

# Emotional Effects of Absent Fathers

The Children's Home of Cincinnati &  
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# Fatherhood is Changing

- De-traditionalization of fatherhood
- Less driven by idealized social models
- Driven more by personal biography, circumstances and desires
- Rejection of one's own father's style of fathering
- The New Man
- More Androgynous Father
- The Involved Father
- The Father Involved in Family Life

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# Types of Fathering

- Deadbeat Dad
- Distant Father
- Involved Father
- Traditional Father
- Provide, Nurture and Guide

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# Psychological Types of Fathers

- Biological Father
- Social Father
- Idealized Father
- Psychological Father

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# The Culture of Fatherhood

- What we expect fathers to be
- How fathers actually are
- Fatherhood is impacted by social change

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# Historical Roles of Fatherhood

- Historical periods in which the expected norm of fathering behavior was dominated by one particular paradigm
- There were definite cultural guidelines for fathers on what was expected in performing the role of a father

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# Historical Roles of Fatherhood

- Moral Father Role
- Breadwinner
- Sex-Role Model
- Nurturing Father

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# *The Moral Father*

- Stern Patriarch
- Moral & Spiritual Leader of the Home
- Taught and Interpreted the Bible
- Presided Over Daily Prayer
- Father Ruled the Family

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# *Breadwinner*

- Economics Caused the Change
- Fathers Became More Passive
- Fathers Still Set Moral Standards
- Protector of the Family
- Mothers Became Primary Parent

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# *Sex Role Model*

- Fathers Provided A Model for True Manhood
- Masculinity/Femininity Emerged
- Depression Impacted the Ability to Work
- Passive Fathers Produced Homosexual Sons
- Too Much Mothering Produced A Sissy

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# *The Nurturing Father*

- Fathers Highly Involved & Nurturing
- Egalitarian Relationships
- Co-Parenting
- Non-Expressive Male A Liability

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# Factors Influencing Father Identity

- The internal desire wanting to be a father
- The emotional bond with the child
- The relationship with the mother
- The desire to give to one's child what one did not get from their own father
- The relationship with one's own father

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# Factors Influencing Parental Involvement

## MOTIVATION

- Developmental History: Own Father's Involvement
- Developmental History: Father's Age, Marital History, and Other Characteristics
- Developmental History: Early Socialization and Other Factors
- Personality Characteristics
- Beliefs
- Personal Identity

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# Factors Influencing Parental Involvement

- SKILLS AND SELF-CONFIDENCE

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# Factors Influencing Parental Involvement

## SOCIAL SUPPORTS AND STRESSES

- Maternal Employment Characteristics
- Other Maternal Characteristics
- Marital Dynamics
- Other Social Supports and Stresses

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# Factors Influencing Parental Involvement

## INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS & PRACTICES

- Father's Employment Characteristics
- Fathers' Work-Family Conflicts
- Effects of Workplace Policies and Practices

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# Paternal Involvement

- Engagement
- Accessibility
- Responsibility

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# Instruments to Measure Father Involvement

- The Fatherhood Scale
- The Paternal Engagement Scale
- Barriers to Father Involvement Scale

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# Paternal Deprivation

- The child's internal subjective experience of the relationship
- A lack of a meaningful relationship

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# Paternal Deprivation

- Abandonment
- Shame
- Humiliation
- Abuse
- Neglect
- Psychologically Absent
- Lack of Acknowledgement
- Lack of Emotional Responsiveness

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# Father Hunger

- The desire, yearning or longing to have a strong, loving, kind and admiring father

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# The Psychological Loss of the Father

- Theory of the self
- Self is a depth psychological concept that contains the basic layers of the personality
- Includes strivings for power, success, idealized goals, and basic talents and skills

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# What Fathers Provide Psychologically For Their Children's Emotional Development

- For the child to be internally known by the father
- An emotionally responsive relationship that the child experiences as supportive of the self

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# What Can Fathers Do?

- Mirroring
- Idealizing
- Twinship

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# Special Issues

- Deployed Fathers
- Gay Fathers
- Emotionally Unavailable Fathers
- Unknown Fathers
- Impact of a Father's Suicide
- Divorced Fathers

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# Responsible Fatherhood

- Waits to make a baby until he is prepared emotionally and financially to support his child.
- Establishes legal paternity.
- Actively shares with the child's mother in the continuing emotional and physical care of their child.
- Shares with the child's mother in the continuing financial support of their child.

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# Engaging Inactive Fathers

## The Father and the Family

- ESTABLISH PATERNITY
- ENCOURAGE INVOLVEMENT
- PROMOTE FATHER/MOTHER PARTNERSHIP IN PARENTING
- DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF THE MOTHER AS A BARRIER
- DOES THE COUNSELING OF THE MOTHER ENCOURAGE HER TO WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE FATHER?

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# *The Social Worker*

- CONDUCT A PROFESSIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT
- KNOWLEDGE OF FATHERHOOD ISSUES
- ATTITUDES TOWARDS FATHERS
- DO YOU SPECIFICALLY GIVE THE MESSAGE TO FATHERS THAT THEIR ROLE IS CRITICAL?

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# *The Child Welfare Agency*

- CONDUCT AN ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT ON FATHER FRIENDLINESS
- IS THE ORGANIZATION'S MISSION INCLUSIVE OF SERVING FATHERS?
- IS THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMITTED TO SERVING FATHERS?
- FUNDING FOR SERVING FATHERS?
- ARE THE AGENCY'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES INCLUSIVE OF FATHERS?

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# *The Child Welfare Agency*

- IS THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO FATHERS INCLUDED IN THE APPRAISALS OF SOCIAL WORKERS?
- COLLABORATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES SERVING FATHERS?
- HOW PREPARED ARE STAFF TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO FATHERS?
- HAS THE ENTIRE STAFF RECEIVED TRAINING ON ISSUES IN WORKING WITH MEN AND FATHERS SPECIFICALLY?
- HAS A NEEDS ASSESSMENT BEEN CONDUCTED IN ORDER TO PLAN FOR PROGRAMS FOR FATHERS?

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# Program Services

- HAVE MEN'S ISSUES AND MALE PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES BEEN INCORPORATED INTO GROUPS FOR FATHERS?
- HOW INVITING AND WELCOMING IS THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT FOR FATHERS?
- HAS THERE BEEN ANY FOCUS GROUPS CONDUCTED WITH FATHERS?
- ARE POSITIVE AND DIVERSE IMAGES OF FATHERS DISPLAYED?
- IS LITERATURE ON FATHERHOOD DISPLAYED?

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- IS THE AGENCY PORTRAYED AS A PLACE FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN ONLY?
- HOW ARE FATHER'S GREETED?
- DO NEWSLETTERS INCLUDE INFORAMTION ON FATHERS?
- ARE REFERRALS MADE TO OTHER AGENCIES FOR SPECIFIC SERVICES (DOMESTIC VIOLENC, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, EMPOOLYMENT/TRAINING)
- ARE FATHERS INCLUDED AS MENTORS?

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