



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

[www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)

## NRFC Technical Assistance Webinar



“Working with Fathers from the Hip-Hop Culture”

**Moderator: Nigel Vann**, NRFC Director of Training and Technical Assistance

**Presenters:**

**Brian Gullins**, Coordinator for Male Responsibility, Richmond City Health District,  
Richmond, VA

**Carol F. Burton**, LMSW, Executive Director, Centerforce, San Rafael, CA  
(OFA grantee)

**P. Thandi Hicks Harper**, Ph.D., President, Youth Popular Culture Institute, Inc.,  
Clinton, MD.

**Ron Clark**, Director, Community Based Programming, National Fatherhood Initiative

**April 28, 2009**

**Webinar Transcription (provided by Global Crossing)**

**Operator:** Ladies and gentlemen thank you for standing by. Welcome to the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse Technical Assistance Webinar. During the presentation all participants will be in a listen only mode. If at any time during the conference you need to reach an operator, please press star 0.

As a reminder this conference is being recorded Tuesday, April 28, 2009. I would now like to turn the conference over to Nigel Vann Director of Training and Technical Assistance. Please go ahead sir.

**Nigel Vann:** Thank you very much and welcome everybody. I particularly like to welcome the Healthy Marriage Grantees who have joined us today. This is something of a first I think. And of course welcome all you Responsible Father Grantees and certainly good to see some of you at the recent Round Tables and look forward to seeing more of you over the coming weeks.

So the focus today is going to be on working with fathers from the Hip Hop Culture. So I think this is going to be a very interesting Webinar for us. In a sense what we're talking about is how to generate cross generational conversations.

*Take Time to Be a Dad Today*

You know, many of your staff may not be of the Hip Hop generation although it certainly if we understand the culture we can engage in more meaningful communication. That doesn't mean we've got to speak like a Hip Hopper but it does mean we need to understand what they respect and value.

I was talking just recently with my son about this and also Adrian Mullings, our young executive coordinator here at the Clearinghouse and they both made the point that there really are sub-cultures within cultures. And you get different messages from different areas of rap and Hip Hop.

And we got a lot of positive messages from many of these artists name. Many of whom have now become fathers and experienced that sort of change that that comes with. We've got two reality shows on MTV now Run's House and Snoop Dogg's Fatherhood that really do carry a more positive message about being a father and being a husband.

Adrian made the point though that a lot of these messages are still whispers in a room of shouters. And in a sense I think a lot of are saying and have been saying in the father field is still a whisper. You know in the larger culture we still need to make more headway in terms of addressing the notion of it being okay to be a strong silent man and talking about the importance of fatherhood and challenging sexist attitudes and thought that its not okay to beat up on your wife etcetera, etcetera.

So I'm certainly looking forward to exploring a lot of these issues. Before we get into this we are going to have a brief announcement from Dr. Jeff Johnson President of NPCL about plans for a Father's Day rally which is perhaps another step in raising the sound of our whispers.

But before we get there I do want to passengers it to Jen McHenry who's going to give us some of the logistics to help you through the Webinar and then I'll come back and introduce Jeff for a brief announcement. Jen?

Jennifer McHenry: Thanks Nigel. We just want to quickly go through how you can ask a question. If you have a question that comes up during any of our presenters presentations, you can



send them to us via the live meeting tool. And when you do this you'll get a standard response back to let you know that we've gotten your question and it will also free you up to ask a second question.

So please don't hold back if you have anything that you'd like to present. And at the end of all of the presentations today, we'll get back together with all of the presenters and pose these questions. If your question is not addressed, we will do so afterwards as a follow up. But please send in as many as you have. And here's how you ask a question.

You look at the top of your Toolbar, you should see a Button that says Q&A. Simply click on that button, type in your question and hit ask. It's just that simple. You can also use this if a presenter is too quite or if you didn't catch something, please feel free to send it to us.

And just a couple of other quick technical issues aside from the question and answer tool. If you'd like to take your presentation full screen, if the current format is a little bit too small for you or perhaps your viewing the presentation with more than one person, if you hit the F5 on your keyboard that will take the presentation full screen.

And if you hit the F5 button a second time or the Escape Button that will take you down to the original format. You have to be in that original format in order to ask a question. But after you've asked your question you can then go back to the full screen.

And again, if you're interested in those slides from the presentations today and you did not receive them ahead of time, you can email the clearinghouse at [info@fatherhood.gov](mailto:info@fatherhood.gov) and we will get those to you.

So thank you all for participating and I'll turn it back over to Nigel.

Nigel Vann:

Thank you very much Jen. So let me introduce you to Jeff Johnson. I'm sure a lot of you know Jeff. He and I first met in I think it was 1990. He first came onto Health co-author Curriculum with Pam Wilson for the young unwed fathers pilot project and Jeff

ended up working for me in a sense for the next few years and then I ended up going to work for Jeff at NPCL from the end of 97 to end of 2005.

He and I have not had a lot of contact recently but we certainly do go back a long way. Some of you may remember him by that he gave a brief address at last year's OFA Grantee Conference and at that time introduced the fact that although the first celebration of Father's Day wasn't held until 1910, we've actually only had it as a permanent national observance since 1972.

The idea of Father's Day was first put out there in 1909, 100 years ago. And so Jeff has been working with others over the last year to develop a celebration of that 100th anniversary. And so he's here today to share some of his ideas with you and let you know how you and your fathers might get involved in that. So, Jeff?

Jeff Johnson: Thank you very much Nigel and good afternoon everyone. I want to talk about two things. First let me talk about the 11th Annual International Fatherhood Conference which will be held June 16 through the 19 in Baltimore, Maryland. I think that's showing up on your screen.

And the theme of this year's conference is Maximizing Father Engagement, Celebrating 100 Years of Father's Day in America. We have a very impressive line up of speakers and activities for the conference that begins on June 16 with a public policy forum that's being coordinated by Congressman Danny Davis' office. That is an important name for all of us because Congress Davis is the lead person in the House of Representatives on the Fatherhood Bill. That will probably be addressed by Congress in the next several weeks.

And then its also important to note about that public policy forum is that it will be shown also in North Carolina simultaneously with African American Healthy Marriage Initiative. And so we will be able to see some of their sessions in Baltimore and they will be able to see some of our sessions in North Carolina. So we're looking forward to that. And the technology is so impressive today.

And then on Wednesday we're having starting with a prayer breakfast and we have that opening session that begins on Wednesday and we're having our banquet on



Wednesday night. Let me just say it to the grantees that we are still accepting applications for Favorite Fathers of 2009. They will be recognized and honored at our banquet this year. You can contact us on that number on your - on the slide on the screen for more information about that Favorite Fathers, those nominations.

We also have two Super Sessions at that conference. One will focus on facilitating employment opportunities for ex offenders. And the other will be developing green job opportunities for low income parents. That's being facilitated by the State of Maryland who has really jumped into this whole greens job initiative, you know full bore. And so I think you'll find that impressive.

And so also for OFA Grantees we are going to offer a 10% discount between now and May 22 if you'd like to attend the conference. And so that will be a 10% discount but you have to register by May 22.

Finally, I just want to announce our Father's Day rally which will be convened at the Lincoln Memorial that will be June 20 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We have been able to partner with over 100 organizations to sponsor this rally at Lincoln Memorial. There are also many organizations who will have their own local rally's in their communities.

The focus of the rally is on responsible fatherhood. And the theme of it is entitled The National Rally on Responsible Fatherhood on Behalf of America's Children, A Call to Personal Responsibility.

And so we'll have a platform of speakers and guests including some very high powered speakers and then at the end of the rally fathers will take a pledge of personal responsibility. This idea of this rally was really born out of the work that you all do out there in the field where people just felt it was necessary with this 100th celebration of the idea of Father's Day to really shows the nation that there's a lot going on out here, there's a lot that needs to be done.

And this rally will be a focal point for a lot of us coming together with our dads and our mothers, but particularly our dads to take this pledge of personal responsibility.

The rally Chair Person is Congressman (Danny Davis) and we think its going to be an impressive event. For more information on the rally you can contact us at that 1888-775-6725 number.

Another Website address that's not on your screen, I'd like to give you and this is for specific information related to the rally which was recently created and it's, the Website address is [fathersdayrally.com](http://fathersdayrally.com), [fathersdayrally.com](http://fathersdayrally.com).

Nigel thank you so much for the opportunity, and I wish all the grantees much success over the coming months and years.

Nigel Vann: Well thank you very much Jeff and I certainly appreciate you. You know Jeff is one of the more loquacious folk out there and I appreciate you keeping it short Jeff.

Jeff Johnson: Okay.

Nigel Vann: Yes, and it seems like a long while since we had the first International Fatherhood Conference, so its great that that's still going and I really hope this (unintelligible) to raise the sounds of our whispers as I kind of said at the beginning there. So thanks for that. (unintelligible) to follow up and get more information on the rally.

Jeff Johnson: Okay, thank you very much.

Nigel Vann: Thanks Jeff.

Jeff Johnson: Okay, bye.

Nigel Vann: Let's move into the main portion of the Webinar here then now. And I'm going to introduce our first presenter in a minute. He is Brian Gullins. I did just want to say, you know I'm 55 years old and Hip Hop is certainly not been something very much on my radar screen.

You know I grew up with the Beatles and I understood the punk rock era of the later 70s and 80s. I never did totally get my head around Hip Hop although I've sort of



worked on that a little bit as I indicated talking to my son. So, I'm certainly looking forward to learning more from our presenters today.

And we have a great crew lined up for you today. Unfortunately Ron Clark who as I indicated in an email to you, Ron had jaw surgery recently and isn't able to talk fully at the moment, so we do have another person who stepped up though who I will be introducing in a few minutes.

And I will give a brief overview of Ron's slides at the end if there's time. First of all I'd like to introduce you to Brian Gullins who is the coordinator for Male Responsibility with the Richmond City Health District in Richmond, Virginia. Brian has got years of experience working with Generation X and Millennials within a state, local and non profit context as an Educator, Youth Director, Pastor and Program Coordinator.

His current role her is creating and executing a citywide initiative called Man Up Richmond, Man Up Richmond which is designed to reduce out of wedlock births, school drop out and to increase two parent families, leveraging strategies for boys, fathers and men.

So I think he's got an interesting presentation here that's going give us a little bit of history of Hip Hop and help us get started with our conversation today. So Brian take it away.

**Brian Gullins:** Well thank you Nigel. Greetings to everyone this afternoon. Today we want to talk about Hip Hop and fatherhood. And we're going to be looking at using Hip Hop Culture to connect with fathers and bridge the gap between fathers and children. The key word we want to remember is connect. And bridge, that's what we want to do. So as we progress, just keep those two things in mind. Next slide.

As a result of our presentation today, as a result of our time together, we're going to discuss the historical origins of Hip Hop. We're going to look at the underlying messages and needs express in Hip Hop Culture that's critical that we recognize or understand the message and needs because there is a message but underneath that message there's a need,

And if we can understand the need, it will give us a great opportunity to communicate and meet that need. I'll also examine strategies in communicating the value of fatherhood through Hip Hop Culture. Next slide.

Let's take a look briefly at just where did Hip Hop come from. And so let's talk history and demographics for a moment here. The 1950s, the South Bronx, the Burrell's, New York was the stable middle class community. In an applicant bridge growing suburban neighborhood was downtown retail districts. Massive construction began on the expressway.

Construction would be stabilized. The economic base of the South Bronx to be followed by suburban flight. That flight wasn't just a white flight, it was an economic flight. Demographically by the 1970s, the South Bronx would become characterized by low income, high unemployment, high crime, high rates of non marital births, rising drop out rates and the majority African-American population.

The South Bronx would be the birth place of Hip Hop Culture. As we take a look at Hip Hop we are to understand that context is critical. As Hip Hop was birthed in the South Bronx community there is some very, very important things that we need to observe and they're mentioned here on the slide. Next slide please.

Hip Hop has gone from a Sub-Culture to Pop Culture. From a Sub-Culture to Pop Culture and when we think about, when we look at engaging Hip Hop Culture I want you to imagine if you were a Missionary going to a foreign country or a foreign land, how would you prepare yourself to engage that culture?

What would you do? So as we look at engaging Hip Hop Culture, its important that we put aside our assumptions, but that we become students of that culture, of that sub-culture. Gather as much information as we can and then engage it appropriately.

When we look at Hip Hop Culture there are four original elements to Hip Hop Sub-Culture that is. It began with Rapping, DJing, Break Dancing and Graffiti. Those were the original pieces of expression that came together or the original tools that the South Bronx community used in expressing itself, Rapping, DJing, Break Dancing and Graffiti.



Early themes were from community and self pride. A lot of the messages that we hear today weren't the original messages of Hip Hop. Hip Hop was all about fun, community and having pride in one self. That's important to know because this was a community that had experienced a significant economic downturn, (unintelligible) with many negative indicators.

And originally this was an effort of community expression, positive community expression. Hip Hop begins as an Urban Genre. Hip Hop would later transform itself into a global movement. And that's what we see today. Next slide.

Hip Hop Culture, Hip Hop culturally and continentally can be found, now think about this in North America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe and Latin America. It has spread all over the world. Now uniquely for the United States there are different forms of Hip Hop that have geographical distinctions.

There's East Coast Hip Hop or we'll say Rap. West Coast. There's what is called the Dirty South and even now Mid West. So and other forms of Hip Hop. And when we take a look at Hip Hop there is a unique ability of Hip Hop Culture to almost morph into other geographical regions and take on its own expression.

There are no cultural or racial limits to Hip Hop. Hip Hop goes beyond every racial limit that we've seen and then that's what makes Hip Hop very, very unique in our country here in the United States its that it has the ability to transcend racial barriers.

Also Hip Hop was culturally was historically oppressed populations (unintelligible) Hip Hop. In other words when we look historically at the spread of Hip Hop it normally gravitates or manifests in the oppressed populations first. It doesn't stay uniquely in oppressed populations but it springs up in those populations first.

And then has the ability to spread across economic lines. But that's a significant observation because when we track Hip Hop we see that it does begin in oppressed populations. But that will also help us to even kind of predict where it might manifest itself in the future. So we can track it normally through the oppressed populations. Next slide.

Messages and needs. This is a quote from My Life, Young Jeezy says, I needed my father but he needed a needle. In that we hear a need expressed and we'll talk the power of the needs that we see in Hip Hop in a few moments.

Now when we look at Hip Hop there's basically, Hip Hop was birthed through Generation X, those born between 1961 and 1981. I happened to be a Gen X. A post Baby Boom generation described as a No Mad Generation. Variety, tough, feelings of being unwanted, diverse, adventurous, cynical about authority and institutions.

Now that last piece there, cynical about authority and institutions is an important piece when we look at engaging Hip Hop Culture because any program that will address that use of the Hip Hop Culture must build trust. The sense of mistrust that many Gen Xers experience that must be built in, in any programming. It is the ability to create a sense of trust.

So when we talk programming and trying to reach Hip Hop Culture, we have to be patient. Trust isn't built over night, we must build it slowly, strategically and carefully but intentionally when we talk about engaging the Hip Hop Culture. Trust is critical.

Also Hip Hop message was shaped by a generation that's felt disenfranchised or a generation that's felt deprived or there's a huge void in the original generations of Hip Hop that other things have failed. Next slide please.

Gen X and Hip Hop, culturally the deep seeded feeling of (dupe) connection and abandonment would give way to a message of misogyny, materialism, criminalism and anti-intellectualism. These feelings reflect a generation lacking the emotional and financial connection of a father.

Perhaps, and Ron talks live, they'll mention this, but the father rule is something that has to be estimated when we talk about engaging Hip Hop Culture because the lack of a father creates a father shaped void.

Now also one observation to make is, and it's rarely talked about but when there's a sense of abandonment amongst a generation, particularly the fathers, there can be



an underlying often times silent resentment towards the mothers. And in some of the video that we see, and some of the language that is used that's directed at the women it could be a connection with a resentment towards mothers and females as well.

So that's something to be explored but the choice or the decisions of mothers, particularly as it relates to men who they have had in their life and the effect of that upon children can create some issues that we could see expressed in the music.

Every rapper, this is a quote from Snoop Dogg, every rapping, I'll say about 90% of rappers grew up without a father. That speaks for itself. Next slide please.

Hip Hop Culture consist of, as we mentioned, of basically two segments, the Gen X and the Millennials. Millennials are those born 1982 to 2002. A very, very important generation to study. There's a book I would offer you, Millennials Rising, is an excellent resource to use in terms of learning more about Millennials.

We have done some surveys of Gen Xs and Millennials and what we found is while they come from different eras, there's some basic needs that seem to surface as it relates to both generations. They manifest themselves differently but here is what we found.

When we talk about reaching the Hip Hop Culture, there are four basic needs we need to surface. One there is a need for identity, a need for a relationships, a need for understanding sexuality and the world view.

When we talk about identity, that question of who am I? Is a consistent thing. Who am I? Any programming that looks to address the Hip Hop Culture must answer this question to the best of its ability. Who am I?

Relationships, relationships, much of what we see in terms of Hip Hop Culture is in a negative sense. It's a result of a break down in relationships. And so when we look at addressing fathers and men, we have to address three basic areas and it depends on your context but relationally first what is their relationship with God or a Higher Power?

What is their relationship with themselves? And again, depending on your context, self can be spiritual or body. And then how do you relate to others? Those are very, very important pieces that need to be addressed when we talk about programming on a relational sense.

Also sexuality, when it comes to addressing fathers and men, understanding masculinity. There's so many misconceptions, misinformation's about masculinity that need to be addressed within the world view. How do they interpret the world? How do we make decisions, principle based decisions or value based decisions? So needs. Next slide please.

Using Hip Hop to reach fathers. Here are five basic strategies I'll walk through quickly. One, create a profile. Two, bait the hook. Three, making programming epic. Four, target critical transitions and then five, use what is cultural to communicate what's timeless. Next slide.

Strategy number one, creating a profile. When the FBI is looking for someone they create a profile and one of the things we have done here in Richmond City is we've created a profile of the missing father. We have 2,100 non material births 2007. And we raised the question where are the fathers. And so we created a profile of the missing father. And a profile is very, very helpful.

And here are some of the pieces of the profile that we made. Location, location, location, where are they? Using local census data to help you pinpoint where they are. Educationally, what do they know or what don't they know? One of the things we discovered in terms of drop here through our profile is that the majority of our missing fathers dropped out between the ninth and tenth grade with a reading comprehension at the fifth and sixth grade.

So those kinds of questions are important when you talk about programming. So understanding reading comprehension levels or computer skills, level of computer skills. Socially, where do they go? How do they interact with each other? Who do they interact with? Economically, how much do they make? Where do they spend and what do they spend their money on? Next slide please.



Culturally, who do they listen to? What do they wear? All these are very, very important questions to ask. Now relationally, who do they date? How do they connect with each other? We had a very, very interesting observation we made through focus groups talking to fathers and men, how relationally how do they view their partners? Now when we talk about using Hip Hop and addressing fatherhood, we came up with an approach called The A-B-C/ And this was an effort to get into the psyche of fathers, understanding how they view the mothers of their children.

And when we talk about reaching fathers, when that relationship between the father the mother break down, it leaves the child often out in the cold. That's when the father disconnects emotionally and financially from that child when that relationship with the mother breaks.

And so we asked fathers how did they view the mother and basically there was three categories as to how they viewed the mother. So, I'll share these with you. I do not seek to be crude in any way. So, I'll use my language carefully.

But the A woman was what they called wifey. That's the one who they would bring home to their mother or that's the one they would be seen in public with, that's their main woman. They use the expression wifey, doesn't necessarily mean they're married, but that's their main woman in their life.

B, is what they would call the booty call. That's the one who they have a friend with benefits you can say. That's the one who they have an understanding with that they have sexual relationship with very little responsibility or obligation to.

The C was what we obviously call a cover of darkness. This is those who they may engage with sexually who they might call a skank or a trick or someone, a crack head as they have expressed it. Someone who they would just use for sexual purposes. Normally there is an addiction or some kind of abuse involved. And so we asked the question. What happens when A gets pregnant? Or B gets pregnant. Or C gets pregnant?



That is a critical issue because the perspective relationship of that father, how he perceives the mother before she gets pregnant will have a tremendous impact on how he relates to the child after the pregnancy.

So that's an important consideration. Also health, going back to the profile, are they healthy? Next slide.

Strategies, bait the hook. That is always have some kind of bait in your program, something appealing. For the sake of time I won't go through all of those examples. But always have a programming that appeals culturally, culturally relevant programming that draws them in and then engages them from a point of their interest.

The bottom of the slide says, making programming ethic, that is experiential, participatory, imagine driven or connectedness. That is when programming is developed consider does it draw the participant in effectively, experientially. What is the experience or what do they come away with?

Participatory, does it get them directly involved? Imagine driven, as many of us know most men are imagine driven, stimulated through stimuli. So what are the images presented. And then connectedness, some great examples of ethic programming would be who wants to be a Millionaire and Bill or No Bill.

And I have one minute left so I want to move quickly for the sake of time. Next slide please, talks about strategies for critical transitions. Just imagine a motor cycle making a turn. Often times motor cycles crash out when the turn is made. That's when we lose a lot of our young men. It's in those critical turns in life. And then next slide.

Lastly, using what is cultural to communicate what is timeless. Do not be afraid to use the culture to communicate what's timeless. And my last statement will be this. That the value of fatherhood is timeless. Thank you all so much for your time.

Nigel Vann:

Thank you very much Brian. A lot of useful information there, probably too much for us to digest at one take I think, but and I realized you were a bit rushed at the end. If



there was an important point that you'd like to make at the end, there will be time in the question and answer section.

I did want to acknowledge that we had one question at the beginning, someone was asking why we had music playing at the beginning and not Hip Hop? That was a good thought. We should have had some Hip Hop for the end of this but let me move on and I do want to encourage you to ask questions though by using the Q&A feature. So please do that so we can have a full Q&A session at the end here.

Let me now introduce you to Carol Burton who is Executive Director with Center Force in (Ten) Raphael, California. She is one of the Promoting Responsible Fatherhood Grantees. And she is going to be talking about working in an incarcerated setting. Before coming to Center Force, Carol was the Associate Executive Director of the Osborne Association in New York City. And while she was there she developed and oversaw a lot of Osborne's in prison and community based family and reentry service programs.

She also serves as the Board Chair of the Family and Corrections Network. For those Grantees, the Fatherhood Grantees who came to our Round Table in Minneapolis last year, you had the pleasure of hearing from Ann Adalis-Eston whose the Director of the Family and Corrections Network. And offers a lot of useful insights in terms of working with children and families that have been impacted by incarceration. And this is something Carol brings very strongly to the table as well.

She's wrote articles on children of the incarcerated, would use two video training curriculums as well as various (unintelligible) manuals. So let me turn it over to Carol for some insights on Hip Hop and working with incarcerated fathers. Carol?

Carol Burton: Hi, good morning for those of who are on the West Coast and good afternoon to those of you on the East Coast. I just want to spend a few minutes talking with you about my experience in working with men and fathers and some women who have been impacted by incarceration and the children.

I just want to say from my perspective and I want to give a disclaimer because I feel like there are so many folks in the field Hip Hop, the origins of Hip Hop, Hip Hop



education who can really go through what is and be specific about what is a technique that has its origins in Hip Hop.

So I want to be specific that my take and my position has always been that Hip Hop in this country is much like trying to pull away the pieces of Hip Hop in this country and identify what they are is much like after baking a cake and then trying to pull it apart and decide what the ingredients are.

I think Hip Hop has become much a part of our fabric in this country and it is the way in many ways on how we do what we do. So much of what we do is influenced by Hip Hop and so I just wanted to say that and give honor to the folks who have been doing the work and the folks who made it possible for Hip Hop to flourish in this country.

So with that being said, I certainly have some positive images and impressions and influences from Hip Hop over the years in my work. So next screen.

So I'll spend a few minutes talking about the number of men who are incarcerated. I hope that at the end of this you have a greater understanding of Hip Hop and its impact on children affected by incarceration and that we'll learn some new strategies that can be used within organization that typically do not have a Youth focus.

And I just want to say that much of what we hear often talks about Hip Hop from a developed, using Hip Hop strategies from a developmental standpoint. And although that is true when you are working with a young people particularly teens and also young adults, I also think that what development brings to your work is an opportunity for people to see themselves differently to think that creatively about the work they're going to be doing or about the situations that they see themselves in.

And often agencies do not have a youth focus or not developmental in the approach are uncomfortable in allowing creative opportunities in creating programs that are infused with that inside their organizations. Next slide please.

So while I think this work is important, Randall Robinson in his book *The Debt, What America Owes to Blacks*, talks about the legacy of slavery. And I liked the term that



he used distorted in the telling, buried in the untelling. To talk about these lives of the incarcerated fathers and their children.

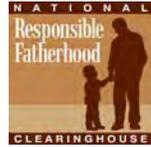
There are (unintelligible) to the people and just to restate, you know that (unintelligible) have been relegated to a place of unimportance. To a powerless position within society or groups. And often we hear is that we when tell stories about fathers, that young fathers don't hear, they say they treat women poorly and they leave their children.

But and so what we do is we suppress that group of folks and we have children who are unsilenced into like the silent victims. And so we don't hear much of their voice unless we give them opportunities to be creative through programs and supportive activities.

In the criminal justice system just does not have a system that supports the relationship with the incarcerated fathers and their families. Many of the fathers that I've met over the years in prison come out of prison are overwhelmed with the child arrears and are sometimes upwards of \$40,000 when coming out of prison. So that again has an impact on how they begin to interact and relate to their children and their families.

As for the negative attitudes and opinions about incarcerated folks and their families, I spend a great deal of time helping to combat public opinion around people who commit crimes and or end up in prison and that the families who attack them. Negative opinions not just about the person who committed the crime, but about family members who disclose them and family members to continue to support, love and care for individuals in prison.

And also why is it important to talk about fathers in prison because often the work when we talk about incarcerated children, also focuses incarcerated mothers. I just want to say they are equally important. Incarcerated mothers and fathers are equally important in the lives of their children. Just look at the data, there's certainly more fathers in prison overwhelmingly the numbers are fathers in prison versus mothers.



Social Services organization lastly are really ill-equipped to work with young fathers who impacted by the criminal justice system. Next slide.

So I did want to say that the prison count has increased three fold. If you look at the numbers between the mid 1980 to 2007 it's literally tripled. And if you go back even earlier from that point to the early 70s, it looks like it went up almost 300%.

If you look at what was going on in the country about the time that the war on drugs and other things were happening, you can see that there's some coloration with it. And then you can see the importance of a kind of group of people who are marginalized, who are trying to find a voice and reason for the oppression and the incarceration of mass groups of folks. Next slide.

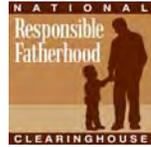
So believe it or not, its 1 in every 100 adults are behind bars here in the United States. And its 1 in 30 that are probation and parole. And it gets even more concerning if you to the next slide please.

For black men ages 18 years of age or older, they are 1 in 15, 1 out of every 15 are in prison. Look at a smaller age range, 18 to 19 it gets 1 out of 9 and then this is where it gets very concerning, that between 20 and 34 its 1 out of 9 in prison.

And up to 35, 1 out of 10. And then of course we're hitting the end of what we call Generation X, 1 out of 44, 40 to 44 is a 1 in 13. Alarming and startling numbers. Next slide.

And so this actually gives you, I think it's just a reference point, I don't want to say much about it but it gives you an opportunity to look at Hispanics. And you just put the number in 1 and every 36 male Hispanic men in this country incarcerated. So particular slide is particularly telling and startling. Next slide.

(Unintelligible ) I began to really pay attention to the values that are not only I brought to this work and my opinion and my thoughts about Hip Hop artists who use derogatory terms to talk about women. Who use the N word, who swore, who surrounded in videos of women who was skimpily dressed.



All of those images begin to arise in our conversations inside of the organization as we begin to look at Xiara's song. Xiara's song is about the documentary about a six year old girl who's father, she was very close to her father and her father was incarcerated.

And from Xiara's birth her and her father had a strong bond and were very close and he would sing to her, Rap songs and she would actually create her own songs. So this is a song that Xiara wrote for her father and she performed it for him along with a friend of hers while he was in prison.

And so in the documentary you hear Xiara singing this, Rapping this song. Hi daddy, how ya doing? Are you fine? I haven't seen you in a long time. And I miss you and I love you. I just forget about you. You're still with me. It's great to see you here. It's great to hear about you. Next slide.

So Xiara's song is not, its really not an attempt to romanticize Harold whose been in and out of prison literally all of his daughter's life. But it does show this real gentle side of him, he's handsome, he's a rapper who has an inspirations not only in making it big in the industry but he has a deep seated love for his daughter.

But more importantly what we saw in the video because of all of the work we do inside prison and helping men to gain a greater empathy for their children to transform their lives into people who are accountable and responsible. We noticed in the video that there were really uncomfortable scenes where Harold was talking to his brother and there was language that wasn't appropriate.

There were comments about a song that he sang to her that was referred to having sex with her mother. And so we've had to step back as a group of people, as a certain group of people who are trying to engage men from this particular culture, sub culture to look at what were our opinions about that and to challenge our own values and emotions around it.

So that was the beginning of my really kind of hard fast journey in looking at how we should better prepare and equip staff to better engage with the folks are influenced and a part of the Hip Hop generation. Next slide.



So let's talk about children of incarcerated parents. About 35% of 5 to 9 years old in this country have a parent that are in prison. And when you think about developmental stages and then there is the identification with the parent of the opposite sex, you have over 50% of the children falling in that category in this particular statistical report. Next slide.

So we often leave children in the same environment. You talk about violence, you talk about violence we talk about - and a great deal of our (songs) speak to the violence, the depression, the pain that people experience in their communities and their every day lives. And we actually leave our children in those same circumstances. And often not cared for, not supported and in silence and in isolation. Next slide.

So, my work has been around helping clients to be fathers where they are. The number one thing is to consider automatically consider and assume that most fathers love and care for their children. Now it is true that we, father could use more help in demonstrating their love for their children. And understanding that they can participate in the child's life even if they're not there physically and if they cannot contribute financially.

And that's so that either one of those things are not equally important. The other thing is that asking fathers what they want, what kind of life they want for their child. You will find in those responses that there is a great love and great concern and fathers want the best and better for their children.

I mentioned empathy, simply the important roles that father have in the lives their daughters. Many times a father does not understand that girls need their fathers as well as their mothers. And there is an important role for girls in terms of identifying and understanding men, that they learn those things through the process of the relationship with their fathers.

And the last one that I say some more about it. Is going for the low hanging fruit. That we often want to immediately go to the dress, the swagger, the scarves, the language. And I think that appealing to first of all a father's love for their children is an



engaging with them in a way that most people don't assume automatically assume that they love their children.

So that is a way to first gain some trust but also a degree of connection where in fact fathers do understand that you understand and you get some part of them. Next slide.

You know staff hiring and training, hire staff who are sensitive to the needs and the complexities of incarcerated fathers and their families. And I say incarcerated fathers and their families, and again we're talking in the context of that the community the culture and the environment in which we live in are all greatly influenced by Hip Hop Culture and generations.

And that we are saying that you want staff who are aware of that and are in tune with that. Hire young fathers and mothers who are particularly vocal about the influence of Hip Hop in the line. And then mentor them to promote them in leadership positions in your organization.

Secondly, consider conducting gender specific and couple specific training from experts in the field. Look at your policy that prohibits fathers from fully engaging in your services. And in prison were about to enroll older, what they call old heads in prison to develop out reach efforts for younger guys who were - who ordinarily they look at and say those guys you know, you cant control them, they don't have their head on right.

But as we being to work some of the mature in the prison and help them understand the price, the conditions, the opportunities for young people to use art in various forms to express themselves, to express their live experiences. Then the older men begin to understand them and have greater empathy for them and the out reach program inside prison increase greatly.

The last thing I want to say is that since resources that challenge (unintelligible) people who have participated in the Hip Hop music industry, the video industry, the spoken word and just the mere culture of how we and I include myself as that, how we do what we do. If you have some assumptions that prohibit recruitment and



retention then I think that's a value escalation and challenge that would be appropriate for you and your staff.

The last slide is just a few things to sum it up with. Well I look forward to answers to questions at the end. I hope some of this was helpful and I look forward to hearing from Dr. Hick Harper on what she's doing there. Thank you.

Nigel Vann:

Thank you very much Carol. I appreciate the insights just in terms of really making sure, you know that we understand who we're working with here. So our next presenter as I mentioned at the beginning is really stepped in here at the 11th hour or almost close to Midnight. Ron Clark had as you saw send in his (unintelligible) slides and as I mentioned he's on the line here, so we may get a word from him at the end.

But he just didn't feel that his voice was really ready to be speaking in public yet. So I called up Dr. Harper yesterday and just asked if she could be available to make a few comments at the end of the Webinar. And then this morning she had sent me a full Power Point presentation. So we are delighted to have her here to share some of his thoughts and knowledge with us. And Thandi Hicks Harper is President of the Youth Popular Culture Institute which is based in Clinton, Maryland.

She's been studying Hip Hop Culture and its potential for facilitating learning for over 20 years. Her focus is on how best to use Hip Hop Culture in various media tools to effectively engage young parents, youth workers and educators in efforts to prepare children and youth for successful school and life experiences. She was sharing with me just yesterday that she just completed some training for youth workers in Prince George's County, Maryland just in terms of really understanding the youth they're working with.

And so she has a wealth of knowledge to share with us, so we're going to get a snapshot of it today and I think she's going to leave with a link to her Website so you can follow up and get more. But with that said, let me invite Dr. Harper to share some wisdom with us.

Thandi Harper:

Okay, thank you, greetings everyone. I'd like to really thank Nigel and also NRFC for the invitation and really the vision to see the importance of discussion Hip Hop



Culture within the context of fatherhood. I'd like to thank all of you grantees for your participation and also the fellow presenters.

I'd like to start with saying that I love the question, why wasn't Hip Hop music being played? Because it speaks to the need to always have the type of population at the table and every facet of everything that we all do in our work. We have to make sure that who ever we're trying to reach is at the table giving us advice, giving us words of wisdom and letting us know how to best reach those at they interact with or those that they know very well.

Okay, next slide please. Everything that we've talked about today falls under what I call Hip Hop Development. Which recognizes Hip Hop Culture as this rose that continues to grow from concrete. How does this rose grow? And those of you know are listening you might know that that came from Tupac Shakur and Nikki Giovanni the Rose that Grew From Concrete.

It grows because young people give it the breath of life and we as adults must begin to embrace its roots and its flowers if we are going to be successful in working with young people. Successful in working with young fathers.

This road is, Hip Hop is dominate youth popular culture. And Hip Hop is going to be there whether or not we institutionalize it or not it's going to be there. So what are we going to do? It's a little static, it's a new tool which overlaps existing approaches in the filed of youth work and it can serve as a catalyst for reaching young fathers where they are.

Bottom line, it's empowering when we as adults use Hip Hop Culture as a backdrop when providing young fathers the opportunity to develop and to use the asset field. So that doesn't just mean having young people just participate, we have to include them. We have to listen to them.

We have to see what they like and what they don't like. We have to see what makes them tick. We have to be on their pulse to some extent. And just like they have to be on our pulse also. It's really a youth, adult a father, youth worker type of partnership that I'm talking about. Next slide please.



Hip Hop must be discussed, articulated, understood, beginning with what we know already about culture. When we talk about culture, we're talking about values, we're talking about world views, we're talking about predilections. And Asa Hilliard talked about culture and said that it gives a group a sense of belonging and behaving in certain ways.

So culture -- if you look at this slide, I don't want to go through each one of these because of time, but look at the last bullet. Culture is valuable in nature in that all cultures allow for some individual variation between activity and choice.

So what does that mean? That means that just because you're a member of the hip hop culture, just because you like hip hop music, okay, does not mean that you don't do anything else. We have to be careful of our stereotypes. Hat turned around backwards? Okay. Pants low? Okay. That does say hip hop culture to many of us and it does symbolize hip hop culture. But also know that a nice button up with a tie, a nice S.Carter raw silk suit, a nice Ed Hardy khaki pants, that's hip hop culture too. We have to be careful of the stereotypes.

If you don't leave this conversation with anything else, leave here knowing that hip hop culture is not just rap music. It's not just music period, okay? Economics. Hip hop is entrepreneurial, it's spiritual, it's corporate. And I argue that it's not just a subculture. I argue that it is mainstream culture when it comes to young people that started with its roots in Africa.

Now when you talk about the temporary hip hop culture, yes, we move forward and some of you may remember -- well, we all remember James Brown, (unintelligible), and The Last Poets, and the list goes on and on. But contemporary hip hop culture, I must say briefly, started in the early 1970s and it started as a violence prevention and intervention tool. So what are we dealing with here? When Afrika Bambaataa named the culture hip hop culture, he was then a member of the Black Spades gang in the South Bronx. So we can talk a lot about that, but that's just a little trigger to just say we're going right back where we started from when it comes to hip hop culture and it's use with young fathers.



Okay, next slide, please. Cultural terminology. It's important for us to have as youth and adult workers all of this in place: cultural sensitivity, awareness, openness, humility, fluency at some level. But what must not be negotiated is what I call a high level of hip hop cultural competence.

Next slide, please. Now what do I mean by this? And I'd also like to give kudos to all of you because for some it's a beginning and for others it's an enhancement doing this Webinar because all of us have to constantly (unintelligible) hip hop culture (unintelligible) competency. It just means that you're going the extra mile to try to understand the culture.

You're going the extra mile to really talk to young people and to really get out there, search the Internet, and connect with others who may have some understanding about the culture. It means researching more. It means maybe putting down Newsweek and Time or Jet and Ebony magazine for a second and picking up XXL magazine, Vibe, or The Source Magazine. That's how you increase your hip hop culture competency very briefly.

Next slide, please. Now the formal features of hip hop culture, they're the characteristics that give hip hop its power, its influence, its appeal, and its leverage capability. Okay, so swagger and technology, those are just two formal features.

But what is important for all of us to remember is that once we have an understanding of what those formal features of the culture are, then we'll make more informed and better decisions when it comes to positively engaging fathers in our programs, when it comes to recruitment, and when it comes to retention.

Okay, next slide, please. This is one of my favorite slides (unintelligible) because it makes me sit back and really think about some of the things that I'm saying to young people. And it speaks to our tendency as adults to always feel that we're one up on young people no matter what the subject.

We can be talking to a young person about, say for instance, a cell phone which most of us barely know how to use. I mean, we know how to dial a number, we may know how to take a picture, but some of us probably do not know how to send the same



picture to 25 people at the same time. And we still will act like we have one up on those young people.

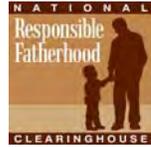
How many of us have said to folks in our program just do it because I said to do it? Or been there done that? Or I already know what you're talking about before you even say it? That's a problem. That's what we call adultism. An adultism can destroy any effort that you may use in your program to successfully work with young fathers in a heartbeat. It will limit the enhancement that could be a direct result of you engaging young fathers on a whole other level. So we have to be careful of adultisms.

Next slide. This is the basic equation: modus operandi. Increasing our understanding of hip hop and informal features, positive youth and young adult engagement, and new leading technology in hip hop equals more informed decision making and hip hop strategies that lead to desire, programmatic, and young fathers like the outcome. That's the basic equation.

If you don't understand your target -- or it's social marketing 101. Understand your target audience. Understand what makes them tick. Understand what excites them. Once you have that clear understanding and then you use the characteristics of the culture to fully engage them, okay, to put them in situations where they make decisions when they're at the table not as a token but as a person who everyone is listening to and taking their suggestions from, that's when we're going somewhere. That's when we're really making a difference.

Next slide, please. Now I wanted to let you know about Passport to Opportunity because it's one of our newest inventions. Right now the Youth Popular Culture Institute along with Billo Communications is offering P2O in a DVD format for distribution and the development of an online social network. And basically Passport to Opportunity is a media tool using the latest technology applications. And it's an interactive experience that provides juveniles and young fathers with a road map to better their life choices.

And why this is important for me to mention right now is because youth advisors were at the table throughout this whole production as content providers, as production, as



talent, and they worked along with adults, adults previously in prison for possession of guns and drugs.

And many of these youths had their own offenses like auto theft and drug dealing, manslaughter, stealing, you name it. But this was a collaborative effort. Again I have to say that it's really all about youth, adult, father, youth worker partnership. That's the only way it's going to work.

And I also want to mention that there is a new and innovative hip hop-based curriculum that is the first to concurrently demonstrate positive effects on adolescent cognition and behavior. And it's called hip hop prevents substance abuse and HIV. And I'm one of the primary -- I am the primary writer.

And right now I'm really excited because it's awarded placement on the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services national registry of evidence-based programs and practices. So you can go online and check it out. We finally have something and we're not sounding rhetorical that's evidence based that has to do with hip hop culture.

Okay, next slide, please. There's a sense of urgency for -- you can read -- commitment, competence, belief changed, exception, sharing, and authenticity. Don't take any of these lightly. They are core components of being successful in everything that you do.

Next slide. And I want to focus on change for a minute because Tupac is one of my favorite artists. And he talks about change, how we have to make a change. And for those of us who feel like we need to make a change and for those of us who may feel like it later on that you need to make a change, begin to feel, try to feel comfortable about it. It's really okay. It's like President Obama says, change. And we have to really begin to adhere to that when it comes to our work and when it comes to briefing all the guys.

And I'd like to conclude with a young father because, again, it's always important to have young people to speak for themselves and to listen to what we have to say just as much as we need to listen to what they have to say. And when I called one of

them that rap for The Youth Popular Culture Institute and I said just come up with something real quick that I can share with some of the grantees and some of the individuals that are going to be on this Webinar.

And he came up with this in about three minutes for hip hop. "I learned my time in a rhyme and my ABCs. Now hip hop is being taught in universities. There's no debate that the voice is relevant. That's why this is called hip hop development. Before you make a judgment call, just listen and learn. There's a message in our music if you're really concerned." So I end with a young person's voice. Thank you.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much Thandi and, again, thanks for putting this together on such short notice. I'd like to add one quote to that actually. I did take a look at Dr. Harper's Web site yesterday and there was one quote on there that caught me from a young man, aged 17. And he said "Hip hop is more than just videos about having money, nice cars, and being surrounded by beautiful women. Hip hop is a culture, a message that represents the who, what, and why of today. It does more than entertain. It can educate." I think that sort of sums up what we're saying here.

So Jen can you put Ron's slides up just briefly and I'll just scan through some of those?

Thandi Harper: Excuse me. Did you put up the last slide was the contact information? I'm sorry. If you didn't, that's okay.

Nigel Vann: We can go back there at the end if we need to. Okay, there we go. Yeah, it's there.

Thandi Harper: And I challenge everybody to go in the blog and to communicate via social network.

Nigel Vann: Okay. The challenge is out there.

Thandi Harper: Great.

Nigel Vann: Thank you. Okay, so again I'm really sorry that Ron couldn't join us. And for those of you who don't know, Ron was in this position before I stepped into this position. So I've been doing this for a little bit over a year now. Ron was in this position for the



first, I guess, about 18 months of this grant and he's now just been on the slide director of community-based program for National Fathers Initiative.

I first met Ron back in the early '90s when he came to a training session that we were doing when he was working down in Virginia and I've known him in various capacities since then. But he's been doing a lot of great father work for the state of Virginia and gladly for NFI.

So I did just want to try and highlight a few of his slides. We do have the luxury today that we've got an extra 15 minutes on the Webinar, so I'm just going to take a few minutes just to highlight a few of Ron's slides. I know you've all got them so you can look at them in more detail, and then there's a couple of questions that came in that we will address.

So let's see here. The second slide -- can I control this Jen or do you need to? Okay, so on the second slide, I just wanted to highlight this real briefly. This is NFI's mission, to improve the well being of children by increasing the proportion of children growing up with involved, responsible, and committed fathers in their lives. So obviously that is a statement that applies to most of the work that we're all doing and certainly relates to making sure that we don't leave out hip hop fathers.

So Jen have I got control of this? Yes, I do, okay. Okay, I just wanted to point out on this slide then that Ron is really underlining that there's various perceived positive values of hip hop. We tend to focus on the negative a lot in terms of what we hear in the mass media anyway, and so the fact that hip hop culture is really -- it's coming from people who want to make their own way in the world. They don't want to be doing a minimum wage job with no real future. They want to find a way to find their own feet.

There's also a lot of artistic expression going on here. A lot of rap artists, although they may not have grown up with their fathers in their life, they did have very involved mothers who helped them become who they are. And so there's a lot of respect for mothers throughout the culture. And also respect for the father's role although often after the fact when they become fathers. In fact, there's a great quote down here.



Let me see which slide -- here we go; it's the next one. Brian actually mentioned the more negative from Snoop Dog. I think this is sort of pretty illustrative of where a lot of rap artists have gotten to as they've grown up, as we all get to as we grow up, and becoming a father is a step where we really are challenged to grow. We don't all make it which is why we have these father programs to help us grow up.

But as Snoop Dogg says here, "We're becoming fathers and we're doing something that our fathers didn't do." So this is a message I know you hear from a lot of fathers in your program who talk about perhaps some of the negative aspects of their dad not being involved or being involved in a negative way but really sort of making that declaration to each other that we're going to do better by our kids. And so this is one way in which rap really does bring a positive message to the table.

And here's another one which comes from this magazine XXL which Ron taught me is available in a lot of barbershops around the country. And so here we have a "Shouts to the real dads who go out into the world and grind for their children in a way that helps children even outside of their home. That's the sign of a good father to me." So this is another way in which hip hop can really be a powerful message for us if we've got guys sitting in the barbershop reading this.

I'm going to just skip down here a little bit. Okay, so I just wanted to talk about some of these average strategies that Ron had suggested. So he's certainly making the point that you can really involve participants in your program in providing an outlet for their artistic expression.

So if you've got guys in your program who've got good art skills, involve them in designing brochures and posters and t-shirts or even some hip hop music that you can play during a session or use to outreach.

Ron particularly stressed this second point on here about developing entrepreneurial opportunities so it's not just a traditional career path. Bring employers in, folks who've made it on their own, bring them in to talk to guys about how they made it and really stressing -- even trying perhaps have those folks act as mentors.



So perhaps bringing in someone from the Small Business Development Corporation and helping your participants think about if they want to be an entrepreneur, what does that involve, how do you do that.

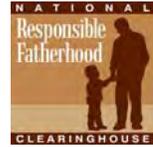
Certainly the whole importance of the group sessions as stress management sessions. Ron said he's got a lot of young men telling him that they really find these useful in terms of helping me vent their frustrations is what a lot of them have said to him.

The barbershop. (unintelligible) a lot that you can reach guys through barbershops. I really like the way Ron explained this to me in that in a sense the barbershop is the middle-income guy's country club. This is where a lot of your hip hop guys are going to be hanging out. So they may not be sharing their problems with other people, sharing them with the barber. So if the barber knows about your program, he can direct dads to your program. And vice versa; you can direct guys to him.

Perhaps they can get a discount if they're a member of your fatherhood program. And Ron also mentioned a program in Louisville, Kentucky that's based out of a barbershop in the evenings. So they have an arrangement with the local barber that when the shop closes in the evening, they actually have their father group there in the barbershop.

And he makes also the point about your resource materials really should reflect your population. So get some pictures in there that reflect your guys. And his closing quote was going to be, but I'm sure you've all seen this before, from Margaret Mead. The primary task of every civilization is to teach the young men to be fathers. So part of that is if we're going to teach young men to be fathers, we've really got to understand who they are, what their experiences are. And other things, a lot of what we've been talking about today.

So with that, let me just ask a couple of questions. I've got to tell you I got a note from Brian a few minutes ago. He had to leave. Something came up for him, so we do have Thandi and Carol still on the line. And Ron is with us as well if he can bring his voice to bear. But we do have a couple of questions that came in so let me just put a couple of these out.



This is for Thandi, Carol, or Ron if you feel up to it. How would you describe masculinity as a positive factor? What is it that we're trying to encourage in the men we're working with? So what should the male role involve? If you could just take a stab at that for us.

Ron Clark: Okay, this is Ron here and again I apologize for my voice. But I think one of the things that I've seen a lot of programs do successfully is talk about masculinity from the perspective of men having something that is unique in terms of being able to be a responsible father. A lot of these guys grow up thinking masculinity is violence, thinking masculinity is mistreatment of women.

But being able to redefine masculinity in terms of using their strength for good and not for evil and getting a lot of these young men to think about when they were young kids, what they wished their fathers had done for them. And so being able to help these men use their strength and turn it in a positive light in terms of being able to utilize their strength to take their kids to the park, use their strength to change their kids' diapers, use their strength to work and provide for their family. So really just redefining what it means to be a man, what it means to be a strong father.

Nigel Vann: Thanks Ron yeah. Actually Ron while you were talking, we had a question come in from somebody who's based in Louisville, Kentucky. They're asking if you know the name of the barbershop so they can get in touch with them.

Ron Clark: Yeah, if you send me an email, I can get that name and contact information for you. But I actually spoke with that gentlemen yesterday. His name is Luke Terry. So I can get information to you if you send me an email.

Nigel Vann: Okay, great. So the person who asked that question, if you just want to send me an email, I'll forward it to Ron. So I think you know my email but if not, it's [nvann@fatherhood.org](mailto:nvann@fatherhood.org) or you can just send something -- a TA message into the clearinghouse.

So Carol or Thandi would you like to talk about how we should be identifying masculinity, what the male role might involve here?

Thandi Harper: This is Thandi. When I think about masculinity and I think about fatherhood, of course I think about strength. But what does that equate to? It equates to leadership, empowerment, and power. All of those things have to be a part of how we identify and look at young people. We have to provide them with opportunities to lead. We talk all the time about young people, we want them to lead. But we don't provide the opportunities for them to fall and then get back up and stand up like a man before we beat them down. That's really, really important.

The other thing I want to mention, as we empower these young people, we have to identify their skill sets. What do they know, okay? What is important to them? Many of them are very Internet, technology savvy. I feel like we need to build on that. Let someone that's a part of your program, let them create an online blog for your center or for your program.

Let them develop it, let them figure out the images along with you and some others. Take some of the video that you all might take, put them on YouTube. That's masculinity. That makes them stand up and really feel good about themselves as fathers. Let them put their kids on the site. Those are really, really powerful things that touch home.

So it's about integrating their family, their immediate family or their extended family, and providing opportunity for these young males to show leadership and show the leaders that they are.

Nigel Vann: Thank you, yeah. Very good, yes. Carol have you got anything you'd like to add to that?

Carol: No, I would not like to add to that. I agree.

Nigel Vann: Okay, thank you. Yeah, it was very well put. I do want to point out that one person sent a note in during Brian's presentation. Apparently the quote that Brian provided from Young Jeezy is not actually Young Jeezy; it's from The Game. And I did check that with Brian while we were going forward here and he did check that and apologize for that mistake.

But there's one more question that came in I'd like just to throw out to you. And it's just in terms of -- it's asking if there's actually anywhere folk might go to get a glossary of terms for the hip hop language. And someone asked if someone might talk a little bit more about the new hip hop language such as swagger. I think Thandi did mention that briefly. So it's two questions really. If someone could talk a little bit about some of the new hip hop language and is there somewhere that we might direct folk to see a glossary of this.

Thandi Harper: Okay, this is Thandi again. First of all, don't ever expect that you're going to know all the hip hop terminology. That's the first thing. Because just like when we were young, there's a lot of things that our parents didn't know or didn't understand in terms of our language. The point is that they don't want you to understand everything, okay? So that's the first thing.

There is a dictionary of hip hop terminology that came out maybe about six years ago by Alonzo Westbrook. It's called the Hip Hoptionary, if you will. So that's a book that you can check out to get some terminology.

Also it's important to say that the terminology often is regional. If you break up the country into six regions -- and now that we know hip hop is worldwide. You cannot go anywhere in the world and not hear a little bit of something about hip hop culture. So there might be terminology that we use on the East Coast or even in New York that may be different in Philly that may be different in D.C., not to mention the West Coast. So you really have to be careful of that, and that's a little cultural sensitivity and be culturally appropriate when you use the terminology. That's why young people have to be at the table to help you to figure out the best ways for communication.

Nigel Vann: I really appreciate that. In fact I think a big part of your message Thandi about avoiding adultism is really important because in a sense it's not even hip hop culture; it's youth culture. We've all been young and youth culture just changes over time. And I was talking with Joe Jones the other day. We were wondering what comes next for the grandkids of the hip hop generation. We have to wait and see on that one.

Thandi Harper: And just lastly I just want to mention when you're dealing with hip hop -- anything that you want to know about hip hop is in cyberspace. Go to the Internet, Google anything that you want to know about, and it's going to be there. And then there's going to be another link and another link and another link and another link.

So it's all out there. You don't even have to leave your computer. Everything will come right across your desktop. So any terminology, anything that you really -- Web sites, any of the hundreds of Web sites that are out there, that's how you increase your hip hop cultural competence and then provide opportunities for young people to -- and also trainers to take you from there.

Nigel Vann: Yeah. Actually it's an amazing world we live in, and it should be easier to communicate with our youth nowadays than it used to be, right? So, yeah.

Ron do you have anything you'd like to add to that or any other comments you'd like to make that have come up for you as we've been talking?

Ron Clark: Yeah, just on one of the things I think is critically important. It's what I talked about earlier about entrepreneurs and I think that's really our key point. During our generation we talked about civil rights, and what they're interested in today, the hip hop culture, is what we call civil rights -- children rights rather (unintelligible) ILBER. And they may not have a work ethic, but they have what we call the ownership ethic.

And I think we need to think about that as we design our programs. A lot of us have a program where we offer young men the traditional job path and what a lot of these guys are interested in today is controlling their own destiny. And so being able to bring in people who actually own their own businesses, I think that's very key.

Also there was a lot of talk about young men not really liking women. But I think what I've seen as I travel across the country is more like being a direct service provider and that these men tend to have a soft spot for one female, and that female is their own mother. And so some programs I've consulted with have been very successful. They've recruited fathers who (unintelligible) fathers' mothers. So I think that's something that we really need to take into consideration in terms of recruitment and retention. Thank you.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much Ron. Yeah, I apologize. Ron briefed me on these slides yesterday and I forgot to mention the piece about children rights rather than civil rights. But it's great to hear your voice Ron, although we certainly wait for it to come back in its full extent here.

Carol let me just offer you the opportunity for one final thought.

Carol: I guess I would just say that people should really look to the resources out there in their community. There are folks as Dr. Hicks Harper mentioned. Of course you can always Google almost anything that you want to know, but there are also natural experts in the field of hip hop and popular culture. And those are the folks who are most influenced by it. So lean on and depend on your participants and others who can provide knowledge and resources around the topic.

Nigel Vann: Yes, thank you very much. A great point. So let's lean on those guys and let's recruit them and let's get them in all sorts of roles as this field moves forward.

So let me pass this back to Jen so we can do our survey and then I'll come back for just a closing comment.

Jennifer McHenry: Thanks Nigel. I ask if you please look to your screen and answer just four questions for us to let us know how we're doing. The first question is "I have a better understanding of the underlying messages and needs expressed in hip hop culture." And answer by clicking to the left of the colored box, and your choices are strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree, strongly disagree, or at the bottom you can choose to no vote. Again the question, "I have a better understanding of the underlying messages and needs expressed in hip hop culture."

Thank you, and we'll move on to question number two. "I have a better understanding of strategies for communicating with the hip hop generation's fathers in my program." And here your choices are strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree, strongly disagree, or no vote. And again you can answer by clicking to the left of each response. The question one more time is "I have a better understanding of strategies for communicating with the hip hop generation's fathers in my program."



Thank you, and we'll move on to question number three. Question three is "I have a more complete understanding of what hip hop culture means and how it relates to the fathers in my program." And here your choices as before are strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree, strongly disagree, or no vote. And that question one more time: "I have a more complete understanding of what hip hop culture means and how it relates to the fathers in my program."

Thank you, and we have one last question and that is "The advice and suggestions regarding outreach strategies were helpful to me." And here please note the choices are a little bit different. Choices are very helpful, helpful, unsure, of little help, of no help at all, or no vote down at the bottom. And that question: "The advice and suggestions regarding outreach strategies were helpful to me."

Thank you all for participating in the slide and we'll turn it back over to Nigel for some closing comments.

Nigel Vann:

Thank you very much Jen. So I've said this before after these Webinars, that I always feel like we're just starting the conversation. I think that's particularly true with this one. I certainly look forward to continuing these conversations. I thank all the presenters again, particularly Thandi for doing this at the last minute.

There was one other question that came in that I did just want to acknowledge. Somebody was asking about the NPCL discount. I do suggest you contact them directly. I believe Jeff said that there was a 10% discount until May 22 for OFA grantees but I'm not positive about that so I would get in touch with them directly.

I do think what we've heard here is something that we all know in terms of best practices, but really it's talk to your population, it's talk to the folk you're trying to work with and make sure that we're all on the same page with them. And one of the things I'd really encourage you to do actually is to keep an eye out for videos that you might be able to show to your fathers. Joe Jones likes to show the Will Smith video, The Two of Us, which is really heart touching in terms of he and his son in the video.



As I was talking to Adrian Mullings right before this today, he told me about Snoop Dog's fatherhood program on MTV. I've never watched that but he said there was one episode where Snoop Dogg was talking about soccer with his children and he had David Beckham come on. So for those of you who know me, you know that I like the real football. And so having David Beckham in there with Snoop Dogg sounded pretty neat.

But I'm sure you can find clips that you can show your dads and show them that you're on the same wavelength and what this is all about is helping them be the best dads they can be for their kids. And of course that's why we're doing this work.

So, again, I thank our presenters and the presenters can stay on the line if they'd like and we'll have a quick chat afterwards. And, again, I look forward to seeing the fatherhood grantees at the coming round tables and all of you at our next Webinar which will be the Tuesday after Memorial Day. And our focus for that topic is going to be on working with fathers in a rural setting. So we'll be looking at some rural fatherhood programs for you, and I'm sure there's lessons there that apply to everybody.

So thank you very much and enjoy the rest of your day.

Operator: Thank you ladies and gentlemen. That concludes our conference call for today. We thank you for your participation and ask that you please disconnect the lines. Have a good day.

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