



Meeting: 17th Annual Meeting of the Society for Prevention Research

Tracking Id: 202133

Alternate Ids:

Name	Id
Printed Program Id	0165

Abstract Type: Individual Poster Presentation

Status: Accept - Individual Poster

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Title: Attitudes Towards Fatherhood: The Relations between Positive and Negative Attitudes and Paternal Involvement

Text: Despite evidence of the importance of father involvement in children's lives, little focused research has been conducted with minority fathers living in urban settings. As such, relatively little is known about predictors of father involvement in this relatively high risk population. The proposed presentation will examine attitudes toward fatherhood and the interrelations between these attitudes, relationship with the child's mother, and father involvement.

The present sample is a subset of participants from the Chicago Youth Development Study (CYDS), a longitudinal study of African-American and Latino men living in the inner city. These male participants were originally recruited from 5th and 7th grade classrooms within 17 Chicago Public Schools. A total of 225 male subjects (78% of the eligible sample) participated in the present study, which took place when the participants' median age was 26. Of those surveyed, 149 (66%) reported at least one child. Data from these 149 fathers form the basis of the present analyses. As part of the interview, fathers were asked to recall their attitudes about being a father at three time points: 1) the time while the mother became pregnant, 2) the time of the child's birth, and 3) the time of the interview. Fathers were asked about their attitudes towards pregnancy and birth repeatedly for each child, but were only asked once about their current attitudes about fathering.

An hypothesized 3-factor model emerged to fit the data best. Attitudes regarding fathering could be categorized as positive emotions (e.g., excited, proud), anger (e.g., angry, resentful), and concern (e.g., worried, overwhelmed). Although anger was significantly correlated with both positive emotions (r 's $-.33$ to $-.65$) and concern (r 's $.41$ to $.77$), positive emotions were unrelated to concern at all three reference points (r 's $-.15$ to $.09$). The three factors were consistent across the three reference points. Preliminary analyses suggest the attitude factors were correlated with the father's current amount of contact with the child. Fathers with positive emotions were had greater contact and those with anger and concern had less contact with their children. Additional analyses will be presented relating attitudes towards the child's mother and other components of father involvement, such as responsibility, engagement, and accessibility. Implications for research and prevention science will be discussed.

Theme Groups: 1 Key social relationships