



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



Working with Dads: Parenting Skills Development

Moderator: Nigel Vann, Senior Director, Training & Technical Assistance, National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

Presenters:

John Badalament, Modern Dads, Boston, MA

Trena Pollard, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM

Jan Watson, Parents as Teachers, St. Louis, MO

April 19, 2011

Webinar Transcription (provided by PGi)

Operator: Good day everyone and welcome to the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse Technical Assistance webinar.

Today's conference is being recorded.

At this time I would like to turn the conference over to your host Mr. Nigel Vann. Please go ahead sir.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much and welcome everybody. Happy Passover and a special welcome to those healthy manage grantees who are joining us for this webinar.

Today our focus is on working with dads around parenting skills development. Our basic goal is to give you a taste of various ideas and activities that you might use in your work with fathers and families. We have three presenters lined up with some great information to share.

Jan Watson is going to talk a little bit about the Parents as Teachers fatherhood curriculum and one specific activity that helps dads in terms of reading to their kids.

Trena Pollard is going to share various activities that she uses in her work with incarcerated fathers and John Badalament is going to provide an overview of some neat activities that help dads to be more in touch with themselves and with their kids.

At the end of the webinar we're going to talk briefly about ways that we can talk with dads about effective discipline and then we'll end up with our usual Q&A session and in order to do that we do encourage your questions. So let me turn it over to Matt Crews who's going to quickly remind you how to send those questions in.

Matt Crews: All right, thank you Nigel. And, as we said, it's going to be a quick reminder because most of you are already familiar.

Look on the screen, a question can be asked by typing it at anytime during a presentation. To receive a standard answer to let you know that your question has been received and will be submitted to Nigel to ask presenters during the Q&A. And if your question does not get answered in the time allowed, (email your FPO).

The next screen I'm going to show you is an example of the Q&A box. You click on that. It's usually in the upper left-hand corner. Type your question in the box that appears and then click on the word Ask to submit your question.

Take Time to Be a Dad Today

Now, if you're having a technical issue, say your screen is too small, hit F5. However, if you want to ask a question hit F5 again because when the screen is at its maximum capacity you cannot ask a question during that time.

If you're having trouble hearing feel free to send us a message with the Q&A tool and if you didn't receive the slides that came out this morning you can email info at fatherhood.gov and we'll get them right to you.

And that's all and back to you Nigel.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much Matt. And, as Matt said, you know, you should actually receive two emails this morning the first one had the PowerPoint slides and the second one had some handouts that we're going to refer to during the webinar and they're also for you to look at it in more detail after the webinar.

The first one is just a resource listing that we actually used for a recent conference presentation that Jan and I did together and the others are from materials that Jan and John are going to be talking about.

So, first of all, before I introduce Jan who's going to be the first presenter I'm going to just provide a few introductory thoughts and I've got a few slides that I'm going to go over as well.

Now, I've been doing a number of conference workshops on this topic recently and I'm actually scheduled to do another one at the May Grantee conference with (Patty Peconi) from the University of Arkansas Grantee.

And, as some of you may remember, I did a couple of one-day sessions on this at the 2009 roundtables and I'm also going to be able to provide a very small number of on-site staff training sessions for two or three fatherhood grantees in July and August on this.

So, I've been thinking about this quite a bit lately and I think it's an area where fatherhood work is sometimes fallen short. We've generally done a good job of helping dads with their immediate needs such as employment, dealing with child support or custody issues, with personal or manhood development issues but a lot of times once we meet those needs the dads are gone. How do we keep them around?

And so how do we really make the time to help them focus on parenting? And one of the things that we focus on responsible parenting in a lot of your grants is really been a big step forward in making this a more central issue for the field.

We know from research and general work with families that kids do better when their dads are around and involved in positive ways. In fact, Matt, if you want to go to the first slide and this is just an example of some of that research. You know the bottom line here, this all comes from (Carl Pruitt)'s book, (Father Need) and it says at the bottom there, the bottom line is the closer the connection between father and child the better off they both are now and in the future.

And we all know this in the field but the question becomes how do we have dads see this? Can we go to the next slide Matt?

And this is just a few more points from a recent parent survey done by 0 to (30) and the interesting thing here is those (pointed out) that dads are not generally as informed about

mothers, about their child's development issues. They're less likely to understand that kids really pick up on our moods and they tend to be less aware that talking and signing to their very little infants and babies has such an important influence.

The real important influence are those first few months, those first few days, and those first few years. Now, last year I was at the event at the Brookings Institute. I think it was in October where they were talking about the new future of children report which is part of the Fragile Families Research.

And there were two couples there who were talking about their experiences in marriage and relationship education programs. One couple came from (Mary Mileage) Program in Oklahoma City and the other couple was from (Joe Jones') program in Baltimore.

And both couples in one way or another made the point that the program had really shown them the impact that their relationship has on kids. And they just hadn't understood that. I mean, we don't when we're young parents.

But as they got that awareness they had resolved that they were going to do all they could to ensure that they understood and they utilized healthy marriage skills.

And so I think what we have to do in terms of the parenting skills is exactly the same thing. We have to help dads and mothers get this and be more aware of these kinds of things.

So, if we can go to the next slide Matt, and I'm just posing the question here, how do we get this message across to dads? And I'm not going to dwell on this because this is what we're going to be talking about today but essentially I think for some programs it really is a case of a staff examining their own experiences and biases so that we all assume that dads do want to be involved not just in the program but in the life of their kids from an early age.

But we have to come up with strategies, handouts, activities, etc., that are really going to engage fathers and help them go on this journey because that's what you're doing in your work.

So, essentially what each of the presenters is going to talk to you about is ways in which we engage dads? Particularly, how do we challenge them? How do we encourage the self-reflection and then how do we provide them knowledge and skills to actually take advantage of this?

So, if we can go to the next slide Matt. I've just got a couple of handouts here that I think are examples of the kind of things that you can just use either as outreach or to have around at program or to hand out at specific activities. Just something that's going to get a dad's attention to make the point.

So, I've got slides from these three organizations. The first one is from Healthy Families San Angelo in Texas and if we can go to that slide Matt? I've actually been using a few slides. These are developed by (Geidnar Weishard) who actually was into one of our webinars a couple of years ago and he's got some very neat slides.

There's a slide that I haven't used here but he's got it - it's a one page handout that essentially says with a very neat picture of a dad on it, this is why kids - this is how kids do better when dads are involved. And it just lists all of the things that we know, you know.

This particular one is just, as you see; it's saying what's the most, best, toy for my baby to play with? And it's none of these things in the little picture there, it's you.

And that can be a real simple message for a dad to see. Next slide Matt?

And here's another one from that program. So after you get dad's to think about the fact that hey, it is important to bond with my little baby. It is important to be spending time with my child during the first few days, the first few months and part of this journey, as well, of course is to help mothers to enable dads to be involved and not taking over when the dad picks the baby up or when the dad wants to change the diaper.

But here's some things that dad can do to bond with his baby. And there's some nice simple things, nice little picture of a dad there. This could be lying around your program. It could be given to a group of mothers who are having a class but this could get into the hands of dads or you could just leave this with dads after you've been talking about this in a particular group session.

And the next slide Matt?

And this comes from the National Father's Initiative; you can actually get this one-page handout at a very minimal cost I think. The actual handout has material under each of these bullets just with some tips to how you do these things.

You know, here's ten things that can really, or nine things, that are ways in which a dad can really start being more involved with his kid. And these are some of the key things that you'll be talking about as you talk with fathers about parenting skills.

And the next slide Matt?

This is just an example of some materials that are available from one of your fellow grantees at the University of Arkansas. And, as I said, (Patty Peconi) and I will actually be doing a workshop together at the Grantee conference and she'll be talking a lot more about these cards. But these cards were developed to put in the hands of teachers and early childhood workers so you could just leave these with parents and particularly fathers but just some tips on what do you do in these particular situations? What kind of issues should you be expecting in that particular childhood development stages?

And the information on this has actually just been posted to the fatherhood community practice. So if you want to learn a bit more about it, for fatherhood grantees anyway, you can get into that community practice and have a look at it. But there's some great information there and you've got contact information for (Patty) on the first handout that you received, the resource list, and I mentioned. So, if you do want to get more information you can just go to that.

So, with that I'm going to move onto our first presenter and bringing up Jan Watson who's going to talk to you a little bit about the focus on fathering curriculum.

And, in particular, about ways in which we can encourage dads to read with their kids. As I mentioned, Jan and I did a workshop just a month or so ago that was very well received and we're going to try and recreate part of that as part of the webinar here. So Jan's going to come back at the end of the webinar and show a little bit more about how they use their curriculum to talk about discipline with dads.

So, Jan is the Training Program Support and Technical Assistance Manager for the National Center for Parents as Teachers based in St. Louis, Missouri. You'll see from her bio she's been with Parents as Teachers since 1998 and prior to working on the fatherhood grant she coordinated all the parent and teachers programs in 61 Bureau of Indian Education Schools. She's written training manuals in curricular for Parents as Teachers and serves on the Circle of Parents National Advisory Committee and the Missouri Healthy Families Coalition.

So, tell us all about it Jan?

Jan Watson: Thank you so much Nigel. Next slide please?

Our responsible - I'm going to give an overview of our grant which currently are Responsible Fatherhood grant currently includes five partner sites in four different states.

And our target population for our fathers are dads who have children that are ages prenatal up to kindergarten entry and whose family is enrolled in their Parents as Teachers program in their community.

So through these meetings that they attend they're either weekly or biweekly and they focus on skill-based parenting education. These fathers are also encouraged to participate in our home visits which were offered at least monthly but, as many of you know, that are familiar with home visitation, a lot of times we don't have fathers participate as much as we would like them to participate and often the mother is the primary parent that benefits from this wonderful child development information that is shared during these visits.

So, our goal with this grant is to increase father involvement and to increase father's knowledge of age appropriate development and behavior but we also added in another piece that we were hoping to be able to show and that is once fathers realize how important their role is and how much they contribute to their child's development that they then would possibly increase their participation in the home visits as well and glean some of this wonderful information as well.

Next slide please?

We have several curriculum that we use to achieve these goals. The first one that we use with our home visitation portion of our program is our Parents as Teachers curriculum and we use the visits to help guide the time with families as well as share developmental related information to where the child is, take a look at emerging skills, help parents identify goals that they have for their families and address concerns that arise as a result of raising children.

Our father groups focus on skill-based parenting education using either the 24/7 Dad or the Young Dad's portion of the Young Dads, Young Moms as well as the focusing on fathering. And that's a way to really go a little bit deeper with some of the topics. So that's what I'm going to focus on today.

Next slide.

So focusing on fathering includes 12 group meeting plans that lift up topics that are important to the health and wellbeing of young children. These plans provide an opportunity for fathers to really reflect on their beliefs and attitudes as well as share what

knowledge and experience that they bring to the picture and learn new information through discussion and an activity with the plans part of every one of these visits.

I'm going to talk briefly about topic 9 which is reading with your child and - next slide please?

I selected this because sometimes we see fathers who either don't read or just don't seem comfortable reading to their child and some of the reasons are included on this slide.

We know that every one of these barriers are really important to consider but the one I just really want to take a minute to highlight right now is encouraging fathers with low literacy skills.

Books for young children, as you all know, have a lot of pictures and books for infants and toddlers maybe have just a couple of words on the page as well as the pictures.

There are even wordless books that are on the market that encourage making up stories that are related to the pictures in the book. This is an optimal time for what I call a real window of opportunity to involve dads in becoming comfortable to read with their children. And the greatest part is that children this age, they don't critic reading ability, that's not what's important to them it's spending the time with their father.

So fathers can be encouraged to talk about the pictures on each page and many of the toddlers books include pictures of everyday objects which can be named and discussed such as their sippy cup, a teddy bear, a highchair or a family pet. So it's a really easy opportunity to connect what they see and know with the pictures in the book.

There's also books with faces and people that children see everyday such as brother and sisters and nana and papa and fathers can even make up a story based on whatever picture is on that page and connect it to a recent event that they have shared as a family.

The key piece is really for the reading. The child is physically and emotionally close and there is focused sharing which is a key ingredient for secure attachment. A wonderful side benefit to the reading is that a father who reads regularly to their child and provides these early literacy experiences are really providing a first step to supporting school readiness.

Next slide?

So this group meeting topic, reading to your child, addresses these barriers and empowers the father to read to his child. Fathers have an opportunity during this group topic and session to share a favorite book that they had when they were growing up.

They're also encouraged to reflect on and share the qualities that they think are important in children's books. So it's really empowering fathers to share what they already know and believe in.

Next part of the group are discussion points are shared that emphasis the importance of reading for young children. We have to weave that in but the neat part is is that it's not done in a lecture format, it's shared in a very user friendly and empowering way.

The activity for this plan provides a great opportunity for fathers to evaluate the different types of quality books and it is really important to select good quality books so that if a father hasn't experienced it before they get to within the setting of this group.

We found it works really well to put fathers in pairs for this activity so that they can share ideas with each other as they review the books. It's really a very safe way to do that.

There listed, as they're given these books, they're given an activity handout which is on your next slide and it's called, Checkout A Book. And this provides a (class) like sheet for them to record their responses to a series of questions.

We did find in one of our groups that they had to adapt this activity sheet for the Spanish-speaking fathers. So not only did they have to translate it but the fathers that were in this particular group did not - they had very low level of literacy experiences and so adaptations were made to some of the questions as well. The key piece is that it is adapted and worked well for the group of fathers that you're sharing it with.

And the really neat part that happened as a result of the facilitator doing that is that fathers really ended up feeling safe enough to share that they didn't have the reading experience. So the next group meeting was followed up with a time where they had somebody come in and read a story to the fathers and the children as a group and then the fathers paired up with their child with age-appropriate books and practice reading. So it was just a wonderful safe way to become more comfortable.

This group has all the other group meeting plans in this curriculum and with a debrief. So it's an opportunity for fathers to share their responses to the activity and information that they learned or the facilitator can ask an open-ended question such as what are your thoughts on appropriate books for children after doing this activity? So it really invites them to share if they've had enough time to process what they've learned and share it back with the group.

The facilitator ends the group by summarizing key points which are the takeaways and then share parent handouts for the fathers that they can take with them that are on a couple of the next slides that you can see. And I think they're also sent to you in a readable PDF format so that you can look them over and become more familiar with the information and use it.

Matt could you go to slide 19 which should be Strategies to Empower Fathers?

Nigel Vann: Actually Jan, let me just pop in here. I realize...

Jan Watson: Sure.

Nigel Vann: ...people are having a hard time. The slides are not moving on the screen so I don't think anybody can actually see them at the moment.

My screen has just actually totally gone blank. Matt was going to try and give the controls over to me so...

Jan Watson: Mine did too but I...

Nigel Vann: Yes.

Jan Watson: ...knew the order they were in.

Nigel Vann: Yes. So, I think Jan, hopefully, people have the slides from, you know - if it's possible for people to go to their email and download them while we wait to get this fixed. But if you could just keep talking from your printout of your slides, Jan, and as soon as we get this fixed we'll get the slides back on the screen.

Jan Watson: Okay.

I wanted to really make sure that we keyed in on the slide that talks about strategies to empower fathers to read to their children. It is just so important to do this to encourage successful reading times so that the fathers will feel comfortable reading to their child and that they'll continue reading to their child.

So it's important to really share with dads exactly what age-appropriate book behaviors that they're going to experience. In other words, we want dads to know that children may lose focus while they're reading to them. They may wiggle and squirm. They may get distracted while they're reading to them but mainly because that's part of where they are developmentally.

But we also want fathers to know that creating an environment that is conducive to reading like when it's quiet and has a small space and place to cuddle, selecting age-appropriate books and experimenting with techniques to engage a child will reap many benefits for both father and the child.

I don't know if the next slides going to come up but the next point that I want to cover is the importance of reading with your child. These takeaways are embedded in this particular group meeting, topic plan, about the importance of reading aloud to children and how it helps them hear the sounds of speech so that they're able to speak them and later read them.

I've mentioned already that it helps dads form attachment with their kids but it also is a wonderful opportunity to introduce children to new ideas and concepts through quality book and rich text. It also exposes them to proper sentence structure which we know is not always used in everyday language. So that's a really important piece for, in terms of school readiness for children to experience as well.

And also when fathers read early we know that it's more likely that children are going to enjoy reading themselves and will continue to do so as they grow up.

These takeaways, like I said, are really important to either share at the end verbally or they can be charted or you can share them in handout form for fathers to take home. But they really serve as a reminder of the important contributions that fathers are making to their child's development and school readiness.

Thank you.

Nigel Vann: Thank you Jan. I do apologize for the problems we're having on the screen. Matt just sent me an email asking if I have control. Matt, I actually - my system went down Matt. I'm just re-entering the Live Meeting so right now I don't have a screen.

I'm just going to wait a minute and see if this shows up.

Okay. Are you on the line Matt?

- Matt Crews:** Yes, I'm here. There's apparently something wrong with the Live Meeting server. We apologize for the inconvenience. And it may be (serving) some of you. We would like to go ahead and get this topic covered so if you do have the slides that were emailed out this morning, if you could follow along with that until then and I'll be working with the technical team to resolve any issue that may be occurring. And I'll let you know when we're back up.
- Nigel Vann:** Okay. So you tried to give me control Matt right?
- Matt Crews:** Correct, yes.
- Nigel Vann:** I just clicked and Trena's slide is now on the screen. Did I do that or did you do that?
- Matt Crews:** I actually don't have anything on my screen right now unfortunately. I'm in the process of brining it back up.
- Nigel Vann:** Okay, well I'll let you work on that. I'm on - we've got Trena's first slide showing but I do not seem to be able to move it. So, I do apologize Trena.
- Trena's got some really nice slides here so if you've got - if you do have the opportunity - oh, no. It didn't move then. So, I don't know if I made that move. It went back and forth Matt. Did you do that?
- Matt Crews:** No, that was you.
- Nigel Vann:** Okay. Okay, well let me introduce Trena and, Trena, I'm sorry about this but, you know, just go through your presentation and hopefully your slides will follow you. So let me just say a few words about Trena.
- As you probably realize, or you may not realize, but I'm just down the road from Trena. We're about two hours down the road so I've actually had the opportunity to sit in on her classes at the Incarcerated Fathers Program a few times and always been really impressed with what she does.
- In fact, anybody who still thinks that father's work can only be done by men I'd ask you to go and sit in on a class of Trena's and just see - it's really a treat to see how engaged the dad's are in the classroom with Trena. She really has a real skill in taking them on this journey that I was talking about.
- As you'll see again from the bio, Trena is a certified family life educator. She's been providing parenting and life skills education to families in the southwestern area of New Mexico since 2002 and she provides parenting and life skill education to incarcerated dads as part of the Federal Grant Program.
- She has a Master of Science degree from New Mexico State University in Family and Consumer Sciences with a focus on Family and Child Science and she's a wonderful presenter. She's got some great little activities that she's going to give you a taste of here.
- So take it away Trena and hopefully we can keep your slides moving with you.
- Trena Pollard:** Okay, thank you Nigel. No pressure here. As Nigel said, I'm Trena Pollard from New Mexico State University and I work in the Incarcerated Fathers Program.

My presentation is on child focused activities for non-resident fathers. We're always searing for ways to teach, engage and connect these incarcerated fathers with their children. So I'd like to share with you today some of the outreach projects that I use in my classes.

Slide 2 is up so just a brief description of the program. The class series are weekly for 15 sessions. I spend two and a half hours per session with the dads. The curriculum that we use is nurturing parenting and creating a process of change for men who (batter) from the (Duluth) Curriculum. We use life skills advisors, volunteer program handbook from the Washington State University and then Money on The Bookshelf from the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension.

I facilitate classes at both southern New Mexico Correctional Facility and the La Tuna Federal Corrections Institution.

Just to give you an idea of the population that we serve it shows we have 58% Hispanic, 24% Anglo, almost 10% African American, a little over 6% Native American and then the last 2% are Asian and then 0.7% is listed as other.

Yes, the slides are up.

Nigel Vann: I shouldn't have control Trena.

Trena Pollard: That's good. Our program is heavily based on the Children Outreach Component. When I started this program or when we got the grant and I was tasked to come up with the curriculum I wanted to help the fathers connect with their children.

So we actually have a skills-based project enhanced approach to promoting this responsible fatherhood. And, as you all know, overcoming barriers to help these incarcerated fathers, or actually helping anyone, to communicate and connect with their children can be a challenge. So choose curricular topics that can be translated into activities that enhance their learning, that encourage the connection, promoting the communication and also that provides a tangible product for the child.

And then choose method development projects that encourage all fathers to participate. And keep in mind the literacy level of all the dads involved.

Okay. I wanted to share with you just the basic class topics because I know many of you will recognize topics from your own curriculum that you will be able to use with these activities.

We start the first session with the basic overall what is nurturing parenting? And I know some of you may be saying, oh, nurturing parenting, maybe the fathers won't really like that but we have found that you can adapt, you can, without changing the curriculum, add, enhance and it works really well.

We do the pre-assessment in the first session and then we discuss developing family morals and values and this is actually where we introduce the topic of discipline. I like to introduce a topic of discipline early on and then by the time we get to it in session 8 they're familiar with what we like to encourage them to think of the meaning as to guide and to teach.

Session 3 is building self-worth and praise. In session 4 if you notice it's a lab day. The entire class period is utilized for the children's outreach. And I'll show you in just a moment what we mean by that.

This gives the dad, session 4, the opportunity to actually practice what they've already learned.

Session 5 begins Ages and Stages which will start the discussion for them to make their own book in session 7 and then we tie in personal power and we go over job preparation.

Session 7, again, is a lab day. Session 8 we discuss discipline and, again, I ask the dads if they can discipline from prison. And the first reaction is usually no and then we get into the real meaning of discipline, to guide and to teach, and their whole demeanor changes.

Session 9 is understanding feelings and this also has a children's outreach component which is worked into the class curricula. Session 10 we get into the managing anger, money management and we get into the domestic violence and emotional abuse here in this session.

Session 11 is stress and saying in control. I introduce stress before session 12 which is a children's (art mail-out) to help them - a little bit of humor added to help them not get so stressed out when they are told when they will be able to do an art piece for their children.

Session 13 then we get into the STD's, AIDS, HIV awareness and in this class we talk about the fathers themselves but then when you turn it around and ask them about their daughters or their sons it puts a whole new perspective on this topic.

Session 14 then is the review and the post-assessment which is another - we have a lengthy assessment packet. Session 15, the guys are recognized with certificates and this, again, is an outreach component. It's their final (mail-out). We don't pay the guy for taking the class. They get to choose a book which is age appropriate and what I do is I actually take in the books and try to set it up like a bookstore because many of these fathers have never spent much time in a bookstore.

So the next slide the topic of praise. Some of you may say, oh, that's a difficult topic. This is actually one of the favorite topics, again, because we tie it into using praise and discipline. It gives the fathers a chance to practice the knowledge that they've gained in the previous two sessions. It allows the fathers to stay focused on their children. It reinforces father and child communication. It opens doors to discuss praise and discipline and it provides the fathers the opportunity for staff reflection which is also very important.

The next one is how to complete the project. If you will notice I developed a very simple form using coloring book pages as the images. The fathers have a choice of 12 cards. They choose one card for each child then the fathers color the card and then they use a praise for being, a praise for doing, or words and phrases on the inside that they've actually learned from the previous session.

We like to keep it very simple. We don't want them to send home what I call commands like take care of your mothers, take care of your brother. We want to teach them new ways of communicating with their families so that it doesn't set them up for criticism.

And, as you can see, I've listed - these are very cost effective materials, free coloring book pages. You print it on card stock, get a greeting card envelope and colored pencils and you're set to go.

Okay. The next - this is actually a copy of a completed project that one of the fathers did. He actually choose, I believe, Image number 2 from the previous slide so this gives you an idea of what paper and a colored pencil and a free coloring book page can turn into.

The sentiment that this dad wrote on the inside of the card was your mother told me that you were recognized for being student of the month. I am so proud of you. I love you, daddy. And what we do is we try to encourage the dads when they're talking to the parenting partner to have the parenting partner tell them something positive about the child within ear-shot of the child.

So this was actually something the mother had told him previously and he used it in this project. So I thought that would be a neat idea to show all of you.

Then we go from session 4 which we use the full class period for children's outreach projects and session 7 is the second one that we use the full class period time.

And this is make your own book and you can just imagine what all you can - how many topics you can address using this activity. The dads make one book for each child. Some of the fathers have more than one child. They may have more than one household but they are encouraged to make one book for each child.

And we've found that this is one of the projects that the warden's allow the men to take back to their pods or to their unit because it is proven to actually relieve their stress and it helps them stay focused on their children and maybe not focus so much on other things for that period of time.

I then allow the dads to choose from six different blank book types. This ranges from small canvas covered books to large storybooks and even board books for the younger children. I've given you the Web site for - I use bookblanks.com and then Barnes & Noble, I go through them to get the make your own Little Golden Book. Some of you may have used that before but it comes with crayons and we break it down and just give the guys the books and then we use the crayons and the stencils on our family days and we give those to the children. So that little packet is two-fold.

Okay. The next slide?

As you can see I like to keep the materials simple. This particular make your own book project requires stickers, blank books and markers. I wanted to show you some of the books the fathers actually made. As you can see the first one is (Della) and SpongeBob using the child's name and then he did some of his own drawing, his own artwork and enhanced it with the stickers that we provide.

And this was a neat story about (Della) and SpongeBob in their travels to Paris.

The next one just shows - this was a book that the father did, a book of riddles, tongue-twisters and jokes and he made it neat on the inside because he turned the book upside down. He'd write the answers squiggly and just made it a really fun book for his son.

The third book was called (Abigail). She happened to love music, play the fiddle and she had a cat so the dad wrote her story around something that she enjoys doing. And I put

this one in there because I wanted to show you that particular cat is juvenile wall art and these are very cost-effective. We use the Dollar Tree and there are several stickers on each sheet and they are larger than your regular stickers and plus they're easier to clean.

So maybe that gives you some ideas of what you could use for these guys.

Okay, the next slide?

Session 12 we've covered most of our curriculum topics and we - I wanted to use something that many of the guys and many of you are familiar with. Whatever you think of prison art, I wanted to take something and show them how to change it into something age appropriate and that would be child friendly.

So we used their handkerchief or the (panuelo) and the dads choose patterns from children's coloring books which I take in. They can't draw their own art on these. We keep it very simple and we keep it child-focused.

And then what we do is we send each child a packet. The father makes one (panuelo) per household and that is his pattern to show the child what he did and then the child can make their own.

The child receives blank handkerchief, a coloring book, colored pencils and then we send a pack of crayons along with it in case there are younger children who would like to just color.

And you can see in the picture the dads are all focused and you can hear a pin drop when they're working on these projects.

The next page, the next slide, slide 11, shows the completed handkerchief, the complete project. And I have gotten feedback from the children and from the parenting partner. They take them, they may frame them, set them on the child's dresser and you can supplement topics such as the human needs, emotional, intellectual, creativity, talk about age appropriateness. Would you use this for a 15-year-old? No, you would choose something a little bit different. And this actually opens up communication because I encourage the fathers to talk with their children before session 12 and find out what their favorite movie is and just learn a little bit about them so maybe we can help connect them in that way.

Again, this is very cost effective, a white handkerchief, free coloring book pages, a Dollar Store coloring book and then the colored pencils.

These are just a few examples of the things that we've incorporated into our program. We know that actually being there nothing can take the place of that but I wanted to come up with ideas. I know fathers have really great intentions and they may tell you that they will write their child or they will communicate with them but sometimes they haven't communicated for a long time and so they might need a little nudge.

And we use these activities to actually start that communication process and this is a small part of the reintegration with the family but I feel that they need to start connecting with the family way before they are released.

So I hope that you got some ideas from this. And if you have any questions just email me.

Thank you.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much Trena. Yes, and you know, I'm sure some of you are thinking, well, how does Trena get these incarcerated dads to do this stuff? I actually had the real pleasure of being out there a few months ago to do a focus group with, well, I forget how many dads there were Trena. We had the whole class, right, so it was about 18 dads I think who were in this group. And they were sort of talking about what they get out of it. And they were just so enthusiastic and there's a big waiting list to get into these groups. So words has now spread through the prison that this is something good.

I'm just wondering, Trena, can you put into words what it is you do at that first class that sort of gets the guys to go along with this?

Trena Pollard: To go along with all of the neat ideas that we will experience?

Nigel Vann: Well, just to be open to go in on this journey with you really.

Trena Pollard: I tell you, just be honest and just be really open with them and make sure that they understand if they're a little bit hesitant that you will meet with them and you will discuss it and you will work out something if they are not, you know, all on board at this point. And I guarantee by the fourth session they're all on board.

I've had over 650 fathers and as of today they have all participated in these projects.

Nigel Vann: Yes, it's great stuff you're doing Trena so I really appreciate you sharing a little bit of that and we'll come back to you again at the end for a few more thoughts.

Trena Pollard: Okay.

Nigel Vann: So, I've been getting messages from Matt and I've been afraid to go off this screen. I didn't want to lose control of it but I believe you've now taken over the controls again Matt?

Matt Crews: Yes, everything should be fine now. It was just a file size issue with the first slides.

Nigel Vann: Okay, cool. Okay. Well, I'll let you get back to the slides and I'll move forward here and introduce John.

And so John Badalament, I had to learn from John how to pronounce that. I hope I'm doing that right John. I've heard a lot about John's work and I've read some of his articles before but I had only recently got to meet him in person.

I had to the opportunity to sit in on a workshop at the recent New England Fathering Conference. And John and Haji Shearer, who's with the Children's Trust Fund of Massachusetts, also based in Boston, they did a very interesting workshop together on ways to talk to dads about nutrition. And it was just a really neat workshop.

So I asked John if he could join us today as part of this presentation and sort of just weave a little bit on that nutrition piece into the presentation. John, as you see there, you've got his email address. He's written this book called Modern Dad's Dilemma: How to Stay Connected to Your Kids in a Rapidly Changing World.

And he also directed an acclaimed PBS documentary, All Men Are Sons Exploring the Legacy of Fatherhood and his works been featured in various places such as ABC News, NPR, The Men's Health Magazine and so forth.

He's currently working on a new documentary film project entitled Gender Traps: How Marriage Problems Start in Kindergarten and he maintains a Web site for fathers and professionals at www.moderndads.net.

And so looking forward to your presentation John. John is not actually on-screen with us. He's in the middle of traveling down to a speaking engagement but he's pulled over, he's on the phone and he's got his slides printed and he's ready to walk us through them.

So, are you there John?

John Badalament: I'm here. Can you hear me all right?

Nigel Vann: Yes, you sound great.

John Badalament: All right. I'm presently in Yonkers, New York for any New Yorkers out there. And I'm being a modern dad by pushing my kids out of the car and having them go into a shopping mall while dad does the webinar.

Sound good?

Nigel Vann: Take it away John. And when you want me to move the slides just let us know and Matt's going to move them so everyone will see them.

John Badalament: Great, so we should be on the introduction, the first slide there with my mug.

Nigel Vann: That's right. People are looking right at ya.

John Badalament: Right at me, all right. Well we'll try to get through this one. Just let me thank you Nigel and Matt and Trena and Jan. It's a pleasure to be on the call and thank you all for joining us in the middle of this day.

I'm going to talk a little bit about the Modern Dad's Dilemma and I think pick up just where Trena left off in the sense that my work is very practical and it's also very adaptable so you have a PDF or a few PDFs of a couple of the activities that I'm going to talk about today.

I'm just going to say is a (blanketed) statement. Everything I do, and maybe this goes without saying, but needs to be and should be adapted to whatever setting you're in whether it's with incarcerated dads in a school-based program and a heads tart program, whatever. It's all adaptable and changeable. And I think that's part of what's been fun for me to see anyway is to see the many different environments that this work is used in. And a number of US grantees, I know, for instance, Strong Fathers up in Maine uses this first activity I'm going to talk about.

So, the Modern Dad's Dilemma let me just say a couple of words about that. I wrote this book with - it's basically a how-to that I had dads, and I interviewed dads, and had them do the activities.

So it's a how-to that's already done and one of the guys I talked to I think captures the dilemma perfectly, his names (Lou Wayne Jones), 35-year-old guy from Nashville. Truck

driver by trade and his wife owns a hair salon. And fairly recently, around the time I was interviewing, it occurred to (Lou Wayne) and his wife that they were - it made more sense that her business was taking off and he was only going to make so much at his job it basically made more sense for (Lou Wayne) to pick up more of the child care and specifically do the drop-off in the mornings and the pickups after school for their daughter.

And, you know, long story short this was initially very difficult for (Lou Wayne) to stomach, one, that his wife was making more money than him, that was hard and then, two, to then get used to the new role of having a lot of - he talked about how mothers would call him and ask to speak to his wife about doing a sleep over and he would have to say, no, well, actually you need to talk to me about that. I'm the one who handles all that.

So the point being that (Lou Wayne) instead of backing - and it was so difficult, I should say, because he grew up in a very traditional, dad goes to work as the breadwinner, mom's the caretaker family.

So for him it was a challenge but it was a dilemma. And the dilemma was stepping into this new role, this very awkward challenging role, of being an engaged father.

And the beauty of his story is, and the answer to the dilemma in, I think - well, I should say an answer to the dilemma is what (Lou Wayne) does which is instead of backing away from, or doing it sort of halfway, explain his new role halfway, he steps into the discomfort. He steps into the chaos, the embarrassment. And by that I mean he embraces his new role.

And, lo and behold, what he learns, and I think this is really important for all of us as we, all of us working with fathers, is to help dads see that they're pioneers. They're leaders in stepping into a new role that was not what most of them grew up with.

And (Lou Wayne) especially learned by picking up his daughter he gets to learn her rhythms and understand so much more about what makes her tick. And in the process, and he says this very clearly in the book, he learns and he builds, he discovers, how to have the kind of close relationship with his daughter that he wanted with his own father.

So there is the dilemma is actually an opportunity and that's how I try to present this idea of the Modern Dad's Dilemma is also your greatest opportunity for connecting with your kids. And ask dad's in any setting what they want most as a parent or ask them what they want most in their life and it's usually going to be I want to have a close relationship with my kids. And then in parenthesis, unspoken is, but I don't know how.

And that's where I created this book as a guide and so let me give you a few of the activities. So if we could advance the first slide it should say the dad's vision statement. Matt?

Now that Matt is at the helm to driving Nigel, by the way.

Nigel Vann: Yes, we're there Matt. I mean we're there John. You've got your slide.

John Badalament: Great. Okay, so the dad's vision statement. This is where I start and initially as I thought about this I thought we should start with the past and looking at the legacy but then it occurred to me, wait a minute, before we get into the past it's very important for dads to set forth a vision for what being a good dad mean's to them.

And so this is an activity that is very straight-forward and you can play with the amount of years. It says imagine 20 years from now, it could be, imagine 30 years, 40 years, 15 years, that your child is being interviewed for a film about the relationship with you, the dads. And this is how I present it to the group.

What do you hope he or she would say to that interviewer and I might throw in Oprah. I sometimes have a picture of Oprah or Larry King up on the screen when I'm doing the slide. What do you hope that he or she wouldn't say? Those usually come a lot quicker.

And then based on those two first questions, what are your priorities today and what do you need to change? And I have guys do this either in written form first to think quietly. They can do this, is literacy is an issue they can doddle, they can draw or they can just simply sit quietly and think about what their answers are to this.

And what this activity does it is sets up a vision and it says I want to - I hope that my kids say that I was there for them. That always comes up. Or I hope that my kids say dad was somebody I could talk to about all the things in my life, the good and the bad.

Okay, what do I hope they don't say? I hope they don't say that dad wasn't there. Dad never paid attention, dad never listened. So based on that - and I asked dads to get really specific about what are the priorities and what do they need to change?

So that might be - I hope my kids say that I was there for them. Well, one of the priorities then might be in the case where dad's able to, it might be that I'm going to make sure that I'm home for dinner two nights a week, three nights a week, five nights, whatever it may be.

Or I'm going to make sure that I send a letter to them every single month and, again, it's I really try to get guys to be specific because then they can have a success and pick one thing that's realistic.

You know, I hope that my kid says that dad was there for every event that I've ever done. No, that's not realistic so don't pick that. That's where I think all of you come in and working with them to say what's a realistic vision?

So, if we could advance to the next slide, the bridging the past and the present, this is - so now that you've set forth a vision which I, you know, like a company or all of your organizations whether you use it or not, they all have a mission or a vision statement, right? So why should parenthood be any different? We should know where we're headed.

So after having a sense of where you're going as a parent, then I think it's important to look back, to take a step back and say, all right, what am I carrying with me? What is the legacy that I bring with me? And I should note, by the way, when it's possible I have dads share their vision statements with their kids or in the presence of their kids. It's a very powerful activity.

By the same token, moms can do this as well and it's a great activity for couples to do. What is your parenting vision? You each do it separately and then come together.

So, bridging the past and the present, if you could go to the next slide it should say gifts and liabilities. Here's where I start with this concept or this idea of how do you look at the past?

And, again, like so many of Trena's activities I think were so very concrete and I think that's really important especially when you're talking about a subject as big as the past. I have dads, again, an activity that works with both moms and dads, circle two or three on the left-hand column are the gifts, on the right, A column, are the liabilities. This list is much longer. This is an abridged list and I also have, again, always ask dads to add to the list if something isn't there.

So a gift might be that dad had, you know, a good work ethic. Dad had showed up to my events. And I have them circle those. Same token on the right, circle the liabilities.

Okay, and, again, this is a discussion right there to talk about how sometimes the liabilities, the fact that let's say my dad didn't control his anger might also be a gift to you because it's really made you get your anger under control.

So, after they circle a few (hits) a few liabilities go to the next slide and that is number 5, it should say Bridge the Past and Present and have some little stick figure guys that you probably can't even make out.

But what I have then is I say, all right, let's take those three gifts and put the gifts in the left-hand column from the big guy to the sort of same sized guy and then what that means and then let's go to the - so on the left-hand column it should say the gift that my father gave me.

And you can do this for mothers by the way too. It works very well. And then on the right hand where it goes from the big guy to the tiny guy it says, how I will pass on that gift.

So, if the gift is a work ethic, my dad gave me a great work ethic, how are you going to pass that on to your kids. And it may seem - it's a very simple activity but very thought provoking.

Your dad was - you had a great sense of humor. How are you going to pass that gift on to your kids? And then it's not up here but it's basically the same graphic, I say all right, let's take those three liabilities, plug them in the left-hand column from the big guy to the middle guy and that's the liabilities and then it says in the right hand it says how I'm going to not repeat these liabilities so, these mistakes. How I'm going to not pass these on to my kids?

So, in the left it might say my father was an alcoholic. On the right it's going to say, I don't drink or I never have more than two drinks. In other words, again, I ask dad to be really concrete in how they're going to change this, how are they not going to pass that on to their kids?

And part of this is about raising awareness. That the idea that you have a legacy. It's a question - everyone has legacy. It's not a question of good or bad, it's a question of how you're going to deal with it. So that's another practical activity.

And then to the next slide it says the food legacy and this says talking with dads about nutrition. This is a workshop that Haji Shearer at Children's Trust Fund and I have just been working on putting together.

And basically - and it's a very rich topic especially in the context of so much obesity in this society and the need for a focus on nutrition. We just ask these simple questions, what messages do you get from your parents, you can say your dad about food, and then what do you want to give to your kids?

And it really opens up some very rich conversations about the legacy of food. For example, my own father was diabetic and basically that was one of the last things he said to me was could you get me a Reese's? And I left and also felt like punching him and felt like crying at the same time. But it was this legacy of needing to deal with sugar.

And so that's something I don't want to pass on to the extent it's possible, the behavioral aspect of it, to my kids.

So, the other part of the food is the nutritional legacy is what are the conflicts that come up around partners? And that's kind of - I left that out of here but that's another rich discussion of who does what in the family? What lessons do kids learn from mom and dad?

So next slide is Connecting Emotionally and I'm going to zip through this because I'm aware of our time. Nigel, how are we doing for time?

Nigel Vann: You've got about six or seven minutes John.

John Badalament: Good, okay. So, it should say Connecting Emotionally: Knowing and Be Known. And I'm switching gears from the legacy to one of the, I think, fundamental practices. And these are all, to me, practices. You don't just do a vision statement or look at the legacy once, you have to do this ongoing and on a regular basis as a parent, that's the idea.

So, what do I mean by connecting emotionally? I've tried and this has been the focus of my work really over the last decade is to try and make it concrete. What does it mean to connect emotionally? And I'll say a couple of words about why it's important but what is - because it's such an elusive term and it brings up so much for guys when you start looking at masculinity, touchy feely and I try to dispel the notion of connecting emotionally is something to be laughed at. You know, it's like basically the best prevention that we can do as dads is to connect emotionally with our kids. It's the best prevention against everything we worry about as fathers.

So the simple way I look at it is knowing and be known. Knowing who your kids are. And, again, you might think, oh, well of course I know who my kids are, but do you really? And this is something that I have to do ongoing. I try to take - I have an activity that I'm going to show you in a moment to really pay attention. How well do you know your kids? How well do you know what their social life is like? How well do you know what's going on in school? Who they are, what they love, what they don't like and all of this?

So, the idea of knowing it really requires, fundamentally requires, listening. And, again, these are challenging depending on what your context is. So it might be you have to rely on somebody else, the child's mother, for instance, to get some of your information. But the idea is that the focus is being an expert about your child. You know who your child is, you do your best to know what's going on in their life because that's what's important.

Being known is the other side of that which is letting children into who you are as a man, as a person, beyond just being their dad. It's about being known and I primarily ask dad to do that through focused story telling letting - and there's a whole conversation about which stories when and that's important. We're not going to get into that now but the fundamental idea is so many men grew up with dads and men in their lives that were a mystery.

And if you really want to know somebody they have to be able to share what's going on with them to some degree and a simple activity for dinners is, you know, highlight and the low light or what was good today, what was bad? Everybody at dinner can do that, mom and dad included.

So, to the next slide, the Research Highlights, I'm not going to spend much time on this. The bottom line, and I think all of us at this point know that kids who have actively involved dads, dads who are connected emotionally with them are far better off than kids who don't, who have more distant or unconnected fathers.

And I think one of the interesting things is there is some great research coming out about how this impacts school life and academic life which is so critical and so much of my work these days is focused on getting dads connected at school because it makes a huge difference and it's a really nice central hub where to find fathers and father figures.

And I should have said at the outset when I say dad I'm including father figures in that whether that's a grandfather, adult male mentor, etc. So the research is just clear and this is the research that I use sometimes to dispel the ideal of emotional connection as touchy feely or somehow weak and something that we as men don't do.

The bottom line is, the research shows, you connect with your kids emotionally they're going to do better across the board.

Slide 9, the next one is Knowing the Modern Dad's Quiz, How Well Do You Know Your Children? This is, again, a very straightforward activity and here are just a few of the questions. You have this activity in the PDF and, again, it's very much adaptable. But the idea is the quiz is meant to keep you honest.

How well, and I have dads fill this out, another activity that's great to do if the kids are present and of age to where they would understand it, but it's basically a quiz and, again, it works well with mom's. And you can even have them formulate some questions that are important to them to know.

So, for instance, what recent accomplishment is your child most proud of? If I'm paying attention to my kids life then I'm going to know that their recent accomplishment was my daughter did a presentation on Brazil recently.

I think that's what she would be most proud of. And I have dad's go through these answers and the homework is they've got to find out if they were right or not.

And it generally gives kids a great sense of connection and power to be able to say, nope, daddy got that one wrong. And, again, sometimes dads are going to have to rely on mom or a home care visitor or whoever it may be to get this information but it's really critical that dads are paying attention to what's going on.

So one of the questions is name two things that your kid did at school in the past two weeks? Well, if you don't get the newsletter or if you don't make it a point to try and get the information from school then you're not going to know that necessarily.

If you don't tune in to what your kids coming home with for homework it's going to be harder. So the point of the quiz is to really give dad some accountability and I think it really is critical to building connections.

The last part, slide 10, Knowing and Being Known: The Relationship Checkup, this kind of brings the two ideas knowing and being known together.

And, again, I said be known I do a lot through story telling. I have dad's say, you know, what it was like a meal at my house growing up. That's an example of a story.

So this last activity is probably, I think, the most critical and most important and what it is is you're just seeing a few of the questions. It's a longer comprehensive list of questions that dad and child answer on their own first and then they come together to share their responses.

I have a version for four through ten-year-olds and then I have one from 11 and up. So there's two separate versions but you get a sense of the questions. And, again, remember, dad's answering and the child is answering.

One thing, I as your dad, could do to improve our relationship is I could show up to your games. I could listen to you more. One thing I could do as the son or daughter to improve our relationship is maybe I could listen to you more when you tell me what's right and what's wrong. The point is, they have, they do the activity by doing the questions alone and then they come together and share the responses.

Now, with younger kids I will have them do it together to just walk through it. And this activity - and, again, sometimes I'll have dad just pick one question and go to breakfast or go take a walk or take a bike ride, something or ideally get out of your home environment and just being to introduce these conversations.

What this activity has done, and I was fortunate enough to have my best friend and his daughter I've been basically documenting their relationship since his daughter, my friend (Jonas)' daughter was about 5 and she's not 16.

And I've had them do this over time and it's always met with resistance but it always leads to more open dialogue which is what kids want and what kids need from their fathers. And that is a chance to say, here's what's going well dad.

And I say to dad's, don't you want to know what's going well? Don't you want to know what you could improve? And fundamentally I think it empowers children to be able to have a voice and to be able to have a strong voice and say my dad listens to me. He may not change what I asked him to do but my dad listens to me and this is building the language of relationships.

In a relationship we talk about what works, what doesn't work, what we love, what we don't love. That's the language that so many kids are not getting and they're especially not getting it from men. So this is a way to provide them with a language.

So that's a real quick spin through some of the activities in my work and I hope they can be helpful and I'm always available. I think contact info will be there to talk through specific circumstances or questions you might have. But, again, I hope they're hopeful and thank you all for listening.

Nigel Vann: Okay John, thank you very much and stay on the line there we're going to pull you back in here again in a few minutes.

You know, I really like the way John approaches this. I think this whole idea of sort of knowing your child but also knowing yourself and then making sure that you're known to your child just really underlines a lot of what everyone out there is doing.

You know, and I think it's also - it really shows the intersection between the fatherhood work and the healthy marriage work. I'm - as John was going over that last slide I was just thinking how that's a lot of what you do when you're working with couples. So there's no reason why you can't take a lot of that couples work and encourage dads and mothers to do those same kinds of things with their kids.

So thank you very much for that John. We've had a couple of questions come in and one actually leads us straight into the topic of talking about discipline but I thought what I would do actually first here - there's a question Trena that I think you might be able to answer. If you don't want to answer straightaway we can come back to it.

But it's a question that's come in that says, are there screening or accommodations made for participants with substantial mental health or substance abuse issues? How do you handle that in the prison setting?

Trena Pollard: Actually it is open to anyone. I work closely - I actually do a class with the therapeutic community and it is open to anyone who would like to be in the class.

We have had no problem. I've been working this for over five years now so I don't know if that help, if that answers someone's question but for us it has not been an issue. We work closely with them understanding that they may be on medication or whatever the issue but we don't tell them that they cannot be a part of the program.

Nigel Vann: Okay, thanks Trena. There's another question coming, I'll come back to that.

Yes, I just wanted to say on top of that I know a lot of father programs are sort of running into issues where they sort of really do need to find a referral source in the community to help with some counseling around some mental health issues and other programs that will sort of - if substance abuse issues pop up they'll make sure that dad's deal with that before they can really move any further forward.

But let me go and just tell you this first question that came in and this person says we often hear, that's how I was raised and I turned out fine when we're discussing corporal punishment. How do we address this tactfully with our fathers?

And that's exactly where we want to go now in terms of talking about discipline. So Matt if you could pull up the slides on discipline. We'll come back to the other questions after we spin through this here. But I just wanted to spend a few minutes talking about this. Obviously it's a very difficult issue to talk about with fathers but it's an extremely important one.

And you are going to get dads as the question or pointed out who say that they were beaten as kids and they turned out fine. In a sense I think that's a good comment because it's going to spark discussion and hopefully it's going to lead to everybody in the group taking a look at what they really think about some of these issues and how things impact their kids.

That's where we want to get to with this. And obviously in the next few minutes here we can't do justice to this but what we are going to try and do is give you a quick overview of

some ways to have this discussion with dads and leave you with some ideas for handouts that you might leave them with.

But I think the bottom line here is that we have to remember that what we're doing is - we're facilitating a process of self reflection and discovery for these dads and our job is to guide them on that journey and to provide tools and skills as they become open to receiving those tools and skills.

But we can't and we should not be trying to force our opinions and beliefs on them. In fact, in the activity on discipline that Jan's going to briefly mention from their curriculum there's a note to facilitators that points out that this is a very controversial issue. We need to remind dads that each child is different and therefore you need to think about different discipline strategies with different kids.

It's good to remind dads that it's sometimes better to walk away from a situation rather than to become physically aggressive with a child but to always remember that as a facilitator it's important to remain neutral and allow the group and the individuals to make the appropriate choice.

So we're not trying to force their choice here. We're just trying to spark a discussion where they can take a look at what they really feel about this.

And one way to do this is just to start talking about, well, what does the word discipline mean? As you see on the screen here, and I'm sure most of you know this, but it comes from a Latin word meaning to teach or to guide. And so in that sense fathers are teachers and children are disciples of their fathers.

And I'm going to just briefly refer to an activity that comes from responsible fatherhood curriculum. There's also very good activity on this that begins with this very definition that you see on the page from the 24/7 Dad.

But if we can go to the next slide Matt, and this is just laying out some questions - it's not coming up Matt. But it lays out some questions that you can pose to fathers to start the discussion. And I'm just trying to find my printout of it so I remember what I had down here.

Matt Crews: Nigel, it's not coming up. If you could actually take over on your end that would be great.

Nigel Vann: Let's see if we can do that. No, it's spinning on me again Matt. I haven't got it.

Matt Crews: Okay.

Nigel Vann: So but I'll just walk people through this and if we can't see the slide I apologize. But, you know a few questions to spark this discussion is it's similar really to what John was just talking about with getting dad's to look at the gifts and liabilities that we get from our dads. So you can ask, can you identify some of your children's behaviors right now that are causing problems which can spark a whole discussion.

You can ask dads to think about time in their childhood when a parent or relative, it could be their father, it could be somebody else, corrected their behavior. But just take them back to that time. You know, how old were you? What were you doing at the time? How did your father or the other adult respond? And what did you feel like then?

And then that way you know just to get people in that place where they start thinking about this. And obviously that takes some time, you know, you don't just do that and then more forward you process that.

But then where you want to get to and on the next slide I've just laid out some distinctions between what punishment is and what discipline is. And normally I wouldn't read these because you can't see the slides. I will just quickly read through these. And so some of the differences are that if we're talking about punishment then really what that does is tells children only that they've been bad but it doesn't tell them what to do instead.

Whereas with discipline we want to teach children how to act. So it should make sense to children. There should be some connection with what they did wrong and there should be lessons about consequences there.

So discipline should provide a chance to correct your mistakes and it should be able to put kids in control of their actions whereas on punishment's side it's more the parent trying to maintain control so it tends to be more fear based and so you're talking about, you know, I'm going to take your privileges away from you or the child feels threatened in terms of safety or losing their belongings or losing their parents love.

And it can often involve hitting or yelling and it can even show that violence is a good way to resolve conflict and, of course, it has the potential to turn into abuse. And so a lot of these discussions are going to start getting into, well, what is child abuse? And that's where you can sort of push the discussion a little bit.

But I think the bottom line is that, you know, discipline needs to be clear, consistent and doable and should also include praise and reinforcement of good behavior and correction of negative behavior. And it should focus on how kids are different at different stages of child development and how you can't discipline a toddler in the same way that you can a teenager.

So, with that, let me ask Jan to come in and just talk for a few minutes about how you handle this and the focus on fathering curriculum Jan. And we'll...

Jan Watson: Okay, thank you Nigel. I don't know if I've got a slide or not so I'm just going to go ahead and move forward and just kind of do a quick overview of topic 4 which is in the focus on father and curriculum which is discipline. And as you all know in this field disciplines a topic that always comes up in father group meetings, usually unscheduled, and often as a result of something that's currently going on in the family.

So I love the fact that Trena shared that it's already an integral topic that they introduce early as part of the curriculum that she uses.

What I really love about this particular group meeting plan is that it's particularly effective at getting to the heart of the topic, of this topic, which is an awareness of why fathers respond to behavioral issues in the ways that they do as well as for them to consider what the response is from the child. How does the child respond to the discipline strategy that they are currently using?

Because the bottom line is tagging right with what you said Nigel is that whatever discipline technique or strategy that's used it should be not only effective but it should be growth producing.

And what I mean by growth producing is it should, as a result, support the growth and development of the child. For example, it should - there should be a way after the discipline technique is given that there should be a reuniting of the parent and child so that the trust that has already been built continues. So it should build on trust in the parent/child relationship. It should carry, encourage, positive social emotional development of behaviors and skills.

For example, we want to teach children to care about other people, to respect people, to be kind. We also know that we want them to learn to control impulses and delay gratification.

So, it's such a big topic and, you're right Nigel, there's no way to do any justice to it but to reinforce what you said, the goal of this particular group meeting activity is to reinforce what appropriate behavior is for the child, to provide for their safety and wellbeing and to set limits for them to provide both emotional and physical safety as well as support pro social skills.

So I'm just going to do a quick highlight of this particular activity. And what it does is statements and I think you've got it, if you've got the handout in front of you...

Nigel Vann: Jan, the slides do seem to be working so we've got slide 5 on the screen now.

Jan Watson: Okay. So, let me see, I need the slide that has a copy of the activity in it and I'm trying to think what that is at this point.

Is it slide - I don't know and I'm sorry.

Nigel Vann: Slide 5 has the how statements and it talks about statements about discipline (one at a time).

Jan Watson: Okay, I wanted to just, knowing that we were short on time, just kind of highlight the activity in the group meeting plan on discipline and I thought it was part of this.

But, anyway, what I wanted to do was just share that the idea is to read - thank you so much Matt. Some of the statements that are listed on here. These are red out loud one at a time and fathers, ahead of time, they can be given a piece of piece of construction paper or an index card that's a different color and they hold it up, a predetermined color. Let's say green would mean I strongly agree and that a red card would mean I strongly disagree.

So they're asked to hold those up. And then they're asked to share back a response to a statement that they strongly agree with or strongly disagree with. But, I think in order to try to keep it from being too volatile they're asked to begin the sentence with I believe that, you know, discipline is teaching or I strongly disagree. I think that discipline is - and then they can fill in their answer.

But it's a way to provide reflection and an opportunity for them to hear what other dads say in a relatively safe kind of environment. And I just think that's a really important piece of this and then there's a debriefing that's obviously part of this. and I know that when this activity has been done we have some facilitators that have just kind of struggled to keep comments being as positive and fathers not feeling judged and leaving the group. Because that isn't the goal because we know we're not going to impact any growth on the part of the father or positive results of the child if the father leaves the group.

So, Nigel, I don't know if you want to put in any more comments at this point or...

Nigel Vann: Do you want to just have your final takeaway messages Jan or is this what you said at the beginning?

Jan Watson: Sure. Yes, the final - yes, the takeaways are already embedded in the discussion points but they just really lift up and highlight some of the just key kinds of messages that are really important to share and I don't want to read them all to you but they can be charted during the group as they arise and come up.

They can be kind of summarized as key points at the end of the group meeting or they can have a handout to take away. But it's really lifting up a key piece that understanding where your child is developmentally has a huge impact on what type of discipline strategy is important to be using with a child because we have to remember where that child is intellectually and what they can handle and what is age appropriate.

I know that I had one of the dads in the group that said, I really think my child is doing this to upset me. And so that needed to be discussed that a 12 month old was not intentionally trying to upset their father or the baby was not crying to make the father upset.

So, real important, important topic that I think is going to go beyond more than one group meeting with the fathers.

Nigel Vann: Okay, well thank you Jan. I've also put your final slide up here so people can just see that with the two ((inaudible)) and the fathers. Now, we've had one other - we've had a couple of other questions come in and one person is just asking if they can get a copy of the slides and yes you can. We have your email address so that will be sent out.

Anybody else who needs the slides you can just send an email to info@fatherhood.gov and we'll get that off to you.

And the other question, I don't know if anyone can answer this, it's sort of a follow-on to the previous question about screening and it says if you've got a father who needs to be addressed on levels deeper than behavioral issues, do you work with finding adjunct help for them for their more damaging histories, e.g., if they've experienced child abuse?

And John, would you like to take a stab at that just quickly?

John Badalament: Yes, can you hear me?

Nigel Vann: Yes.

John Badalament: Yes, I mean I think that absolutely needs to be, you know, addressed and especially in the context of when you're talking about legacy. I mean, you know, in the fatherhood groups that I run we always make sure to do a very thorough screening, evaluation, and have support, you know, ideally on site. And certainly I think those are important issues to address.

But, I also don't think that that means that you don't address some of these very - some of the more cogitative and behavioral aspects. But I do think that is critical when you're talking about a history of child abuse or, you know, any number of mental health issues.

Nigel Vann: Yes, thanks. You know, I think one of the keys to doing this work is just realizing that we cannot do everything ourselves either as one person or in-house. We've got to be able to work as a team in-house but also we've got to have, you know, a team in the community where we can bring other people in to help as needed.

So, we're getting close on time here. I think what I'll do Matt is let you do the survey questions and then we'll come back and I do want to hear from Trena if you've got any more input on the discipline and I want to give everybody the chance to have one more final point.

But let's just make sure we get this survey done and then we'll come back and have a bit more chat before we sign off.

Matt Crews: Great, I have my fingers crossed on the survey questions. But (how to take these) so I'll be quick and get you through it.

Question number 1, I have a better understanding of ways to help dads see the importance of early father infant bonding? You have the options; strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree or strongly disagree. No vote at the bottom. You can simply click on your screen for the option that you want to choose. I'll give everybody another 30 seconds to come to a decision.

All right, it looks like everybody's voted. Poll question number 2, the advice and suggestions of ways to help fathers increase their understanding of child development and age appropriate behavior were helpful.

Again, I'll give you a couple more moments to get your votes in.

All right, for poll question number 3, the overview of the various activities to engage fathers, enhance parenting knowledge and skills is helpful? And you have your five options in color and if you do not have an opinion, no vote is available at the bottom.

And for those of you that are joining us not using the Live Meeting tools, you do have opinions about some of the questions you'll ask you can also send feedback to info@fatherhood.gov. We've appreciate it.

I'll give you all a couple more moments to vote on poll question number 3.

All right and poll question, the final question that we have today, in general I received good information that I can use in my work for fathers and families?

Again, you have your options on the screen. And for those of you that experienced difficulty viewing some of the slides during the webinar today we apologize. We came to the conclusion that it was an issue with the size of some of the PDF images that were uploaded on some of the slides. So if you didn't receive the slides this morning feel free to email us, info@fatherhood.gov and we will send those over to you.

And other than that this information will be available in the (COP)'s in the near future.

Nigel Vann: Well, thank you very much Matt. So Trena, I'd just like to ask you quickly if you had anything to add to what we were saying about discipline? Was there anything else that you do when you talk about that?

Trena Pollard: I'd like to add one last comment. Sometimes if we just listen to the fathers they can teach us a lot and I want to share this one father's statement. He said that when he was a young boy that he soiled his pants in the middle of the night and his punishment was wearing those pants over his head for the rest of the night.

So to him he had never heard of to guide and to teach meaning discipline. So he came up after he had shared this with everyone in the class and he had tears in his eyes and he said that he wished someone had explained what discipline meant before his children were in school.

So that's my comment on discipline. It's in every topic that we discuss.

Nigel Vann: Right, powerful Trena, thanks. Have you got one last set of thoughts in a couple of sentences in terms of this whole topic of helping dads to improve their parenting skills?

Trena Pollard: You bet. Just never assume that the parents have knowledge of parenting and never underestimate the willingness of fathers or parents to learn. Never be afraid to introduce projects that might seem trivial to other people and never hesitate to encourage fathers to examine their own self awareness.

Nigel Vann: Right. I hope you've got that written down. If so, I'd like you to send it to me.

Trena Pollard: Okay.

Nigel Vann: And actually before I forget I want to say to all of the presenters if we stay on the line after this ends we can have a brief chat at the end. But let me just go to Jan and then John for just a quick final thought.

Jan Watson: Okay, I'll go ahead and go. And my final thought is that positive early experiences are just essential for healthy development and, too, as we work with fathers to remind them of the impact of each discussion, each comment and each interaction that they have with their child.

Nigel Vann: Great, I hope you write that down for me as well Jan.

Jan Watson: Okay.

Nigel Vann: And John?

John Badalament: Three things; one, I think it's important to acknowledge that even today in contemporary American society for a group of guys to come together, especially when we're talking about guys across lines of class and race and religion to come together and just speak the truth, and especially the truth about parenting, which is what we're talking about here, is still revolutionary. It is a revolutionary act. And I really commend all of us who are doing this work to just acknowledge how important it is to provide these forums. Just creating that space is so critical. And I think that's really important.

And then secondly I would say I think it's important for all of us who are doing this work to do our own work. That's something that gets overlooked and looking at our own legacies as we're asking people to do very, very difficult work whether it's just reading with a baby or looking at your own fathers legacy that we do that too to some degree.

And then third I think it's really important that we help dads understand that they're also on the front lines of what is a bigger movement and they're really part of changing what it

means to be a man, what it means to be a dad today and I try to keep it very, you know, just positive that they're really part of something bigger than just what's happening right there in the room. So that's it.

Nigel Vann: Well, thank you John. Yes, they're very, very deep important messages there. Yes, you know, I'm privileged to get to go to a lot of these programs and meet these dads and one of these (we say), you know, what you just said, you know, that you're part of something big here. There's a lot of other programs like this going on and I think it is really important for guys to know that and understand that.

And I think that they really can take a powerful message back to their families and their communities and that's how we build on this work and I totally take your point that we have to do our own work. You know, if we have processed our own stuff then we have no business trying to help other people process theirs.

And if we haven't processed it it's going to get in the way of us doing it. So, you know, on that resource list that we provided as part of the handout's you've got various curricula and tools you can use and quite a few of those are available at no charge or minimal charge. But I think it's a mistake if people take that and start working without doing some staff training, for instance, but without also having staff work through these kind of activities as well.

So, we should all be thinking about the gifts and liabilities that we've got from our fathers and some of the other things that John was talking about there.

So, I think the three of you, that was a really stimulating conversation. I apologize to everyone for the technical difficulties but I think you'll probably join me in indicating that the three of them did a wonderful job there.

So hats off to you all and I look forward to seeing the grantees in Baltimore very shortly and our next webinar will be the third Tuesday in June I believe and our topic then is going to be telling story. We're going to be focused mainly on ways in which you, as programs, tell the story and that's particularly looking forward to how you carry this work on.

But a part of that is also what John was talking about is how we have dads tell their stories first of all to themselves and but also to their kids. We shouldn't forget that.

So I thank you very much and wish everybody a good afternoon. If the presenters want to stay on the line we'll keep talking.

Thank you.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, that does conclude today's presentation. We do thank everyone for your participation.

END