

FACTORING IN FATHERS: NUTS 'N BOLTS OF PATERNAL PERINATAL HEALTH

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HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES COALITION OF PALM BEACH COUNTY CONTINUING EDUCATION WEBINAR, OCTOBER 22ND, 2020



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe key psychosocial elements in the transition to fatherhood and men's perinatal mental health
- Cite examples of how fatherhood involvement impacts the family system
- List evidence-based approaches to better engage fathers with perinatal services, with their children, and with their partners during pregnancy and early parenthood

A series of sexist, heterosexist, age-ist, and racist observations!



A COUPLE OF SHAMELESS PLUGS...

❑ *Parental Mental Health: Factoring in Fathers* — PSI Bookstore

❑ International Fathers' Mental Health Day — June 21st, 2020

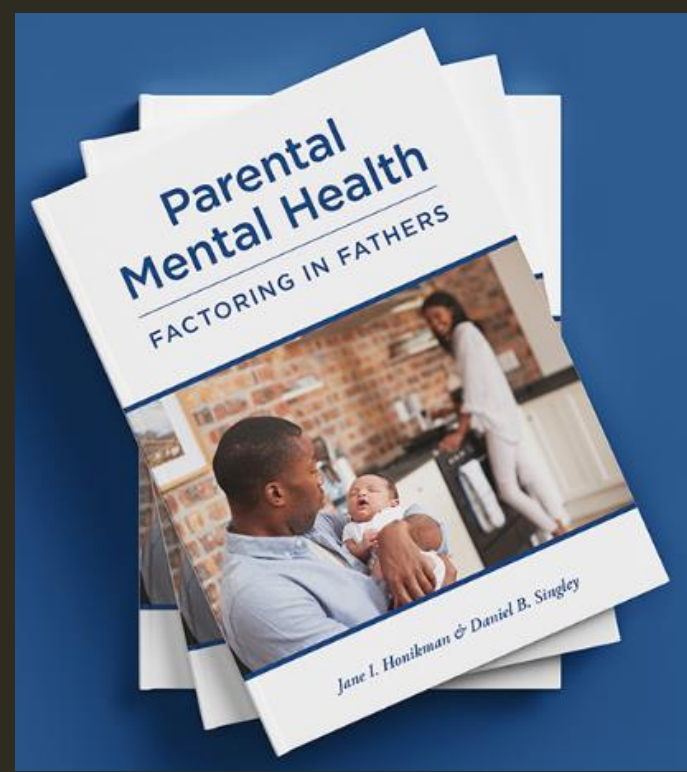
Web Page: <http://www.postpartum.net/get-help/resources-for-fathers/ifmhd/>

Twitter: @dadsMHday

Facebook: www.facebook.com/dadsMHday

❑ PSI Monthly Dads Chat AND new Dads Support Group

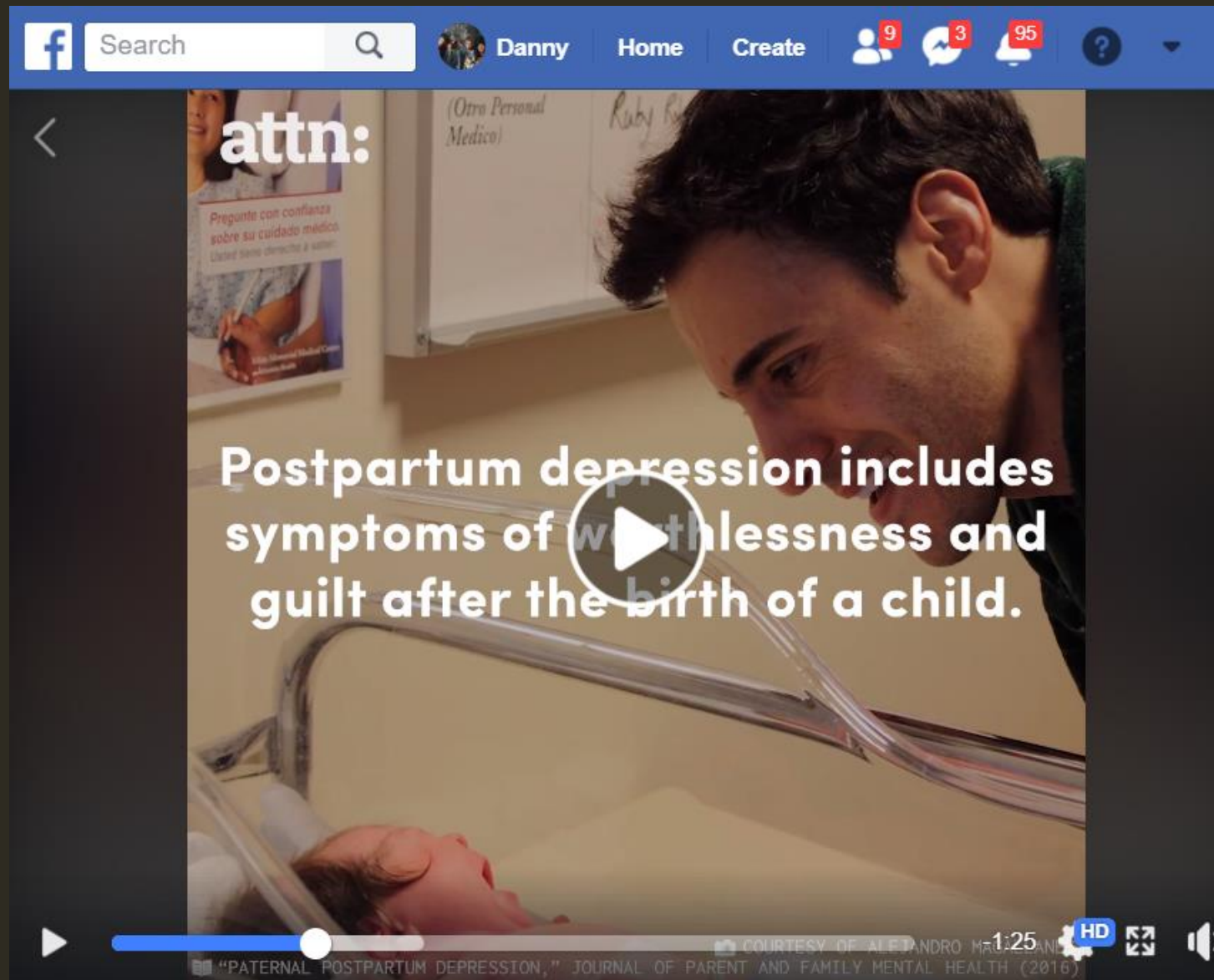
Web Page: <http://www.postpartum.net/chat-with-an-expert/chat-with-an-expert-for-dads/>



MEET SOME POSTPARTUM DADS — ATTN VIDEO

“New Dads Get Postpartum Depression, Too”

<https://www.facebook.com/attn/videos/new-dads-get-postpartum-depression-too/1586216661413787/>





Cole Thomas Steinhoff What a bunch of fucking babies. Get the fuck over it, your wife just went 9 months of being wore out for no reason, not being able to go out or have some wine after a long week. And you wanna be a whiny little bitch? Nut up butter cup.



Like · Reply · 15w



Steve Lunceford amen  1

Like · Reply · 14w



Sian Young Word!!!!  1

Like · Reply · 14w



Sian Young



Like · Reply · 14w



Heidi Oona "There's this kid that you don't really want right now". I'm sorry. That is not "postpartum depression". That is just being a jerk that doesn't want to take responsibility for his actions. The others, ok. Depression, sure. But that one guy pissed me off.



Like · Reply · 16w

↳ 14 Replies



Yolanda Mercado As far as I know they don't suffer any hormonal unbalance when they "give birth". So stop the stupid comparison. They maybe suffer anxiety or depression, but you can't call it "postpartum". You are not getting away with sexual appropriation, it would be like saying that, we women, can suffer "erectal dysfunction".



Like · Reply · 16w · Edited

↳ 193 Replies



Richard Martin Jimmerson This isn't even depression. These are just a bunch of old men who can't handle a baby, which makes me doubt their capability in anything else in life. These are the types of guys probably raised in a house without a father themselves. One guy describes his child as something he doesn't want, as if the child is an old pool table in the basement. I don't get why these men feel entitled to be depressed.



Like · Reply · 16w

↳ 12 Replies



Heath Williams Sounds to me like these men are suffering from toxic masculinity and feeling overwhelmed by having a few obligations to help care for their OWN children. The dude talking about feeling like a prisoner in his own home was the fucking worst. Take the baby outside in the stroller? Go for a drive. Use your fucking imagination or maybe wear a condom next time.



Like · Reply · 16w · Edited

↳ 11 Replies

PATERNAL PERINATAL HORMONAL SHIFTS

Decrease in testosterone

Increase in cortisol

Increase in estrogen (estradiol)

Increase in vasopressin

Increase in prolactin / oxytocin

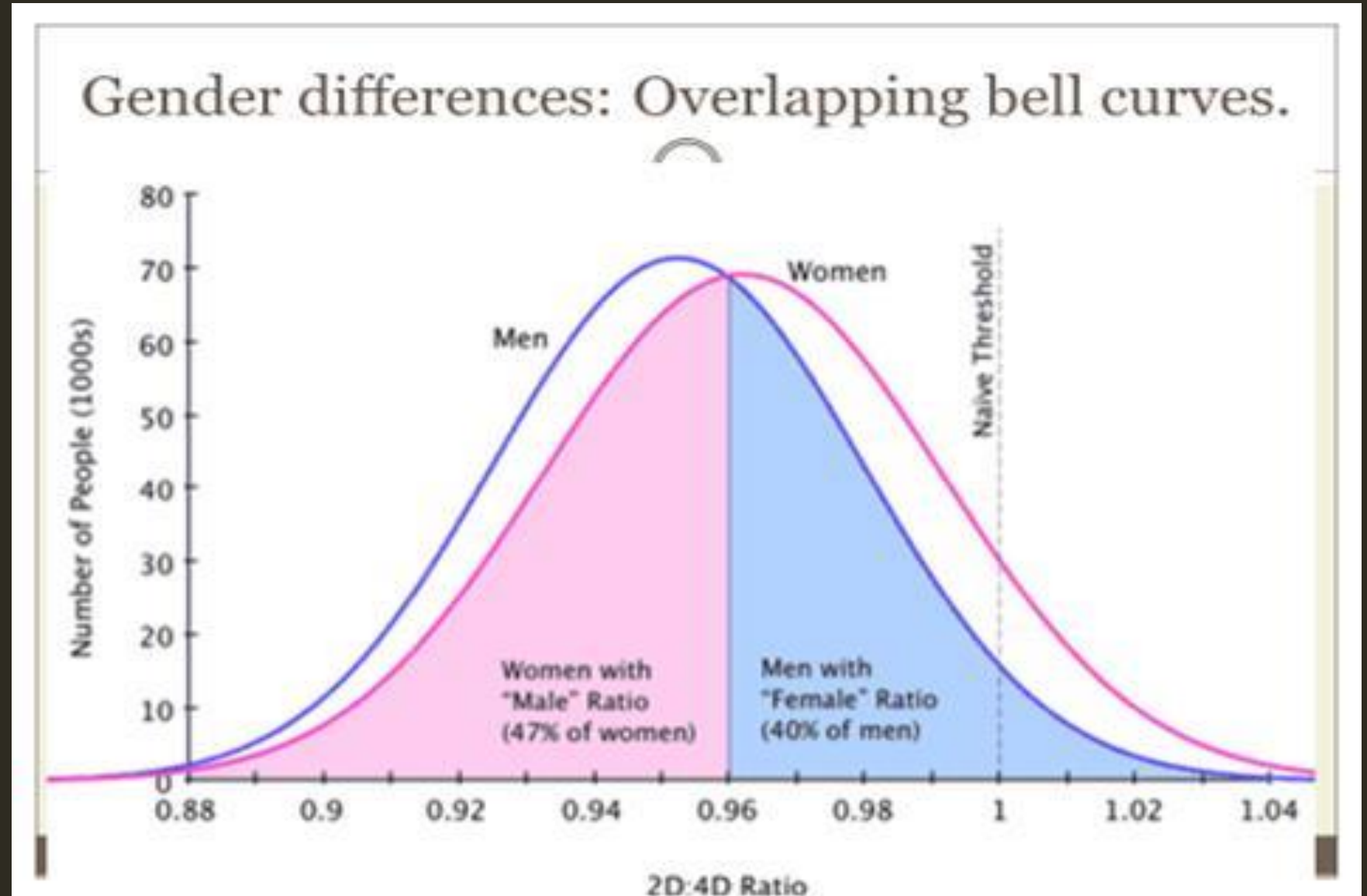
Dysregulation of any hormonal concentrations and/or amount of receptors in key areas of the brain may serve as a biological risk factor for mental health



GENDER SIMILARITIES HYPOTHESIS

(HYDE, 2005)

MALES AND FEMALES ARE
SIMILAR ON MOST, BUT
NOT ALL, PSYCHOLOGICAL
VARIABLES.



FAMILY DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXT



MEN'S SOCIALIZATION — “DADDY 1.0”

Traditional Masculinity (Brannon, 1976)

1. Antifemininity- “No Sissy Stuff”
2. Status and Achievement — “The Big Wheel”
3. Inexpressiveness and Independence “The Study Oak”
4. Adventurousness and Aggressiveness
“Give ‘Em Hell”

- Dad’s Role Is To Support Mom And Earn
- Uninvolved with Children 0-5



MEN'S SOCIALIZATION — “DADDY 2.0”

Generative Fathers (Hawkins & Dollahite, 1996)

“The task of establishing and guiding the next generation.”

Nontraditional Masculine Norms

Nurturing, Hands-On Care of Child

Emotionally Open to Mom and Baby

Few Models of Generative Fathers — “Generation Gap”

Mental Health Implications

Changing Roles Brings Stress/Uncertainty

One in 10 have depression; 2-18% have anxiety

History of MH Issues/Abuse/Trauma

Gender Role Conflict — ↑ MH probs, ↓ Help-Seeking



Male Relational Styles – Fun, shared activities

Male Ways of Caring – Caring, protection, and “action empathy”

Generative Fatherhood – Developing kids

Male Self-Reliance – Connected, yet “his own man”

Workplace/Provider – Achievement, purpose, and meaning

Male Courage/ Risk-Taking – Worthwhile, sensible risks

Group Orientation – Identity in community

Humanitarian Service – Social interest and common good

Humor – Healing, coping, and connecting

Male Herosim – Overcoming obstacles

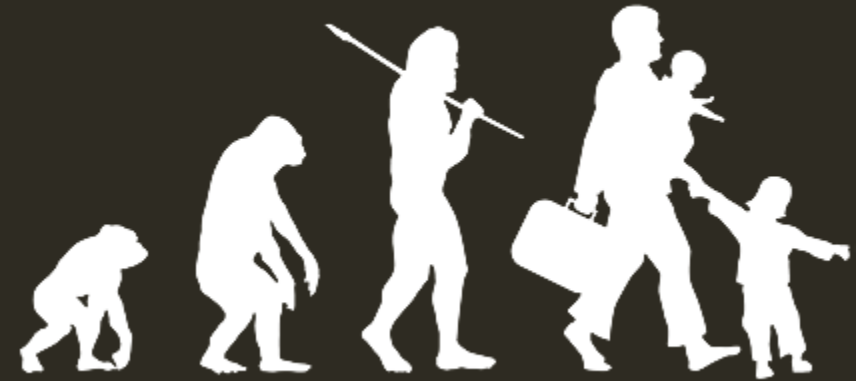
POSITIVE MASCULINITIES (KISELICA & ENGLAR- CARLSON, 2010)



THE FATHERHOOD ROLE

(ROSENBERG & WILCOX, 2006)

- Fostering a positive relationship with the child's mother
- Spending time with the child
- Nurturing the child
- Disciplining appropriately
- Serving as a guide to the outside world
- Protecting and providing
- Being a role model



BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH MOM AND BABY

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

Aggressive

Only MY needs matter



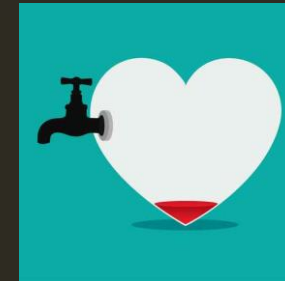
Assertive

BOTH of our needs matter



Passive

Only YOUR Needs matter



Do NOT try to **fix or win** right off the bat

- **ASK:** Find out specifically why the issue is important to him/her
- **LISTEN:** Active listening – ask 3 open questions, followed by a restatement
- **ASSERT:** Communicate why this is important to you
- **COMPROMISE:** THEN find the common ground about what to do

NEW DADS' SOCIAL SUPPORT — PARENTING/MH

(ROMINOV, GIALLO, PILKINGTON, & WHELAN, 2017)

- More demands on men's psychological resources during transition to fatherhood increase their vulnerability to mental health issues.
- Further research regarding fathers' parenting support needs because their mental health is highly interrelated with their experience as a parent.
- Dads prefer supports which are:
 1. Informal — friends, family, work colleagues, online information
 2. From fathers themselves
 3. Supportive of a “winging it” — on-the-fly approach to seeking support

Dads' “winging it” contrasted with a more measured/proactive style may relate to perceptions of fathers' not being involved “the right way.”



NEW DADS' SOCIAL SUPPORT — PARENTING/MH

(ROMINOV, GIALLO, PILKINGTON, & WHELAN, 2017)

- Dads resistant to traditional psychotherapy are much more open to parenting supports, which naturally impact mental health
- Dad-sensitive clinicians assess for social isolation and use a structured approach to identify in-person and virtual supports.



WHERE DADS GO FOR INFORMATION/GUIDANCE

(ZERO TO THREE 2016 ANNUAL REPORT)

Frequently/Sometimes:

- 40-50% - Internet and social media for parenting advice
- 28-35% - Medical professionals (e.g., pediatrician)
- 23-33% - Teachers or other child care professionals
- 20-24% - Portrayals of parenting on TV shows
- 67% wish more TV shows would do a better job portraying the realities of parenting young children



WHY IS FATHERHOOD INVOLVEMENT IMPORTANT?

Parenting of children 0-5 is really just mothering, right?

Child Outcomes:

- Higher IQ, school readiness, social skills, emotional regulation, and empathy
- Increased attachment, emotional security, popularity, independence

Paternal Outcomes:

- Fewer mental health issues
- Increased confidence, parenting satisfaction, relationship satisfaction

Maternal Outcomes:

- Fewer mental health issues
- Increased responsiveness, confidence, and affection



ATTUNEMENT!!

BARRIERS TO FATHER INVOLVEMENT

Blended / Inconsistent Family Structure

Substance Use

Fathers' AND Mothers' Socialization

Low Self- And Other-Efficacy

Anxiety/Gatekeeping

Custody Arrangements/CPS

Work/Life Balance



FATHERHOOD DIVERSITY FACTORS

Protective Factors

- Familismo
- Multigenerational Homes
- Adoptive dual dads

Risk Factors

- Historical Trauma
- High AND Low SES!
- Rigid Masculine Socialization

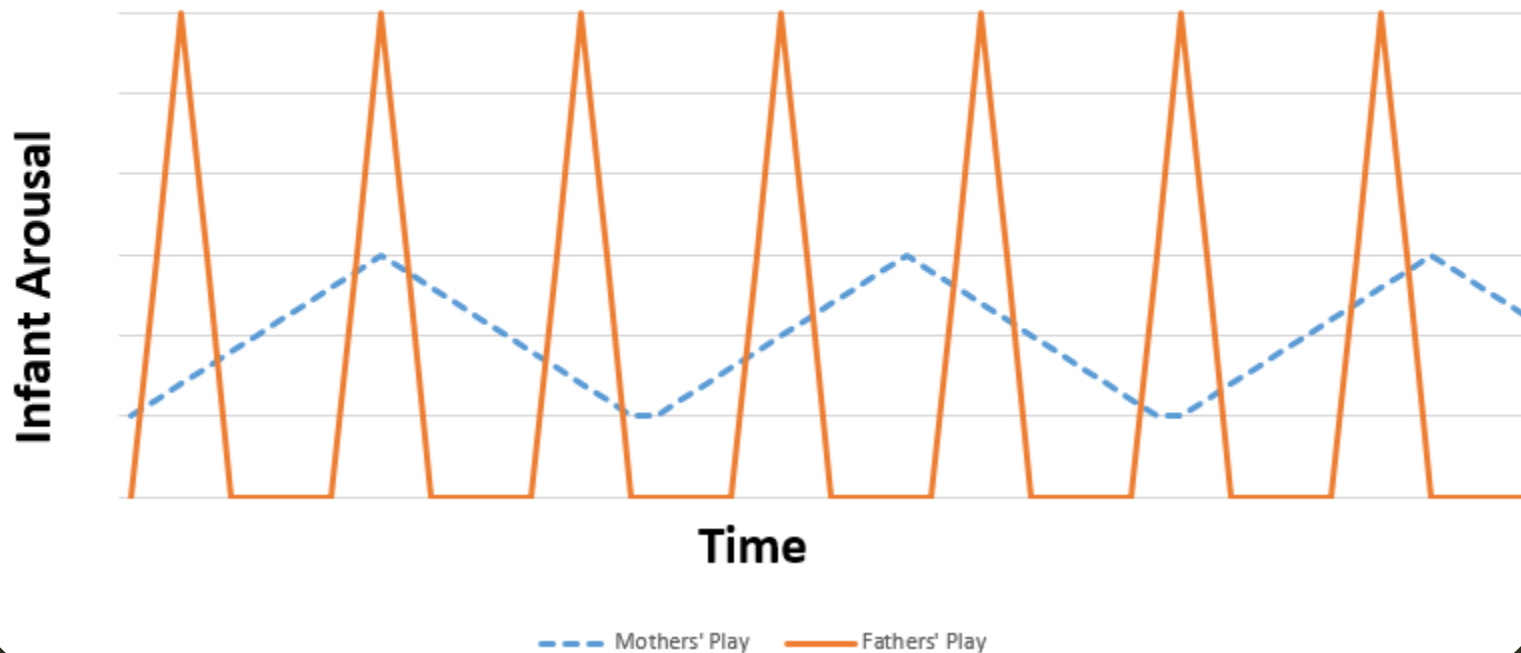
ATTACHMENT AND THE PATERNAL ACTIVATION RELATIONSHIP

“The affective bond that enables children to open up to the outside world, focusing primarily on parental stimulation of risk-taking and control.” (Paquette, 2013)



WHAT EXACTLY DOES DAD CONTRIBUTE?

Comparison of Mothers' and Fathers' Play
on Child's Central Nervous System Arousal



One-on-One High-Intensity
Interactions Promote
Emotional and Behavioral
Regulation

MEASURING PATERNAL INVOLVEMENT

- **Paternal Involvement with Infants Scale** (PIWIS; Singley et al., 2017)
- 35-item self-report scale
- Theory-driven development
- Strong relationship with depression, social support, parental alliance, parenting satisfaction, and self-efficacy
- The author gives you permission to use the PIWIS 😊



PIWIS SUBSCALES AND SAMPLE ITEMS

1. Positive Engagement

Burping your baby

Changing your baby's diaper

2. Indirect Care

Taking your baby to/picking up from child care

Arranging for child care (e.g., babysitter, day care)

3. Frustration

Feeling jealous of your partner's connection with your baby

Giving your baby to your partner or other caregiver when your baby is crying

4. Warmth and Attunement

Kissing your baby

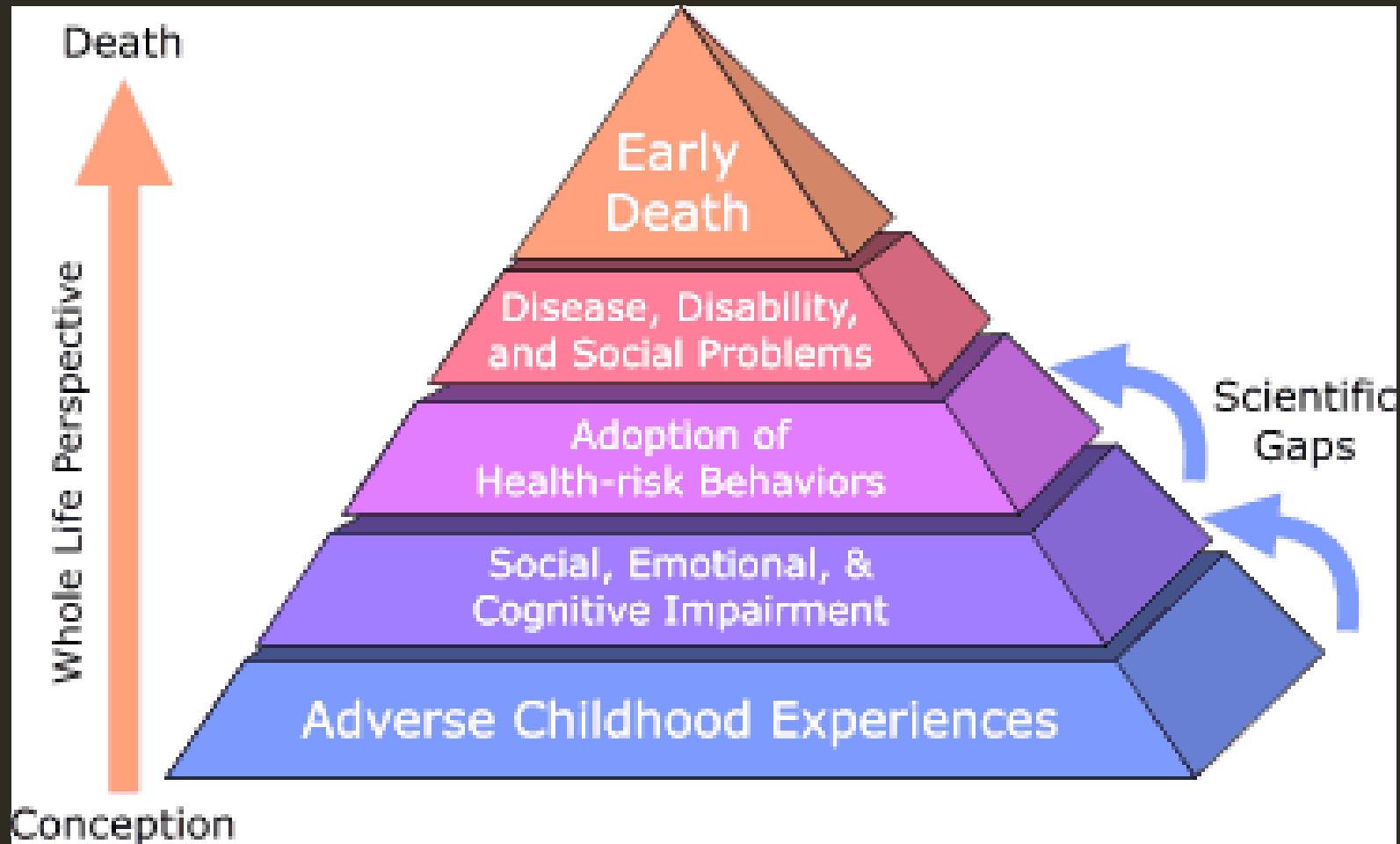
Responding to your baby's facial expressions so that s/he can see your response

5. Control and Process Responsibility

Determining what media (TV, DVD's, music) is appropriate for your baby

Determining when to feed your baby

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACE) STUDY



DADS' MENTAL HEALTH

Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs)

Depression, GAD, OCD, PTSD, Psychosis

10-20% of men experience PMADs during perinatal period

DSM-5 “with peripartum onset” specifier – 4 weeks postpartum

ICD-10 “with postpartum onset” specifier – 6 weeks postpartum

Stress brings elevated risk for new episode and relapses

Men's socialization and expression of “weak” emotions

Maternal PPD is the strongest predictor of paternal PPD



MALE “MASKED” DEPRESSION/ MDD — MALE TYPE

(COCHRAN & RABINOWITZ, 2000; POLLACK, 1998)

Lower stress threshold

Substance use

Aggressiveness, low impulse control

Feeling of being burned out and empty

Constant, inexplicable tiredness

Irritability, restlessness, dissatisfaction

Difficulty making ordinary everyday decisions

Sleep problems

Feeling anxiety —especially in the morning

Abusive, hyperactive, or antisocial behavior

Depressive thoughts

Criticizing

The “withdrawal response”

ANGER, ADDICTION, AND WITHDRAWAL



PATERNAL ANXIETY DISORDERS

(LEACH, POYSER, COOKLINE, & GIALLO, 2016)

- Prevalence rates in the prenatal period range from 4.1% - 16.0%
- Postpartum prevalence ranges from 2.4% - 18.0%
- Contributing factors work/life balance, lower relationship satisfaction, fatigue, poor partner/infant health, witnessing birth trauma, and low parental self-efficacy
- High level of paternal anxiety predicts increased infant negative affect and child internalising
- Highly comorbid with depression, so recommend assessing/measuring both anxiety and depression

Anxiety is common for new dads – assess and support both partners!



SCREENING — DO IT!

“We take a whole-family approach to your baby’s well-being.”

- Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (Cox, Holden, & Sagovsky, 1987)
- Gotland Scale for Male Depression (Zierau et al., 2002)
- Patient Health Questionnaire -2 and -9 (Arroll, Goodyear-Smith, & Crengle, 2010)
- Paternal Involvement with Infants Scale (Singley et al., 2017)



NEW DADS GAME PLAN

“You should do everything but nurse the baby ASAP”

Learn about the child’s development – scaffolding

Weekly “state of the union” meeting with mom

Weekly “family operations” meeting with mom

Providing more than materially – “Be the best you”

Communicate assertively with mom

Diversify social support portfolio – connect with other dads

Expectant dads – take my Basic Training for New Dads class



Getting ~~therapy~~ with a “coach”





- Sleep – Plan for it
- Diet – Weight gain/loss
- Exercise – 20-30 mins, 2-3 times/week
- Social Support:
 1. Time alone
 2. Time with friends
 3. Time with parnter

ESSENTIAL SELF-CARE

WHAT CAN PARTNERS DO?



Give dad “alone time” with child

Encourage dad to ~~hang out with buddies~~ get social support Guilt-Free

Get their own social support needs met

Recognize that dads’ approach to parenting is different, not necessarily bad

Manage own mental health

RESEARCH ON FATHER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

(PANTER-BRICK ET AL., 2014)

Surprisingly little research available regarding specific program effectiveness:

- Weak evidence results in **overly general recommendations.**
- **Many biases that serve to exclude fathers** as parents exist at every level, from practitioners, to programs, organizations, and systems.
- **Tendency to use “home-grown” programs** rather than evidence-based ones.

ASSESSING QUANTITY AND QUALITY

(BRONTE-TINKEW, BURKHAUSER, & METZ, 2012)

Quantity Indicators

- Staff trainings, outreach, resources, contacts, referrals made
- “Butts in seats”
- Immediate and straight-forward evaluation

Quality Indicators

- Client-level outcomes
- Satisfaction, parent/relationship/self-care changes
- Implementation and measurement **takes 2-4 years**

FATHERHOOD PROGRAMS: CORE ELEMENTS (BELLAMY, 2008)

“Gotta Have” Core Elements Fundamentally define an intervention

- Couples co-parenting and relationship building
- Child involvement behavior
- Fathers' health and well-being

Common Additional Core Elements

- Child development knowledge
- Legal resources
- Discipline strategies
- Medical resources
- Help-Seeking/Social Support
- Vocational/Financial responsibility



PERIPHERAL ELEMENTS

Peripheral Elements are not central to integrity of an intervention

- Images
- Language
- Gender, ethnicity, paternity status of leaders

These elements are more difficult to assess, but they're critical to helping dads to feel that "This [person/resource/program] really is for me/us."



FATHER-SPECIFIC PERIPHERAL ELEMENTS

(BELLAMY, 2008)

- Father inclusive or gender neutral approaches
- Don't call it "training" or a "class"- use positive language about a "group," "program," or "club"
- Keep things simple, attend to reading level
- Use more active approaches, less didactic
- Make it brief!
- Use humor – let guys be guys
- Male staff – preferably fathers
- **Celebrate wins!**



ORGANIZATIONS / PROVIDERS

- Healer, know thyself - Check your assumptions
- Ask the tough questions, assess with EPDS and know how to refer!
- Familiarize yourself with resources
- Is your organization set up to foster fathers' attunement with moms and babies?



FATHER INVOLVEMENT AND THE WORKPLACE

What Are Your Organization's Official and Unofficial Stances on Work/Life Balance and Family Leave?

How Is Your Organization Already Father-Inclusive?

How Are You Lacking in Father-Inclusiveness?

Given Time and Resource Constraints – What Is a Concrete Next Step to Enhance Father Inclusiveness in Your Setting?



RESOURCES

- Padre Cadre – www.padrecadre.com
- Dope Black Dads – www.dopeblackdads.com
- Life of Dad – www.lifeofdad.com
- Basic Training for New Dads – www.menexcel.com
- FB Brand New Father Group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bnfsupport/>
- Postpartum Support International – www.postpartum.net **Dads Chat**
- The Good Men Project - <http://goodmenproject.com/category/families/>
- Daddit - <http://www.reddit.com/r/daddit>
- Dad Labs - <http://www.dadlabs.com/>
- National Fatherhood Initiative – www.fatherhood.org



Q&A



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THANKS VERY MUCH!



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**“You can’t babysit your own kid –
that’s called ‘fathering.’”**

