the kinds of things, you know, moms are good at this and are good at it because they've done - they've figured out 300 things that don't work. And that's how you were - you will become competent and confident as a dad.

If you can, take family leave. And not everybody's able to do that but usually most guys are able to cobble together a couple vacation days or days off or take a few sick days here and there. But be there as much as you possibly can because this is where the relationship starts.

Never miss a chance. And I've always looked at this as - and I get funny looks when I say it but diaper changing is kind of a highly underrated way of bonding with your child.

So never miss a chance to change a diaper. If you possibly can, do it. It's a great thing. You get to learn your baby - what the baby feels like, sounds like. And the baby learns to see you as an active participant.

And being engaged with the little baby is kind of hard sometimes and so doing things like going to the grocery store and, you know, taking your child out for walks you again, you kind of begin to form that relationship.

Grocery stores I think are fantastic places. I remember taking my kids there and, you know, to the produce section and rub a kiwi on the hand and say hey this is a kiwi. Isn't it kind of soft? And then you try a coconut and it's different. Kids going to have no idea what you're talking about but you're building that relationship.

Get to know your baby's temperament if you possibly can. And what's one of those things that you'll look back a few years into fatherhood and you say boy I saw that stuff when this kid was two weeks old.

And if you can get to know how your baby is you're going to have a really good shot at developing a better relationship.

Start thinking about childproofing, not going to do a whole lot but start thinking about it.

And then take care of yourself is a tremendously important thing. Dad - kids are - they have an amazing capacity to bring out the absolute fury in us that we're never very familiar with.

But there's nothing like your own child to make you incredibly angry. And it's important to understand that that's going to happen and to understand that there are ways of dealing with that and you need to manage that anger.

From the practitioner's point of view again we're talking about the dad friendly environment, making the exam rooms and waiting rooms friendly. Having evening and weekend hours is incredibly important because a lot of dads are not involved in taking their kids to the pediatricians or other appointments because they can't do it because they've got to work.

Education again, particularly about dad's role in breast-feeding, very important role in breast-feeding. The more - excuse me, the guidelines are pretty much that you want to have your baby breast-fed nothing but breast milk for the first six months.

And then after the six months you can phase out food, phase-in - I'm sorry, yes, phase out the milk, phase in the food so at a year you can wean the baby. That's the ideal guidelines.

Dads who are involved and encouraging have wives or partners who breast-feed longer and who are - enjoy it more. And just the difference between going from four months to six months cuts the risk of ear infection and pneumonia by more than half -- major, major involvement.

So dads think oh I can't be involved in breast-feeding but you really can. It's very important.

And then you need to start - start having conversations with the moms about gatekeeping. And this is something that's somewhat controversial but it's really important.

Moms are still very much the portal through which parenting is - parents go through. And people will look at the mom, they'll look at her as a primary parent. And she will possibly do things that could interfere with the dad's involvement with the child not in a malicious way but saving him the trouble.

So getting back to the diapers like, you know, oh, let me change the diapers. I'll take care of that. Don't worry about it. Well no, you need to do that yourself.

Or leaving the dads -- you'll see this later on -- leaving the dad was a big list if she goes out with for the evening with her girlfriends. She'll say the baby needs to be wearing this and eat this food and have this and a long list of things which is fantastic but it keeps him from making the kinds of mistakes that he needs to make.

Okay so let's go on to the next one then. We're at evolving fathers. Okay. This is really when the relationship with the child really kind of kicks it into high gear here.

So I think one of the most important things dads can do is volunteer in your child's school even if it's the preschool. Come in, hang out. And if it's a preschool or kindergarten you're probably going to be a large piece of playground equipment because kids are going to be jumping all over you.

But being there is so important. And the look on your child's face when you walk in -- and everybody loves to see the dad coming in -- it's absolutely priceless.

And that are not nearly enough men involved in early childhood education. And having the dads there shows the kids that you're important, shows the kids that they're important to you and shows the people who are running the schools or the day care programs that dads do care and really need focus and pay attention.

Reading is absolutely critical. And I could've started to talk about reading even in the first year. I think when I started reading to my kids from day one and I think it's an important, very, very important thing and I know that we're going to hear more about them later on but the reading process every night if you possibly can it's so important.

And then as your children are growing older it's important to kind of talk a little bit less and listen a little bit more because they really do have interesting things to say.

And they want to be listened to. And if you just sort of go and you turn it to something that you want to go off on you're not going to get the same level of involvement.

Kids are not going to come and talk to you later on if they've learned at age 2 that they can't talk to because you're not listening.

Electronics start kicking in. This is something I did have to deal with my oldest who is 22 or my middle one who's 20 because there - this wasn't the kind of electronics. But I can tell you my 10-year-old from the very beginning she has been better at every single piece of electronics than I've got around the house than anybody else.

And it's important to keep that to a minimum, keep a lid on it and make sure that it doesn't become an electronic babysitter, that it becomes something that can augment your relationship with your child.

Getting to know your kids is so important. And the way that you do that is you get to know their friends. You drive the car pool. You take them where they need to go. You get involved in every aspect that you possibly can.

The goal of this whole thing is you do not want to end up as mommy's Little helper that you need to be your own man. You need to get involved and do everything you possibly can on your own terms to build the relationship.

And that really kind of leads to another thing which I think is so important which is don't devalue what you do.

Moms and dads interact with their kids differently. Dads tend to be -- and this is very stereotypical but it really does tend to play out this way. Moms tend to be a little bit quieter and do more hand games, more interaction facially and expressions. Dads tend to be more physical.

There's nothing wrong with that. Kids grow up having - kids who grow up having equal parts dad and mom do so much better than kids who don't have.

So if you continually stop jumping on the couch because you're concerned that your partner's going to get upset about it wait till she leaves and do it.

Your chances are very, very slim that you're going to do anything that's going to be irresponsible or dangerous around your child. You're on this call because you're - you want to be there, you want to be involved so, so important.

And then also very important and we kind of lose track throughout fatherhood of the moms here. And you need to be taking care of the mom making sure that she's okay.

So on the practitioner side very important. This is something that's again highly underrated to get to make specific outreach to dads. When a notes comes home saying here's a - there's a PTA meeting coming next week, why don't you come to it, dads have a tendency to process anything that has the word parents in it as now that equals mom and this isn't for me.

And so you need to say dads please come to this thing. It's even better if you possibly can get on the phone, have some dads make the phone calls to do this and say hey (Bob), I'm doing it here. We need you down here. That's the way they're going to get dads to be involved in PTA and any other sort of educational issue or anything really pretty much.

And think about the kinds of policies that you have particularly around divorced dads. A lot of divorced dads that I talk to still have difficulty getting notified about school events, school plays -- any kind of thing like that because school sends only to the mom.

And with email it's not like it costs them anything extra to add you to the email list. But it's important from the school's perspective or the practitioner perspective to make sure that dads are involved.

When divorced dads are involved with their kids you have the same benefits pretty much as when in - married or dads who are involved in relationships are as well.

And think about things like checking IDs. It's so common when - very often you get - people check IDs when a parent picks up a child. Quite often you'll see that they'll check the IDs of the dads but they won't check the IDs of moms. Think about the message that that sends to the dads about whether they're welcome or not.

You need to continue those discussions with the moms about gatekeeping. And the praise issue is so important. This is if you ever watched the old I Love Lucy reruns, you know, you see that the way Lucy would get Ricky to do something would be to talk to Ethel and say oh Ricky is so good at this stuff. I just love to watch him. And he's of course listening from slightly, you know, from 5 feet away.

When the dads hear that they're doing something valuable, that their partner appreciates what they're doing, that they're doing a good job they're going to want to come back and do it again.

So the more that you focus on what he's doing well instead of what he's not doing well the more involved you're going to get.

Offering resources is going to be tremendously important. We've talked about that before about apps or books or programs like this for example I mean anything like that that you can get the dad so that they can learn about their role.

I've got the word bribery in here which I think is actually it's sort of a flip comment, sort of not.

If you want to have meetings, you want to have dads come to organizations, you want to have dads come to PTA conferences, you want to have them come to any other kind of conference, if you give door prizes and you have food available -- and it sounds ridiculous but you're going to get a lot more guys come in if they have a chance to win something than if you don't.

And kind of along the lines of bribery if particularly if you're having an event on a weekend and you want dads to show up make sure that you've got childcare.

Dads really, really do despite whatever stereotypes there are they really do want to spend time with their kids. And if you have an event on a weekend that's going to take them away from those kids they may not be that terribly interested in doing it.

But if there's going to be childcare and they know that their kids are going to be having fun they will be much more involved.

And then keep on educating, keep teaching them about their important role, how much, the contributions that they're making to their children, to themselves, to society and suggest the ways or in the other column here about what dads can do, suggest those things and other things for how they can be involved.

So I know I'm running out of time here so just so if we could get to the next slide here we'll go through that in about a second.

Yes so this one basically -- and I know we're going to hear a lot more about this -- it's really kind of more of the same. Try it as much as you can, volunteer as much as you can.

You really need to start adapting your parenting style to the needs of the child. You need to have the kind of conversations that you don't want to have, conversations about media, conversations about friends, a little bit age-appropriate about sex and start giving your children responsibility.

Let them take on a role. Let them fail. Kids who don't fail -- and there's a lot of the, you know, you hear about the helicopter parenting -- kids who don't learn how to fail and recover don't learn how to take risks later on in their lives. And I'm talking about healthy risks, not driving too fast.

So giving them responsibility, allowing them to develop skills is really important.

Keep on reading, absolutely has to be done. See if they - make sure you can get as much play in, physical play as you possibly can.

And then on the practitioner side again it's kind of more of the same about making sure that the environment that you've got is dad friendly that you're making sure that you're making specific outreach to get dads to come in that is in a dad specific sort of way.

Keep talking to the mom. Keep reminding dad about important he is. Show media messages then and media messages of positive - are positive media messages of fathers are few and far between but they are available.

For the most part we're portrayed as dopes. But if you can find - here's an example of a guy who quit his high profile job to stay home and take care of the kids or to spend more time with the family. Those are things that dads need to see. Yes, somebody else can do that.

Again, keep it fun. I do a lot of work with men's health. And we've had great experiences and great reaction and results in getting men to take - to get - to go to health fairs and to have prostate cancer screenings and other kinds of screenings by working with NFL teams to have those screens available at the stadium possibly during a game, possibly during a time that isn't the game but they get to go in the locker room, things like that to engage the dads in something, making it fun, making it entertaining is really going to be the way that you've got to get these guys involved.

So the last slide of all that and this is - yes we there we are. So you can get a hold of meat obviously misterdad.com.

And there's different - you probably can go back and look at the slides. I do want to take you through all of them. But there's a blog that Nigel mentioned also do a couple of different radio shows, all of our podcasts are available of those going back several years, written a number of books some of which you may have seen that cover some of the territory that I've covered here about, you know, the expectant father dealing with pregnancy the first year, dealing with the first year.

And I've also started coming out with apps that are based on those books because I'm realizing or we're all realizing that young dads these days are not necessarily going to be reachable through a book. You want to reach you dads you're going to have to reach them in their pocket.

And that's going to be through their phone. And they're going to need to be - you need to present the information that you've got in a much different way than we did even five, six years ago.

So there you are. Thank you very much for listening. Sorry I kind of whipped through that very quickly but had a lot cover it and thank you.

Nigel Vann: Okay thanks very much Armin. Yes and yes the slides will be available for everybody to download. And Armin if you had intended to send other slides if you want to send those along we can probably make those available to people.

Armin Brott: Okay that's no problem.

Nigel Vann: So let me now turn to our colleague David Miller, Social Media Manager for the Clearinghouse. He's going to teach me a bit about Twitter later. We're supposed to be going to David now Matt on the screen.

So David's besides being our Social Media Manager he's a founder of the Urban Leadership Institute which focuses on leadership development to empower youth and adults.

He launched the Raising Him Alone Campaign in 2009, an (advocacy) campaign focused on supporting single moms and grandmas who are raising boys.

He's a member of Leap for Ghana, a project focused on building sustainable education infrastructure in a rural village in the Eastern region of Ghana West Africa.

He's also the author of several books including lessons I learned from my father, a collection of quotes from men of African descent and most recently Khalil's Way which is the first in a series of children's books for boys of color.

He's a formal Baltimore City Public School Teacher. He's married with three kids, now lives in DC and it's great to have him as a colleague and looking forward to hearing what he's going to tell us about school aged children. David?

David Miller: Thanks Matthew and to all of our colleagues across the country that are participating in this exciting Webinar I want to thank Mr. David Armin for providing us with some rich and tangible information to really begin to look at this continuum that we call fatherhood.

Ladies and gentlemen I'm going to be really talking about encouraging and supporting father involvement for children ages 6 to 12. So Matt we can go to the next slide.

One of the things that I think it's really critical to discuss and again I think Armin sort of began with this discussion around dads and reading.

Literacy is a critical component of parenting and of being a good father. And oftentimes as Armin indicated a lot of times we tend to think that anything educational related falls within mom's purview.

But when you look at a lot of the research around literacy and father engagement we see that children that have very active dads who are engaged in literacy and literacy-based activities with children starting at an early age do definitely do things like improve a child's vocabulary, improve a child's fluency as it relates to reading and also writing because oftentimes we talk about literacy in children we only talk about reading.

But when you look at things like writing, writing is also a critical academic function. And so having dads participate with children as a young as possible on reading and writing activities is very important.

I'm a dad of three children. I'm the oldest of 17. My son is 13. My daughter is 8. And all of my children are avid readers.

One of the things that we do is I host a day - I don't let mom do it. I host a summer reading competition with my children. They read X number of books depending upon because all three are different ages.

And depending upon how many books that they read -- and they have to write very short essays on, you know we have some, you know, sort of in-house prizes. It might be gift cards. It might be an evening at one of their favorite places for lunch or dinner.

And so even trying to incentivize the power of reading and writing and we all know for young children story time is just a tremendous opportunity for young children to bond with dad.

And for those practitioners that are listening oftentimes encouraging moms to get dads involved even if mom and dad are not living in the same households, schedule some time, you know, every Wednesday dad is going to come over for 25 minutes or for 30 minutes and he's going to read to his children before bedtime.

Because oftentimes, you know, moms and dads may not be living in the same home but really kind of figuring out some schedules and some continuity between the adults to ensure that things like story time and read aloud are not just activities for moms.

And so we really want to make sure that the practitioner understand that we've got to make sure that the noncustodial dads are involved in reading time and things like going to the library.

Most public libraries throughout the United States offer things like read aloud and story time. Many times it may be on a Saturday morning. So dads who might be working the evening shift sometimes you'll have storybook time at the public libraries in different cities.

So consult your local library to find out about story time and also recommended reading lists of books. Reading and playing with books again is a wonderful and special opportunity for dads and children, particularly younger children during those early child years, picture books, storybooks, really, really important.

There's some dynamic books out here written and illustrated by children's book authors.

I just did a presentation on looking at children's literature for the Latino community. And there are a host of award-winning Latino children's book authors and also illustrators. And oftentimes you guys can get that information from Internet or consult your local librarian.

As your children get older it's really important that you do have memory to you because again you want to be able to practice some of those concrete literacy skills, reading comprehension and things like fluency.

And so as your children get older take time. Take turns. I'm sorry dad may read a passage, child might read a passage.

Or sometimes as your children get older particularly as they are preteen, you know, they may not want dads to read to them. So it's important to allow your children to read to you. And dads sometimes you might have to wait, Monday night football may have to wait or basketball game or soccer match or your favorite telephone programs may have to wait 15 minutes or 20 minutes to allow your children to get an opportunity to read.

Matt we can go to the next slide.

Again this is just really basically sort of drilling down on this whole idea around literacy strategies for dads.

Once again oftentimes things like story time, things like going to the library are often relegated to mom. And so we really want particularly practitioners to begin to drive home this whole notion that dads have to be equally involved in education and also literacy.

And one great strategy for organizations that may be listening is to have a children's book Expo specifically for fathers to have a heavy emphasis on finding children's books written and illustrated by dads or by men and having your organization it could be a head start. You could be a different kind of community-based organization. You could be a school.

And again you could partner with your local library and have books on display written by dads or books, children's books that present dads and children in a very positive light.

Oftentimes or just like you talk about the mainstream media oftentimes it's very difficult for historically I mean it's been difficult to find positive representations of dads and children within children's book literature but that has changed over the last year or two.

I can think of maybe 15 to 20 books that have come out for children ages say 4 to 9 that have prominent dads featured in those books.

And I'm actually as we speak working on a collection of children's books that really focus on stay-at-home dads and single dads. Because when you look at the data there's increasing number of single dads that we don't necessarily talk about. And they're also absent from the children's book literature.

Things like story time, getting your son or daughter, getting children to begin to develop stories and tell stories in their own words, having them begin to develop imaginary characters because children oftentimes like the power of their imagination.

So even if you and your children are doing a collective project whereas dads you create an imaginary character and you might even dress up as that imaginary character and have your son or daughter develop an imaginary character and they develop - I mean they dress up as a character and then each of you right sort of a short story about that imaginary character I think that those are things that really highlight and uplift the power of literacy and strategies for dads.

Next slide Matt, communicating with pre-teens. And this is often a challenge.

I can remember when my 17-year-old was, you know, 11, 12 and talking to dad oftentimes wasn't a priority because one of the things that I would always ask my daughter is coming you know, what little boys in school like you, what little boys in school are picking on you.

But this whole notion around dads literally carving out time to talk to your preteens, table time I think is always good, having dinner or lunch with your children.

And once again for those families that are not living in the same home sometimes it's about mom and dad getting on the same page and dad saying to mom do you mind if I come over every Thursday for dinner time, you know, at 6 o'clock and, you know, to really begin to establish some consistency and a ritual.

And dad a lot of times I think that, you know, sometimes you've got to come to mom very humble and kind of work through some of these issues but really helped the mom understand that you really want to be more proactive in your preteen's life. And so things like table time where you can sit down and talk to your children about everything from, you know, what happened in school today?

Because a lot of times we - parents get in the routine of asking children what they did in school or how was school and you often get the same response every day. It was okay. It was good. You know, I did everything I was supposed to.

But again we're encouraging dads to have dinner with their children to sort of delve a little deeper into well what did you do in history class?

I understand that you had some challenges on a pop quiz last week. What are things that you think you can do to get a better grade in that particular class?

How is gym class? You know, I know you're on the debate team. You know, what's a good movie that you may have seen? Tell me about the movie. You were the characters. And so just really allowing your son or daughter to be the expert of their own social activity and begin to kind of describe what those social activities are.

And it's again it's really important for - that dads have to know their children. You have to know what your children like, what they dislike.

You know, going back to literacy I know the kinds of books my 13-year-old son like's. I know what kinds of books might 8-year-old likes. I know a kind of books my 17-year-old likes. And so that provides opportunity for conversation.

Second thing which is critically important and sort of open the door for this we've got to spend more time listening to our children.

Ladies and gentlemen we live in a very strange society. And oftentimes as fathers we automatically want to give advice. But sometime we just don't take time to listen to our children.

And now more than ever our children want to have sounding boards. They want to have people talk to you.

When I did my research on the book that I wrote Khalil's Way I interviewed about 2000 young people ages 9 through 13 years of age and interviewing them about their school experiences to really begin to look at issues like about bullying, about cyber bullying and other kinds of things that young folks deal with on a day to day basis.

And oftentimes when I would ask the children well your parents, now often times the parents are the last to know.

And what I found children who did share with their parents when I asked them who they share the fact that they were being bullied they shared with either mom or grandmom.

Oftentimes parents are like I just didn't really share with dad because dad is super busy. So this notion around communicating with preteens and teenagers -- and I know Carl is going to take that home -- is critically important. Next slide.

So we want to be active dads. We - you have a lot of information about exercise. And so when you look at the obesity rates in this country when you walk through communities and you see children who are overweight critically, critically important that we begin to look at the role of exercise in a child's life.

And even if your child is not the most active young person doing things like instead of driving to the mall if the mall is - let's say the mall is a half a mile from the house and it's a nice day. So we're going to walk to the mall. And then maybe there's a store that's a mile away. So we start off going to the mall which is half a mile then we're going to walk to another store that your son or daughter might want to go to that's a mile away.

But a regimen of a sporting activities is really important.

I am a big proponent of swimming. And I hope for the dads who are listening and the practitioners that are listening that you promote swimming.

Swimming is a great physical activity. It's a great bonding activity for dads and children. So many children in this country die every year are based on swimming accidents. And so oftentimes when I get a chance to talk about physical fitness activities I really promote swimming.

And so when you look at the data too many children die of drownings. So swimming is something pretty good. And fun walks, tennis class, shooting baskets, throw baseball, kick a soccer ball. And introduce your children to sporting activities that they may not necessarily be involved in.

You know, a lot of my friends joke me because I'm - although I'm African-American I kayak and I hike. I mean you don't see a lot of brothers in the water kayaking but myself and my younger son who's 8 we kayaked all of the world.

And so it's a great father and son. We do the two person kayak. And we really get it in. We snorkeling. We bike ride.

And so - and so again try to find maybe some physical fitness activities that your son or daughter haven't been introduced to. It could be yoga. It could be tai chi. It could be Zumba. But the ultimate goal is physical fitness.

And just for the sake of time we're going to kind of move this right along pretty quickly. Dad's monitoring child technology.

I happen to do a lot of workshops on parent groups around monitoring your child's technology because ladies and gentlemen if your child has a cell phone on Facebook on Twitter super important that you really understand the technology that they're using whether it's Instagram or the latest technology.

And I'm sure there's going to be new technology coming out. It's just really super important for dads to play an active role.

My 17-year-old often says I stock her Facebook page. We're not Facebook friends, let me be very clear. But I view her page every day.

And so on that note I'm going to pass it back over to Nigel because I know we're a little short on time. Thank you.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much David. Yes, very good stuff there. Yes. And I'm pleased to know you're a hiker. That's one of my favorite things to do.

So let me know move to Carl Pickhardt. And Carl is a psychologist in private counseling and lecturing practice in Austin, Texas. He's married with four adult children. So he's gone through this whole adolescence several times.

He's got a BA in a Masters of Education from Harvard and a doctorate from University of Texas, member of the American and Texas Psychological Associations. He's been writing the - a weekly blog on surviving childhood adolescence for Psychology Today for the last three years or so.

He also wrote a column in the 80s on parenting the teenager for the Austin American stateman - statesman.

He's appeared on several TV and radio programs, written numerous books he sent me a list of. I don't know how many there were Carl. There must've been 50 in there. I'm not sure.

Carl Pickhardt: Will there - yes they're...

(Crosstalk)

Carl Pickhardt: They keep emerging.

Nigel Vann: Yes. Anyway his most recent book which I think is perhaps the most relevant of the date is called Surviving Child Adolescence. And that was just published this year. So he's truly an expert on raising adolescents.

I certainly wish I'd met him a few years ago. My son is 28 now Carl. So anyway share some knowledge with us Carl, thanks.

Carl Pickhardt: Yes it's good to be with you. The, you know, particularly the - a lot of the power I think of what Armin and David have shared with you is that fathers have a question.

And Armin and David just started massively answering that question. And the question is how can I be father? What can I do?

And what Armin and David have shared with you is just a host of things that dads can do to create a meaningful presence and connection and attachment in the lives of their kids.

So listen, fathering is not something to be - feel helpless about.

You know, this is something that we can in fact take initiative about in terms of how we choose to define ourselves and interact with our kids.

And I'm going to be talking about fathering kids and adolescents and some of the ways that that becomes more complicated.

But just becomes because it becomes more complicated doesn't mean there's not stuff that we can do. There's a whole lot we can do. So let me start with the first slide on this.

Adolescence is a, you know, it's a long process. It's a process of redefinition. And it's an exciting process I think for dads to be involved in.

Because what you see from starting around the ages of 9 to 13 and not entering - ending up until probably the early to mid 20s you see a child develop into an adult. You see a little boy becoming young man. You see a little girl become a young woman. So it's an extremely moving process to watch.

It is however a complicated process. In the complexity begins with the fact that adolescence begins with loss. And the nature of the loss is the loss of the childhood relationship between dad and son or daughter.

Because once the child enters adolescence that means they have started separating from childhood. They no longer want to be treated and defined as just a child anymore. And then the process what you and I as dads have to do is, you know, we have to go through our own sense of loss just like the child, the adolescent is going through their sense of loss.

Our loss is that once the child enters adolescence they will talk about with the process looks like. What that means for you and I is that we will never have our adoring and adorable little buddy best companion again, that marvelous magical. And our relationship is over.

It doesn't mean that the next phase of our relationship isn't just as magical and marvelous but it is different.

And then you have the child entering adolescence and all of a sudden this huge world opens up and their loss is that they know that they can't go home again. They can't go back to the simplicity, to the shelter, to the security of childhood. They can only go forward.

So adolescence is a very, very complicated transition. And it is a long-lasting one.

I think it kicks in somewhere around 9 to 13 and doesn't end up until the early to mid-20s. So we're talking about a lot of time and a lot of re-definitional work that needs to take place.

One I think sometimes fathers think that, you know, what I have to do with my adolescence is that I have to maintain control of what is going on here.

And what I try to suggest to dads is rather than think of it as a challenge of control for you let's just think of it as kind of like a dance. And what you're trying to do is trying to follow where the adolescent leads.

For example, you know, where are interests taking them because you want to have interest in their interests.

And you want to leave the adolescent where you want the young person to grow. And this does require direction. And so you're doing both those things. And both following and leading are important functions that you need exercise.

And you need understand that the outcome of your efforts is going to be essentially a working compromise so that you're not going to get all the influence that you would ideally like.

But by the same token the adolescent isn't going to get all the freedom that he or she would ideally like. And in each case what that means is that some has to be enough. And if you can, you know, if you can keep that, the sense of a modest working compromise as you stay connected in this dance over this period of years that's really what we're talking about. Let me go to the next slide on this.

I think one of the things to understand is that a father is not a mother. And it's important to make this distinction because when you make it then what happens is you can start doing some of the things that Armin and David described. I think to fill out the fathers role in some really important ways.

The mother has a founding attachment to this child. That is, you know, she bears the child, she births the child, you know, and she very often nurses the child.

She is - the child is born attached to the mother. It's - and what you have is you have a very - you have an intimacy, a mysterious intimacy based relationship and there's a very, very strong relational focus to that relationship.

You know, and that's why very often you get this very strong emotional connection with the mom. That is the mom very often becomes the parent that the child goes to for comfort when that is needed.

The dad is born - when the child is born the dad is a stranger. And what he's going to have to do is he does not have founding attachment. But he can earn attachment. And that's the beauty of what Armin and David have described here.

There are a host of ways you can earn this attachment and build it. And, you know, basically a lot of what it does is has to do with the dad engaging and tending and talking and touching.

In the process of that, you know, what happens is that you get this attachment starting to build. And very often it's an approval-based relationship more than intimacy based relationship because what happens is, you know, the dad is working to get that magical child smile laugh, look of pleasure. And the little child is working to get, you know, the same kind of positive response from the dad.

And very often the dad tends to have more of the performance focus because what they've been trying to figure out is, you know, what can I do to create attachment to this little person?

In general I think what I - when I'm working with dad's what I try to help them do is I try to help them say well you know, you have a wonderful performance focus with your child. You know a lot of the, you know, a lot of dads for example are wonderful coaches with your kids. That's a performance issue.

But sometimes what you need to do is as a dad you don't want to just have a performance focus because then what you have you got the high school kid, you know, daughter who comes home from school the dad's first question how did you do in school today.

And the daughter looks at dad and goes dad school is not all I am. I'm also a person and I have friendships and I have feelings and you, you know, why don't you respond to that? And see that's the relation focus.

And a lot of dads need to - it's not a question of giving up. Performance focus is a great focus. But for a lot of dads they have to develop a relational focus to go with that so that they can respond to the whole person is going on here.

The risks I think on both sides for dad and mom are they, you know, they don't - they have a hard time transitioning from the childhood relationship to the adolescent relationship. And what you get is for the mom what she has very often is she has a really hard time letting go.

And so you have the adolescent who complains about the controlling mother that is too close for comfort. She won't give me emotional space.

And on the dad side you get the issue of the dad, you know, the dad so closely connected with this little child. And now as they started differentiating and separating he's had a much harder time staying connected. And now you have the kid complaining about the distant father who is somehow too removed to care.

Both these risks can be overcome. And they can simply be overcome by the decisions that we make. The role of the dad is based upon the decisions they make.

You and I as dads do not have to be distant. We do have not be removed. We do not have to be disconnected. We can do all kinds of things like a lot of the early things carry forward that David and Armin suggested.

We can stay involved, relevant, important, caring communicative people in the lives of our child. And let's go to the next slide.

It's really important not only as a dad, not a mother but an adolescent is not a child. And the parenting is significantly different. The challenge is different with a child. And again that's what Armin and David were describing is that it's vitally important. And Armin, you know, carried it back, you know prenatal saying hey, you know, there are things you can do in pregnancy to start building here.

You want to engage in attachment parenting. And the purpose of attachment parenting is to - for the parent to hold on to keep the child close.

And a lot of times that's physically close as well as emotionally close and communicatively close.

And the goal of attachment parenting is to established a secure dependency where essentially the child has basic trust in the parents and in the parents being there.

I mean there's been lots of loss of particularly coming out all the way back to the aftermath of World War II with displaced children. What happens when you don't have kids who have this founding attachment?

And what happens is it creates a legacy of relational and mental health difficulties that follow. So the attachment in childhood is definitely the goal.

But once your kid start entering adolescence and they start separating from childhood then you have another goal. And in some ways it's a more complicated goal to reach because now you have to engage in detachment parenting.

And rather than just holding on now what you're trying to do is you're letting go to look grow. At the same time however - it doesn't mean you're not abandoning the child.

It means that you are still remaining sufficiently involved and caringly connected and communicated to keep the connection there.

So what we're talking about is essentially going from attachment parenting to connected parenting, in this case to connected fathering, learning how to do this, letting go while staying involved.

And the goal in this case is to nurture a confident independence of this young person so that they develop a basic trust in themselves and relying on the self which they will need when they step off from your care.

In the last stage of adolescence 18 to 23 and they feel that they have what it takes to rely on themselves. They have the basic confidence.

So, you know, part of, you know, one of the differences for example, one of the differences between attachment parenting and detachment parenting is very often how discipline is handled.

With child's attachment parenting very often, you know, parents are using rewards and punishments to encourage or discourage behavior to kind of shape responsible behavior in a child.

But once you move into adolescence you're dealing with detachment parenting. And now what you're doing is you're not doing reward stuff, you're doing choice consequence stuff.

What you're saying to the adolescent is you are responsible for your choices and you also have to cope with the consequences of those choices when they occur. And you see that teaches not just responsible behavior, it actually teaches responsibility.

Let's go to the next slide.

Okay so what does adolescence look like? Well gosh, it's a vast transformation. But let me just suggest to you I tend to divide it I don't know what seen in here four kinds of stages. And the first is in fact the separation from childhood.

And what you know how do - you know, the question is how do you tell? How do you tell when your kid has entered adolescence? We'll let me give you four ways you can tell.

One is that you find that the early adolescence -- this is around 9 to 13 late ((inaudible)) early middle school all of a sudden seems to be massively disorganized. And you're wondering what is happened to this kid. They're

forgetting stuff. They're losing stuff. They're so distracted. They can't, you know, they're messy. They can't keep any sense of order in their life.

And sometimes, you know, a dad will look at that and he'll say well I know what we can do about that. We, you know, I need to come down hard on this kid and let them know that that is not acceptable behavior.

And what I try to explain to the dad in this case is what this is - this disorganization is not something to be patient about. It's not something to be critical about. It's not something to be punished about. It's something to say to learn from and to say I understand that my child now has a problem because the self-management system that worked in the simplest simplicity of childhood no longer works in a more complicated world of adolescence. And they have to developing a new self-management system to deal with greater complexity.

And my job as dad is to help for example, help them organize themselves, help them focus, you know, help them remember stuff, help them to keep track of stuff, gives them systems that will work for them in this new larger more complicated world.

And it's really important that when infractions occur during early adolescence - and they occurred for not just the kids getting more disorganized. Now remember now also there are three other criteria added to the disorganization.

You know, one is you get the more negative attitude. The kid is more dissatisfied and complaining to live and that's going on.

And the reason they're doing that is because they're dissatisfied with being defined and treated as a child and they want something different.

And then you get more active and passive resistance. You get more argument and you get more delay. You know, and then you get testing limits to see what you get away with to see if an effect the old limits still hold in this new world that the kid has entered.

When kids are pushing this way dads need to be absolutely non-evaluative in their correction. And by that I mean they do not criticize. They don't criticize the kid's character, they don't criticize the kids conduct. And they literally they use these words I disagree with the choice you made. This is why. This is what I need to have happen now. And this is what I hope to you learn from this experience.

So you stay away from evaluation. But part of what you're doing is at this age what the kid needs is the need for constant structure from the dad.

Remember now the kid is giving you - the message the kid is giving you, you know, I don't want your structure. You're overprotective. No, you've got a hang in there with responsible constructive structure for the kids.

And then you move in mid-adolescence and now what do you have is the kid forming a family of friends.

And what they're doing is they are setting up essentially a competing social family of people, young people who are all becoming different the same way they are.

And in the new family they're developing all kinds of new interests. And what dads have to do is they have to realize that, you know, the old interests that bonded us together, the things that we enjoy doing together now what happens is the child, the adolescent is no longer interested in doing some of those things with me.

So what I need to do is rather than say well, you know, we have no interests in common, I have no way of relating to this kid, no, what you say is my child - my kid has new interests now. And my job is to bridge to those interests with my interest to get interested in what they're interested in. And that's the way you start bridging.

You know, this is a new relationship to maintain that connection. And then you move into late adolescence.

Nigel Vann: Sorry to interrupt Carl but we're getting tight on time there. Can I ask you just perhaps leave us with one final thought? People are going to be able to see the rest of your slides.

Carl Pickhardt: Yes.

Nigel Vann: I'll give you an opportunity at the end to say...

Carl Pickhardt: Yes sure. The - yes, so what all this means is what's going to happen is you're going to get more - there's going to be more friction in the relationship. It's going to take more, you know, going to be more disagreements and differences to do your work with.

And that's why I think, you know what - the primary skill that you might have want to have in detachment parenting is treating complex. And there will be more than an opportunity of communication.

And if you say well that's a hard thing to do in closing I can tell you is if you think it's hard having an adolescent argue with you all the time I can promise you that it is much easier to have a kid who argues with you for you can communicate with because conflict and active communication than a kid who won't to talk to you.

I would much rather have an argumentative kid than a silent kid. Anyhow it's good talking with you and it's been fun.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much Carl. Yes some marvelous stuff. I'm really sorry that we didn't have time to...

Carl Pickhardt: That's not a problem. It was fun.

Nigel Vann: Yes. And, you know, one of the things I really heard from you and from David is the importance of really taking the time to make sure we listen to our kids and...

Carl Pickhardt: Right, right.

Nigel Vann: And certainly it is tough as we lose those manageable marvelous little beings. But it is also wonderful that they grow into larger magical marvelous beings.

Carl Pickhardt: Absolutely. And we parent and we parent our kids - the parenting goes on all the rest of our lives.

Nigel Vann: That's right. And what we do with the beginning really lays the platform the rest of it, yes.

Carl Pickhardt: Absolutely.

Nigel Vann: Yes.

Carl Pickhardt: Absolutely.

Nigel Vann: So what I'd like to do here we've got about ten minutes left. Matt if could we go to poll questions? And then what I'm going to do I'm going to come back to each of the presenters. And I just like you to each leave with one final thought. You know just a tip for - just a general tip. If you were say one sentence to a dad what would that be?

But first of all I'm going to have Matt just take us through the poll questions there.

Matt Crews: All right great. Everybody check your screens out. I have a better understanding of how father involvement benefits children, fathers and mothers. You can vote simply by clicking on the answer you see best fits.

And I'll give you guys about ten more seconds on that.

Second question is going to be tips for dads when bonding with the baby and engaging in the lives of their children were helpful?

All right the next question we're going to have...

Nigel Vann: It looks like we skipped one Matt. Did you - you didn't read but did people already answer that one?

Matt Crews: I'll go back to it. There was some technical issues on my end.

In general I received good information that I can use in my work in my work for fathers ((inaudible)).

I'm going to give you guys about 20 more seconds to put your votes in.

(Crosstalk)

Matt Crews: All right. And I'm going to conclude with that. And Nigel if you want to just go ahead reiterate the question that you think that we missed out on we can collect polling results for that via heinfo@fatherhood.gov inbox.

Nigel Vann: Okay yes we went to it. I mean I just saw people answering a question Matt I didn't hear you read that - so I think maybe people saw the question sorry.

Matt Crews: Okay.

Nigel Vann: Yes. Anyway certainly everybody was either agreeing or strongly agreeing with everything so we appreciate that. I'm glad we were able to provide some relevant information. I certainly what enjoyed listening to all of you. This was really, really interesting.

So let me know just gives each of you an opportunity to leave us with one final sentence. If you can say one thing about dad, dad with child of any age, one thing to a dad what would it be? Armin?

Armin Brott: Oh I would say jump in as early as you can and as often as you can. And keep on making as many mistakes as you need to. You're never going to get it 100% right but you can keep on getting better.

Nigel Vann: That's great. Yes, yes. And I think, you know, just the fact that we know we make a mistake is a big step right, yes.

Armin Brott: Yes.

Nigel Vann: David?

David Miller: Again I'm going to thank everybody for joining the Webinar. Just be proactive in all aspects of your children's life. Don't keep referring to mom to do things related to education, participating in going to library, activities. Be proactive in your child's life.

Nigel Vann: Okay. And actually David there's one other the question I want to shoot at you if you have a quick response to it someone...

David Miller: Okay.

Nigel Vann: Someone was asking if there's any strategies to help dads who have low literacy levels in terms of, you know, enrichment activities around reading or ((inaudible)). Any thoughts on that?

David Miller: And that's a great question. For dads that have issues with literacy that's one of the reasons why think that the public library is so critical. Because the librarian can help select books even if you start with picture books and have dad describe different images within those books that does two things.

One it's a bonding time for dad and the child. Second it also builds a sense of self-worth and competencies in the fact that dad who knows he has some reading challenges was at least able to sit down with a picture book with a book with words. I mean there's some amazing books out there.

And I hope that we can just do another Webinar just on the whole literacy piece on because I think that that's so fundamentally critical. But working with the library, finding books that a dad can actually read the words in a book, books that a rich illustrations with picture and colors that will attract and stimulate interest among the child.

Nigel Vann: Great. Okay thanks yes. And I think that it's something we could actually put a lot more information on the Web site about that as well. It's a good thought, yes.

So Carl I really enjoyed your wise words. Have you got one more thought?

Carl Pickhardt: Well I would just say that's what real important I think is for dads not to take their kid's adolescence personally.

Adolescence is not about - it's not about the father. It's about the kids. It's not against the parent. It's for the young person attempting in their own way to redefine themselves and is acted out against the parent in this case the father. But it's not about the father.

Nigel Vann: Yes, wonderful. Yes and I think, you know, we all know that on some level we've been adolescents. And I think...

Carl Pickhardt: Right.

Nigel Vann: ...so for me one of the tricks of fatherhood was always trying to remember what it was like at different ages for me, you know, and trying to put myself in my son's shoes a little bit. But...



Carl Pickhardt: Well that's right yes. If you can remember that and if you can share memories that's a very helpful connecting way to be with your kid.

Nigel Vann: Yes, yes. Great well thank you very much everybody. And Matt have you got that final slide I promised people?

Matt Crews: I do.

Nigel Vann: Okay let's put it up there.

Matt Crews: All right.

Nigel Vann: Okay so this is - this was actually pulled together by (Ken Braswell), our Director of Clearinghouse. He's the second to the right there. On the left you see Patrick Patterson as I said who's been whisked off to the Caribbean.

And next to him is Matt Crews and father of a youngster who actually with his mother was in a very serious car accident yesterday. We're pleased to report they're doing okay. But Matt had a lot of stress yesterday so we're very pleased you could be with us today Matt.

And I'm in the middle and next to (Katie Lawson) who is the chapter leads a lot of our barbershop activities. And on the far right there you see David Miller who shared a lot of wisdom with us and is the author of this new book Khalil's Way.

So I thank our presenter one more time, had a marvelous setting insights you provided to us and I hope everybody else enjoyed it as much as I did. We'll see you for the next Webinar. Thank you very much everybody.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen this will conclude today's presentation. We thank you for your participation.

END