

Jason T. Downer**

Project Title:

Describing and Defining Dads: A Father's Role in Promoting Head Start Children's School Readiness

Grantee:

Jason T. Downer

Project Funding Years:

2001-2003

University Affiliation:

University of South Carolina
Department of Psychology

Project Abstract:

Researchers plan to use a multi-dimensional, ecological approach to study father involvement within a low-income, minority population to answer several questions about influences that deter or contribute to fathers' involvement in children's learning and development. Specifically, the impact of father-child relationships on children's school readiness will be investigated. The researchers hypothesize that consistent, positive fathering has a positive impact on children's development and outcomes in the form of school readiness. Child cognitive, social, and emotional competency domains will be examined. Participants in Year 1 of the study will include 50 families (including father, mother and child). For these 50 families, father-child play interactions will be videotaped and coded, and a comprehensive father involvement interview will be completed. Additionally, a battery of instruments will be used with both parents to assess individual and family characteristics, the fathers' sense of their own ability to influence their children's educational outcome, and the quality of the parenting alliance. Researchers will also assess children's language development, peer play interactions, and ability to self-regulate in the school setting, mainly by teacher reports. Across both Year 1 and 2, an effort will be made to recruit a total of 100 Head Start fathers in order to provide a more representative sample. These fathers will complete interviews and questionnaires similar to above, but with less detail and without simultaneously collecting child data. By holding focus groups with Head Start parents and teachers in Year 2, the researchers also hope to obtain a better understanding of Head Start parents' perceptions of the paternal role in children's development, which will ultimately inform the synthesis of support services and interventions to promote and facilitate positive father-child relationships and father involvement. These semi-structured focus groups will cover discussion of

Year 1 findings, perspectives on fatherhood and feelings about potential interventions to promote positive father-child relationships.

Sample:

n=50 families (including father, mother, and child)

n=100 fathers

Measures:

Child

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Third Edition (PPVT-III)

Father

About Being a Parent Scale (ABPS)

Parenting Alliance Measure (PAM)

Dyadic Parent-Child Interaction Coding System (DPICS)

Both Parents

Personal and Family Characteristics Questionnaire (FNCQ)

Father Involvement Scale (FIS)

Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ)

Teacher

Emotion Regulation Checklist (ERC)

Penn Interactive Peer Play Scale (PIPPS)

Hilary A. Raikes**

Project Title:

Mother's Self-Efficacy as a Protective Factor for Secure Attachments for Low-Income Children

Grantee:

Hilary A. Raikes

Project Funding Years:

2001-2003

University Affiliation:

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