

On Fathers' Surround

A portrait of projects to support and promote fathering

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On Father's Ground

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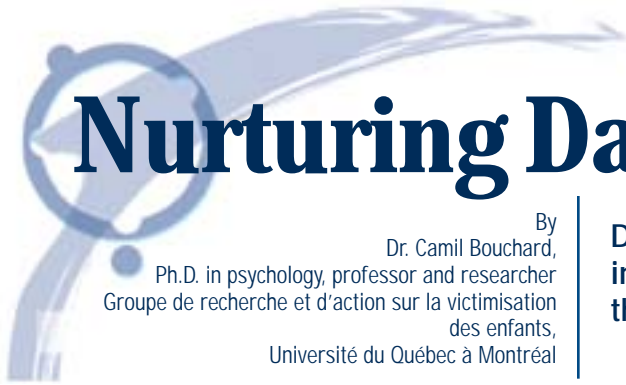
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Nurturing Dads

F O R W A R D

By
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Does a father's presence have a determining influence in the life of his child? Does it deserve the extraordinary effort some groups devote to encourage it?

A new image that reflects real change.

Watch a few hours of television and you will be convinced: the father who is involved and dedicated to his children is no longer a marginal figure or a lofty ideal beyond the reach of common mortals. The advertising industry—always the first to catch the waves of social trends and ride their crests—no longer hesitates to use the image of the involved and committed father. In doing so, advertisers not only promote this new notion of fatherhood along with their products, they also demonstrate that the image of the dedicated father no longer even needs to be “sold” to most men. If advertising—that supreme arbiter of society's values and a key influence on its ideology—uses the “dedicated father” to sell its products, it is because this has become a positive image with which men like to be associated, a social standard to which they are willing to conform and a behaviour that they want to adopt.

Indeed, increasing numbers of men are adopting this behaviour. From Monday to Friday, on average, fathers devote 67 percent as much time as mothers do in

caring for their children; on weekends, this number climbs to 87 percent. Some say these figures are still low, but thirty years ago, these proportions were a mere 30 and 45 percent respectively. These statistics alone illustrate the change that has taken place not only in the advertising industry but also in the reality of paternal commitment. Overall, today's fathers play more dynamic and active roles in the daily lives of their children than previously. Part of the explanation for this phenomenon is probably due to the fact that mothers, increasingly employed outside the home, have less time to spend with their children, resulting necessarily in the greater involvement of fathers. However, another entirely plausible explanation is that the increased participation of fathers in household tasks and parenting reflects a real desire to be more involved with their children. It is even possible that the increase in mothers' employment outside the home has made more “parenting room” available for fathers, providing an opportunity for which some have waited many years. One thing is certain: the involvement of fathers in the daily care of their children is no longer viewed as a rare and abnormal phenomenon

brought on by hormonal imbalances.

“You wash the floor, I'll load the dishwasher...”

Sharing household and parenting tasks doesn't mean that both parents care for and spend time with their children in equal and identical measures; rather, it is more a question of equity. In some families, fathers play a supporting role to mothers; in others they carry out specific tasks; in some, though this is atypical, they assume the lion's share of the parenting duties. There is nothing that says any one of these formulas is intrinsically better than the others; nor has it been shown that an ideal and rigid model of “equal” sharing of parenting duties is preferable to an “unequal” or asymmetrical model if the latter fulfills the needs of a specific family or couple. In other words, from the child's point of view (i.e., his or her well-being and development), an unequal but harmonious sharing of parenting duties between mother and father might be better than a situation where equal contribution from both parents creates tension in the relationship. Research has



clearly shown that conjugal harmony is strongly related to the commitment of fathers to their children.

“Just wait till your father gets home!”

Obviously, fathers are supremely aware that their parental role is not limited to paying the bills. For example, they know that their physical presence in the home makes a difference. And research backs them up on this point: children, especially boys, who grow up without the presence of a father are more at risk of developing problems of self-control, behaviour and adaptation. The reason is simple: as children develop, they require guidance, supervision, care and attention—an assignment likely to wear down even the most heroic super-mother raising a child alone, let alone two or three children (and sometimes a spouse for whom she must do the washing and ironing as well!). By sharing parenting tasks, the job can be done more thoroughly, with more consistency and in a way that is more balanced toward the child’s needs and expectations. However, in today’s social context, the struggle for shared parenting remains a struggle for more sustained paternal (or spousal) commitment to everyday family life. Thus, the saying “just wait till your father gets home” takes on new meaning when seen in the light of providing children with a more stable, structured and supervised family environment—

conditions favourable to normal development.

Big plans for the little one.

The sharing of parental roles is not limited, however, to one’s physical availability and participation in caring for the children. It also assumes that parents share a fundamental sense of responsibility for their children. Such a feeling means that both parents care about the future needs of their children and ensure that they can fulfill them: buying winter clothes, making appointments for vaccinations, registering them for daycare or school, planning birthday parties, recreational activities, and so on. Even though fathers have made progress in sharing parental duties, they are perhaps less involved in this aspect of parenting. A father may not mind waking up at 5 a.m. to take his daughter to a swimming lesson, but would he have thought of signing her up for lessons in the first place?

Some researchers believe that this aspect of parenting is what fathers need to work on most in the years ahead. It is a vital aspect of parenting because, aside from the obvious value of being able to think of, plan and organize the child’s future environment, these actions are a much deeper demonstration of a father’s affection for his child. Researchers in developmental psychology have uncovered a clear pattern in building a relationship of

trust: 1) observing the other person; 2) sharing activities with the other person; and 3) developing a mental image of the other person's presence, even when they are not there. Thinking about other people, caring about their well-being and acting to ensure that well-being, seeing them as happy people, thinking of them in their best light, setting aside time for them—these are all signs of affection and commitment.

Thus, while fathers have made progress, they still have some way to go. But again, the fact that mothers have less time to devote to planning, organizing and attending the children's activities is an incentive to paternal involvement. This involvement is already quite marked in the area of recreational activities and there is some hope that fathers will take this experience and apply it to daycares and schools.

Protesting Papas?

Paradoxically, it may be the very organizations and institutions that provide services to children and families that are caught unawares by the arrival of fathers in a territory which, until now, has been more or less the exclusive domain of mothers and women—a fact that has also been stressed by researchers. These organizations and institutions may not be as “father friendly” in their practices as they would have us believe, and they have their work cut out for them if fathers are to

feel comfortable enough to participate fully in them.

In fact, these institutions may find it even more upsetting if at some point fathers, after having taken on their fair share of parenting duties and the organization of their children's activities, become involved in a third area of concern—the defence of not only their own children's interests but the general welfare of all children. Until now, women have led the battles for parental leave, flexible work and service hours, higher quality daycare services, keeping local schools open, and the elimination of child poverty and violence against children. Imagine for a moment if fathers decided to get involved in these struggles, bringing with them all the determination and know-how they currently employ in fields such as business, politics and the labour movement, to name a few. Conceivably, the influx of such a force could affect the balance of power in several areas. Imagine the consequences if fathers, step-fathers and grandfathers decided to organize a march in opposition to violence against children or child poverty, decided to make their voices heard on school councils or health clinics, decided to question political candidates about the lack of quality housing or recreational areas in their communities...

“Dad, I need some money...”

Thus, a dedicated father is one who is present, who assumes his fair share of the parenting tasks and who cares about the future of his child and of all children. And it is these aspects of parenthood that have generally been emphasized over the last few years. In doing so, however, a more traditional role, but one that remains just as important—perhaps more so than ever—has perhaps been relegated to second place: the role of provider or “bill payer.”

Fathers everywhere struggle to protect their children against poverty. The fortunate ones manage to provide a certain degree of comfort and material security. Both groups try to fulfill what they naturally perceive as a fundamental role—that of provider. It seems to me that this role has tended to be all too easily minimized. It is as though in the effort to recognize the father who is affectionate, who acts as teacher and companion, and who is committed and interactive, the role of breadwinner has been neglected, if not actually ignored and even scorned. And yet fathers themselves have not forgotten this role, as evidenced by their vulnerability and distress when they fail to fulfill it adequately. They seem to understand that while this role may not be enough in and of itself, it is a necessary one. The fact that over 60 percent of poor children live in single-parent households where the single





parent is a woman (while only 13 percent of poor children live in two-parent households) would seem to indicate that they are right. There is no way to hide it: of all paternal roles, that of provider is perhaps the most thankless. Granted, for the advertising industry, the image of the father sitting at his desk or operating a machine tool is less desirable and romantic than that of the father standing in a sports arena cheering on his daughter or son, but that doesn't diminish its importance. Fathers who, after losing their jobs, go through depression, marital troubles or conflicts with their adolescent children describe the significance of this role in their lives with great eloquence. They say that a father's responsibility is also to make sure their child has food on the table, a warm and safe place to live, stability, a solid place in the community and good prospects for the future.

In this respect too, service providers and even groups who promote paternal involvement have some thinking to do. Obviously, this is not to question the validity of initiatives such as discussion groups for fathers or activities to develop parenting skills; however, much more attention should probably be given this traditional-yet-vital role of breadwinner. Above all, the promotion of other paternal roles should not lead to the neglect of what most fathers still perceive as their primary responsibility: contributing to the economic well-being of their families. Yes, teaching fathers to cook and to play with their children is

crucial. However, it is also just as crucial to provide concrete support in the area of income or employment, a source of great stress and vulnerability for fathers, especially when their income is low or their employment is insecure. Fathers who have trouble making ends meet, whose jobs are threatened or who have recently lost their jobs, are fathers who need support; and it is perhaps in just such situations of great personal vulnerability, which are also situations of high risk for family life, that support should be given priority. Fathers who are secure in their role as "provider" are generally much more available to take on the other parenting tasks that their spouses and children expect of them, allowing them to concentrate fully on their role as "nurturer."

Thus, the job of a father is this: to help his children develop—to teach them to express and master their emotions; to avoid physiological distress; to provide a context for their experiences; to help them persevere, reach their goals and take on responsibilities; and to instill the roles of citizen, partner and parent. In short, it is to fill their bellies with bread, their brains with wisdom and their hearts with love and courage.

Once a father...

I have a memory. I couldn't have been more than three or four years old. For two weeks every summer, my father would rent a cabin on a lake that was at once inviting and frightening because, though beautiful, it was inhabited by crayfish. The only person who could convince me to go into the water was my father—and even then, only riding on his shoulders. I thought him all the braver because my mother was terrified. Not of the crayfish, but because my father didn't know how to swim. He would always take me across to an island that was perhaps 100 or 150 steps off shore—"out to sea," as my mother would say. In some places, the water would come up to just below his nose. My mother would yell, "Are you crazy, Lucien?" Thus, my father's silent affection for me went right up to his nose: if he opened his mouth, he was dead—and so was I! Under the circumstances, I was lucky my father didn't talk much.

And yet, with every crossing, he saved my life. But, in saving my life, didn't he also save his own? Is it not also a father's job to save his own life, to prolong it and give it meaning, to know both its limitations and the dizzying highs of unconditional love? Because fatherhood is also this: an intense love for one's child and a never-ending vertigo.





Fathering: a Commitment Redefined

Many factors have led to the redefinition of the role of the father, starting with the will of fathers themselves. However, the few resources available to make fathering easier are still widely unknown.

Over the last few decades, a number of factors have combined to trigger a change in the role of the father. The flood of women into the workforce, an increase in the unemployment rate among men¹, new family arrangements and the rise of feminism are all examples of social or economic phenomena that have contributed to a redefinition of the role of the father—a role that, until recently, has generally been assigned to the category of “provider.” Another significant factor in this redefinition has been the rise in the number of separations and divorces in Canadian households. The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth conducted in 1994–1995 revealed a Canadian divorce rate of well

over 50 percent. Moreover, five years after the separation of their parents, 56 percent of children had very little or no contact with their fathers², a situation that could threaten a child’s well-being³.

Increasing numbers of fathers, conscious of both the complexity and importance of their roles, would like, or are demanding, greater involvement in the lives of their children. However, some may also feel ill-equipped to fulfill their roles within the new social context. Indeed, many fathers lack models with which they can identify; they also lack the resources both at work and in their communities to support them adequately in this richer and more complex role⁴.



¹ Desrosiers, H., Juby, H. & Le Bourdais, C. (1997). La diversification des trajectoires parentales des hommes : conséquences pour la politique du père. *Lien Social et Politique*, 37, 19-28.

² Marciel-Gratton, N. & Le Bourdais, C. (1999). *Garde des enfants, droits de visite et pension alimentaire : Résultats tirés de l'Enquête Longitudinale sur les Enfants et les Jeunes*. Montréal : Centre interuniversitaire d'études démographiques, Université de Montréal.

³ Amato, P.R. & Gilbreth, J. G. (1999). Nonresident fathers and children's well-being. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61, 557-573.

⁴ Dulac, G. (1996). Les moments du processus de déliaison père-enfant chez les hommes en rupture d'union. Dans J. Allary, & L.S. Éthier (Eds), pp. 45-64, *Comprendre la famille: acte du 3e symposium québécois de recherche sur la famille*. Sainte-Foy : Presses de l'Université du Québec.

Being an involved father—it's simple...

A father's involvement with his child can take on different forms and manifest itself in a variety of familial contexts (e.g., blended families, shared custody or fathers who work outside the country). There are a number of definitions of paternal involvement, but four facets emerge from the definitions given by researchers⁵. Ultimately, being an involved father is as simple as:

■ interacting directly with one's child.

The father has a direct relationship with his child, acting as companion, playmate, moral guide, educator and provider of emotional support and physical care.

■ being available to one's child.

The father sees to activities in which the child does not directly participate, but he is available if necessary (e.g., preparing a meal while the child plays in his or her room).

■ being actively involved with the health and well-being of one's child.

The father, while not necessarily interacting directly with his child, knows when he must drive the child to a doctor's appointment or when he is to attend parent-teacher interviews.

■ thinking and caring about one's child.

The father thinks about his child when they are apart, has an emotional attachment to his child and feels the child is an important part of his life.

...but it's important!

Increasingly, research has demonstrated the specific character and importance of a father's involvement with his child⁶:

■ Fathers are more likely than mothers to engage in physical play with their children⁷ and, in general, they do more to encourage exploratory behaviours, which help children adapt to the outside world⁸.



5 Lamb, M.E. (2000). The history of research on father involvement: An overview. Dans H.E. Peters., G.W. Peterson., S.K. Steinmetz & R. D. Daly (Eds), Fatherhood: Research, interventions and policies, pp 23-42, New York: The Haworth Press.

6 Palkowitz, R. (1997). Reconstructing involvement : Expanding conceptualizations of men's caring in contemporary families. In A.J. Hawkins & D.C. Dollahite (Eds), Generative fathering beyond deficit perspectives, pp. 200-216. Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications.

7 Pleck, J.H. (1997). Paternal involvement: Levels, sources and consequences. In M. Lamb (Ed), The role of the father in child development.(Third edition), pp.66-103. New York: Wiley.

8 Lewis, C. (1997). Fathers and preschoolers. In M. Lamb (Ed), The role of the father in child development. (Third edition), pp.121-142. New York: Wiley.

■ A father's involvement promotes his children's social, cognitive and emotional development⁹.

■ A warm father/child relationship helps a child develop his or her sexual identity with greater confidence¹⁰.

■ Children of dedicated fathers have a better chance of being successful in school and of having a positive self-image¹¹.

■ Children who have the social, emotional and material support of a father or father figure display fewer behavioural problems and symptoms of depression than those who do not¹².

■ Paternal commitment is a factor in the prevention of child neglect and abuse¹³.

■ The nature and quality of a father's interaction with his children counts for more than his mere

physical availability¹⁴.

Fathers get more involved if...

Studies show that paternal involvement is sometimes related to a father's individual characteristics or circumstances. It is to be assumed that "accumulating" certain of these conditions will lead to stronger and enhanced paternal involvement. What emerges more consistently, however, is that a father will show greater commitment to his children if¹⁵:

■ he feels competent as a parent, if he values his role as a father and if he possesses a certain degree of emotional stability;

■ he has a harmonious, stable and satisfying marital relationship;

■ the mother of his children encourages him to take an active role in their care and education, and

values this role (this holds true even if the parents are separated);

■ work does not occupy a dominant role in his life and he makes time to take part in the socialization and play activities of his child;

■ his work environment supports him in his role as father;

■ the mother has a job outside the home.

9 Turcotte, G. (1994). L'implication paternelle: déterminants et modèles d'intervention. Montréal : Université du Québec à Montréal : [Les cahiers du Grave](#), 1, 4.

10 Levine, J.A., Murphy, D.T.& Wilson, S. (1993). [Getting men involved. Strategies for early childhood programs](#). New York: Scholastic.

11 Amato, P.R. & Gilbreth, J. G. (1999). Nonresident fathers and children's well-being. [Journal of Marriage and the Family](#), 61, 557-573.

12 Turcotte, G. (1994). L'implication paternelle: déterminants et modèles d'intervention. Montréal : Université du Québec à Montréal : [Les cahiers du Grave](#), 1, 4.

13 Dubowitz, H. M., Black, M., Kerr, M.A., Starr, R.H.& Harrington, D. (2000). [Fathers and child neglect. Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine](#), 154, 2, 56-70.

14 Palkowitz, R. (1997). Reconstructing involvement : Expanding conceptualizations of men's caring in contemporary families. In A.J. Hawkins & D.C. Dollahite (Eds), [Generative fathering beyond deficit perspectives](#), pp. 200-216. Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications.

15 Turcotte, G., Dubeau, D., Bolte, C., Paquette, D. (2001). Pourquoi certains pères sont-ils plus engagés auprès de leurs enfants? Une revue des déterminants de l'engagement paternel. [Revue Canadienne de Psycho-Éducation](#), (30), 1, 65-91.

Food for thought—a three-course meal.

Unfortunately, this catalogue cannot remedy the lack of resources for supporting the kind of paternal involvement described above; it can, however, help to better publicize the resources that are available. It is, above all, a reference source for anyone interested in developing or enriching a project to encourage paternal involvement.

Part One draws a general outline of the Canadian projects that, in one way or another—either directly or indirectly—promote the involvement of fathers with their children.

Part Two describes the 15 projects that bear witness to the diversity and originality of the numerous projects that have been carried out in recent years. It describes the circumstances of these projects and the manner in which they were initiated and implemented. Each project also illustrates one or several of the factors, as described in the scientific literature on project evaluation, that increase the probability of success in these types of projects.

The last section, Part Three, sets out several general observations and formulates some recommendations that are related to the factors favoring success. These observations and recommendations are based on the examination of both the projects that responded to the original questionnaire and the 15 projects that are studied in detail.



Family Portrait:

Dad in the Foreground

New projects that are underfunded, run by skilled, committed professionals, and offer a wide variety of activities oriented to a specific group: fathers.

In designing this catalogue, we looked for projects_initiatives, resources, programs, etc._ that aimed to promote the involvement of fathers with their children aged 0 to 12 years.

Of the 230 projects throughout Canada of which we had knowledge, we counted 61 whose primary objective was to promote and support paternal involvement. What follows describes the process we undertook and paints a general portrait of these projects.

The ecology of fathering.

The method of inquiry adopted for this catalogue is largely inspired by the ecological approach put forth by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986). The method of locating the projects, the design of the investigative tool and the analysis of the results are all based on this approach to a great degree.

The ecological approach states that human development is the result of people's interactions with their environments. In the context of fathering, this means that paternal

involvement is influenced by a man's individual characteristics (such as temperament or education) and by the environment in which he lives (for instance, a father living in poverty will not have the same opportunities with respect to material resources and information as a father who is better off). However, the ecological model also states that taken individually, these factors cannot in and of themselves determine how people will develop and assume various roles.

The ecological model can be made use of from two points of view: analysis and intervention. The multi-faceted view provided by ecological analysis facilitates an overall understanding of fathers' situations. It includes six tightly interwoven systems that should be considered simultaneously:

- The ontosystem represents the father's individual characteristics—his past, his experiences and his skills.

- The microsystem represents the characteristics of the father's various environments (family, work and public or religious associations).

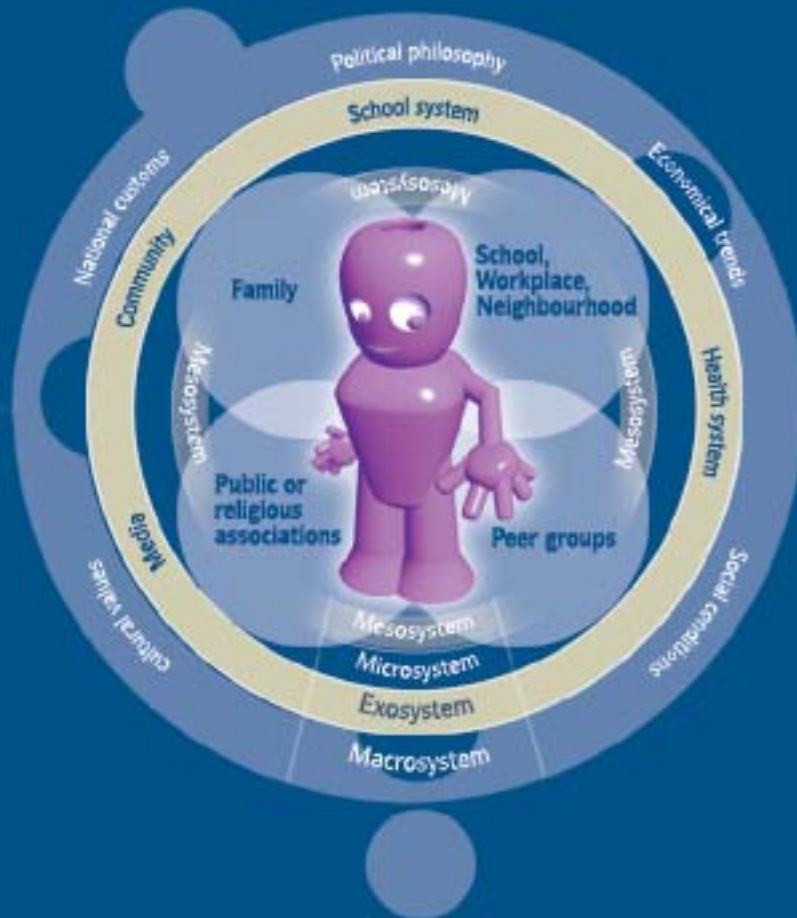
- The mesosystem represents the degree to which the relationships between these environments are compatible and complement each other.

- The exosystem represents the nature and coherence of the administrative and political decisions that influence the father's development.

- The macrosystem represents the cultural standards and values of the culture being analyzed.

- The chronosystem represents the influences on the role of the father. As fatherhood is a role that is taken on and performed during a specific period of one's life, the time and context of this role is one of the factors that will be included within the scope of this analysis.

The use of such a broad approach facilitates the search for intervention strategies that, depending on the context, take a greater or smaller



number of factors into consideration. This catalogue contains examples of projects that emphasize skills or knowledge acquisition by fathers (ontosystem). Other projects deal more with changes in the fathers' environments—for example, those that involve mothers in promoting paternal involvement or that increase the sensitivity and openness of school and social workers toward fathers' needs (microsystem). On another level, projects may improve the compatibility between fathers' various environments and aim to improve access to family services for fathers who work full time or who have their children only on weekends by extending the hours during which such services are available (mesosystem). Other, more political, initiatives consist of finding ways to pressure governments to change child custody or parental leave policies (exosystem), and some projects plan mass information campaigns in order to influence public opinion toward fathers (macrosystem). The ages of both children and fathers influence the strategies and implementation of certain projects (chronosystem). As we will show, some projects act on one or two levels, and more rarely, on three or four. However, taken together, the projects presented in this catalogue deal with a very wide range of factors, which constitute an invaluable source of inspiration.

Survey methodology.

How did we go about conducting an inventory and analyzing projects related to fathering?

The inventory.

We began by gathering information from key sources¹⁶ working in a wide range of family-oriented sectors throughout Canada. In particular, we spoke with

people involved with community, health, social, and workplace issues, as well as people working in the education system, with early childhood issues and in the prison environment. These sources provided names and contact information of the workers assigned to projects related to fathers; they also sent the same request for information in writing to other people (snowball sampling technique¹⁷). The managers of the 800-odd projects for children

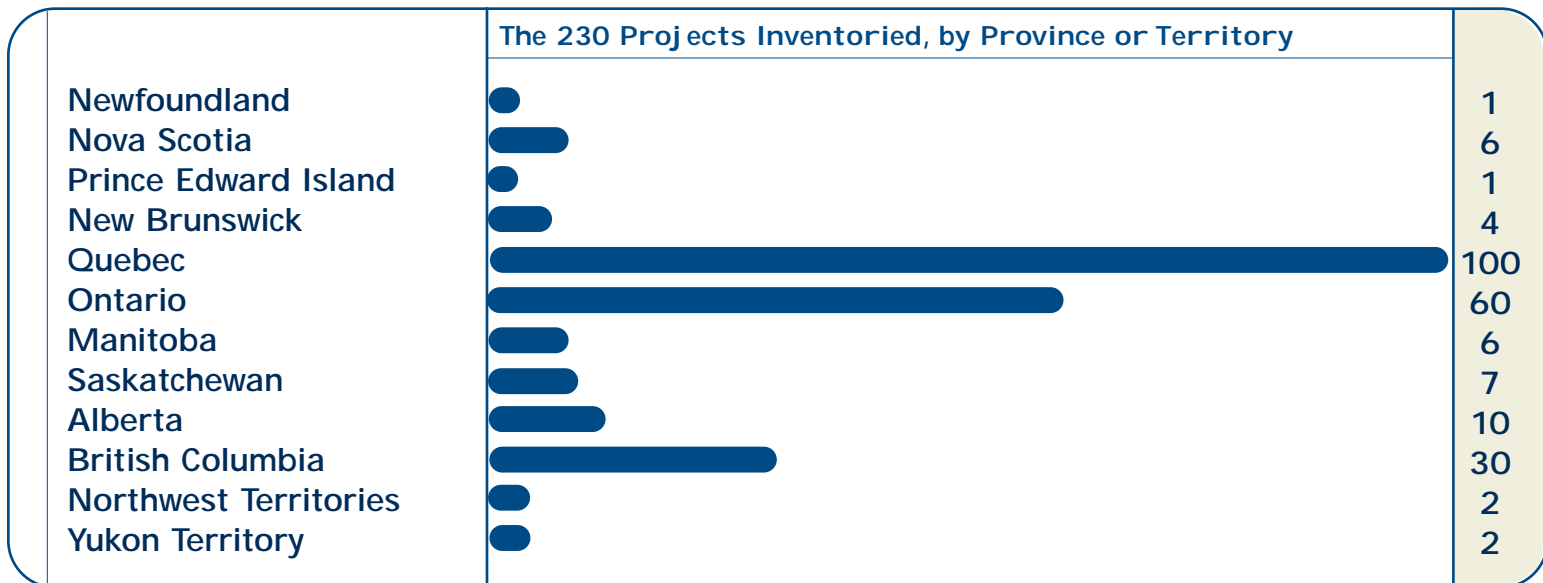
funded by Health Canada (CAPC¹⁸ and CPPN¹⁹) were all invited to act as key sources. As a result of this assistance and the help of about one hundred other organizations throughout Canada, we obtained contact information for 230 projects. Despite the scope of the campaign, this inventory does not claim to have thoroughly covered all the provinces and reached all of the project managers (as of the fall, 1999).

¹⁶ Communications with key sources are in english or french depending on the person's first language.

¹⁷ Patton, M.Q. (1987). How to use qualitative methods in evaluation. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

¹⁸ Community Action Programs for Children

¹⁹ Canadian Program for Parental Nutrition.



The survey tool.

In developing the questionnaire, the ecological approach served to divide project activities into three categories or intervention targets. In addition, various studies on project evaluation provided the scientific basis for choosing the type of data to be documented. (Groupe de travail pour les jeunes, 1991²⁰; Arama, 1996²¹; Blanchet, Laurendeau, Perreault and Saucier, 1993²²; Chamberland, Dallaire, Camero, Fréchette, Lindsay, Beaudoin and Hébert, 1996²³; O'Loughlin, Renaud, Richard, Gomez and Paradis, 1998²⁴; Turcotte, 1994²⁵).

The twenty-odd success factors for intervention projects gleaned from these sources were used to develop the preliminary version of the Questionnaire for Projects Aimed at Supporting

Paternal Involvement .

The questionnaire was drafted in French and translated into English, verified by five researchers and pre-tested by six project managers, both anglophone and francophone. This process allowed us to both reduce the number of questions and clarify their content and presentation.

The final version included several general questions (basic information about the project, when it was implemented and the name of the project manager) and a series of questions designed to outline the project's main characteristics (region, initiators, general objectives, descriptions and targets of activities, project team, funding sources, partners, observed effects, obstacles, successes, evaluation and most notable project

activity). The questionnaire included questions in both multiple-choice and short-answer formats.

Data collection.

The questionnaire and a letter explaining the inventory procedure were mailed to the project directors or coordinators (i.e., the person(s) most knowledgeable about the project) of the 230 projects inventoried. There was a telephone follow-up three weeks after the mailing.

Eighty-five questionnaires—or 37 percent of the projects originally inventoried—were filled in and returned. Telephone calls to several respondents allowed us to complete the questionnaires that were received.

20 Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). *Un Québec fou de ses enfants*. Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux.

21 Arama, D., Bouchard, C. (1996). *Recension des projets d'intervention ayant trait à la paternité dans la grande région de Montréal*. Montréal : Université du Québec à Montréal, Les cahiers d'analyse du GRAVE (3), 1.

22 Blanchet, L., Laurendeau, M.-C., Paul, D. & Saucier, J.-F. (1993). *La prévention et la promotion en santé mentale : Préparer l'avenir*. Boucherville : Gaëtan Morin éditeur.

23 Chamberland, C., Dallaire, N., Cameron, S., Fréchette, L., Lindsay, J., Beaudoin, G & Hébert, J. (1996). *Promotion du bien-être et présentation des problèmes sociaux chez les jeunes et leur famille : portrait des pratiques et analyse des conditions de réussite*. Montréal : Université de Montréal, École de service social.

24 O'Loughlin, J., Renaud, L., Richard, L., Gomez, S., & Paradis, G. (1998). Correlates of the sustainability of community-based health promotion interventions. *Preventive Medicine*, 27, 702-712.

25 Turcotte, G. (1994). L'implication paternelle: déterminants et modèles d'intervention. Montréal : Université du Québec à Montréal : *Les cahiers du Grave*, 1, 4.

Following these contacts and a discussion among the team members, 24 projects were eventually rejected. A variety of criteria entered in to this decision:

- incomplete questionnaires,
- projects oriented primarily toward the family and in which the father-related dimension seemed minimal,
- projects suspended just as we were trying to collect missing information.

Thus, the final sample of the catalogue includes 61 projects. The list of these projects appears at the end of this document.

Data analysis.

For multiple-choice questions, the categories had been pre-defined. They

were either nominal (e.g., the different sources of project funding) or numerical (e.g., the number of months the project had existed).

For the short answer questions, we analyzed the thematic content of the responses²⁶. By grouping similar responses to each question from 15 of the questionnaires, we created a preliminary categorization grid. We then refined this grid and applied it to the 46 other questionnaires. Very few statements were grouped into more than one category and all statements in a given category dealt with the same theme. Vague or overly general statements—which are difficult to categorize—were systematically rejected. An external coder was used to validate the classification grid, in an effort to offset the main coder's biases,

leading to a consensus with respect to the adopted categories²⁷.

26 Bardin, L. (1996). *L'analyse de contenu*. (8th ed.). Paris : Presses universitaires de France.

27 Miles, B.B. & Huberman, M.A. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Results of the analysis for all projects.

Activities arranged into three target groups.

In order to simplify the presentation of the projects' activities, they are grouped—using the systemic levels of the ecological approach—into three categories or intervention targets.

Fathers and their families:

Includes activities aimed at fathers only or at fathers and their children and/or spouses. In ecological terms, these activities deal with the paternal ontosystem, the family and work microsystems and, in some cases, the chronosystem.

Fathers and their immediate environments:

(work, school, daycare, public and community services). Includes activities aimed at changing social practices and/or the fathers' environments to make them more favourable to paternal involvement and to increase their compatibility with each other. In ecological terms, they deal with mesosystems.

Fathers and the larger environment:

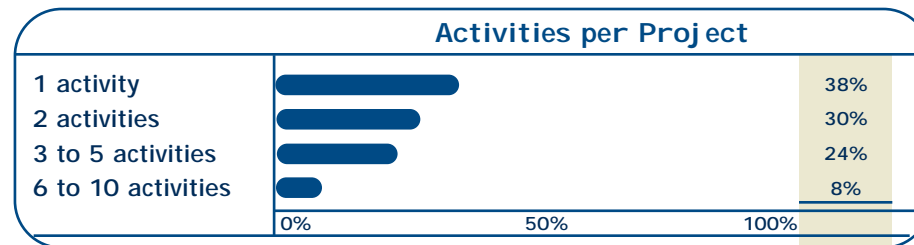
Includes activities aimed at changing the population's social and cultural environments by means of mass influence (images and models conveyed through the media, social

policy and the norms and values of society). These activities deal with the exosystem and the macrosystem.

Primary target: fathers.

Activities.

Some projects offered only a single activity while others offered many. These activities ranged from group discussions to outings in the forest to family celebrations to practitioner training. We counted 162 activities offered by the 61 projects. Most projects offered one or two activities, but one third offered a wider variety.



Targets

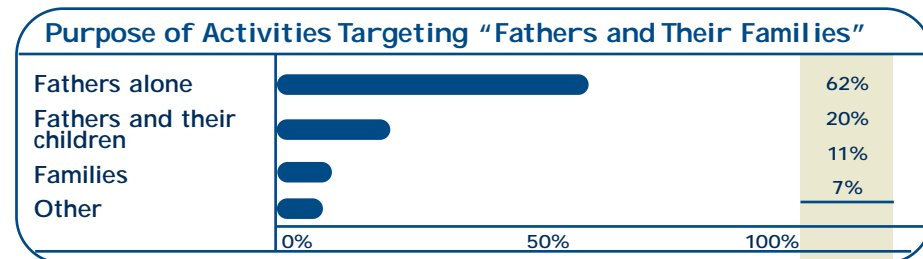
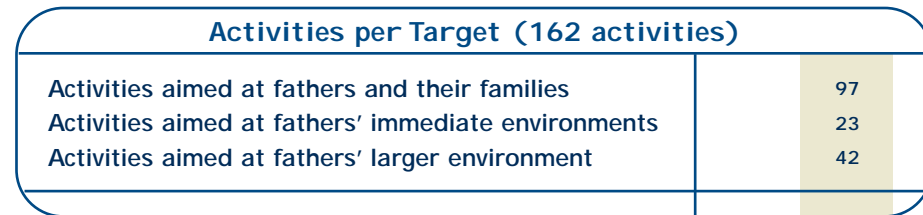
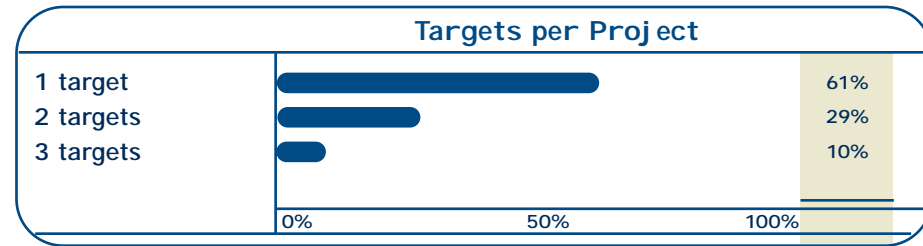
Activities always have objectives and they are always aimed at either one or several targets simultaneously. As mentioned above, these targets can be grouped into three broad categories:

- Fathers and their families (a father, his children and his spouse),
- The immediate environments of fathers or their children (work, leisure, school, etc.),
- The fathers' larger environment (society at large).

Of the 61 projects, 60 percent of the activities targeted fathers and their families, 14 percent were aimed at fathers' immediate environments and 26 percent, at the larger environment.

The main concern: fathers.

In the "fathers and their families" category, a large proportion of activities concerned fathers exclusively. These activities were designed to increase awareness of the importance of their role and reinforce their sense of parental competence. Many of these activities gave fathers the opportunity to discuss issues such as their identities as fathers and the difficulties and joys of fatherhood.



On the other hand, some projects broadened their scope to include all family members. These projects offered activities for fathers accompanied by their children so they could interact with and observe other fathers interacting with their own children. These group activities often took the form of cultural outings or other activities of a more “hands-on” nature. In addition to being an opportunity for children to have the complete attention of their fathers, these activities were designed to reinforce fathers’ feelings of competence. In some cases, though infrequently, the goals were broadened to include the entire family rather than fathers alone; such projects did not simply try to change fathers’ behaviours and attitudes, they provided support for both parents. Communication workshops for young parents or family-oriented activities were the means employed to reach these goals.

The immediate environment— intervening also with project workers.

A large number of the activities inventoried aimed at bringing about changes in the social practices of project staff or their working environments. Project managers seemed to indicate that case workers too should review their practices to better adapt them to fathers’ needs. In these cases, the goals were essentially to ensure that when fathers go to community or social

service centres, they will be treated warmly and benefit from services that take their needs into account.

These activities consisted primarily of:

- establishing awareness committees in organizations, neighbourhoods, districts or regions in order to bring people together to think collectively about how fathers are received in various organizations and to set up inter-sectorial activities;
- creating awareness among workers in the health and social services network.

The larger environment— fathering as a social concern.

Certain projects were aimed at changing laws that directly affect fathers’ lives. For instance, associations for separated fathers expended more energy on political representation than any other groups. In particular, they tried to change the standards, rules and practices governing how child custody is assigned. Changing family mediation practices is another way in which to bring about a change in the larger environment.

Changing public opinion.

Trying to change fathers’ public image through print or electronic media was a relatively common strategy among the projects inventoried. Some chose to use

the media to get their messages across, others took part in radio interviews or presented videos for debate and discussion. One group published information bulletins for fathers and the general public. But the media was not the only vehicle used for carrying out mass information campaigns. The organization of special events such as large, family-oriented celebrations, open-houses or public conferences are examples of other means employed. Though the image of the father in the media has improved in recent years, these methods of promoting paternal involvement are essential because while this public image is beneficial to some fathers, for others, it has become a sort of unreachable ideal. Events to which the entire community is invited have the added advantage of fostering interpersonal relationships and of featuring real live fathers.

Between ideals and reality.

Most of the projects inventoried targeted a single group: fathers and their families. One third of the projects targeted two groups simultaneously. In most cases, these were activities that concerned either fathers and their families or changes in the overall environment. And ten percent of the projects dealt with all three broad groupings simultaneously: fathers and both their immediate and overall environments.

Obviously, it is to be expected that the wider the range of targets, the better the chance of reaching the overall goal of promoting paternal involvement. Indeed, if a project targets fathers but does nothing to remedy an environment that does not favour their participation, the objective is less likely to be attained. Similarly, if a father who participates actively in his child's development feels ostracized because of negative messages from society, the job will remain half finished.

In an ideal world, targeting fathers, their families and their immediate and larger environments would be the obvious choice. However, in the real world, such a choice implies significant costs in material and human resources and would therefore appear difficult to achieve for most of the projects inventoried in Canada.

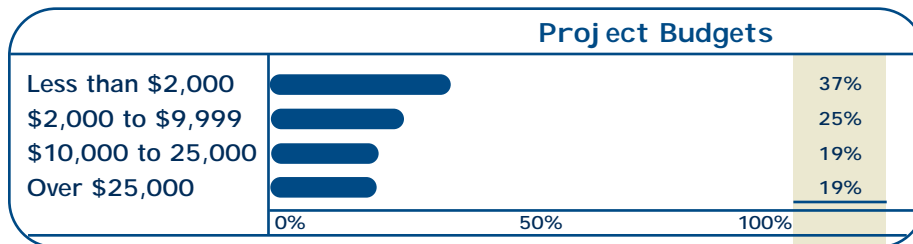
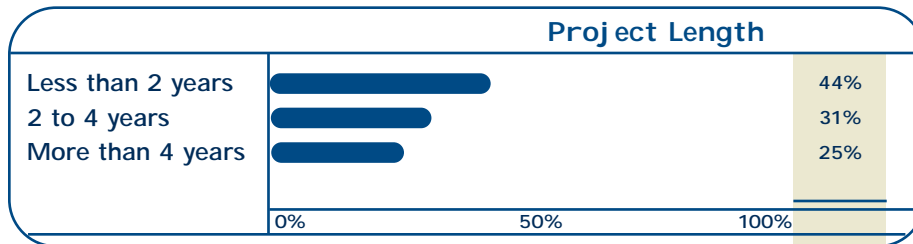
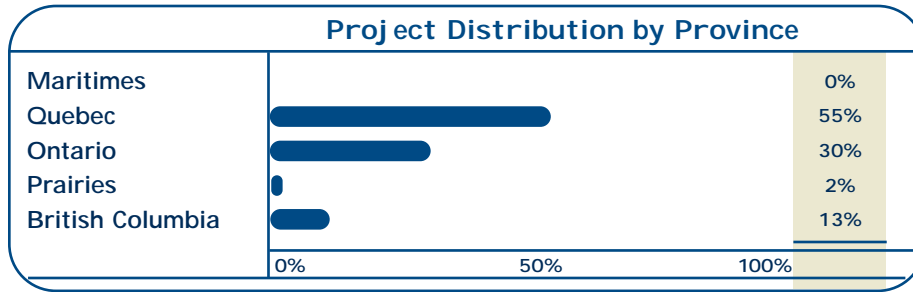
However, it should not be concluded that projects with narrower scopes do not attain their objectives, based, at least, on the interviews conducted with project spokespersons on how they viewed their projects' effects. For example:

- Approximately one third of the 61 respondents mentioned that their project provided fathers with opportunities for discussion, for sharing their experiences and problems, and for breaking through their isolation.

- Slightly less than one third of the respondents said they noticed an increase in fathers' confidence in themselves and their parenting skills.

- About one quarter of project managers believed that the activities they offered allowed fathers to become aware of the importance of their roles as fathers, educators and role models to their children. This awareness can also manifest itself in a better understanding of a child's development and of the mutual needs expressed in a father/child relationship.

- One quarter of managers also felt their project contributed to making practitioners, educators and managers aware of the importance of making room for fathers during interventions.



Geographical distribution.

The 61 projects were concentrated primarily in three provinces and, in linguistic terms, are spread equally among both official languages. Also notable is that they were especially active in cities (48 percent), while 12 percent operated in suburbs and another 12 percent in rural areas. The remaining projects had activities in more than one area (n=16).

Project length.

The average lifespan of the projects was about three years (37.5 months), not a great length of time to begin activities and become known. There were exceptions, however; one of the projects has been operating for nearly 15 years.

Budget and funding.

Judging by the financial resources that fathering projects had to work with, this area of intervention is still largely neglected. The survey showed that most projects operate on extremely thin budgets. Of the 48 respondents who provided funding information for their projects, 37 percent declared annual budgets of less than \$2,000 and 62 percent operated on budgets of less than \$10,000 per year. The average annual budget for all projects was \$13,000.

These funding amounts are not only low, they are extremely precarious. When asked for how long they could count on their funding, 41 percent of project managers replied that their funding was in no way secure. Combining the results revealed that more than half the projects had secure funding for less than one year.

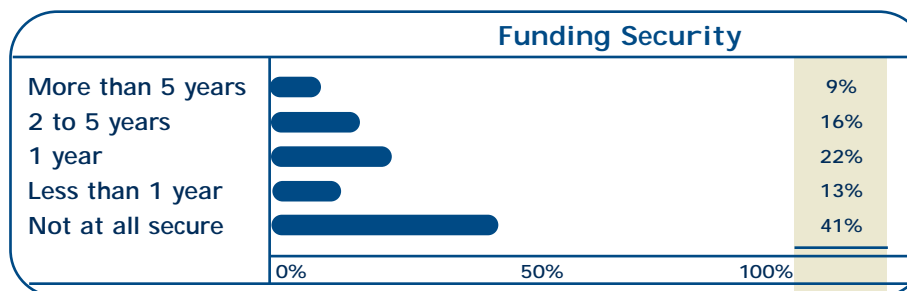
Project establishment.

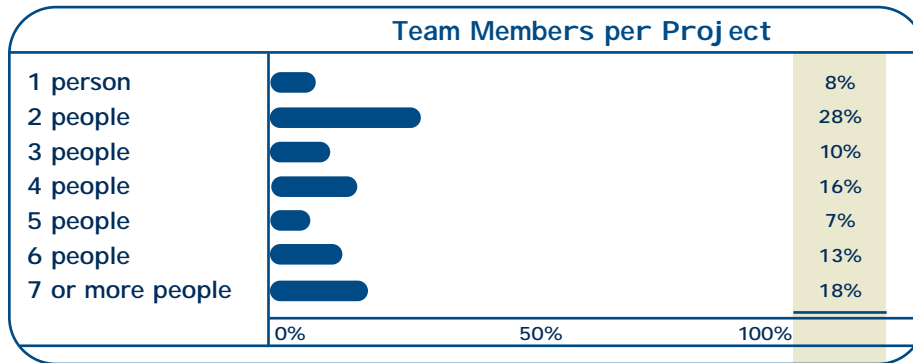
People from a wide variety of backgrounds can become involved in setting up projects for promoting and supporting paternal involvement: a group of fathers, a community or public service worker, the director of a community organization or some other establishment, a research team, a funding agency or a government.

Most of the projects inventoried appeared to have been established through initiatives of people with close ties to the community (fathers, practitioners from community groups or the public system) rather than people such as directors of organizations (community or public).

Among the people mentioned as having participated in setting up projects, one finds in more or less equal proportions, fathers, workers from the public health and social services sector, and community workers.

However, 11 projects were implemented through the participation of community group administrators, nine were the initiatives of an organization in the





public services network, and nine others were established with help from a government agency.

Project teams.

In total, the projects inventoried employed 220 people. Project teams averaged five people; however, nearly half the projects operated with small teams of one to three people.

Other statistics on project workers:

- 60 percent were men.
- The average experience in the social services field for project workers was 13 years. Most came from the community sector (33 percent), the public health and social services sector (27 percent) or the private sector (18 percent). Eighty percent had a university education.
- 60 percent were salaried, however nearly all (94 percent) were employed on a part time basis.
- 40 percent worked as volunteers, 80 percent of whom were men.

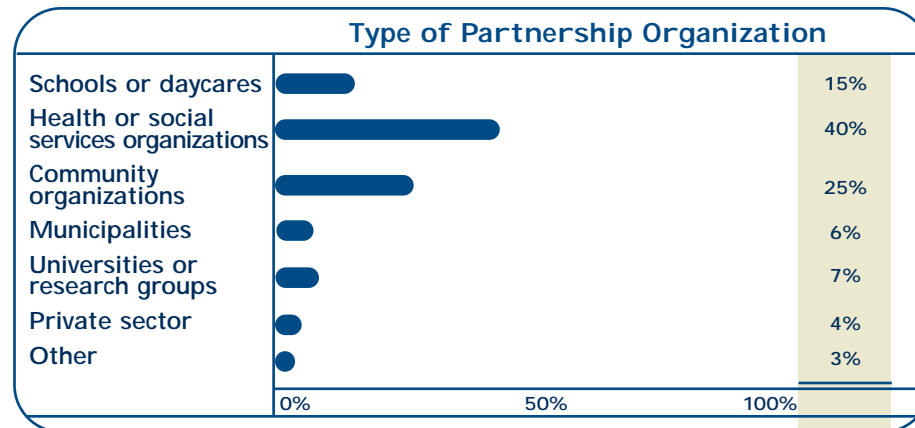
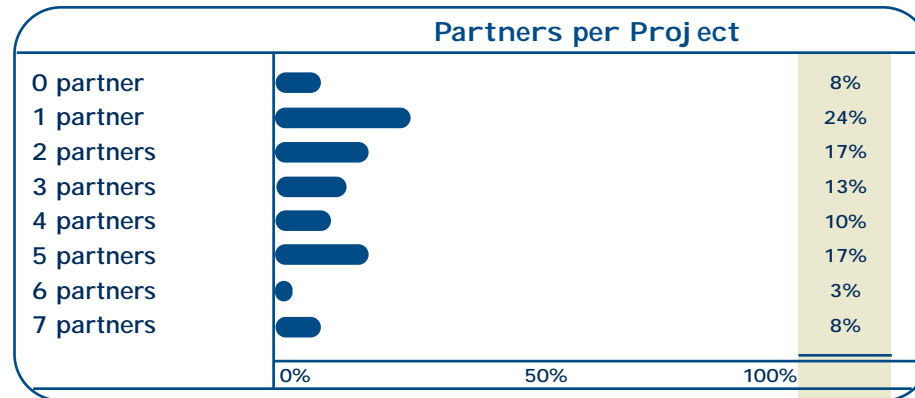
Partnerships

Ninety-two percent of the projects operated in partnership with one or two other bodies.

Most of these partners were in either the public health and social services sector (40 percent) or the community sector (25 percent). One third represented school, municipal, private and university groups.

The frequency of contact with partners varied among the projects inventoried, ranging from once per year to nearly constant. Nearly half of project spokespersons (48 percent) said these contacts occurred several times per year; however a significant number had monthly (21 percent) or weekly (22 percent) meetings with their partners.

The relationships between the partners took several different forms that required varying degrees of investment. Partners exchanged information, shared material or human resources, shared responsibilities or implemented joint activities. The most frequent form of partnership was information exchange. Only infrequently did projects form partnerships that shared responsibilities or organized joint activities.





There's No Need to Reinvent the Wheel!

In recent years, projects for prevention and promotion of all sorts have sprung up like mushrooms everywhere in response to the needs of communities or groups of people. However, these projects often fail or deteriorate as soon as they are set up, mostly due to lack of funding. But that is not the only reason.

Innovating or taking the initiative always involves a certain amount of risk. It must be recognized, however, that the risks can often be reduced (and the chances of success increased) if the experiences of those who have succeeded and survived before are better taken into account.

The 61 projects inventoried provide a wide range of examples of such experiences. And so with a view to helping those who wish to begin a new venture or improve an existing project, we will highlight some of the most promising and inspiring ones.

An important criterion: the existence of success factors.

Choosing among the 61 projects inventoried was not an easy task. All of them could have served, in one aspect or another, as good examples of what to do or what not to do to ensure the success and survival of a fathering project.

In the first step of the process, three members of the research team made an initial selection of 32 projects. Their choices were guided by their experience in the field, by taking a broad view of each project (coherence, pace of development, chances of survival and originality) and by considering success factors that have been proven in terms of project evaluation:

1. a clearly defined conceptual framework
2. intervention that builds on transitions in the lives of people and families
3. an effective recruitment strategy
4. an approach adapted to the specific reality of fathers
5. intervention that promotes the fathers' empowerment
6. strong and respected leadership

7. the integration of activities into the fathers' immediate environments
8. intensive intervention with the most vulnerable fathers
9. public awareness campaigns
10. political pressure and action (lobbying)
11. a multiplicity of targets and of strategies for action
12. organizational support
13. a support network for project workers
14. quality partnerships
15. stable and diversified funding
16. rigorous project evaluation

Next, an external committee made up of researchers, students and male practitioners, studied these 32 projects with the same attention as did the initial research team. After this step, they chose 15 projects for a more thorough examination.

We would like to make it clear that this process was not intended to create a list of the "best" projects or to set forth a list of recipes that, if followed to the letter, will lead unerringly to success. The features we highlight are by no means exhaustive and, in mentioning them, we do not mean to imply that they must be applied "as is" to all projects. Rather, they are ideas and concerns to keep in mind when embarking on a project of

this nature. The goal is to inspire, not to prescribe. A quote by Lisbeth Shorr sums up the reasoning behind the selection of these projects: "They provide a vision of what can be achieved, a benchmark for judging other efforts, and, at a minimum, a takeoff point in the search for better understanding of the elements of interventions worthy of widespread implementation²⁸."

Projects that stand out.

Part Three will deal with some of the constants that emerged from the analysis of these projects. At this point, however, it would be useful to mention the characteristics that make these 15 projects stand out from the others in one way or another:

- They have been running longer (55 months on average, compared to 32 months for all the other projects) and they have undergone a greater number of significant changes along the way.
- They were founded on the initiative of a greater number of people or organizations. In addition, a greater number of these founders came from administrations of other organizations or from funding agencies.

²⁸ Schorr, L.B., Schorr, D. (1988). *Within our reach: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage*. New York: Anchor Books Double Day.

- They offer a greater number of activities. And while the number of activities offered to fathers may be the same as in other projects, activities designed to change fathers' immediate or larger environments are offered more frequently or in greater numbers.

- They have more funding sources. Compared to the other projects, they receive funding from private foundations or donations more frequently.

- They have a greater number of partners.

Let us now examine what each of these projects can teach us.



Separation and divorce are important transition periods when solidarity and change can be fostered.

THE DADS PROJECT

Making the Most of a Crisis

32

"I coordinate the project but I don't facilitate. I think it's important that a father or a man conduct the meetings because they deal with very emotional issues. I'm not sure if, as a woman, I could really understand what men go through. That said, the fathers seem to appreciate and respect me; they like having a woman's point of view because it helps them put things in perspective."

In analyzing the makeup of the population of Montreal, an organization called Catholic Community Services (CCS), which provides social services to the anglophone community in Montreal, noted that there was a particularly high number of young fathers (17 to 25 years old) residing in the city's Notre-Dame-de Gráce (NDG) neighbourhood. At the same time, a survey of young mothers in this district revealed that young fathers had very little involvement in the lives of their children. The CCS therefore tried to extend its services to these fathers; however, it was soon noticed that fathers did not avail themselves of these services. Rather than continuing in the same direction, they decided to target a different clientele—divorced fathers in need of support within the anglophone community. After reflecting on what types of services they should offer, the CCS decided to create a support group

for single fathers, either separated or divorced. The Dads Project was set up in January 1999 and Carolyn Arsenault was hired as its coordinator.

A wide array of services.

The Dads Project is one of the first programs in Quebec to provide support for anglophone fathers. Some of its activities are addressed directly to fathers, while others are aimed at the larger environment, i.e., society as a whole.

Volunteer accompaniments

allow single fathers to rely on the support of other fathers for various custody-related situations. For example, one father can accompany another to pick up or drop off his children at his ex-spouse's residence. Such situations can be stressful and some fathers require accompaniment two or three times per week. This type of accompaniment is also provided when fathers must make court appearances.

Support group for fathers with or without custody.

Twice a year, a group for newly separated fathers meets once a week for ten weeks. A facilitator guides this self-help group and tries to ease fathers

through this difficult period. Together, they develop strategies that enable them to accept and deal with their new situation. Project leaders state that only after going through this process can fathers learn how to better fulfill their parental roles.

Two other activities complement the self-help group meetings: My time with Dad provides fathers who do not have custody with special occasions to spend time with their children. Two Saturdays per month, fathers and their children can participate in outings or group activities where they can interact (social or cultural activities, carpentry workshops, etc.). The project coordinator facilitates these activities and helps fathers and their children communicate with each other.

The collective kitchen

is designed to help fathers learn the art of preparing healthy meals for their kids and, at the same time, reinforce their sense of competence in the kitchen. The courses take place one Sunday per month and fathers take turns in the role of "teaching chef." Each month, the fathers decide on the menu and pick a "grocery buyer" for the next month's meal. The CCS provides a babysitting service to make it easier for fathers to take part in this activity.



The special events committee, made up of three fathers who are particularly involved in the project, organizes monthly outings and special activities such as barbecues or the annual Christmas party. This very active core group plays an important role with the other fathers, providing support and encouraging them to participate in project activities.

Each year, everyone who has taken part in the project (employees, volunteers and fathers and their families) are invited to a barbecue and to the Father's Day party.

Gaining visibility in the community and with partners.

Over the last year, the project has organized public meetings on various themes (e.g., children's sexual education) to increase its visibility. While fathers involved in the project took part, on the whole the general public did not. In the future, organizers will try to hold meetings in a library in the hopes of attracting more members of the general public.

The Dads Project publishes a newsletter every two months, which is distributed to project participants and some community organizations in the neighbourhood. The newsletter contains book reviews, recipes used in the community kitchen, as well as a review of past activities and a calendar of upcoming events.

In other respects, the project is involved in coordinating community events such as the Men's Walk, which went through NDG and was held to increase awareness of the reality and special problems encountered by men. By organizing public activities in partnership with other community groups, the project has reaped unexpected benefits. As Carolyn Arsenault points out, "many in the community see our group as a lobby group for men, which is not at all the case. Because of this perception, some organizations hesitate to refer fathers to us. Taking part in the organization of community activities has helped to dispel this misunderstanding and to show other groups who we really are."

Smooth change.

The Dads Project staff have a special knack of questioning themselves and of adapting. "One of our goals is to constantly re-evaluate the needs of both the fathers in the project and other fathers in the community," states Arsenault. They have an obvious desire to develop activities that respond to the specific needs of fathers and, if necessary, to adapt the ones already offered to make them more relevant. They also demonstrate a genuine openness toward other organizations in the community and want to increase their cooperation with them.

Two widely shared concerns.

As with many of the projects inventoried, The Dads Project appears to be hindered by two issues that are both obstacles and challenges to overcome.

Inconstant participation of fathers:

The main challenge is to get fathers to participate and to do it on a regular basis. Most take part in project activities only sporadically or in blocks of time, as with the ten-week support groups. As one father put it, "I don't need to come when things are OK, but when I'm in crisis, it's good to know that they are here." This attitude is shared by many fathers. One of the solutions adopted to achieve more regular attendance is to hold group support meetings every two weeks but to keep the meeting room open on off weeks; a volunteer father greets fathers who "drop in."

Money, money, money!

Not surprisingly, the other challenge is funding. Arsenault believes that with an increased budget, the project could be improved. For example, it could offer a wider range of activities and more often. Currently, the project has a deficit that is preventing it from expanding—grants have fallen through and the survival of the collective kitchen is in jeopardy. The lack of funding is a constant concern for

Arsenault, especially when she has to tell fathers who want to take part in the summer support group that they have to wait until September. She blames several shortcomings of current funding policies: "They give you money for a year and then they turn off the tap." What she would really like to see is for the funding agencies to let communities define their own problems and needs and to let them grant funding without interference. For the moment, however, this is not in keeping with current funding strategies. "They grant you funding if you respond to a need, but they're the ones who decide what those needs are!"

Obviously, the fact that the organization is managed by capable hands ensures a certain amount of stability, as does the essential contribution of volunteers, who make it possible to keep offering certain activities. Though the coordinator agrees that the lack of resources forces her to be resourceful, she would rather be in a position to use her creative talents to make the project's activities more attractive instead of constantly having to find the means to offer them in the first place.

Arsenault's secrets

- Don't undertake a project alone. One of the most important things you can do is develop a network within the community and use it to support your project.

- The fathers have to know that they're important in the eyes of the project's staff, especially if they don't think they are in the eyes of the judicial system.

- Leaflets are all well and good, but they're not enough. You have to participate in community activities and events if you want to gain credibility. This kind of partnership is a good way to give your project visibility and make it better known.

P R O J E C T P A R T I C U L A R S

Project name The Dads Project

Location Montreal, Quebec

Type of intervention Support and accompaniment for fathers; public awareness

Project start 1997

Target clientele Single fathers, separated or divorced, going through crisis situations

Objectives

- To offer active support to fathers in their various roles and in their relationships with their children.
- To help fathers better understand fathering and to play on their strengths.
- To provide fathers with the opportunity to share their experiences with other fathers going through similar situations by organizing a series of activities.
- To increase awareness in the community of the vital and positive roles fathers play.

Team One coordinator (female), one facilitator (volunteer male), one designer and four other volunteers.

Primary partners Catholic Community Services
CLSC Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

Annual budget and funding sources The \$17,000 granted by Centraide of Greater Montreal is used to pay the coordinator's salary. A grant from Health Canada covers some of the project's operating costs.

Contact information

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On taking advantage of transitions.

" In the mid 1970s, an increasing number of investigators began to employ research designs that took into account constancy and change not only in the person, but also in the environment. I have referred to designs of this kind as chronosystem models. Particular attention was focused on developmental changes triggered by life events or experiences. These experiences may have their origins either in the external environment (e.g., the birth of a sibling, entering school, divorce, winning the sweepstakes), or within the organism (e.g. puberty, severe illness). Whatever their origin, the critical feature of such events is that they alter the existing relation between person and environment, thus creating a dynamic that may instigate developmental change."

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). The ecology of human development: experiments in nature and by design. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.p.201.

"Sensitivity to the developmental process includes not only a sensitivity to the chronological age of the participants, but also an awareness of the point in the evolution of the system—whether it be a family system, a dyadic system, a community, or whatever—at which the program is being implemented. If a program sets out to address the needs of individuals during critical transitions, then it is important to take into account the point in the transition at which the individuals are encountered. In this regard, it may be necessary for programs to have the flexibility to address the needs of individuals, families, or larger systems that are at different points in the transition. For example, the needs of the families of the chronically ill may differ considerably depending upon how far along family members are in the process of understanding and responding both to the illness and to one another's reactions."

Bond, L.A., & Wagner, B.M. (1988). Families in transitions: Primary prevention programs that work. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.p.346.



Organizing activities that fulfill the needs of fathers won't guarantee their participation; you have to reach out to them where they are.

S U C C E S S B Y S I X - P A R E N T I N G G R O U P F O R F A T H E R S

Reaching Out to Dads, Wherever They Are



Fathering can be fun.

Father/child activities are geared to the interests and strengths of fathers and encourage them to play and share their experiences with their children. For example, as children, fathers from Brazil and Angola learned how to make and fly kites. It is an art that they can now pass on to their children; through play, fathers not only experience the pleasure of engaging in this activity with their children but also realize the importance that play can have in their relationship with them. In other respects, the interaction between fathers and their children during outings offer multiple learning opportunities and enhances the cultural integration of immigrant families. The sites for group visits are chosen for ease of access (financial and geographic) so that fathers can continue to take their children.

In 1998, United Way launched the Success by Six program to stimulate the development of children under six and to support their parents. The program came with a guarantee of funding for three years, an opportunity that St. Christopher House in Toronto could not pass up.

St. Christopher House is a non-profit organization that offers a range of services to the general public, especially to ethnic communities. Along with two other organizations working with Toronto's Portuguese-speaking community, St. Christopher House submitted a proposal to United Way, which was accepted. The work is divided among the three partners: one organization works with Portuguese mothers, another with couples, and St. Christopher House, with fathers. Being among the first organizations to implement a project exclusively for

fathers—a group that had previously showed little interest in other programs for parents—was seen as a challenge by St. Christopher House employees. Jussara Lourenço was hired as the primary facilitator one year after the program was launched. The decision to hire a woman was made only after much discussion, since many felt that this position more naturally belonged to a man. However, the fathers consulted had no objection to having a female facilitator as long as she was competent.

Activities for fathers to share their experiences.

Lourenço also provides individual support to fathers in the group. This support is necessary when emergencies arise or in situations that are too delicate to discuss in a group setting. She provides fathers with information and ensures they have access not only to the resources appropriate for the circumstances—family doctor, legal council or psychologist, for example—but also to resources that can help with income, lodging or food. In addition, she occasionally acts as an interpreter when language is a barrier.

Finally, the project offers workshops designed for fathers but to which spouses are also invited. The fathers choose the themes for discussion themselves. For example, one workshop dealt with improving language skills

because fathers worried about how a poor mastery of English would affect their children's ability to learn in school. Other workshops involved discipline or differences of opinion between fathers and mothers. These joint workshops are important because they facilitate discussion with the couple and help the parents to be on the same wave length with their children.

Twice a year, fathers are consulted on the activities they would like to undertake with their children and the themes they would like to take up in workshops. The facilitator also suggests ideas for outings since some fathers, even after having lived ten years in Toronto, still do not know the city very well.

Overall, 16 fathers have participated in the project. Some of them just immigrated; others have permanent custody of their children. Several of them socialize together outside group activities, providing mutual support. Occasionally, they invite one another to barbeques or birthday parties. Four fathers who have custody of their children went camping together last summer. In the words of one father, the project is "synonymous with relaxation, harmony and protection" for his children and for him – three elements that many fathers and many children would like to find in the relation that unites them.



That's what friends are for...

Lourenço remarks that a project has a much greater chance of survival if it is undertaken with partners or run by a larger organization such as St. Christopher House. The main advantage of partnerships is the ability to provide more services to a greater number of families. In addition, funding agencies look favourably upon partnerships because they lead to a pooling and more sensible use of resources. Indeed, partnership support can help compensate for the lack of human resources or the high rate of staff turnover so common in community organizations. On the other hand, partnership has its challenges. For example, successful partnerships depend on all partners fulfilling their obligations and on the partners

continuing to work closely together. Lourenço feels it is important that partners already have a good working relationship beforehand. In any case, this partnership appears to bear fruit: the three organizations involved in Success by Six are currently developing a common evaluation procedure. They then intend to jointly negotiate a new agreement with United Way and look for private funding together.

Recruitment: an all-out offensive.

Jussara Lourenço took on the job of recruitment like a general in charge of a military campaign—by trying to occupy the whole territory. Her first move was to establish links with other organizations active within the Portuguese-speaking community. Anywhere people spoke Portuguese or where she was likely to meet fathers, she went, pamphlets and information on the project in hand: churches, service or aid organizations, etc. She maintains that “canvassing fathers is an arduous job but it is the only way to go. Don’t be afraid to mix with the community, that’s how to learn about the needs. Find out which fathers are leaders in the community, they’re the ones that will get other fathers to

come.” Obviously, canvassing and personal contacts were not her only recruitment strategies. She also relied on advertising, the community service sections of Portuguese-language weekly newspapers as well as press and radio interviews.

Lourenço’s secrets

-Don’t dictate a program of activities to fathers and impose it on them; they know best what they need.

-As a facilitator, you have to be careful to be accessible, approachable, and aware of the fact that you aren’t a specialist who has an answer to everything.

-As a female facilitator, you also have to be very careful not to arouse feelings of distrust among fathers’ wives or girlfriends. They must completely understand your role as facilitator, which can be done, for example by inviting them to family activities or discussion workshops.

-You also have to make fathers’ lives easier; for example, occasionally treat them like guests, or cover transportation costs or entrance fees for outings.



PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Success by Six - Parenting Group for Fathers

Location Toronto (Ontario)

Type of intervention Support for father/child relationships

Project start 1998

Target clientele Portuguese-speaking immigrants (primarily from Brazil and Angola) and their children 0 to 6 years old.

Objective

- To enhance the relationship play between father and child by encouraging the father to play with his child.
- To increase fathers' knowledge of child development.
- To increase their knowledge of Canadian culture and traditions, and the city of Toronto.

Team Three people: one facilitator (female), a volunteer facilitator (male) and the coordinator (female) of the St. Christopher House Children, Youth and Family Program, who supervises the project.

Primary partners St. Christopher House personnel
Two main outside partners: Abrigo and College Montrose Children's Place.
Other organizations in the community also refer fathers to the project.

Annual budget and funding sources United Way of Greater Toronto grants \$16,000 (guaranteed for three years) to pay a facilitator two days per week and cover activity costs (breakfasts for children, transportation, daycare, etc.) for the portion of the Success by Six program dedicated to fathers. St. Christopher House pays for the extra hours spent providing fathers with individual support.

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On recruiting.

“Ensuring that the people who need a program’s services the most actually use them requires customized recruitment strategies that are at once dogged, systematic and ingenious and that make the program attractive. The availability of related services such as daycare, transportation and meals, or holding activities in the family environment are all factors that help programs reach and hold the interest of people whose participation is often limited by more than one cause.”

Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). Un Québec fou de ses enfants. Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux. p.61.

“We believe that the more men hear about the role of the father, the more it will be possible to break through the cultural barriers and prejudices that inhibit men from joining [support] groups, and this in order to encourage a greater participation of fathers. Thus, we planned to pursue promotional activities continually throughout the year. [...] During the sessions we realized that 90% of the fathers who signed up had already had the opportunity to meet the facilitator. This initial personal contact established a minimal bond of trust, helped him overcome his apprehensions and take the step to register. [...] It’s up to you to identify the best places to speak with fathers in your community.”

Ferland, L. & Ménard, M. (1997). Les sessions d’entraide Cœur de Pères : guide d’animation. St-Gabriel-de-Brandon : Cible Famille Brandon inc, pp.23-24.



An intense, physically demanding outdoor experience helps fathers learn to give their sons guidance and convey a positive model of self-assertion.

ENTRE-HOMME : RELATION-PÈRE FILS DANS L'ACTION
 BETWEEN-MEN : THE FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIP IN ACTION

A Rite of Passage : Towards Becoming a Man



In Quebec's Beauce region, many educators have become concerned about the future of boys in a social context where adolescence tends to stretch out until young people enter the workforce. They are worried about the many rites of passage between adolescence and adulthood that have disappeared, and they have noticed that without positive role models to rely on, youths end up accepting the stereotypes conveyed by the media or by the "gang." They have also noticed that few men or fathers are capable of explaining to their sons in simple terms what it means "to be a man." And even for those who are able, it isn't simply a matter of knowing the right words to say; they also need to have a relationship with their sons in order to transmit the attitudes and skills needed to become a man, "bit by bit." Since in their attempts at self-assertion

adolescents often oppose their parents, it can be difficult for fathers to connect with them without the sons feeling threatened or controlled. Thus, for the team of professionals in the educational sector in the Beauce, the challenge was to develop an approach that would support fathers in guiding their sons toward manhood.

Through years of experience working with young people, this team was well aware of the interest youth generally have in outdoor activities and for concrete challenges such as rock climbing or extreme sports. This sort of intense experience has profoundly affected many young people, both in their outlooks on life and in their attitudes and behaviours. But for the "magic" to happen, it isn't enough to put a group of youths "through hell" for a weekend; they also need to be

accompanied in their experience.

At the initiative of Raynald Goudreau and Guy Beaudet, Entre-Hommes (Between-men) was born of a combination of concern, experience and knowledge. With the help of small groups of fathers and sons, the approach was tested, adjusted and honed over a three-year period. Entre-Hommes is now in its fourth year of existence.

When it's "cool to hang out with Dad".

Entre-Hommes aims to create a relationship between an adolescent and an adult male who plays a determining role in his life (preferably his father), in a context that the young person sees as "cool"—a context that helps them to

continues on page 46

THE WHEEL OF SELF-AFFIRMATION.

This approach is a model of self-assertion with four modes that draws its strength and wisdom from nature. Each mode is associated with an animal and a colour. It is a simple, imagistic method where the attitudes and inner strengths that must be mastered to be able to live in equilibrium with oneself, other people, and the environment in general must be named.

-The bison and blue are associated with challenges, exceeding one's limitations, determination and will power.

-The squirrel and green are associated with sensitivity, wonder, play and the ability to enjoy oneself.

-The eagle and yellow are associated with commitment in relationships, a feeling of belonging and the ability to respect another person and feel confident in that relationship.

-The grizzly and red are associated with controlling aggression, self-control and the ability to keep a level head in emergency situations.

Balance and flexibility.

These four inner strengths are also means of self-affirmation. It is the way in which they are lived, however, which determines whether they are experienced and expressed as positive or negative. In any given situation, a person must

be able to adapt and find the right attitude that will allow him to respond appropriately. Incorporating this "wheel of self-affirmation" into the everyday life of a young man is an excellent and accessible means of communicating with and guiding him in his steps toward manhood. By using animal images, the father can respond to his son's behaviours (whether they be positive or negative) using a language that is concrete and visual but also full of meaning, and indicate what he perceives or feels: "Your 'inner grizzly' wanted to bite everyone. You have a right to be a grizzly, but there are ways of being aggressive that respect others." The father says what needs to be said in a way the young person understands. Moreover, for fathers from working-class backgrounds—who often did not receive adequate guidance from their own fathers—this approach is an accessible way to support their sons as they grow toward manhood.

The experience gained over three years has shown that it takes as little as 30 minutes for some fathers, adolescents and even eight-year-olds to understand this model of self-affirmation and to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses.





interact and bond. In order to cultivate this, the project founders decided on a non-hierarchical meeting ground that conforms to local youth culture. An intense, 24-hour outdoor experience in which sons and fathers cooperate and confront each other in physical trials allows the relational models of authority so often shunned by young people to be broken. Instead, it helps establish a new model of relationships based on collaboration, cooperation and guidance of the son by his father, one of the key concepts in project. The context also permits the rapid integration of a simple and efficient means of communication.

Connecting in the heat of the action.

The project has four activities: three two-hour meetings and one 24-hour outing in the woods. A maximum of eight youths and eight fathers, accompanied by four facilitators, take part in any one outing.

First preparatory meeting.

The fathers of youths who are having troubles in school or of a personal nature are invited to come to the first meeting at the school after first-term report cards are issued. A teacher or meeting facilitator telephones each of the fathers. As one project worker explains, "sometimes, it's hard to convince them to come to the first

meeting, but if they come to the first one, they rarely quit."

The facilitators provide the fathers with four categories of information:

- their sons' report cards and the reasons for school officials' concern;
- general statistics on issues such as suicide among men, behavioural disorders and school dropout rates, which illustrate how boys run much greater risks than girls of having trouble in school;
- information on the importance of the role of the father;
- the importance of the project's outdoor session.

The second preparatory meeting

is never held more than two weeks after the first in order to keep interest in the project high. At this meeting, facilitators explain the concepts of guidance and the "wheel of self-affirmation." Fathers are then asked to take part in activities to help them quickly learn how the wheel works. This gives them a good grasp of the concept when it comes time to use it during the outdoor session and reinforces their sense of competence with their sons. It also allows them to let go and enjoy the games more easily.

The outdoor session

in the woods takes place in an outdoor recreational area. It begins on a Friday at 5 p.m. with a welcome, a game of "prisoners" (cooperation) and supper.

Over the course of the evening, facilitators introduce the “wheel of self-affirmation” to the youths and the group plays a series cooperative games to help integrate it. Next come role-playing games that illustrate various male stereotypes and lead participants in reveal their personal values.

Saturday morning is entirely given over to a series of physical trials in the woods. In these activities, father and son sometimes cooperate and sometimes compete with each other.

On Saturday afternoon, the morning's experiences are discussed. The sons' attitudes and behaviours are discussed; each youth is given practical advice and “anchors” to guide him. These anchors are symbolized by objects that have a connection to the “wheel of self-affirmation” and that remind the young person of his strengths in his way of asserting himself. The afternoon ends with the drawing up of an intervention plan for each youth, to which the father commits himself to continue to support his son in his personal growth. The project thus asks fathers to make an investment in their sons that goes beyond simply spending 24 hours in the woods with them.

The follow-up meeting

takes place three to six months after the outdoor session. Thus far, these meetings have taken the form of suppers where everyone reviews the progress of their individual intervention

plans and what they gained from the outdoor session.

Experience has shown how important it is for project facilitators to follow up on the father/son pairs after the outdoor session. As one facilitator emphasized, “we can't expect to transform a boy into a man in the space of 24 hours.” Both father and son need time to incorporate the new attitudes and skills specific to their respective roles. The facilitators are there to help the fathers in the months that follow the intensive session.

Specific qualities required by facilitators of this project.

This project requires three specific qualities of its facilitators:

- to be available outside of normal working hours, especially when facilitating the 24-hour outdoor session;
 - to possess the skills required by the project's physical activities, or access to someone who can take on the technical aspects of the activities in the woods.
 - to be oneself in the process of “becoming a man,” since the values instilled in the youths and fathers must come from within.
-

Secrets of the “Entre-Hommes” team

-Try to highlight the skills of the fathers and their sons. When people are confronted with their own limitations, it can be a very humbling experience and make them feel incompetent.

-As an facilitator, it's very important to know yourself, both as a person and as a man, so you can immediately illustrate to a father and his son the relational process that is occurring at any given moment.

-You must be able to quickly grasp the main element of any request for help, support or service.

-In order to connect with youths and their fathers—i.e., to provide activities that are concrete, based on their reality and culture, and that have meaning for them—you need to be completely versant in the culture and interests of the target clientele.

-You have to be creative and passionate, and know how to communicate your enthusiasm and passion.



PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Entre-hommes: relation père-fils dans l'action
"Between-Men : The Father-Son Relationship in Action"

Location Saint-Georges de Beauce (Quebec)

Type of intervention Intensive outdoor activity

Project start 1997

Target clientele Young men from 13 to 18 years old, who have a relatively high risk of school dropout (caused by adaptive, learning or behavioural disorders), and their fathers or father figures.

Objectives

- To promote, within the youths' natural social network, the development of a healthy relationship with a significant adult male figure (e.g., father or godfather).
- To help youths and their fathers become aware of their main values and beliefs with respect to being a man.
- To introduce youths and their fathers to a positive model of self-assertion in various contexts, and to allow them to speak about their experiences more easily.
- To help the youths and their fathers develop meaningful objectives in their relationship and, if necessary, scholastic goals (in terms of effort or responsibilities).

Team Four facilitators from a secondary school and three facilitators from a CLSC

Primary partners School / CLSC (community services centre) / Youth centre
Community organization in the area that works with youths

Annual budget and funding sources \$3,000, which covers all activity costs (outdoor recreation area rental, food, etc.) and the salary of a specialized teacher. The salaries of the other facilitators are covered by their employers (CLSC and school). Participation in the program is free of charge.

Tools A self-guiding manual for facilitators; a poster of the "wheel of self-affirmation" used in meetings to present the approach.

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On an approach that recognizes the realities of fathers.

Project staff, clinicians and volunteers will all tell you: men and women do not have the same attitudes toward help and support. This difference shows up in statistics, which show that women use and offer help more often than men. [...] It is relatively more difficult to intervene with men, or at least it is more difficult to get them to commit to intervention. This situation is both harmful to men and costly to society, which is why we must try harder to understand their needs. [...] Men often have trouble understanding that asking for help or receiving support is not incompatible with being a man. [...] Their socialization and male roles do not favour the expression of feelings nor of their inner lives; but rather imply competence, success and self-realization."

Dulac, G. (1996). L'intervention auprès des pères : des défis pour les intervenants, des gains pour les hommes. Prisme (18), pp.194-195.

"Facilitators must remember that every person has a unique life experience. They must, therefore, adapt to each participant and help him or her progress at his or her own pace. If they want to stay motivated, facilitators must accept that some participants will progress slowly while others will make great leaps forward. It is also important to intervene in such a way that every person feels valued and becomes conscious of his or her potential.

"As these types of meetings are often fraught with periods of emotional upheaval, sometimes a touch of humour can be very useful in relaxing the atmosphere or reorienting the discussion.

"To lead a discussion with a group of fathers, one must be convinced that they play an important role in child education and that it is a role they want to play, even if they are not always sure how. Group support is the instrument that allows them to get a better feeling for how they relate to this role."

Beauchamp, D. & Thibaudeau, C. (1995). Pères présents, enfants gagnants. Guide à l'intention des intervenants. Montréal : Hôpital Ste-Justine. p.19.

When allowed to express themselves freely and confidently, fathers always have something relevant to say about fathering.

PLACE AUX PÈRES !
MAKE ROOM FOR FATHERS !

Fatherhood : Sharing Know-how

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It was after attending the same seminar on fathering that Muriel Ménard, an employee with the Maison de la famille in Quebec's Lanaudière region, and Luc Ferland, a "weekend father in my own right," decided to establish the Cœur de pères self-help sessions. Though both were inspired by the Pères présents, enfants gagnants program ("Involved fathers, winning children") listed later in this catalogue, the two founders had different motivations for initiating a project specifically for fathers in this rural area. Ménard noted that few fathers were involved with her organization and felt it important to try to reach out to them. Ferland, on the other hand, often felt marginalized as a divorced father and had previously benefited from his participation in small discussion groups on the topic of fathering.

After the first Cœur de pères session had finished (translated literally, Cœur de pères means "heart of fathers") some of the fathers expressed a desire to

continue with the self-help process and delve more deeply into one of the session's themes: co-parenting. They thus formed a "dads' committee" and, along with the group's facilitators, set up a two-session workshop called Coéquipiers père-mère : pas toujours facile! ("Father/mother teammates: not always easy"). This workshop gave fathers and mothers an opportunity to discuss their double role as spouse and parent, their different methods of parenting, the dissatisfaction this can sometimes lead to, and solutions that might alleviate these situations.

The Cœur de pères sessions, the Coéquipiers père-mère workshop, the "dads' committee" and the activities they organized now make up the program called Place aux pères! ("Make room for fathers!").

The Cœur de pères sessions.

These self-help sessions accept up to nine fathers at a time and take place

once a week for eight weeks. They try to encourage fathers to share their experiences with each other and help them reflect on fathering and on themes such as "manhood and fatherhood," "beyond stereotypes," "our language of affection" and "basic values in education."

The approach that underlies these sessions is a simple one: "by, for and with fathers." Discussion facilitators place much emphasis on fathers' know-how and potential, and, as the sessions are essentially geared toward self-help, no psychologists or practitioners attend. Each father, based on his own experience, contributes to the group's reflections on fathering. As one father put it: "We're not specialists; we're just trying to improve our skills. We're striving to make the best use of the one strength we all have in common: the very fact that we're fathers." The approach is thus to listen to fathers and give them a chance to express their specific needs. "The goal isn't to show

them how to become responsible or committed fathers—potentially, they already are and they all have their strengths. We need to give them confidence in their role as father,” says Ferland. By virtue of being a father and a mother, Ferland and Ménard’s role is to facilitate meetings and to create a climate of trust. In this way, they can keep discussions on topic while allowing all present to express themselves in their own way. It is vital that fathers view the sessions as self-help and that the facilitators are “not there to solve problems; it’s less threatening for the fathers and they feel less labelled,” continues Ferland.

Recruitment remains the main difficulty faced by the project team. Their explanation is that fathers’ work schedules make them less available or that fathers are concerned about being identified with a problem or about attending discussion and support groups.

A guide for non-professionals.

Because of the interest elicited by the Cœur de pères sessions and increasing requests on how the sessions are run, the two facilitators decided to create a facilitators’ guide. This guide is designed for non-professionals who wish to set up self-help groups for fathers. It is geared toward sharing experiences and offers an approach focused on the present, where fathers are viewed as fathering specialists. This approach does not require interventions of an analytic nature; it is based on the theory that all the participants, as fathers, are the real specialists of their paternity.

When fathers decide to take the reins.

The “dads’ committee,” made up of the two facilitators and three participants, is the motor that drives the Place aux pères! project. The fathers on the committee take charge of new activities when they respond to a need in the community and the theme touches them personally. For example, the fathers of adolescents decided to set up workshops for fathers and teens, while other fathers managed prenatal classes for fathers. In addition, they often accompany project facilitators when they hold training sessions for family organizations, detention centres and halfway houses, or during prenatal courses.

The committee also promotes fathering in the region through newspaper articles and interviews on community television stations. Moreover, one father is currently acting as committee chairperson and is part of a changing of the guard by facilitating, along with Ménard, the Coéquipiers père - mère workshops. This participation by fathers is a concrete example of what might be called “collective empowerment.”

Ferland’s secrets

-You have to make sure that activities for fathers get off to a good start. To do so, you have to get help from one or two interested men and then organize awareness activities. Showing movies is a good example, since they’re fun and they provoke discussion.

-Emphasize recruitment. Good recruitment leads to good activities; it’s vital and should be given specific attention.

-You have to go out into the community and recruit people where they live—on school committees, at prenatal classes, through children, mothers and the media. Good recruitment is first and foremost all about personal contact. People need to know who the project leaders are and feel comfortable enough with them to attend training or self-help sessions.

-Maintaining team spirit and a sense of belonging is very important. Focusing on team spirit helps members of the organizing committee maintain their motivation and sense of belonging. At least a half an hour should be set aside at each meeting for speaking about each person’s experiences as a father. In the long run, a solid team is worth more than spending every minute chasing after funding.

-You have to have the flexibility to adapt your activities to the needs of the fathers.

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Nom du projet Place aux pères ! (Make room for fathers!)

Location Saint-Gabriel-de-Brandon (Quebec)

Type of intervention Self-help and support groups for fathers to promote paternal commitment

Project start 1994

Target clientele All fathers in the region

Objectives

- To foster and support self-help for fathers.
- To promote the importance of fathering among fathers, mothers and the general public.
- To give fathers a major role in running the organization.

Team Two facilitators (one male and one female) and a committee of fathers

Primary partners Cible Famille Brandon / CLSC (community services centre)
Daycare centres / Schools / Youth centres / Community organizations

Annual budget and funding sources

- Operating budget: \$1,600 (since 1997, from Cible Famille Brandon Inc.)
- One-time start-up grant: \$10,000 (government of Quebec)
- One-time grant for the production of a facilitators' guide: \$6,000 (Institut Barthélemy)

Tools available

The Cœur de pères self-help sessions and a facilitators' guide

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On empowerment.

“ Most important and most basic (though most frequently overlooked), staff should ask the participants what they want from the program. Once their needs and hopes for the program are known, staff can more effectively help and retain the parents in the programs.”

Repucci, N.D., Britner, P.A. & Woolard, J.L. (2000). Preventing child abuse and neglect through parent education. Baltimore: Paul.H. Brooks.

“Among innovative social practices, intervention based on the empowerment of people and communities has gradually emerged as one of the most relevant approaches. [...]

“Empowerment is, in one sense, an attempt to widen the scope of possible actions, both from a personal resources point of view (e.g., communications and leadership skills) and an environmental one (e.g., access to appropriate services and housing). Thus, it is a question of having the power to act—the power to initiate or contribute to the desired change. (Watson, 1992)

“More specifically, the power to act can be defined as a process whereby people, organizations or communities exercise greater control over their ability to reach important objectives. (Rappaport, 1987)

“An outlook based on the power to act starts with the principle that those people directly involved with a problem are the ones who are in the best position to define their needs and the solutions that will work in their situation (Bernstein et al., 1994). While this principle in no way excludes the contributions of professionals or fund raisers, it unequivocally underlines the fact that the opinions of those directly concerned must systematically be taken into consideration.”

Le Bossé, Y. & Dufort, F. (2001). Agir au cœur des communautés. La psychologie communautaire et le changement social. Québec : Presses de l'Université Laval, pp. 7-9.



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Community projects often rely on the passion and dedication of a few special people. In Quebec, one of the people working to increase awareness of the importance of the father's involvement is not only special, she's a woman.

PÈRES PRÉSENTS · ENFANTS GAGNANTS
INVOLVED FATHERS · WINNING CHILDREN

A Project that has Born Fruit

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Approach is everything Fathering isn't just about men.

Thibaudeau's experience as a facilitator of self-help groups for fathers is proof that it is possible for men and women to work together on the issue of paternal involvement. "It's important that they see me as a woman and an ally. Occasionally, as a facilitator, I have to confront them, but they're not afraid to do the same to me. It's important that I don't give them the impression I have the solutions to all their problems, and it's vital to create a climate of respect and trust in the group. Everyone must feel valued."

In a way, it was feminism that led Colette Thibaudeau, a social worker in Quebec's CLSCs and school system, to get involved with fathers and organize her first self-help group for them. First, she was influenced by the French writer Christiane Olivier, who said that the problems between men and women would be solved if fathers were more involved in family life. But the people who made the greatest impression on her were the mothers in the groups she facilitated. "There's no help for our husbands!" they told her. So she decided to do something about it.

The project's first steps were not easy ones. After the first year, the organization that launched the project no longer wanted to support it in the school system. That is when the partnership between the CLSC la Vallée des Patriotes, and school principal

Denis Beauchamp was formed; and it was after this alliance in 1985 that the project really took off. It has now been introduced into 14 schools of the Argile-Bleue school board and its self-help groups are open to all fathers in the region.

Self-help groups that multiply.

The self-help groups in the schools meet once a week for ten weeks, with groups generally made up of 15 participants per session. Many different themes are discussed, such as "dad and me," "masculinity," "relationships between men and women," "sexuality and sex education," "fathering roles," "communication" and "non-violence." Quite often, fathers have wanted to continue the process after the ten-week session, which has led to the formation of other small self-help groups, supported by the manager of the Réseau Hommes Québec (Quebec men's network).

Help for project workers.

Thibaudeau doesn't limit herself to facilitating self-help groups. She also works to increase public awareness of the importance of a father's presence and involvement. Among other things, she writes articles on fathering for newsletters that are sent out to practitioners and families. She also gives seminars to daycare workers and teachers to make them more aware of

the importance of the father's role to children. She organizes special events for Fathers' Day such as community bazaars, and she is adamant that connecting with fathers, a clientele often neglected by family service organizations, requires a great deal of creativity. She points out that "after a divorce, mothers usually get custody of the children and project staff tend to communicate only with her, forgetting about the biological or 'psychological' father. Yes, it's a lot more work, but if it isn't done, fathers feel left out of their children's education! We're starting to see an urgent need for the involvement of fathers in our schools."

A ripple effect.

Even though the project hasn't been systematically evaluated, the self-help sessions seem to have a positive effect on the well-being of men, their children and their families. Fathers come to meetings faithfully and show a great deal of respect for each other; many want to continue the self-help process. Some of them talk more about fathering at work, which leads to the formation of small networks of fathers interested in talking about fatherhood at work. This has had no small effect on men; like many others, Thibaudeau believes that "masculinity will be redefined through fathering."

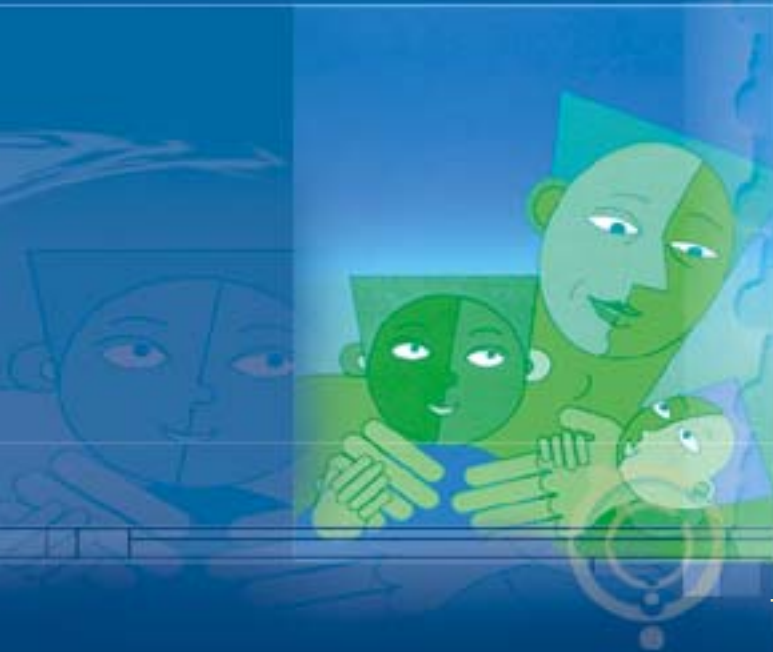
Money isn't everything.

The project's main obstacle is funding. It's difficult to obtain the funds needed to launch or develop new mass awareness campaigns, especially in businesses and daycares. Despite these problems, Thibaudeau's priority over the next few years is to increase awareness among business leaders and daycare workers of the importance of the father's role with his children.

LEADERSHIP

People who get things done.

Thibaudeau, a pioneer in community intervention among fathers in Quebec, has all the characteristics of a good leader. She began her battle to promote fathering ten years ago, at a time when the idea of helping men was far from obvious. Her leadership expresses itself best in her ability to rally key players to her cause. Over the years, they have helped her with various stages of the project: implementation, recruitment, writing intervention guides, facilitating self-help sessions, etc. "A large part of the success I've had is due to the fact that I've surrounded myself with researchers, remedial teachers, sexologists, school teachers and principals. Many of them have volunteered their services on themes related to their skills," explains Thibaudeau.



Quebec's first facilitation tools for fathers.

Thibaudeau and Beauchamp, with the support of Dominique Renaud, developed two guides called Pères présents, enfants gagnants ("Involved fathers, winning children"). One is aimed at facilitators and the other at fathers. Three education specialists worked closely with them to complete the project: Jacques Ross, Germain Duclos and Lucie Beaugard.

The first guide, produced with a \$10,000 grant from the Quebec government and with the support of the CLSC, la Vallée des Patriotes, and Saint Justine's Hospital, responds to the needs of facilitators. It provides a theoretical approach to intervention based on experience and the model of reciprocity in social services. The guide describes in detail nine meetings on different themes. It is aimed at anyone who is interested in the question of the father and who takes to heart the harmonious development of children.

The second guide tries to encourage reflection and offers exercises that can

be used by all fathers, whether they are involved with a self-help group or are on a journey of personal growth as a father.

Thibaudeau's secrets

-You have to convince the community and community leaders of the merits of the project and give them the impression that it's their project.

-You have to join forces with key people in the community and other practitioners who believe in and work for the cause of fathering.

-You need a variety of strategies to connect with fathers: letters to schools announcing the project, referrals from community organizations in the region, articles in local newspapers, etc.

-You can't force men to come to meetings. Their spouses can have an influence, but they have to decide to participate for themselves.

-You have to truly believe that, in general, men are drawn towards loving relationships and towards their children.

-When meeting with fathers, you have to give special place to communication, discussion and openness so that these modes of interaction can occur with their children and spouses.

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Pères présents, enfants gagnants (Involved fathers, winning children)

Location Belœil (Quebec)

Type of intervention Self-help and support group for fathers; support for facilitators in leading groups of fathers

Project start 1990

Target clientele Fathers and practitioners

Objectives

- To get fathers and practitioners to think about the role of the father and its importance.
- To help fathers know themselves better as parents.
- To improve fathers' skills and abilities as well as their relationships with their children.
- To give fathers an opportunity to talk with other men about their fathering experiences.

Team Two facilitators and a redaction committee.

Primary partners CLSC de la Vallée des Patriotes
Argile-Bleue school board
Sainte-Justine Hospital (Edition)

Annual budget and funding sources The facilitator is paid by the CLSC, but she works for the school board. All other project workers are volunteers.

Tools available (in French)

- Pères présents, enfants gagnants, guide à l'intention des intervenants
- Pères présents, enfants gagnants, guide à l'intention des pères

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On leaders.

The profile of a good leader

"Self-confidence is the ability to be certain about one's competencies and skills. It includes a sense of self-esteem and self-assurance and the belief that one can make a difference. Leadership involves influencing others, and self-confidence allows the leader to feel assured that his or her attempts to influence are appropriate and right.

Determination refers to the desire to get the job done and includes characteristics such as initiative, persistence, dominance, and drive. Individuals with determination are willing to assert themselves, they are proactive, and they have the capacity to persevere in the face of obstacles. Being determined includes showing dominance at times and in certain situations where followers need to be directed.

Integrity is the quality of honesty and trustworthiness. Individuals who adhere to a strong set of principles and take responsibility for their actions are exhibiting integrity. Leaders with integrity inspire confidence in others because they can be trusted to do what they say they are going to do [...].

Sociability refers to a leader's inclination to seek out pleasant social relationships. Leaders who show sociability are friendly, outgoing, courteous, tactful, and diplomatic. They are sensitive to others' needs and show concern for their well-being."

Northouse, P.G. (2000). Leadership. Theory and practice (2nd edition). Thousand Oaks: Sage publications, pp. 19-20.

" Leaders in successful programs are able to describe in some detail the next steps that they would like to see their programs take. [...] It also appears that these leaders are able to manage the growth of their program successfully and look to outside sources of funding, recognizing that dependence on any single source of money ultimately is not helpful for their program. [...] These leaders are cognizant of their programs' parameters and are sensitive to their limits. They do not overextend to the point that their efforts are unable to make a difference, yet they make maximum use of the resources that are available, including volunteers."

Repucci, N.D., Britner, P.A. & Woolard, J.L. (2000). Preventing child abuse and neglect through parent education. Baltimore: Paul.H. Brooks, p.134.

How can fathers stay in touch and maintain strong relationships with their children and families when they work halfway around the world?

FATHERING FROM AFAR - NEWSLETTER

A Father Can Work Abroad and Still be “Present”

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Donna Pettinger, coordinator of the Fathering From Afar newsletter, readily admits that the project does not fall within the mandate of her employer, which is to support the families of military personnel posted overseas; but she's proud of it nonetheless. “It used to be that fathers would go away for nine months and after four months they'd get a big stack of letters,” says Pettinger. “Now, fathers can send e-mails almost daily and sometimes do tele-conferencing.” Eight years ago, military authorities began to place a much higher priority on communications between military personnel and their families; Pettinger's project is part of this new philosophy. Some fathers had expressed a desire for some sort of support for fathering. Obviously, their

employment situations made it difficult to have regular meetings, especially when they found themselves at sea on different ships. But the idea of the newsletter to help fathers was born when, during a brainstorming session with fathers, several of them admitted to Pettinger that because of the steady routine typical of a sailor's work at sea, they didn't know what to write to their families. The newsletter's first year saw three issues published and sent to several ships. Today, the newsletter is published every two months and reaches approximately 60 ships or units.

Writing between the lines.

Fathering from Afar comprises four to six pages and three main sections. The first suggests ways for fathers to stay close to their children even though they're far away. It tries to make fathers aware of the feelings that being separated from their fathers can bring up in children and suggests ways to take those feelings into account in the letters they send; for example, what to say to children who are worried that their fathers could be in danger. The second section provides general advice on fathering, e.g., how to be a parent who is involved in his child's education. The third section deals specifically with the issue of amorous relationships in the context of being posted overseas. In particular, it talks about how husbands can support wives who are going through difficult emotional periods. Pettinger also tries to deal with problems such as homesickness and anxiety, emotions that many military personnel experience when posted overseas but about which there is very little information. Finally, the newsletter runs a column called "The Dude speaks...". The "Dude" is a father with both military experience and counselling skills who answers questions about family life raised by fathers. For example, one father expressed his discouragement when he comes home and his wife expects him to take his turn caring for the children.

A project based in the workplace -- Support from above.

Of all the projects inventoried, Fathering from Afar is the only one that reaches fathers in the workplace and that comes from and is anchored in this environment. In this context, a project aimed at navy seamen cannot help but be successful. It isn't all smooth sailing, however. With the target clientele spread out on ships that are either in port or at sea for six months or more at a time, accessibility and logistics become real problems.

The success of the project is due primarily to two factors:

- The project has a liaison on every ship—a contact person who distributes the newsletter, makes photocopies and posts them in strategic areas. Designating a specific person who knows his workplace well and takes his role seriously would seem to be a key factor in achieving efficient distribution.
 - From the beginning, the newsletter was enthusiastically supported by the military's top brass—the fleet commander and the admiral. "Having the 'boss' back and approve of the project increases the level of interest in it among the whole crew," affirms Pettinger. She feels that this is one of the main reasons why the bulletin's first issues were so widely circulated.
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But is it read?

How can the newsletter's publishers know if it is read and appreciated? or if it really has an effect on how fathers communicate with their children and fulfill their parenting duties? Pettinger claims that sending out a questionnaire would be useless: "The men will only fill out a questionnaire if they are required to do so. If they have a choice, they won't do it." Currently, therefore, project evaluation is based on comments from the ships' liaison officers, on e-mail messages that fathers send to Pettinger or on feedback that she collects herself when she visits ships. Judging by their comments, fathers read the newsletter and discuss it among themselves in an informal manner. It would also appear to help them communicate better with their wives.

Approach is everything Addressing fathers.

Father, husband, man... Pettinger has come to realize that the newsletter must be balanced and even subtle on occasion. First of all, it's not aimed at parents in general but at fathers only, a fact that has upset some female military personnel who say that mothers work overseas too. But that's not why the newsletter is focused on men. "Yes, men and women are both parents, but you can't deny that fatherhood and motherhood represent two completely different realities from a psychological,

physical and emotional point of view. We have to recognize that there is very little information directed specifically at fathers; some fathers have no idea how to ease the fears of their children or communicate with them on an emotional level. The fact that the newsletter is addressed to fathers doesn't mean that husbands are excluded since the loving relationship that the father maintains with his wife obviously strengthens his relationship with his children."

Pettinger's secrets

-You have to find the common denominator of the group you're trying to reach so you can orient your actions, even if you have to broaden your scope later.

-Always get reactions from the fathers, both before a project is started and while it's running. You have to talk to them. Not formally, not necessarily in groups, but at least on an individual level. Ask them what they think is important and what they would like to hear discussed.

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Fathering from afar - Newsletter

Location Victoria, British Columbia

Type of intervention Information newsletter on fathering and marital relations

Project start 1997

Target clientele Fathers in the Canadian Armed Forces deployed overseas

Objectives

- To foster communication between fathers, their children and their spouses by providing ways of keeping in contact with them and maintaining their relationship while overseas.
- To inform fathers about their role as parents and on how to fulfill it.
- To provide relational support to fathers.

Team Writer/project manager (a woman), assisted by volunteers

Primary partners

The project has no partners outside the military base.

Annual budget and funding sources

The Military Resource Family Centre liberates the project manager one day every two months and covers printing costs. The Canadian Forces assumes postal costs.

Contact information

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On integrating programs into everyday life.

" The location of the meeting place is important in terms of convenience for the participants. Participants are more likely to get to know one another if the program meets in their own community. Meetings in community settings may be more convenient and less stigmatizing than those in government or social services offices. Location also may solve the transportation problem if the program is on a city bus line or meets in several places close to the clients' neighbourhood."

Repucci, N.D., Britner, P.A. & Woolard, J.L. (2000). Preventing child abuse and neglect through parent education. Baltimore: Paul.H. Brooks, p.134.

Integrating intervention programs into everyday life is also important (Pransky, 1991). [...] Guberman et al. (1993) note that the best guarantee of a program's success is for it to operate in places where people live, work, study, go or meet already."

Blanchet, L., Laurendeau, M.-C., Paul, D. & Saucier, J.-F. (1993). La prévention et la promotion en santé mentale : Préparer l'avenir. Boucherville : Gaëtan Morin éditeur.

When you work with young fathers, you have to use all available means to be in a position to provide support in the various facets of their lives.

7
THE YOUNG FATHERS PROGRAM

Intensive, Comprehensive Intervention

66

The Youville Centre offers secondary-level education adapted to the needs of young mothers. Young mothers are often anxious about the fathers of their children, in particular their relationship with him, the way he deals with his anger or violent behaviour, or his financial support. Because of these concerns, the staff at Youville Centre decided to try and integrate young fathers into the Centre's activities. The ultimate goal was to help them become stable figures in their children's lives rather than drift away.

At first, only men in relationships with young mothers at the Youville Centre were targeted by the project. But because these young fathers were difficult to reach, it proved difficult to

get firm commitments from many of them to participate in project activities once a week. Eventually, other young fathers from the region got wind of the Youville Centre's project and, as there were no other programs for them, they came looking for more information of their own accord. For the project to grow it needed more participants, so this new group of young fathers from the community were included. There are currently about 35 fathers participating in the project, only three or four of whom have a link to the young mothers frequenting the Centre.

Life isn't always a bed of roses.

The group meets every Wednesday evening and participants number anywhere from 10 to 15 young fathers. The evening begins with a two-hour sporting activity (badminton, floor hockey or basketball). According to Tim Paquette, project manager, that's what attracts the young fathers. "It helps a father burn off anger and stress as well as to break down the barriers that he puts up." The sporting activity is always followed by a discussion, course or lecture. For example, fathers taking part in the project have taken courses entitled Nobody's perfect and It's my child too. The group also organizes a Christmas party and the occasional outing (baseball, bowling, pool, etc.).

Get a diploma, find a job!

The project also aims to provide support to fathers who want to complete their education or find a job. It offers a home study program for those who want to finish high school. Young fathers do the course work at home and hand it in to the Centre. If needed, they can get help from Centre staff, who also take care of sending the work to the Ministry of Education. So far, two young fathers have completed high school this way, a fact the Centre is very proud of. Young fathers who are unemployed can also get help writing a CV or looking for a job on the Internet at any time. Paquette

stresses the importance of this aspect of the program: "There are many roles that a father can play and in a young father's mind, probably the most important role for his self-esteem is being able to provide for his family. Very often, if he doesn't fulfill that role, his self-esteem suffers, which can lead him to leave the relationship. That's why we use all the means at our disposal to help him assume this role to the best of his ability.

A group of individuals.

Certain situations cannot be discussed or resolved in a group setting. Group work is therefore supplemented by individual sessions, which is frequently a crisis intervention as well. Paquette recounts: "One father had a housing crisis. His place was rat-infested and he had to move immediately. So I helped him get settled into a temporary family shelter while he looked for a new place. Some fathers will call me and say that they've run out of food." Tim meets fathers individually in his office, at their home, in the community: "Where they want me to go, I'll go."

In addition to crisis intervention, about 20 young fathers also receive monthly individual support, for issues ranging from stress and anger management to learning better how to take care of their child.

An approach that's comprehensive and intensive.

The Young Fathers' Program has a number of characteristics that, taken together, broaden its scope. Young fathers have access to a range of activities, both individual and group. Activities are planned in a coherent and comprehensive way, so as to be able to respond a wide range of needs from many areas of a young adult's life. The activities are offered on a continuous basis so that frequent contacts with other fathers as well as with project staff can improve the fathers' relationships. As Paquette explains. "The philosophy is to meet the needs of fathers, that is, to enhance and support the relationship of the father to the child in any way, shape or form. An effective program has to provide group support as well as one-on-one relationships. Many young fathers have no role models, so the project staff has to be able to take on this role as well."



Fathers are still not a priority.

Thus far, the Young Fathers' Program has managed to avoid financial problems, primarily because of the funding it receives from an anonymous foundation that has supported it from the start. However, that doesn't mean that all its problems have been ironed out. Funding remains a constant concern. According to Paquette: "There is grant money available for programs to young mothers or for research on fathering, but there is nothing for direct services to fathers." He had to write a grant application to the National Crime Prevention Centre in order to pay his own salary. Doesn't such lack of funding basically reflect a lack of public awareness around the issues of fathering? Paquette adds: "There are more and more fathers assuming greater responsibilities for their children, but neither the media nor public opinion seem to be aware of it. A lot of services claim to have a holistic approach to the family, but the father is rarely considered to be one of the essential players. Even worse there seems to be a deeply-rooted perception that the father is an abuser." This is a popular belief that the Young Fathers' Program is trying to change. In the meantime, it compensates for the lack of financial resources by creating alliances with organizations that intervene with young women.

Paquette's secrets

-You have to respect the fact that there are biological differences between men and women, and there are also differences in the way they socialize. As a result, you have to use different strategies to reach men and get them to make a commitment. You have to take men's competitive nature into account and focus more on action. Sitting around in a circle and talking just doesn't work with young fathers.

-It has to be fun; young fathers won't want to do something if it isn't. An activity's content shouldn't become such a concern that you forget to make it fun and attractive.

-You have to structure activities in such a way that young fathers always feel comfortable enough to be able to say what they're feeling.

-You have to listen to them and make changes to the program based on their comments.

-You have to be willing to find partners within the community and create networks. It improves efficiency and it doesn't hurt recruitment either.

-If you want a program to grow, you have to get out of your office and promote it. For example, go to conferences attended by organizations that offer services for young mothers. These organizations are often looking for someone to whom they can refer the fathers who show up at their activities.

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name The Young Fathers' Program

Location Ottawa (Ontario)

Type of intervention Self-help and support for young fathers

Project start 1997

Target clientele Young fathers aged 16 to 25 who have a high risk of violent or delinquent behaviour. Many have or have had troubles with the law.

Objectives

- To provide young fathers struggling with similar problems the opportunity to meet and socialize.
- To give them the opportunity to take part in recreational activities free of charge.
- To reinforce parenting skills through workshops, lectures or courses on parenting.
- To support them in their life plans and defend their interests.

Team Three people: one coordinator and two facilitators

Primary partners

Fathering Involvement Initiative - Ontario Network,
Young Single Parent Support Network

Annual budget and funding sources

\$59,000 covers the salary of a full time coordinator and activity costs.

National Crime Prevention Centre
Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services / United Way
Health Canada (CAPC) / An anonymous foundation

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On intensity.

“With all the experience now amassed of success and failure in providing high-risk families and children with health and social services, education, child care, and family support, there is no longer any basis for believing:

- That some single, simple one-shot intervention is bound to work, and produce a quick payoff, if only we could find the right one.
- That whatever works for middle-class people should work for everybody.
- That if only someone were smart enough to devise the right incentives, or the right magical something, it could all be done on the cheap—solutions without sacrifice, miracles that change outcomes without cost to the taxpayers. (p.264)

“ Programs that succeed in helping children and families at highest risk [...] provide intensive, comprehensive, individualized services with aggressive attention to outreach and to maintaining relationships over time—perhaps frills for more fortunate families, but rock-bottom essentials for high-risk populations, whose level of energy and tolerance for frustration may be low, who are likely to have more than one problem at a time, and whose experiences in searching for help are likely to leave them profoundly discouraged and unable to use services customarily offered. (p.285)

Schorr, L.B., & Schorr, D. (1988). Within our reach: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage. New York: Anchor Books Double Day.

“We cannot expect to obtain truly convincing results without an investment of time and resources. Cheap solutions or half-measures will not eliminate or significantly decrease risk factors that are often many and complex. [...] Intervention that is intensive conveys a clear message to the families, social service workers and the young people themselves as to the commitment and interest of the interveners. Thus, intensity means frequent contact with the target clientele... It is also based on the weight and visibility that an issue has; in addition, we must limit ourselves to a few objectives that are clear and consistent and avoid spreading ourselves too thin. In short, for families, intensity translates into a reliable presence; for jurisdictions, it means actions that grow according to various conditions but that converge toward a clearly identified objective.”

Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). Un Québec fou de ses enfants. Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux.

A promotional and awareness campaign to improve the negative and poisonous image of fatherhood.

LE REGROUPEMENT POUR LA VALORISATION DE LA PATERNITÉ
THE GROUP THAT VALUES FATHERING

Speaking out: Fatherhood Should be Celebrated Too

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The scene unfolds in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve public market in this underprivileged east-end Montreal neighbourhood. It's the SuPèrefête and, like any other celebration, there are music, games, clowns and hundreds of people—adults and kids alike. The difference, however, is that the guests of honour at this family festival are fathers.

But to understand the real scope of this festival, one needs to back up a bit. The people responsible for the celebration are Manuel Prats, an educator at the CLSC Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (a community services centre) and Yvon Lemay, who works at the Carrefour familial Hochelaga (Hochelaga Family Centre). Both men had met many fathers who, in contrast to the negative

image of the absent or uninvolved father shown in the media, took their children's well-being to heart, sometimes despite serious social and economic difficulties. Thus was born the Regroupement pour la valorisation de la paternité (The Group that Values Fathering). Their first idea was to organize a celebration of fatherhood (the SuPèrefête), the first phase of a strategy for speaking out about fathers—not to point the finger at them but to honour and value them.

Right from the start, the two project initiators called on other partners to broaden the scope of this neighbourhood festival. That first celebration was a great success and gradually other community organizations, and then other

communities, joined the founding group in their effort to improve the image of fathers. Every year, new partners join, while others bow out. For SuPèrefête 2000, the group received a \$16,000 grant, which helped to lighten the workload of the organizers, increase the activities offered and launch the festival with more impact.

Careful planning, constant team effort and many, many hours of volunteer work.

In fact, the campaign to promote fathering actually extends over the months that precede the SuPèrefête. It includes a launch, a contest for fathers and various other special activities. The campaign concludes with the SuPèrefête, which takes place in June, a week before Father's Day. The project coordinators make sure that the events get media coverage.

Organizing for the SuPèrefête starts in September. After taking stock of the previous year's campaign, a meeting is held with the new partners to review the campaign's objectives, establish an organizational game plan and begin the search for a spokesperson for the next year's campaign. Four committees are formed to handle each of the four large groups of activities. The members of these committees are largely volunteers.

A voice for fathers.

The Parole aux pères (Fathers speak) contest lets fathers express themselves on the subject of fatherhood through photographs, songs, letters, poems, videos, Web sites, etc. Giving them a choice of media encourages their participation; all entries are exhibited at the SuPèrefête.

The contest requires significant preparation: choosing a theme for the year, producing participation forms, contacting schools so children can take invitations home to their fathers, finding sponsors for prizes, publishing invitations in newspapers to reach more fathers, etc. Each year, out of 8,000 pamphlets inviting fathers to enter the contest, 50 are completed and returned. Certain male-dominated trade unions (dock workers, for example) are also contacted to try and reach even more fathers and encourage them to enter.

Media coverage.

The organizing committee contacts all news media, both to ensure that the campaign is well covered and so that the issue of fathering remains visible in the media throughout the month. The committee coordinates press relations, the writing of press releases, public appearances by the spokesperson and interviews with the media. The reputation and popularity of the spokesperson obviously helps make the process successful.

Campaign launch.


Thanks to a grant, the 2000 launch was able to take on grander proportions. The campaign was launched during a gala evening at a well-known Montreal venue. The invited artists spoke about fatherhood in words and song.

Special events

Over the month of the campaign, a number of special activities are organized, depending on the availability of the participating organizations, such as film screenings or inter-organizational round-tables on fathering.

The SuPèrefête.

But the cornerstone of the campaign is the SuPèrefête, which is held at a public market made available to organizers at no cost by the City of Montréal. The day begins at around 10 a.m. with a word of welcome from the group's president and the spokesperson, who reminds everyone of the reason for holding the celebration. All day long, families take part in activities that range from face painting to puppet-making to games for the whole family. There are also clowns and shows for young and old alike and complementary yogourt, apples and candy floss are provided to festival-goers. The entries of the Parole aux pères (Fathers speak) contest are also exhibited at the festival and the lucky winners (drawn randomly from all the entrants) are awarded prizes such as tickets to a hockey game, or vouchers for a family stay at a recreational centre.



Eight hundred people attended the 2000 edition of the celebration, which was held under a big top, helping to create a more festive and unifying atmosphere. The biggest hit was the “family photo,” which was taken in an original setting and given to fathers free of charge.

Obviously, such an event requires a great deal of preparation: booking the entertainers (on a volunteer basis, as much as possible), reserving the venue or tent (in case of rain), finding sponsors for food and prizes, setting up the public address system, organizing volunteers, and so on. Volunteer coordination is especially important since teams of volunteers are responsible for most of the festival's activities: face-painting, making candy floss, taking family photos, etc.

A message that needs amplification.

According to the organizing group, despite its success, the campaign to promote fatherhood could be even bigger. The reason it isn't is because organizers have many other responsibilities with their own organizations. Hiring a part-time coordinator/promoter who could spend at least three days per week working on the campaign would improve all aspects of the operation, extend activities throughout the year and broaden its impact to include the entire Greater

Montréal area.

The organizing group would like the entire campaign to be taken over by the fathers and mothers themselves so that they would have a more determinant role in the decision-making process. Organizers also intend to play a more visible role in public debates on fathering and to contribute to changing the poor image of fathers that is so often conveyed.

Approach is everything.

According to organizers, it's time to abandon problem-based approaches and tell fathers why they are important. "A father who feels important is a better guide for his children and a better spouse; he is also more aware of his rights and less likely to get discouraged."

The organizers' secrets

-Good partnerships with community and other organizations is important. Organizing the SuPèrefête requires strict planning and a great deal of cooperation between participating organizations that share a common approach and intervention goals.

-The media campaign must also be planned carefully because raising awareness relies in large part on the collaboration of journalists, on both a local and national level; such a collaboration is closely linked to good communications with newsrooms.

-It is absolutely necessary to have a spokesperson who gives a positive image to fatherhood —if possible, someone whom the public knows and likes.

-You need a strong team of volunteers and you have to treat them well (gifts, personal thank-you notes, post-festival meal, etc.).

-You can't let a lack of funds slow you down. A successful awareness campaign can be done for as little as \$3,000—and a lot of creativity, of course.

An effective public awareness strategy: one clear target and a lot of arrows in your quiver

The message conveyed by an awareness strategy that values the role of fathers must be clear and simple. It should say to fathers (and to the community): "Hey guys, your children need you. You have a major role to play in their development." Saying loud and clear to all of society that fathers want to be close to their children is an antidote to the poisonous image of violent, incestuous and irresponsible dads that the media is so fond of portraying.

The members of the Regroupement pour la valorisation de la paternité (The Group that Values Fathering) believe that intervention must first target fathers, then mothers and, after that, the community. This concept is what led to the creation of a contest for fathers, instead of for children, as is so often the custom. But in addressing fathers first, one must take care not to isolate them. Fathering is about families and human relationships, which is why the campaign welcomes participation from all quarters and is why as many mothers as fathers volunteer.

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Le regroupement pour la valorisation de la paternité
"The Group that Values Fathering"

Location Montreal (Quebec)

Type of intervention Public awareness

Project start 1997

Target clientele General public

Objectives

- To create awareness among fathers, the general public as well as social service workers of the importance of fathering in the balanced development of children, families and society in general.
- To elicit and foster the emotional commitment of fathers toward their children

Team Staff from various partner organizations and many volunteers

Primary partners Carrefour familial Hochelaga / CLSC Hochelaga-Maisonneuve
Maison d'entraide Chez Émilie / Maison des parents
Entraide pour hommes de Mercier / Groupe d'entraide pour les pères et de soutien aux enfants / Fondation de La Visite
CooPÈRE Rosemont

Annual budget and funding sources A grant of \$16,000 from the Quebec Ministry of Family and Child Services for a campaign coordinator, media liaison officer, and launching and closing costs.

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On public awareness campaigns.

"Social marketing is the use of commercial marketing techniques to promote the adoption of a behavior that will improve the health or the well-being of the target audience or of the society as a whole." (p. 3)

"There are nearly unlimited numbers of channels that you can use. The key is to carefully select the most effective and efficient methods of reaching each target audience segment. Effective means that the way in which you convey the message attracts attention and inspires behavior change. Efficient means that you reach the most target audience members per dollar expended." (p.81)

"To identify the best channels to use, find out where target audience members spend their time and get information. They will not go out of their way to find your message; you must go to them." (p.82)

"Examples of channels:

Print media:

- Can provide more detailed information than broadcast, but still limited
- Can tailor messages for specific audiences for different publications
- Good for reaching more educated audiences
- Might provide more credibility
- Small ads might get lost

Print materials (e.g. brochures, fact sheets, newsletters):

- Can convey in-depth information, especially about complex issues
- Often low cost
- Good to use as follow-up to requests for more information
- Not competing for ads for audience attention
- Audience must have the interest and will pick up and read it
- Not good for less literate audiences" (pp. 81–83)

Weinreich, N.K. (1999). Hands-on social marketing. A step-by-step guide. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, p.91.

"Projects and media campaigns should convey the positive and stimulating aspects of fathering. Large-scale recurring campaigns should emphasize the attractiveness and positive effects of paternal involvement instead of laying blame. They should also present credible models with which men from all social groups can identify."

Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). Un Québec fou de ses enfants. Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux. p.91.

Supporting fathers going through a separation or divorce: When mutual help and political action go hand in hand.

F A T H E R S F O R E Q U A L I T Y

Dads Demand Their Rights

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In 1986, David Campbell went through a difficult divorce. He was able to visit his son, but he did not have custody. Initially, he tried to get joint custody or, failing that, sole custody. But his experience with the legal system quickly showed him that the principle of “innocent until proven guilty” did not apply to family law.

From 1986 to 1994, he met regularly with David Nordstrom and other men in similar situations. At first, the meetings fulfilled more spiritual needs; but gradually, the discussions began to dwell more and more on the social and political aspects of their situations. They took inspiration from books such as *The Myth of Male Power*, by Warren Farrel; *Iron John*, by Robert Bly; and *The Power*

Myth, by Joseph Campbell. This process culminated in the birth of Fathers for Equality.

In 1994, the group created the Victoria Men’s Centre, using the money, time and skills of its members combined with the implementation of self-funding activities. At the same time, they tried, unsuccessfully, to get funding from the provincial and federal governments. According to Campbell, the Centre was the first in Canada dedicated to male issues. The Centre’s orientation is geared towards the concerns of the participants: issues related to divorce and several others concerning male health and spiritual needs. After its first ten months of operations, the Centre could no longer pay its rent, but it

survived as a Web site and the Centre’s managers continued to search for a physical location. Fathers for Equality has continued to welcome fathers going through divorces, operating out of a space at a community organization, and has maintained its affiliation with the Victoria Men’s Centre.

“Reaching consensus on the project’s goals and objectives is a very long process. It took us a year to come to an agreement.”

Solving individual problems.

The heart of Fathers for Equality is the Fathers Group. It meets every Thursday

evening for two and a half hours and is usually attended by seven or eight fathers. On average, three new men attend every week. At the beginning of the meeting the facilitator tells the participants of up-coming political events and invites them to take part. Next, a chairman is designated to make sure everyone has an opportunity to speak. Fathers can tell their stories, but the new members usually talk first. The group evaluates the seriousness of the new fathers' situations, paying attention to their level of anxiety and their immediate needs (for example, if they have up-coming court appearances, need to consult a lawyer or are facing false accusations). A "talking stick" (a Native symbol) is placed in the centre of the table, and if someone believes that he has not been sufficiently heard, he can take the stick and be assured of everyone's undivided attention.

Some newcomers feel a great deal of anger. According to Campbell, having the support of the group has helped many avoid taking desperate action, simply by letting them express their anger freely and directing them toward the appropriate services. The facilitator and more experienced group members encourage fathers to use mediation and, whenever possible, to find solutions outside the legal system. In time, their anger subsides and the fathers are more easily able to channel their energy toward constructive action. This helps them to focus on the well-being of their children.

"On average, fathers attend six or seven meetings. Once fathers are over their own divorce many of them leave the group. It's hard to keep in contact with them over the long-term, even though many have come back. Men don't care enough about one another, and that's exactly what our project is trying to fix, by providing a natural support network. The women's movements are really good at that; they empathize with each other more easily than men."

The group also uses a buddy system where one father will pair up with another father who has gone through the same situation. This system is used when men have exhausted all solutions except going to court and feel that their lawyers are not clearly presenting their side of the story or their solutions. When presented by two men, the message has a greater chance of being heard.

When women get involved.

A few times during the year, new spouses and the men's mothers come to support their husbands and sons. Some of the men's mothers have been denied visitation rights to their grandchildren or have been forced to pay alimony for their sons. Some of them are ready to get politically involved.

Fathers' Day protest.

Every year on Fathers' Day a protest organized in front of the provincial legislature in Victoria. Some 50 to 100 people participate: fathers involved

with the project as well as their mothers, new spouses and children. Purple balloons are released to symbolize the children's love for a father from whom they are separated. The use of a P. A. system ensures that everyone gets a chance to express their frustrations loudly and clearly about the unfairness of family law. There are interviews with the media and meetings are organized with politicians and civil servants.

The Fathers' Day protest is a public awareness strategy, but it also has an important therapeutic effect for participants. Up to a point, it is an example of one of the vital aspects of Fathers for Equality—political action. Campbell says that mutual support is an important aspect of the feeling of belonging to a group, but the key element—the thing that builds solidarity—is political action. According to Campbell, "a lot of the men think they are going to be treated equally; they don't know that a father doesn't have an equal chance to be a primary parent after divorce."

A price to pay?

Project leaders admit that charitable organizations have told them they would be eligible for funding if they would give up the political side of their activities. But such actions are vital to the project; indeed, its very existence is geared toward bringing about political change.

Thus, funding problems remain the main

obstacle to the development of Fathers for Equality. Project leaders say that if they had sufficient funding their activities could be more oriented toward prevention. In the meantime, they rent a single room in a community organization and each participant, depending on his means, contributes to paying the rent.



Approach is everything A question of balance.

Individual support and political action are equally important, so it's a question of finding the right balance between them. Campbell believes that group meetings should not devote too much time to men's political condition since many members are altogether unaware of the issue at first. It is only after divorce proceedings have begun that they become conscious of and interested in men's concerns. "We always separate the two," explains Campbell. "Our first concern is to support the father in going through the divorce process. Not all men are interested in political action after divorce. It wouldn't be fair to insist on it if, for example, it would jeopardize a father's relationship with his children. That said, many men use political action as a means of expressing their frustration. So it's up to each individual to decide for themselves. Our role is to give them the possibility."

Breaking down the barriers.

Fathers for Equality is based on the theory that while mutual help and solidarity are necessary for supporting fathers who are going through a divorce, they are not sufficient unless they lead to political action. In fact, according to project leaders, the mutual support that the group provides leads directly to such action. After a divorce many fathers express a desire to change the system. They want to promote the equality of rights and responsibilities between parents, rights that stem first and foremost from a child's need to be with his or her father and to have access to his life experience as a man. Fathers also have a general desire to spare their children the same traumatic experiences they have gone through in their dealings with the legal system; this, above all, is what motivates their political actions.

This commitment to political action often emerges in stages, since fathers must first learn basic skills such as dealing with their own cases, filling out forms or writing to their MPs. Such a commitment also takes on various forms: some try to find information about the possibilities available to them for obtaining visitation rights, some publicly support changes to existing laws and others speak before parliamentary commissions. These

experiences often simply confirm for them the fact that men rarely express their expectations and that their needs often go unfulfilled. This is why, says Campbell, political action is essential to promoting fathers' interests, because no one in Canada represents men as men or truly understands their problems.

Campbell's Secrets

-First, you have to win the person's trust; he must be confident that you are concerned about his situation, that you won't do anything to hurt him and that you will give him the best possible advice. You'll know that you've succeeded when you hear: "I thought no one understood what I was going through!"

-You have to make use of people's anger by redirecting it. Some men are bitterly angry and need to express it before it can diminish. Once this happens, they can direct their anger toward other targets. It takes time, but it works.

-Confidentiality must be guaranteed. Some fathers won't express themselves freely because they are concerned that it could get back to their ex-spouses and be used against them.

-You have to look forward rather than dwelling on the past and constantly think about what's best for the child. There are no "winners" in these situations.

-You must make absolutely sure that the egos of the facilitators or fathers don't take over meetings and that everyone has a chance to express himself.

-Always try to hold meetings in the same place.

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Fathers for Equality

Location Victoria, British Columbia

Type of intervention Defending the rights of separated and divorced fathers

Project start 1986

Target clientele Separated or divorced fathers, often going through transitions

Objectives

- To make the best of fathers' situations in the current system while creating awareness in society of the need for improved equity and justice in family law;
- To give fathers a secure and confidential platform for mutual aid during and after the break-up of their marital relationship;
- To even the playing field with respect to fathers obtaining custody or visitation rights by explaining how to proceed in cases in which they have been falsely accused of violence or by giving advice when their child is the victim.
- To help fathers navigate the procedural maze related to the collection of support payments;
- To engage fathers in political action;
- To defend the interests of separated or divorced fathers and raise public awareness of their realities and rights.

Team No formal team. Two managers and several people who have expertise in specific areas.

Primary partners Various independent professionals / The Victoria Men's Centre

Annual budget and funding sources None

Tools Web site: <http://victoria.tc.ca/Community/MensCentre/>

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On political action.

" Prevention and promotion programs will be more effective if prevention efforts, in the broadest sense, are strengthened and sustained. Primary prevention and promotion activities still fail to receive the funding priority they merit. Thus we need to continue to work hard to advocate for our programs. This can be difficult for many of us because, by and large, we have been trained as researchers and/or practitioners and may not feel particularly skilled or comfortable in advocacy work. Yet with the current political and fiscal climates, this work is every bit as important as the energy that goes into the design and implementation of specific programs.

Establishing ties with existing power structures.

Again, the need to establish a support network within the existing power structure is apparent. It is naïve to imagine that "good science" or "good service" will themselves sustain our efforts. Careful scrutiny of multiple systems can provide insights into ways in which prevention and promotion efforts can be presented as a stand with which those in power want to be associated.

Educating policy makers and the public.

Both policy makers and the public must be educated about the models and outcomes of prevention efforts. Policy makers must hear of the ways in which the specific constituencies have and/or can prosper from prevention and promotion activities. Education of the public is also important because prevention and promotion are concepts that are unfamiliar to many, and are seen as entitlements to even fewer. And, of course, as the public increasingly becomes aware of these programs as potential community resources, elected policy makers will become more responsive to the programs as well—emphasis on clout reappears!

Training preventionists.

We have suggested that an effective preventionist (or prevention team) needs to wear many hats—those of a sensitive practitioner, a scientist, a politician, a manager, a marketing specialist and an advocate. Our training programs tend to focus on the first two roles, with little or no attention to the others."

Bond, L.A., & Wagner, B.M. (1988). Families in transitions: Primary prevention programs that work. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.p.352-353

How can administrators who provide for the training and support of project workers contribute to making services more father-friendly and open to the fathers' reality?

VALORISER LE RÔLE DU PÈRE ET PROMOUVOIR SON ENGAGEMENT PARENTAL
VALUING THE FATHER'S ROLE AND ENCOURAGING HIS INVOLVEMENT AS A PARENT

Creating Awareness in an Organization by Infiltrating it

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In Quebec, front line health and social services at the local level, especially with respect to families and children, are provided by community service centres called CLSCs. It is thus understandable that one would expect these centres to take a special interest in fathers and to value their role.

The eight CLSCs of the Quebec City region are linked in a structure that allows the supervisors of child, youth and family services to concert their efforts at the regional level. These supervisors asked an inter-sectoral committee called the Comité Pères (Fathers' Committee) to propose some intervention strategies likely to lead to a more positive valuation of the role of the father. The mandate of the Comité Pères is to foster the relationship between fathers and their children and to

promote paternal involvement. The committee has about ten members that come from various establishments in the health and social services sector (e.g., CLSCs, youth centres, community organizations, public health department), the childcare sector and the university milieu.

In 1997 the Fathers' Committee decided to focus its attention on the perinatal period, which stretches from pregnancy to two years after birth. The committee thereby followed a recommendation of Quebec's Priorities in Public Health 1997–2000 established by the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services in 1997. The recommendation proposed "that perinatal and early childhood programs systematically include a component related to valuing the fathers' role and

their involvement as parents."

In a document on strategies for calling attention to the value of fathering and promoting fathers' involvement in parenting, the Committee suggested a step-by-step approach²⁹: first, increase awareness among program staff and administrators of the importance of the father's role; then, change the environment in which services are offered to make them more father-friendly; and, finally, encourage paternal involvement through direct intervention with fathers, mothers and couples.

It starts with a dyad.

To initiate this process of creating awareness and making father-friendly

²⁹ Allard, F. (1998). *Valoriser le rôle du père et promouvoir son engagement parental : orientations et propositions d'actions*. Régie Régionale de la Santé et des Services Sociaux du Québec, document inédit.

changes in CLSCs, the Committee suggested that CLSC administrators create “dyads” in their respective establishments. These teams would be made up of one male and one female staff member who understood the importance of fathering and wanted to act as agents of change in favor of the father. In exchange, the Committee would take charge of training and supporting the dyads. The proposal was accepted and a multidisciplinary team made up of two men and two women subsequently presented training specifications for the year 1999.

The first phase of this training took place from April to November 1999. By the end of the year, an evaluation of the process helped administrators measure the progress of the project, and coordinators of the CLSCs’ child, youth and family services teams decided to support the continuation of the project into a second phase, which would last until 2002.

Step by step—new knowledge and new practices.

The first year of training comprised four three-hour meetings. The sessions were given by a team of facilitators and were carefully structured but took the needs and requirements of trainees into account by being flexible enough to allow them to interact with each other. The sessions covered the following themes:

- 1) How to promote paternal involvement, especially with respect to the perinatal period.
- 2) The role of the dyads as agents of change. Presentation and adaptation of an analytic grid for the self-assessment of father-friendly practices, inspired by the work of Levine and his collaborators (in *Getting Men Involved: Strategies for Early Childhood Programs*, 1993).
- 3) Discussion of each person’s progress followed by a lecture on how to reach fathers during the perinatal period.
- 4) Bits of theory and discussion to encourage practices that favor paternal involvement.

After the second training session, the trainees began to take practical measures to improve father-friendly practices in their respective CLSCs. This process consisted of identifying the activities to undertake as well as taking into account what each CLSC had already done to make fathers feel more welcome. It also led members of child, youth and family services teams to question themselves about and be more sensitive to the issue of fathering. Between training sessions, the facilitators (or other members of the Fathers’ Committee) monitored the program and helped implement activities to promote paternal involvement.

Thus far, there have been two sessions in the second phase of the training. In response to comments made by the

trainees, more emphasis has been placed on sharing successful ideas and on discussion.

Moreover, in keeping with the objectives of the second phase, the exercises are aimed at determining, in a cooperative manner, just what “a father-friendly environment in CLSCs” means. Instructors then encouraged the trainees and CLSC administrators to combine measures designed to make the service environment more father-friendly and to undertake steps more directly oriented toward practices that promote paternal involvement.

Training—what’s it good for?

Increased knowledge and new skills. With the help of a questionnaire, project managers elicited participants’ opinions of the training sessions and their level of satisfaction. The questionnaire dealt with the training itself, how it achieved its three first objectives and its repercussion in the milieu.

The evaluation report revealed that the trainees felt they had acquired a great deal of knowledge regarding three issues: the role of the father, the factors that influence paternal involvement and the actions that promote it. More than half of the participants felt the training gave them the skills and tools necessary to co-conduct an analysis of perinatal and early childhood services that would take fathers’ needs into account and to

make recommendations if necessary. The self-assessment grid of father-friendly practices and listening to the comments of other participants were seen as the most useful elements of the training.

Repercussions in the workplace.

Five months after the evaluation:

- In the eight CLSCs, staff who had taken the training had organized meetings for their colleagues and partners to raise awareness of the importance of the role of father.
- Formal deliberations on the father's place within child, youth and family service teams were held in six CLSCs. Recommendations were formulated and sent to administrators in four of the CLSCs.
- One CLSC received a grant to set up a project for fathers.
- In other cases social services and child care establishments formed partnerships with a view to organizing activities for fathers.

Getting commitment from the administration.

Something participants understood right away

Surely the fact that the project was not only supported by administrators and directors but was initiated by them is an important reason for this training project's success. Moreover, the project benefited from a flexible communications mechanism between training organizers and administrators, allowing the latter to monitor and evaluate the project's progress and react to and participate in decisions to improve or develop the project. Finally, it should be stressed that by allowing the training to take place during work hours, the establishments made the training much more accessible to participants. In the same spirit, the establishments have supported the programs aimed at promoting paternal involvement set up by program graduates in their respective workplaces.

APPROACH IS EVERYTHING.

Keeping a broad scope.

The regional mobilization of the CLSC dyads has given rise to a variety of actions at the local level. Such a range of actions is in keeping with the strategy adopted by the Fathers Committee, which believes that for effective promotion of paternal involvement it is important to act at different levels and to combine different approaches and means. Indeed, the Committee has not limited its father-promotion activities to supporting the CLSC dyads. At the same time, it has coordinated a review of the prenatal outreach program and organized conferences and discussions on fathering. Program staff say that these activities have had direct effects in their communities by facilitating and reinforcing their own actions.

Clear, well-founded ideas.

Of all the projects analyzed, this staff training and support program is probably the most solidly backed up by

the scientific literature, noted authors or recognized projects in the area of paternal involvement. ([Arama and Bouchard (1996)³⁰, Dulac (1993)³¹, Lanoue and Cloutier (1996)³², Levine (1993)³³, and Turcotte (1994)³⁴]

In the report on strategies for valuing the role of the father mentioned above, Francine Allard sets forth, in a rigorous fashion, the connections between the desired objectives and the means taken for promoting the role of the father among the staff, thus clearly outlining the project's logical basis. For example, she explains and supports her strategy for increasing awareness of the father's importance by relating it to the objectives of valuing the father's role and promoting paternal involvement. The project's goals are also very clearly formulated.

30 Arama, D., Bouchard, C. (1996). Recension des projets d'intervention ayant trait à la paternité dans la grande région de Montréal. Montréal : Université du Québec à Montréal, Les cahiers d'analyse du GRAVE (3), 1.

31 Dulac, G. (1993). La paternité : Les transformations sociales récentes. Gouvernement du Québec : Conseil de la famille.

32 Lanoue, J., & Cloutier, R. (1996). La spécificité du rôle du père auprès de l'enfant. Québec: Université Laval, Centre de recherche sur les services communautaires.

33 Levine, J.A., Murphy, D.T., Wilson, S. (1993). Getting men involved. Strategies for early childhood programs. New York: Scholastic.

34 Turcotte, G. (1994). L'implication paternelle: déterminants et modèles d'intervention. Montréal : Université du Québec à Montréal : Les cahiers du Grave, (1), 4.

Allard's secrets

-Make use of theories of change in the health sector but also within other organizations.

-It's better to use a pair of facilitators—a man and a woman—who both believe in the importance of the role of the father. This will help promote paternal involvement in environments where the staff is mostly female and the primary target, mothers.

-Urge administrators to commit themselves and form alliances with them.

-Identify the roles and responsibilities of every player in the process of change.

-Establish specific and attainable goals for training.

-Highlight the small victories and emphasize continuity.

-Constant effort is needed to promote change.

-A balance must be maintained between guidelines, the "control" of evaluative procedures and the freedom necessary for mobilization and creativity.

-Make sure the agents of change for father-friendly practices reap personal benefits from their actions in their work environments.

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Valoriser le rôle du père et promouvoir son engagement parental
(Valuing the father's role and encouraging his involvement as a parent)

Location Quebec City region, Quebec

Type of intervention Project staff training and support

Project start 1997

Target clientele Staff of child, youth and family services teams of the eight CLSCs of the Quebec City region.

Objectives To train a male-female "dyad" in each CLSC so that they can:

- learn about the role of the father, the determinants of his involvement and intervention strategies for valuing paternal involvement;
- view their roles as agents of change on behalf of the father in his milieu and with his partners;
- feel comfortable and well-equipped to co-animate an analysis of practices in child, youth and family service departments in their CLSCs and to instigate changes in the environment towards more father-friendly services;
- feel able to co-animate a review process of the professional practices that promote paternal involvement.

Team Four training organizers (two males and two females). Multidisciplinary team.

Primary partners CLSC administrators/ Fathers' Committee, CLSCs, youth centres, community organizations, public health department, the childcare sector and the university milieu.

Annual budget and funding sources The annual operating budget of this project is approximately \$600. This covers the room rental costs for the training and administrative costs (postage, photocopies, etc.). Instructors' and trainees' salaries are paid by their respective organizations.

Anticipated results By the end of phase two, in 2002, it is expected that:

- 60% of the region's CLSC child, youth and family service teams will offer a physical and organizational environment that is welcoming to fathers;
- 70% of the "dyads" will feel competent to promote paternal involvement in their daily practices with families;
- 40% of the other workers on the child, youth and family service teams will understand the importance of the role and involvement of fathers.

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On organizational support.

"When service deliverers (and pertinent administrators) feel some ownership of a program, they are more likely to use it, and to give the energy necessary for it to be effective. [...] Once individuals have played some role in conceptualising or embracing a program, they are more likely to have a sense of commitment to it and a desire to nurture it. Ideally a program will be flexible enough to allow modifications to fit with the needs and personalities associated with various settings. These modifications provide an avenue for program administrators and deliverers to exercise problem solving and creativity, thereby developing ownership of their venture."

Bond, L.A., & Wagner, B.M. (1988). Families in transitions: Primary prevention programs that work. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.p.350-351.

"The support of administrators for their staff is vital, and agreement between supervisors and project workers is extremely desirable. In this respect, the direct involvement of supervisors in projects gives them a better idea of the constraints involved and lets them evaluate the obstacles that need to be overcome; it also confirms that they view the actions of their staff as serious and important. Administrators should also facilitate the combination and pooling of experiences and encourage the formation of collectives or support groups in order to break the isolation of staff members."

Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). Un Québec fou de ses enfants. Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux. p.61.

Though on the backburner, this project provides interesting lessons on how project workers can help each other and on some of the factors that hinder mutual support.



P È R E S À P A R T E N T I È R E
T O T A L L Y F A T H E R

Acquiring Knowledge and Competence Through Mutual Support

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Because the Pères à part entière project ("Totally father") has been put on hold, many might be surprised to find it in this inventory. We felt, however, that it should be included since it has made significant contributions to strengthening a support and empowerment network for project workers. This is a project that is deserving of recognition both for the work it accomplished and the difficulties it encountered. Highlighting these difficulties can teach us much about the conditions that can hurt a project.

Fulfilling a need.

Following a 1994 colloquium on fathering, the members of the organizing committee began looking for ways to continue deliberations on a more permanent basis by bringing together all the project workers interested in the question; they also felt that such an association would at the same time help break their isolation. A survey of participants at the colloquium gave rise to the idea of a newsletter, but there remained the question of making sure its content responded to the needs of the people working in the field. In the end, discussions held at regular meetings provided the raw material for the newsletter.

In the first years of operation of the Pères à part entière project, about 25 people participated regularly in these meetings. Gradually, a permanent core group grew up, occasionally joined by other participants, sometimes after only a few meetings. Meetings were attended by practitioners and researchers from a variety of disciplines and organizations, but also by fathers interested in the subjects or interventions pertaining to fatherhood. Recruitment was done by word of mouth and through the newsletter, which was distributed to various organizations and regions. In the beginning people came from as far away as eastern Quebec to attend meetings.

The meetings were held over half a day every two months and dealt with a range

of themes chosen by the group at the beginning of each year. For example: recruitment strategies for difficult-to-reach clientele, fathering and spousal relationships, fathering and divorce or separation, child custody, the motivations for project staff to reach out to fathers, the differences in intervention techniques used for mothers and fathers, maintaining the participation in activities, raising awareness among colleagues and organizations of the importance of the role of the father, and fathering and unemployment.

The newsletter.

To reach the greatest possible number of project workers—primarily those from regions far from Montreal—a newsletter proved to be essential. It contained summaries of the ideas and discussions generated during meetings on particular themes. Every issue also described a resource, intervention or study related to the themes discussed. Finally, it contained a column entitled *J'ai vu, j'ai lu, j'ai su* (I saw, I read, I knew), which suggested readings and announced seminars or other events related to fathering. A sub-committee, often made up of the same people, was in charge of producing and issuing the newsletter. However, because there was no resource person permanently assigned to this task, the newsletter, originally intended to be published biannually, appeared only sporadically.

From practice to theory.

Over the first three years, the themes discussed at meetings dealt strictly with intervention and the day-to-day experiences of project workers, and the whole project had a somewhat informal atmosphere. Since the task of facilitator was supposed to rotate from person to person, after each meeting, a participant would volunteer to facilitate the next one. However, the core group did have a greater burden of responsibility with respect to facilitating meetings and writing minutes.

The next two years saw meetings become somewhat more structured, and themes began to have a more theoretical emphasis. At the beginning of the year, people would take charge of organizing meetings on the themes of their choice and arrange to facilitate them themselves or bring in specialists to speak. During this period, themes dwelt on issues such as gay fathers, parental alienation, reconciling personal difficulties with fathering, the impact of unemployment on fathering, the redefinition of the role of the father and the crisis of fatherhood. This change in direction suited those participants who wished to reflect on a variety of fathering-related problems; however, those in need of more practical support were not as happy with the new emphasis and the number of participants at meetings subsequently began to fall.

Carrying the load for five years—a tough job.

After five years, the core group of five or six people felt that the time and energy needed to keep the project going was too heavy a burden. The project's suspension can be explained by both changes in employment within the core group and by a sense that after carrying the load for five years, they were tired and had run out of steam. Some of this group felt that the project had begun to go around in circles since many themes had already been covered. Others began to weary of the constant battle to convince their respective employers of the importance of taking part in the meetings. In addition, one project organizer, Dominique Arama, surmised that many of the needs to which the meetings responded had been fulfilled and that the participants were perhaps ready to move on to something else.

MUTUAL SUPPORT AMONG PROJECT WORKERS :

Getting what you need when it's not given to you

Over the entire five years of the project's existence, project workers and researchers volunteered their time to make sure that meetings were facilitated and held regularly. They frequently had no support from their employers, meaning that any project-related work, either for meetings or the newsletter, had to be done on their own time. Indeed, the project always had to operate without any financial support.

There were surely failings in the way the project was run, but one cannot help but admire what this determined group accomplished by believing in what they were doing and pooling their skills and energy toward a common cause, especially given the conditions they were faced with. Though the project has been put on hold for the time being, the experience of empowerment and mutual support had many benefits for those who took part. They felt better equipped and informed, and the project motivated them to move forward; they became advocates and promoters of fathering issues in their respective work environments; they finally felt as though they had some support in their work; and, not to be understated, they received recognition for this work.

Arama's secrets

-Continuity must be assured, and someone should work at least one day per week to write up the minutes of meetings and produce the newsletter.

-Make sure the project has a permanent source of funding.

-Meet with the directors of service organizations in person to make them aware of the importance of supporting staff members who want to improve their practices in the area of fathering.

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Pères à part entière (Totally fathers)

Location Montreal (Quebec)

Type of intervention Support for project workers

Project start 1994

Target clientele Anyone interested in paternal involvement, but primarily workers in the fathering field.

Objectives

- To provide a forum where project workers interested in fathering issues can find resources, opportunities for discussion and intellectual support.
- To break the isolation of project workers.
- To help project workers play a key role in their work environments in raising awareness of the importance of fathering.
- To provide direct support to people who want to work with fathers.
- To provide information for project workers in outlying regions on fathering-related themes.
- To promote fathering in various environments.

Team All participants, though a core group played a leading role.

Primary partners No official partners

Annual budget and funding sources The project had no budget. Newsletter publishing and postal costs were assumed by the organizations of the core-group participants and by the participants themselves.

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On staff support networks.

“Staff have tried to compensate for a lack of supervision by looking towards regional meetings among peers; it was an occasion for exchanging ideas. They don't need complicated, sophisticated techniques—these are already available on the market and in the literature. Instead, they need methods that are easy to implement and adapt to their own practices. Regional meetings are a way to help each other and to learn from those who have the most experience.”

Deslauriers, J.-P. & Hurtubise, Y. (1995). Perfectionner des intervenants et des intervenantes communautaires en CLSC. In C. Mercier, C. Gendreau, J.-A. Dostie & L. Fontaine(Eds.) Au cœur des changements sociaux : les communautés et leurs pouvoirs. Actes du IV e colloque du RQIIAC . Québec : Université de Sherbrooke, . p.320.

“The projects that have had the most impact in the area of prevention all demonstrate that having people who are well-trained, well-supported, and adequately paid and supervised is vital to achieving objectives. [...] The training, supervision and stability of hired personnel are major components of a project.”

Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). Un Québec fou de ses enfants. Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux. p.62.

“There is no risk in asserting that it is necessary to create progressively and smoothly a greater awareness of fathering issues, both in the social services sector and the general public, in order to create a culture of fathering.”

Dulac, G. (1997). Promotion du rôle des pères : Revue de la littérature et analyse des impacts prévisibles. Montréal : Université Mc Gill, centre d'études appliquées sur la famille, p. 30.



At a regional level partners from every walk of life have rallied to the same cause: recognizing the needs and realities of fathers.

FATHERING PROJECT

Sticking Together to Give Fathers A Helping Hand

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Why are there so many programs for mothers and so few for fathers? For Kim VandenBroek and her employer, Family Resources for Victoria County, this isn't a new question. This community organization provides mobile educational and support services for parents and child care workers in 14 communities in Victoria County, Ontario. These are often the only services available to people living in the rural communities of this county. When VandenBroek was hired in 1998, the organization had already been offering the program Nobody's Perfect for two years. This program is aimed at single fathers with children 0 to 5 years old. VandenBroek then initiated a program for parents and future parents to try and get fathers involved at as early a stage

as possible in their children's lives. The men who participated in this program decried the paucity of programs specifically designed for fathers.

And so in the spring of 1998, VandenBroek and a father who had previously participated in Nobody's Perfect formed a support group for fathers. The eight-week pilot project—the Fathering Project—was so successful that fathers asked that the group be continued throughout the year. This required a new source of funding, however, because VandenBroek's salary came out of funds that had to be used for activities aimed at the most at-risk fathers. In the end, Trillium, an organization that distributes part of the province's lottery income,

agreed to fund the Fathering Project for all fathers in the community.

Throughout the project's existence, Family Resources for Victoria County has had to rely on a great deal of creativity to overcome funding shortages. The organization relied on its partners to gain credibility, for recruiting participants and for human and material resources (facilitators, meeting halls, etc.) in order to get its activities off the ground.

VandenBroek learned a valuable lesson from this start-up period: "Planning is essential when beginning something like the Fathering Project, whether it be for the organization taking the initiative or for the community you want to start it

in. Before you start, the organizations involved have to ask themselves if their services are adapted to the needs of fathers and are responding to those needs. Only after you've identified the gaps in services and decided on what you need to do to fill them are you really ready to get moving."

Responding to fathers' needs, interests and realities.

The Fathering Project includes two activities aimed specifically at fathers and two others that promote the role of the father.

The Fathering Support Group meets once per month over dinner. Discussions last two or three hours and deal with fathering-related themes such as child discipline. A facilitator leads the meetings and fosters mutual support among the fathers. At the fathers' request, the project also provides free babysitting and transportation. A nutrition specialist from the organization prepares the meal for the group and, if group members are interested, nutrition workshops can also be organized. The support group is open to all fathers. Generally, two to eight participate, but they are not always the same fathers from meeting to meeting. According to VandenBroek, "this really shows that men only come to meetings when they need them."

The Monthly Event is an opportunity for fathers, their children and their families to take part together in activities that reflect the interests and skills of fathers and that are coordinated by an early childhood education specialist. One activity that is highly appreciated by both fathers and children is carpentry, where participants have an opportunity to use woodworking tools.

Resource Networking. Six times per year, the organization invites local member organizations of the Fathering Coalition of Victoria County to a breakfast (see inset).

Resource directory for fathers. With the help of a Health Canada grant, the Fathering Coalition of Victoria County is in the process of developing a directory of community services in the county. It plans to distribute 2,500 issues within its network.

Project staff hope to add a sports component to the activities already in place. They have also suggested offering parenting workshops to both male and female inmates in the penitentiary that will soon be operating in Lindsay.

A multi-faceted network.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Fathering project is the fact that it is part of a regional network that is itself a link in a provincial network that provides services designed especially for fathers.

The Ontario Fathering Initiative, funded by Health Canada, brings together eight local or regional coalitions, of which the Victoria County Fathering Coalition is one.

The goal of this network is to broaden the pool of resources throughout the entire province that organizations and programs can draw on collectively—resources such as questionnaires, and planning and evaluation tools. As VandenBroek points out, “The wheel does not have to be reinvented. Networking permits easy transferability of skills and resources.” In some cases, existing projects have been integrated into the provincial network while in others, the network has given rise to local projects. One of the goals of the provincial network is to develop an action plan to establish common principles and processes for implementing projects for fathers but that will also leave communities the flexibility to build projects adapted to their own needs, strengths and resources.

From the beginning the Fathering Project was able to count on an informal core of partners for practical support

(resource personnel, speakers, donations of food, meeting halls, etc.), but it was on the heels of the training provided by the Ontario Fathering Initiative that project managers systematized the networking approach. This led to an increase in the number of partners in the Fathering Project, which became the driving force for a group that would eventually become the Victoria County Fathering Coalition. The members of this coalition have the common goal of providing services that are better adapted to the needs and realities of men. Given the financial constraints, however, the group tries to make do with existing resources rather than tampering with their programs or creating new ones. Most coalition members occupy positions of authority and are able to influence both the staff in their own organizations and the decision-makers who fund their activities. They can also decide on the degree and type of participation their organization will contribute to efforts to promote fathering (contributions of money and time, for example). And VanderBroek admits that “it wasn’t a hurdle or an obstacle to get other agencies interested in providing male-friendly services. The decision-makers want to get involved and find out what’s new, what’s happening for fathers.”

Partnership and leadership.

“It’s useful if there is one person who has central information, so everybody knows where to go and organizations can refer fathers who need information or services. Coalition members have said several times that for a dynamic partnership you need one organization to organize and keep up with the situation and come back to the coalition with that information.”

Approach is everything.

Working with men.

“I think my whole approach is a bit more loose with fathers. I want them to be aware that the program has objectives to attain, but, at the same time, the atmosphere has to be a bit more informal and relaxed than with mothers. It’s quite funny, I have more fathers that usually knock on my door—just show up on their lunch hour to ask something about fathering -- while mothers usually call first before coming. Men are also a bit more reserved, more stand-offish. They will go and have a look at the bulletin board but they won’t stop at an information booth if there is someone there to discuss the hand-outs with them. And fathers define participation more flexibly: for them the word doesn’t necessarily mean that they come to every single activity but that they participate in the program more or less regularly throughout the year, or even participate in other activities set up by

other services from the same agency.

Working with men... when you're a woman.

Working with a male clientele helped VandenBroek better understand what it's like to be a minority, such as when men visit organizations in which the staff is mostly women. However, she has a warning for female staff: "Try to work through your own personal biases first before sitting around the table with men. If you have personal biases men are going to pick up on that right away." On the other hand, the men tell her that as a facilitator and a mother, she helps them see things more objectively. They say that the fact that they are not involved emotionally or physically with her helps them to better understand the father's role from a mother's standpoint.

VandenBroek feels that there is one other positive aspect of men and women working together: "Having a male/female facilitation team is positive in any group; it allows you to provide positive models of communication between men and women."

Paradoxically, having a woman facilitator is less of a problem for the fathers than it is for people outside the project. VandenBroek says that her presence is often wrongly interpreted, and that society creates barriers to men and women working together because they scrutinize their behaviour much more than they do in single-gender environments. What is, in fact, a simple

professional relationship is often interpreted as a personal relationship.

VandenBroek's secrets

-Create an environment in which fathers feel welcome. For example, if an organization provides services for both men and women, make sure that the bulletin board has as much space for information geared toward men as it does for women.

-Offer a variety of activities and establish programs that give fathers a choice of activities. If you want men to visit your centre more often, you'll have to offer a range of activities specifically for them.

-Offer free meals; whether for men only or for men and women, it's something that always attracts people. Mealtimes are a good occasion to have informal discussions too.



PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Fathering Project	
Location	Lindsay (Ontario)
Type of intervention	Support for fathering; promotion of the needs of fathers
Project start	1996
Target clientele	All fathers in Victoria County with children from 0 to 18 years old
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To establish a program designed for fathers. -To provide fathers with opportunities for talking about the exercise of paternal authority. -To encourage the implementation of a community network for fathers. -To create a unique channel of access to the resources available to fathers.
Team	Five people, including a full-time coordinator, the organization's director, a staff member of Family Resources for Victoria County and two facilitators on loan from the CHIMO.
Primary partners	CHIMO / Children and Family Services Health Unit Family Health / Salvation Army John Howard Society / Lindsay Boys and Girls Club Community Leaders / Lindsay Crisis Pregnancy Centre Children's Services (in five counties) / Children's Aid Society Pentecostal Church / Peterborough Family Resources
Annual budget and funding sources	Family Resources for Victoria County, which is in charge of the Fathering project, receives funding from a variety of sources: Health Canada, United Way, and the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services (these services are now the responsibility of municipal governments). Over the next three years, the Fathering project has been guaranteed funding of \$8,000 per year from Trillium.
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On partnerships.

"Cooperation among various service establishments and between these establishments and organizations or members of the community is indispensable to the success of most prevention programs. These types of programs begin with specific objectives and a well-defined outline, but they must be flexible, simultaneously take multiple risk factors into account and try to respond to a variety of needs, and it is unrealistic to think that a single intervener, service or organization can fulfill all these needs and put all the factors necessary for the program's success into place. Partnerships with people or community groups contribute to the legitimization and acceptance of the project by the public. They also often improve analysis of situations and lead to intervention modalities that are better adapted, better understood and better perceived."

*Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). Un Québec fou de ses enfants.
Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux.*

Gray (1985) divided the planning necessary for successful interagency collaboration into three stages:

- 1) Problem setting— identifying the collaborating agencies and acknowledging a common guiding purpose
- 2) Direction setting – articulating the values held by the participating agencies and agreeing on shared goals
- 3) Structuring - Creating a structure to support long-term collaboration allowing for ongoing contact negotiation between agencies."

Repucci, N.D., Britner, P.A. & Woolard, J.L. (2000). Preventing child abuse and neglect through parent education. Baltimore: Paul.H. Brooks. p.143.



Individually or in groups, this program encourages young fathers to take control of their lives, at their own pace, for the well-being of their children.

NEW BEGINNING — YOUNG FATHERS PROGRAM

Helping Young Fathers Cope One by One

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New Beginning celebrated its tenth year of existence this year. At first, it provided daycare services in a school that adolescent mothers attended who wanted to complete their high school diplomas. Since then, however, the program has grown in response to various other needs of these mothers. Program coordinator, Debbie Jarvis, had always been concerned about the young fathers who visited the premises but who did not feel included, so she applied for and received a grant from the British Columbia Ministry of Social Services to implement a four-month pilot project for these fathers.

At this point, Rick Hein was hired to meet with these fathers, discuss their concerns and work with them to try and find solutions. To his great surprise, after meeting individually with 30 young fathers, 28 of them expressed interest in meeting with him again. That was in 1993, and the “pilot project” has continued ever since. A survey revealing that young fathers were in need of support convinced the B.C. Ministry for Children and Families and the Abbotsford School Board to fund this program on an ongoing basis, and the Young Fathers Program is now an important link in the region’s social services network.

A family affair.

The close links between New Beginning and the Young Fathers Program has meant that project activities have been clearly geared toward families. Whether the mother and father live together or not, the project’s intervention strategies have always been centred on the welfare of children. Even though, at first, New Beginning was oriented primarily toward young mothers and their children, the entire staff was absolutely convinced that fathers had a vital role to play in their children’s lives. “That’s something that is really emphasized,” stresses Hein, “so when fathers come to the building, they have a sense of acceptance and belonging.” By visiting his child’s daycare, a young father

demonstrates in a concrete way to a young mother that he has a solid relationship with his child and that he is really a part of its life. In this way, mothers can see how the fathers act with their children, transform their perceptions and quickly grasp what “paternal involvement” means.

From individual support to group activities.

Most of the young people who participate in the program dropped out of school when they became fathers and they have dead-end jobs. Participation in the program encouraged half of them to go back to school, most to finish high school.

Hein coordinates all activities aimed at these young fathers, occasionally teaming up with a woman. Most of his work is done on an individual basis, through informal meetings or over the telephone. Such frequent, individual attention helps create a bond of trust with each of the fathers and allows him to be aware of what is happening in their lives. The first meeting often takes place in a restaurant, over coffee. The discussion can deal with parenting issues, but if the young father is having professional or legal difficulties, Hein tries to help him, primarily by informing him of the resources available in the community. In a way, he serves as a role model for young fathers and he feels that being a father himself and having previously worked with young people

has helped him do his job.

These individual meetings are complemented by group activities:

- Every Monday evening during the school year, the fathers play floor hockey. This was their own idea and on average, there are 16 participants every evening. The activity gives them a chance to meet other fathers in an informal and fun setting. Exercise helps to relieve stress and fosters team spirit and sportsmanship.
- The support group meets twice per month. At first, meetings were informal in nature; however, they have since evolved into more focused discussions, planned activities (e.g., looking for employment) and lectures. These meetings have only one rule: women are not to be disparaged.

Along with the activities reserved for young fathers is the Nobody's Perfect program, which is offered to mothers and fathers. Given that two-thirds of the fathers who participate in the project live with the mother of their children, they are strongly urged to come as a couple.

In addition, young fathers can take part in a series of family activities throughout the year that occur within the context of the New Beginnings program: Christmas parties, Father's Day barbecues, Valentine's Day dinners, etc.

The Young Fathers Program has now reached cruising speed. Last year alone, Hein met with more than 60 fathers. He communicates with 30 of them every week, while the other half drop by on a semi-regular basis.



A ripe old age.

This year, the Young Fathers Program will celebrate its seventh birthday, an exceptionally long life-span for such a project. This longevity is attributable in part to the permanent and stable presence of Hein, the project's key worker. Hein is quite aware of this and considers himself lucky. Among other factors that have contributed to the project's durability are that it is part of a larger structure and that the coordinator of New Beginning was able to find stable funding, at least for the time being.

these guys responsible and whip them into shape. We had to clarify the supportive approach with fathers.

"The best strategy for getting the first fathers involved was through the young mothers of New Beginnings. Since then, the program has just snowballed: participating fathers bring other fathers, parents of young fathers who have heard about the program call, and health nurses and school councillors make referrals."

RECRUITING

Perseverance is the key.

Of all the projects inventoried, the Young Fathers Program is one of the few for which recruitment is no longer a problem.

"It started as a slow process but there was always an interest. There were nights when there were only two fathers showing up, but the thing is to be persistent and phone them to see how things are going for them. You have to encourage guys to come out and have fun and learn things at the same time.

"There was also a certain amount of resistance to overcome. It took a while before everyone in the community got on board with the fathers program. Some people thought we would make

Approach is Everything.

Part of what this program does is to give the young fathers a voice. It gives them an avenue to voice their concerns, their opinions and their feelings. When you are alone it is a lot harder.

While I encourage them to come on a regular basis, fathers participate as much or as little as they wish. There are no minimal requirements.

I help address what the fathers want to address. I do a lot of problem solving and goal setting with them and a lot of looking at choices. So I help them figure out their own definition of being a father. It comes from them; I don't tell them what makes a good father.

Hein's secrets

-Help fathers identify their needs and concerns. Ask them, "What can we do for you? Do you have any ideas that could make the program better?"

-Show them that you're there to support them, to help them out and to help them become more committed fathers.

-Be open to new ideas and listen to what others have to say without trying to push your own ideas.

-Be flexible, especially with scheduling. Many fathers can't come to meetings between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

-In a context of family intervention you have to respect each parent's confidentiality.

-Offer activities that are fun; recreational activities will attract young fathers and men in general.



PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name New Beginnings - Young Fathers program

Location Abbotsford, British Columbia

Type of intervention Support for young fathers in various aspects of their lives

Project start 1993

Target clientele Young fathers, 15 to 25 years old (when they join the program)

Objectives

- To create a climate of respect where young fathers can talk to one another in complete confidence.
- To help fathers develop their own skills by acting as role models.
- To help them take charge of their lives by reinforcing their ability to set goals and solve problems.
- To support them in attaining their educational and employment objectives.
- To provide information about resources available in the community.
- To raise awareness within the community about young fathers.

Team Three people: a full-time staff member who works directly with the fathers, a coordinator and a female co-facilitator.

Primary partners Two nurses / A high school
A day care center / The Kiwanis Club
The Abbotsford School Board

Annual budget and funding sources An grant of \$35,000 from the B.C. Ministry for Children and Families and the Abbotsford School Board

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On longevity.

“As a result of limited resources, the majority of prevention and promotion efforts have been fleeting affairs, lasting a few years at most. While effective programs have been developed and documented even within these constraints, there is consensus that longitudinal efforts are considerably more likely than short-lived programs to result in effective program development, refinement, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination.”

Bond, L.A., & Wagner, B.M. (1988). Families in transitions: Primary prevention programs that work. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.p.347.

“We must get beyond the sort of short-term funding associated exclusively with an approach by demonstration pilot projects. While this type of funding is necessary, especially when evaluating the components or effects of an innovative project, non-renewable funding, which is often drawn from budgetary allowances that are already under great pressure, builds in to prevention projects right from the start vulnerability, discontinuity and disintegration.

Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). Un Québec fou de ses enfants. Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux. p.63.

“A program’s continuity is a function of the stability of its staff and the continuous presence of program activities in the chosen territory. Continuity fosters close ties between families and project staff; it also greatly facilitates administrative follow-up and the integration of multiple facets of the same program. When programs are interrupted (often due to inadequate funding), the make-up of the teams is weakened: laying off staff and then rehiring them goes against the establishment of trusting relationships and tarnishes the program’s reputation in the eyes of both staff and the public. Moreover, cutting programs with no regard for the nature of the events that people are going through prevents essential resources from being made available to the person right from the start of the event, or in various life contexts (for example, school and family, family and services).”

Moreover, cutting programs with no regard for people’s situations means that essential resources for helping these people when problems arise or in various areas (e.g., school and families or families and services) are not available.”

Par ailleurs, le découpage des projets sans égard à la nature des événements que vivent les personnes empêche que soient mises à contribution des ressources significatives présentes auprès de la personne dès le début de l’événement, ou dans divers milieux de vie (p. ex., école et famille, famille et services). ”

Groupe de travail pour les jeunes. (1991). Un Québec fou de ses enfants. Gouvernement du Québec : Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux. p.58.

Two localities are invited to try out a model of community intervention and adapt it to their own reality

When Researchers and Project Workers Go the Whole Way Together

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The ProsPÈRE project (a play on the French words for “prosper” and “father”) was born in 1993 of a mix of people from the academic and intervention sectors. As part of the Université du Québec à Montréal’s Group for action and research into the victimization of children, or GRAVE, ProsPÈRE followed up on a recommendation in the report entitled *Un Québec fou de ses enfants* (A Quebec crazy about its children) advocating “the establishment of a province-wide program to promote the role of the father that is addressed directly to fathers, but also to institutions, and that forms partnerships with both employers and community groups.”

The ProsPÈRE promotion committee

was initially formed around a core group of researchers and students from GRAVE, researchers from the Institute for research into the social development of young people (IRDS), administrators and staff from youth centres in Québec’s Laurentian region and from the Jean-Oliver-Chénier CLSC. The committee was subsequently joined by representatives from the public health boards in Montréal-Centre and the Laurentians, from the Rosemont CLSC and from a community organization in Montreal. At the time, teamwork between such a broad spectrum of researchers and project staff was quite rare. The ProsPÈRE committee developed a community intervention model aimed at promoting the involvement of fathers with their

Community mobilization aims at several targets and uses several different strategies.

The health-promotion approach aims at several targets and uses several intervention strategies in order to cover the entire population of an area rather than just those at risk. It has four characteristics that, applied to paternal involvement, can be summarized as follows:

Objectives: Act on all factors that have a positive or negative impact on paternal involvement.

Principles: Create conditions that will encourage the public to take charge of strengthening the degree of paternal involvement in their communities.

Multiple intervention targets: Act simultaneously on different systemic levels: 1) the father or father figure, 2) the nuclear family, 3) the father's immediate environment, 4) the larger environment.

Multiple action strategies: Reach the entire population through a variety of activities united within one strategy that has several components: 1) reinforcing individual potential, 2) improving the immediate environment, 3) increasing public awareness or changing public opinion.

children, from 0 to 5 years old, the ultimate goal being to improve the well-being of these young children.

The model was applied in two areas: one in an urban setting, the Rosemont district in Montreal, the other in a semi-urban setting, in the town of Pointe-Calumet, in Quebec's Laurentian region. Many indicators pointed to these two communities as having serious social difficulties.

The goal of the ProsPÈRE project was to have the communities adopt the program's guiding principles and monitor the intervention process in their areas. The promotion committee was responsible for research (assessment of needs, evaluation of the implementation and of its repercussions, etc.), funding efforts, coordination of project activities with municipal activities, dissemination of research results and putting pressure on public decision-makers. The communities were in charge of developing and establishing a plan of action adapted to the particularities of their milieu.

The project's first year of existence consisted of building a consensus on the philosophy and objectives for action, studying documents on the subject of paternal involvement and the conditions for successful intervention, and developing the guiding principles of the intervention model.

At the end of the first year the promotion committee proposed a definition of paternal involvement and a conceptual framework for intervention based on Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This model states that for an intervention program to be effective, it must take into account all of the conditions that either favour or hinder the attainment of the desired goal. In concrete terms this model gave rise to a community type intervention—community mobilization—based on the concepts, principles and strategies of the health-promotion approach.

Paternal involvement: the ProsPÈRE definition.

Paternal involvement is expressed by the biological father's (or his substitute's) sustained concern for and participation in the physical and psychological well-being of his child.



Getting things moving.

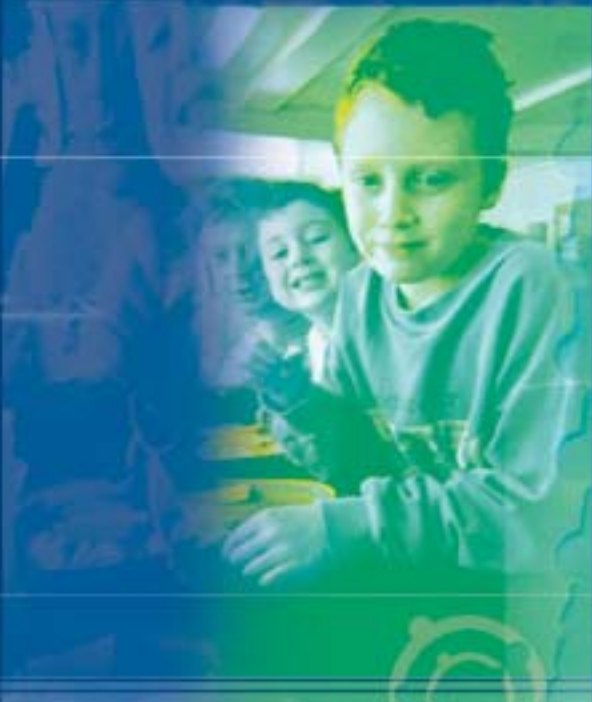
Getting a “community mobilization” project up and running requires a local steering committee to develop and apply an annual action plan; the committee must be made up of representatives from various sectors in the community who have complementary mandates.

Implementing the project in each of the two targeted communities was a five-step process:

1. The mobilization of partners through the establishment of a steering committee.
2. The search for an underlying consensus within the steering committee on the directions the project should take.
3. The assessment of the community's needs, conducted jointly by the researchers and community representatives. This involved a) ensuring that the community representatives had a common vision of the problems and combined existing resources and b) carrying out a more systematic assessment of needs in collaboration with project researchers.
4. The development of an annual action plan containing a set of concrete activities designed to promote paternal involvement. In principle, these activities should have multiple targets and employ various strategies.
5. The execution of the activities and a review of the annual action plan.

Because project experimentation was carried out in two very different localities, with different social and cultural contexts and different resource dynamics, it is possible that what was gained from this experience can be generalized and transferred. Of particular interest is how each of the target communities perceived the process and implemented the projects.

In both communities, partners were found by forming an alliance with an organization that could operate the project in the field; in both ProSPÉRE projects, the local CLSCs committed to run the projects for a five-year period. The CLSCs were in charge of finding project workers, administrators and local citizens who were interested in promoting paternal involvement. These people were invited to an information session in order to make sure the intervention model's guiding principles were applicable and to devise strategies for introducing the project into the community. The model was presented as an outline that the community could then flesh out with details. This led to the formation of a steering committee in each community.



Advancing the cause through evaluation.

The ProsPÈRE project is noteworthy largely because of its research activities. Researchers have carefully followed the progress of the two projects from their very beginnings. They took charge of environmental analyses (of available services and of the fathers' needs), and they documented and validated a tool for measuring the concept of paternal involvement. They collected data on the representation, values, attitudes and behaviours of fathers and mothers of young children from 500 families in the two communities. They also evaluated the project's implementation in both communities and produced an annual report of the project's operations and activities³⁵. The evaluation of the impacts the project has had on families and services is currently underway.

The research method employed for evaluating project implementation is the multiple-case study method. This strategy is especially appropriate for projects that are carried out in "real-life" contexts where researchers cannot "manipulate" the processes under study. Case study is a qualitative approach that is both rigorous and flexible and that favours in-depth data collection and analysis. The strength of this particular case study rests on two

factors: it drew upon a theoretical framework to guide the data collection and analysis, and it employed multiple data-collection methods from various sources of information.

Six variables were examined during the evaluation of the implementation of the two projects (CooPÈRE in Rosemont and Initiative Place-Ô-Pères in Pointe-Calumet):

1. the intervention model developed by the promotion committee,
2. the local environments (each of the communities),
3. the characteristics of the partners on the steering committees and of the members of the promotion committees intervening in the two localities,
4. the participants' operating model (the shared vision of the problems brought about by a lack of paternal involvement and of the solutions to promote it),
5. the action plans employed in each of the communities; and
6. the effects perceived by the field workers and the factors responsible for these effects.

The data were collected from semi-structured interviews, from documents produced by the promotion and steering committees, and from observations by project participants and on activity cards. Some provisional summaries of the research results were

presented to the members of the steering committees in the form of short reports so they could make comments that could be used to adjust both the projects themselves and the evaluation procedures in the future.

Four conditions for a successful partnership between researchers and project workers.

The evaluation of the partnership between the research and intervention milieus shows that the challenges involved can be overcome if the following conditions are met:

- a consensus on the conceptual framework of the intervention (in this case, the ecological approach);
- the presence of certain indispensable attitudes among the project workers: open-mindedness, respect for the know-how of field workers, respect for local dynamics and everyone's rhythm, the ability to adapt to the research and action constraints;
- a partnership agreement that clearly defines everyone's role;
- continuous transmission of the research results to the project workers and to community members (Vallée et al., 1997; Turcotte and Rose, 1997).



35 Ouellet, F., Turcotte, G. et Desjardins, N. (2001). *À Rosemont ça cooPÈRE. Analyse d'implantation d'un projet d'action intersectorielle sur la paternité*. Montréal : Direction de la Santé Publique de Montréal-Centre.

14a

INITIATIVE PLACE-Ô-PÈRES
MAKE ROOM FOR DADS

Finding a Niche and Becoming Part of Dads' Everyday Lives

112

In 1994 the citizens of Pointe-Calumet, a semi-urban community in Quebec's Laurentian region, started looking for ways to respond to the needs of its population. One of the options considered was the creation of a family services centre.

It was at this point that a CLSC community organizer, who was also a member of the ProSPÈRE promotion committee, ascertained the degree of interest of committee members to participate in an action-based research project on paternal involvement. Five people agreed to look into the possibility and the "Make room for

dads" (Initiative Place-Ô-Pères) was born.

A nine-person steering committee in charge of setting up the project within the community was formed: four citizens of Pointe-Calumet already active in the community and five representatives from public institutions (CLSC, youth centre and public health board). The CLSC authorized its community organizer to spend two days per week on the project and, since she was already involved with the group trying to set up a family services centre, Make room for Dads was integrated into this project. Along the way, the coordinator of the family services centre took over

the running Make room for Dads from the CLSC community organizer.

Year 1: Time to understand each other and take charge of the project.

The local steering committee spent the first ten months familiarizing itself with the concept of paternal involvement, reaching a consensus on directions to take and an action philosophy, and understanding in detail the intervention model upon which the action plan would be based. Researchers from the ProSPÈRE team contributed to this process and participated in discussions. At the same time, other researchers studied the community's services and the needs of fathers by gathering

information from practitioners and families. According to Diane Grenier, the project's coordinator, this lengthy process was far from being a waste of time. "It was an important step because it confronted us with our values and our way of doing things. Before speaking intelligently about an intervention model for paternal involvement, we needed to get a clear idea of the concept and get comfortable with it."

That first year resulted in the development of an action plan based on a health-promotion approach. This period also helped to reinforce the sense of belonging felt by members of the steering committee and to promote the project within the community. T-shirts with the project logo printed on them were fabricated for promotional purposes.

Year 2: Time for action.

The project's second year saw the start up of activities set out in the action plan—in particular, an attempt to discover children's perception of fathering. Project workers asked 250 primary school children to express their conception of a father through drawing. At the same time, articles were published in newspapers and the municipal council was made aware of the project.

Years 3 to 6: Rolling along.

In the third year, the project's activities were reinforced and fathers who had taken part in support groups decided to form a dads' committee.

This year, the project's funding was reduced and it is understaffed. Currently, there is no salaried male project worker on staff, and the lack of funding and personnel threatens the existence of certain activities.

Use every means available.

The project's activities are focused on the three intervention targets stated in the introduction of this document:

Fathers and their families.

- individual help for fathers in trouble,
- a discussion and self-help group for fathers (not necessarily the same fathers who get individual help),
- joint activities for dads and their kids,
- mixed supper meetings.

Fathers' immediate environments:

These activities essentially consist of offering training to local project workers about mobilization on behalf of paternal involvement.

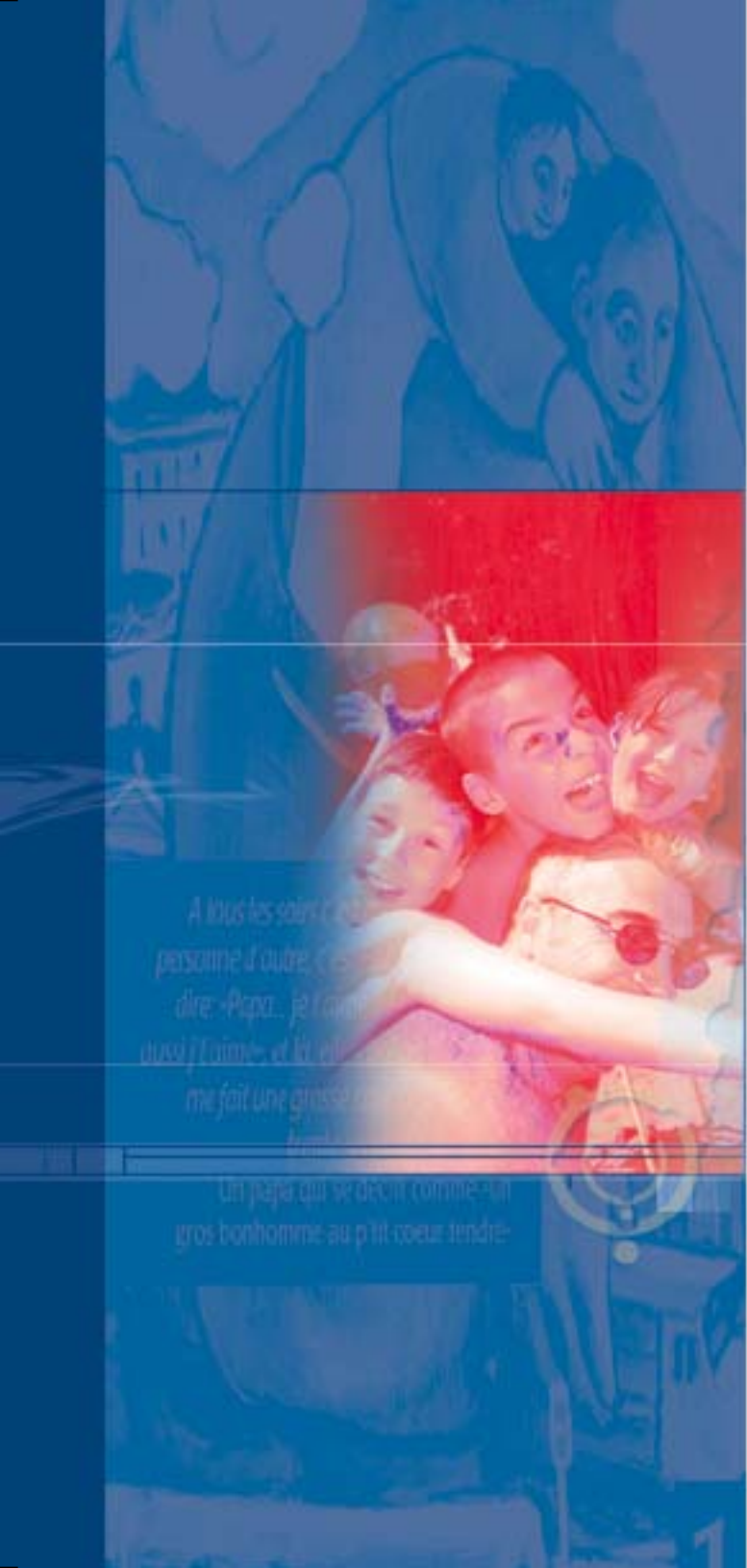
The larger environment.

- articles in the municipal newsletter;
- games involving fathers and their children during town celebrations;

- information booths in the local shopping centre;
- a community awareness day;
- a traveling exhibit called "Draw me a dad" (Dessine-moi un papa). This exhibition of drawings by young children also includes an interactive game and suggestions for encouraging the adoption of all aspects of paternal involvement. The exhibit also comes with a guidebook. A government grant has enabled the exhibit to travel throughout Quebec to raise awareness about fathering.
- promotional door hangers, produced by ProSPÈRE, explaining some of the data from a study of 150 families in the community. The door hangers were aimed at promoting and raising awareness of paternal involvement while increasing the project's profile within the community. They were distributed to every household in the community eight times during the year.

Generally speaking, these activities are now well established and most are repeated from year to year. In addition, new activities are initiated depending on the needs fathers express either directly or through participation in program activities.

Every year project activities for fathers and their families reach between 30 and 45 fathers; 23 fathers are officially



registered with the "Petite Maison" family services centre. The "dads' committee" is facilitated by a nucleus of seven or eight fathers, and 50 to 60 fathers take part in family-oriented activities; some fathers take part in only these activities. Over the last year the participants have set a goal of increasing the number of activities that emphasize the fun part of being a dad (e.g., activities with their kids).

Make room for Dads does not offer any therapy or personal growth groups; it does, however, provide men with documentation and suggests films and programs of activities.

Grenier's secrets

-Be flexible. An annual action plan should be a guide rather than a yoke. You should be able to add new activities when opportunities arise or when men express their needs or wants.

-The intervention objective should always be clear. You need to be able to observe what's going on and see what fathers are going through. If a door opens, you need to have the flexibility to go through it.

-Always be available; be at the right place at the right time.

-Know how to let the fathers take the reins.

-Take action in concrete ways; try to elicit feelings of solidarity and fun between fathers and their children.

-Know how to play down problems.

-Think of fathers in their totality, in their fullness of being.

-Free yourself of anti-male prejudices; learn to believe in them, accept them as they are and don't impose your own way of doing things.



APPROACH IS EVERYTHING.

Letting fathers take the reins.

Fathers have taken over the control of Make room for Dads and now direct it. Project staff impose nothing and respect the way fathers assume their roles as fathers. The fact that the project simultaneously integrates activities targeting fathers, their environments and the general public would seem to favor the mobilization of fathers. Project leaders note that men often need to take an individual path before they are ready to join group activities. However, public awareness measures have led to an improvement when it comes to men feeling more comfortable in asking for individual help. "They know they have a place in the project, that they are welcome and won't be rejected. Here, a man can bang his fist on the table without people automatically thinking he's a violent person," says Grenier "Moreover, perhaps because the project gives them an opportunity to both freely express their needs and to find a variety of solutions, there is a strong sense of belonging or ownership among the dads who participate in the project."

Reaching out to fathers "where it's happening".

Intervention is flexible and very diversified. Grenier says that "it's up to project staff to adapt to what's happening, where it's happening. Men often tell me, 'before we can talk about our problems, we need to develop a sense of solidarity.' That's why meetings

with men might just as well take place in a pool hall as at the family services centre. The staff go where the men are; where they live; on their territories."

Recruiting men where they are.

The dads' committee gave themselves the mission of recruiting other fathers and of reaching those having the most difficulty. But recruiting strategies must be varied as well. As Grenier explains, "I often visit food banks and I meet a lot of people there. I try and win their trust. I often find myself engaged in 'parking lot intervention.' In the summer, I play horseshoes, in the winter I take part in the Knights of Columbus' Christmas charity drive. The goal is to meet people and create a bond of trust. Group recruitment is done one person at a time."

Reaching out to the whole family.

Project leaders believe that the family system could work if all family members felt included and if they all got involved in a process that led to a true recognition of the father's role. This is why they felt it so important to offer activities not only to fathers alone or to fathers and their children, but also to mothers and the entire family—always taking account of the whole person and of their diverse needs.

Playing to people's strengths.

"In order to get people to want to do something, you have to emphasize what they do well."

PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name Initiative Place-Ô-Pères (Make room for Dads)

Location Pointe-Calumet (Quebec)

Type of intervention Community intervention aimed at promoting paternal involvement among various clientele and using multiple intervention strategies.

Project start 1994

Target clientele Fathers and their children; mothers and their children; fathers having trouble; workers in the community's family services organizations; the general public.
Over the years, the project has specifically targeted fathers in trouble, especially due to separation, loss of employment, financial difficulties, complicated shared custody arrangements or the desire to maintain contact with their children after a break-up.

Objectives

- To encourage fathers' involvement with their children from 0 to 6 years old.
- To accentuate the pleasures of being a father.
- To emphasize the importance of the role of fathers with their children.

Team The team includes five people: one coordinator, a facilitator, a community organizer, a nurse and a researcher from the ProsPÈRE committee.

Primary partners Municipality of Pointe-Calumet / CLSC J.O. Chénier
Merchants of the region / La Petite Maison de Pointe-Calumet
L'Éveil regional newspaper

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On multiple targets and strategies.

" Many community-based and prevention programs are designed to enhance the level of skills and knowledge of individuals on a particular topic, such as parenting, drug abuse, social skills, and assertiveness. In fact, it has been argued that most prevention programs tend to be person-centred (Albee, 1996; Albee and Perry, 1995; Cowen, 1985). These are important interventions but tend to neglect the need for social justice and a fair distribution of societal resources. We define, analyse, research and treat human problems as if they were all within the individual or the micro-system (Ratcliffe and Wallack, 1985/1986). At best we think also about the meso-system. Rarely do we think about the macro-system (Prilleltensky, 1994b). Future priorities should reflect a more balanced approach between individualistic and collectivist values; for they respond to different needs." (p. 90)

Prilleltensky, I. & Nelson, G. (2000). Promoting child and family wellness : Priorities for psychological and social interventions. Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, (10), 85-105.

"In the past decade, there has been a growing appreciation of the need to consider human functioning from a multi-system, multi-level perspective. That is, in order to understand and foster competent functioning of individuals, it is critical to acknowledge that individuals do not "stand alone," but instead are an integral part of hierarchies of overlapping systems: dyads and family systems embedded in subcultures and communities, which are part of even larger, more complex social, political, and legal systems. With the current state of the art of research and programming technology, it is unlikely that one could fully address all of the relevant variables when designing a program. Yet, it is important to consider which of the forces or influences at the many levels of systems interplay most significantly with the functioning of the individuals targeted in any effort. For example, in the cases of a child who is experiencing the divorce of his or her parents, it is important to consider not only the family context, but also the attitude of the community to divorce, the orientation of the legal system to divorce, the clergy's perspective, and the changing course of opinion of society at large. Ideally, a prevention program would target as many levels of influence as possible in identifying and targeting agents for change, monitoring program implementation and evaluating program effects. If practical constraints call for less than comprehensive effort, then at the very least it is important to be sensitive and open to the potential influences of multiple systems."

Bond, L.A., & Wagner, B.M. (1988). Families in transitions: Primary prevention programs that work. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.p.344.



When Everyone Lends a Hand



In 1995 one year after Make room for Dads (Initiative Place-O-Pères) began, the ProsPÈRE committee approached two employees of the Rosemont CLSC to gauge that community's interest in taking part in an action-based research project on paternal involvement. After participating in several committee meetings, the two formally requested their CLSC to grant them one day per week to coordinate the project. Their request was granted.

Thus, the process of mobilizing members of the community interested in forming a steering committee for the project began. At the time, the CLSC workers had to be very diplomatic in approaching community organizations as there were tensions between these

organizations and the CLSC. In the end 13 people from community, educational and municipal milieus, the CLSC and the research team joined forces to develop and put into place an intervention project for fathers in Rosemont. And so CoopÈRE began, though it didn't yet have a place to call home as an independent organization. Instead, the project took the form of a group of neighbourhood organizations, which, within their respective mandates, either ran activities directed specifically at fathers of children younger than six years old or at promoting paternal involvement.

At first getting the project known in the neighbourhood was relatively difficult because there were no funds to develop

the right publicity vehicles or undertake public awareness activities. Over the first two years the project operated with nearly no budget at all. In addition, the staff of the participating community organizations all worked full-time with their own organizations. Only the two CLSC coordinators could spend a part of their work week on the project, though one day per week was far from sufficient. But despite the obstacles, the CoopÈRE project staff, along with researchers from the ProsPÈRE committee were able to analyze the neighbourhood's needs and draw up an action plan.

Using every means available.

Like Make room for Dads the CooPÈRE steering committee adopted the ecological model proposed by ProsPÈRE and developed an action plan that took the various facets of fathers' lives into account. Using this plan, the project implemented the following activities, classified according to the three intervention targets previously mentioned:

Fathers and their families.

- A two-pronged program offering, first, group activities for both fathers and their children and, second, discussion groups for fathers.
- One on one. Individual support to respond to the needs of fathers in trouble.
- Among fathers. Theme discussions concerning fathers' realities.
- Kitchen dads. Courses for cooking simple, economical and nutritional meals.
- Raising awareness of paternal involvement. An activity aimed at emphasizing the value of the father's role and eliminating preconceived ideas on their lack of involvement.
- Prenatal classes and reunions. One of the prenatal meetings is devoted to the reality of fathers expecting a baby. During the postnatal period, a reunion is held for all the couples who participated in the prenatal courses to exchange ideas and stories about parenting.

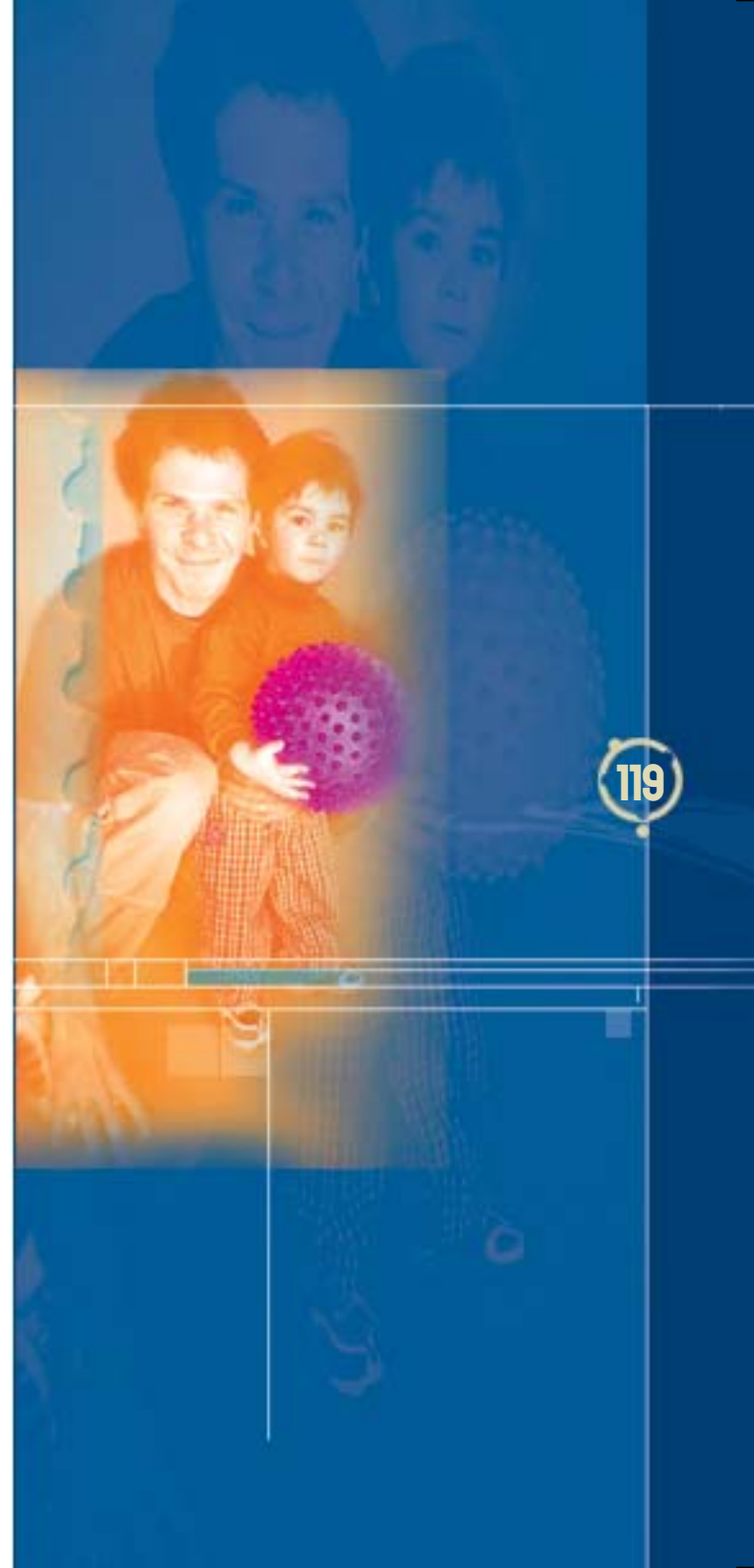
- Special fathers meeting. This meeting is added onto the Nobody's Perfect program and is addressed to single mothers to increase their awareness of the importance of the father's role in a family.
- Story-telling. An animated story for children at the neighbourhood library. The story deals with the subject of fathers.

Fathers' immediate environments.

- 'The Parenthesis'. A meeting place at a community organization especially arranged for fathers.
- Winter playground. A play area for parents and kids.
- Courses on paternal involvement. Training for members of the CooPÈRE committee and its partners, given by the ProsPÈRE promotion committee.

The larger environment.

- Family celebration during family week. Activities based on the theme of families.
- Door hangers. A public awareness tool to report research data on fathering to the community; the door hangers are distributed eight times per year to all households and neighbourhood organizations covered by the research team .
- Screening of the film "Père pour la vie" ("Father for life"). Public screening followed by a discussion.
- Articles in Rosemont's community newspaper.



-Family week leaflets. Distributed throughout the neighbourhood, these leaflets aim to raise the profile of CooPÈRE and make known the activities organized for family week..

Challenges: participation, continuity and cohesion.

On average 15 to 20 men, including a nucleus of eight fathers, take part in father-specific activities. The prenatal courses reach out to as many as 200 fathers per year, and 250 people participate regularly in the family week celebration. Various public awareness measures, such as door hangers, reach all of the families and organizations in the neighbourhood. The team has noticed that fathers are more inclined to take part in program activities if they are directed by project workers whom they trust or by other men who know the project.

However, there are certain obstacles to fathers' regular participation in the project. The activities are offered on the premises of different organizations and are thus not held at the same location. They are also offered in blocks (a 12-week session in the fall and a 12-week session in the winter) instead of continuously, and the activities finish very early in the spring. Furthermore, the fact that the activities are run by different organizations means that their content or intervention models are relatively unknown by other project

workers, including the coordinators. In addition, in the last year alone, four male staff left the project and had to be replaced.

According to project leaders, cohesion, consistency and stability are still problems. Activities often conflict with each other. However, there are plans to hire a facilitator who would attend all project activities in order to create cohesion. This person would also be active within the community, establish links with parents in the neighbourhood and promote paternal involvement. Diane Rose, one of CooPÈRE's coordinators, relates that "in the first few years, things were much more partisan; there was little interaction between the project staff. But over time, there is more openness and interaction. We have noticed that sometimes it's a step-by-step process for fathers. It often starts with the prenatal classes, then they move on to "One on one" and "À deux vitesses" and then to the discussion groups. Follow-up and connections among activities will improve a great deal when we hire a facilitator next year."

Rose also stresses that it's not always easy to take action on all levels at once. "It takes time, energy and both human and financial resources, which the project doesn't have enough of. On the other hand, the implementation process with the ProsPÈRE promotion committee and the interaction among partners are two factors that help keep

interventions grounded in the ecological approach."

A multidisciplinary team: an absolute must.

The success of a project with as wide a scope as CooPÈRE is more or less dependent on taking an inter-sectorial approach, led by a multidisciplinary team. Indeed, it is nearly indispensable that people with diverse expertise and varied approaches work together to create a collective competence in order successfully and simultaneously to provide activities to fathers alone, fathers and their children, mothers, practitioners, institutions and the general public.

Practitioners and researchers: the time to become more sociable.

Rose also explains that "the first year was spent familiarizing ourselves with the theory behind the intervention model. At that point, it was largely the ProsPÈRE researchers who presented studies and explained the theoretical underpinnings of the project. People working in the trenches, so to speak, found that difficult. At the same time, we had to create a team spirit, which was an arduous process and some people thought we were spending too much time on it; they wanted to get right to the action plan. In the end, I think all this preparation helped us



discern the right direction. That being said, for people who are used to taking concrete action, it was a long year.”

work we’ve done. It also makes us proud of CoopÈRE.”

Rose adds that “at the end of the second year, there was a moment of crisis between the project workers and the research team. The researchers were anxious about carry out the evaluation and getting research grants. But the people working in the community still had to run the program and they didn’t have any extra money or time. The research team had to be made to understand that they should offer more support to the project workers. I would say that that was the great weakness of the project from the beginning, not having enough money for the fieldwork. Once everyone realized what the problem was, we designated one person to apply for a Health Canada grant to support project activities.”

Research is useful for project workers.

Rose also relates that “every year, the researchers responsible for evaluating the implementation write a review of project operations. This takes a great burden off the various organizations. Information taken from the research results allows project staff to stand back and look at both the positive and negative aspects of their work. This allows us to evolve, to improve and make adjustments to the action plan. It’s encouraging. When we look at the annual report, we’re proud of all the



PROJECT PARTICULARS

Project name CoopÈRE

Location Montreal (Quebec)

Type of intervention Community intervention in promoting paternal involvement that targets a variety of clientele and uses a range of intervention strategies.

Project start 1995

Target clientele All fathers, mothers, organizations and people in the community

Objectives -To make fathers aware of their importance in their children's development and of the enjoyment they can derive by being involved with their children.

-To encourage mothers to trust men with the care of their children and not want them to do everything their way

-To promote the importance of paternal involvement among families in the neighbourhood.

-To elicit, encourage and sustain paternal involvement with young children.

-To raise awareness among the staff of participating organizations of the importance of the father's presence in the family as well as for the need for activities designed for fathers.

-To change intervention practices such that they take fathers into account as much as mothers in their work with families.

-To develop a community intervention model.

Team Bouffe-Action Rosemont / CA-CLSC de Rosemont / Carrefour communautaire de Rosemont L'Entregens / Carrefour familial l'Intermède / Centre de ressources éducative et pédagogique CREP CSDM / Comité des jeunes de Rosemont / Direction de santé publique de Montréal-Centre / Université du Québec à Montréal (PROSPÈRE) / Sport, leisure and social development social (SSLDS) Ville de Montréal / 8 temporary workers (5 men et 3 women)

Primary partners Fathers participating at Coopère / Journal de Rosemont / Bibliothèque de Rosemont / Joujouthèque / Police du quartier 44 / Service de prévention des incendies de Montréal / Pompier de Rosemont / Scouts de Ste-Bibiane / Corporation de développement communautaire de Rosemont

Annual budget and funding sources For the last four years, the project has received an annual grant of \$25,000. For the first two years, this funding came from Health Canada and for the last two years, from the Montréal-Centre regional health and social services board. This money goes entirely toward covering the costs of activities offered directly to the public or toward the development of public awareness tools.

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On evaluation.

"The rush to quantitative judgement, with its demands for immediate results, also interferes with orderly progress in developing complex programs. Professor Donald Campbell, considered by many the dean of program evaluation, says a new norm is needed to replace the current practice of prematurely evaluating programs not yet working as their staffs intended. The principle he proposes is "Evaluate no program until it is proud." By not insisting on formal evaluation until program personnel have themselves concluded that there is "something special that we know works here and we think others ought to borrow," Dr. Campbell believes that the sum total of useful "borrowable" information would be vastly increased."

"Professor Campbell also endorses an approach to the use of information that forms a fundamental premise of this book: judgements and decisions should be based on a "cumulation" of wisdom. No single study, no single statistic, no single piece of evidence should be the basis of decisions to fund or not to fund, to abandon or to replicate a project. Judgements about what works should be based on a thoughtful appraisal of the many kinds of evidence available. That means relying not only on quantitative but also on qualitative information, not only on evaluations by "objective" outsiders but on the experiences of committed practitioners, not on isolated discoveries but on understanding how consistent the findings are with other knowledge. Relying on common sense, prudence, and understanding in interpreting evidence does not mean sacrificing rigor in assessing information. But applying human intelligence may bring us closer to policy-relevant conclusions than reliance on numbers that have been manipulated in ways that ultimately conceal a basic ignorance of what is really going on."

Schorr, L.B. & Schorr, D. (1988). Within our reach Breaking the cycle of disadvantage, Anchor Books Double Day, New York, pp. 269-270.

"The evaluative component is essential to the success of a program. Evaluation forces its promoters to ask serious questions about objectives and about the means and criteria of their attainment. Not only does it enable programs to be improved but also the theoretical knowledge of the situations that led to their instigation. The evaluation of programs also allows for the creation of a "repository" of preventive practices and provides access to strategically necessary information on short-term effects... ."

Groupe de travail pour les jeunes, Un Québec fou de ses enfants, (Québec: Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux, 1991), p. 63.

For more information on program evaluation:

Rossi, P.H., Freeman, H.E. & Lipsey, M.W. (1999). Evaluation : A systematic approach. (6th édition). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

And on a participatory approach to evaluation:

Direction de la santé de la population (1996). Guide d'évaluation de projet : une démarche participative. Ottawa : Santé Canada.



Experience and Knowledge that will Benefit Other Practitioners and Fathers

The data collected and the information obtained by researchers provide a rich and varied vein from which valuable nuggets of knowledge can be extracted.

In describing these projects we have tried to highlight certain factors that constantly reappear, both in the scientific literature and among practitioners, in explaining a project's success. Thus, in this third section, making use of the data collected from the questionnaires filled out by those responsible for the 61 projects, of the interviews with the spokespersons for the 15 projects described above and of scientific knowledge, we shall try to summarize what we now know about the factors contributing to success. This summary is accompanied by more general precepts that may serve as points of reference for programs of intervention or may increase their chances of success.

Review of the success factors:

1. a clearly defined conceptual framework
2. intervention that builds on transitions in the lives of people and families
3. an effective recruitment strategy
4. an approach adapted to the specific reality of fathers
5. intervention that promotes the fathers' empowerment
6. strong and respected leadership
7. the integration of activities into the fathers' immediate environments
8. intensive intervention with the most vulnerable fathers
9. public awareness campaigns
10. political pressure and action (lobbying)
11. a multiplicity of targets and of strategies for action
12. organizational support
13. a support network for project workers
14. quality partnerships
15. stable and diversified funding
16. rigorous project evaluation

1. A clearly defined conceptual framework: the frame of reference should be explicit.

All intervention is based on ideas, rules and principles, even if they are often implicit and represent a sort of “unwritten code” of intervention.

Thus, most of the project managers interviewed confirmed that they developed their projects and ran their activities based on the needs expressed by the fathers. Only a few specified the conceptual framework underlying their work. It is noteworthy that these few projects were the ones that had one or several researchers on their teams, and that it was these researchers who proposed a theoretical framework and supported the development of an intervention model.

By itself, the survey of the 61 project managers does not provide information about conceptual frameworks. We know, however, that the sources of inspiration behind the projects are quite varied, running the gamut from popular psychology books on self-esteem, to ‘inspiring’ projects, to research papers on fathering.

The conceptual framework underlying a program of intervention can be developed as a function of the community’s needs, of critical analysis by practitioners or of scientific papers. By specifying a conceptual framework,

one connects up the available information and makes a coherent whole of it, such that all team members, once they have adopted it, will be able to move in the same direction. Such a framework can always be revised along the way to take new needs or new information into account, but it is important that it be defined from the start.

» *Projects will be more likely to succeed... if team members take the time to examine together the conceptual framework of an intervention program before undertaking the project, and if they continue to apply this throughout the life of the project. Researchers can be good allies in this area.*

2. Intervention that builds on transitions: opportunities that are not sufficiently taken advantage of.

Only a few of the projects surveyed targeted fathers going through a transition period in their lives: a marital break-up, recent immigration or the birth of a first child. Instead, most offered activities based on the general process of fathering. Yet it is known that a transition period such as the birth of a child, the loss of employment or a divorce arouses in the person experiencing it a need for adjustment, which, in turn, leads to a greater

openness and a search for strategies to deal with the new reality.

» *Projects will be more likely to succeed... if the important transitions that fathers experience are taken into account during the planning of programs and activities, and if particular attention is paid to the challenges that these transitions represent.*

3. An effective recruitment strategy: a common and constant concern.

Recruiting fathers was a major concern for most of the projects surveyed. During a project, the means devised for recruiting fathers are often varied and comprise a wide range of available strategies from very broad to extremely focused.

The more traditional strategies were by far the most frequently mentioned by practitioners:

- informal recruitment through practitioners or other participants (or mothers),
- the media (articles, press releases and press conferences),
- printed advertising (leaflets, posters),
- word of mouth.

A closer examination of the 15 project

described here reveals that some project managers spend as much time and energy on recruiting as if it were one of the project's activities. In the interviews, they made it clear that they also adopted recruitment strategies that were more proactive and adapted to dads:

- Canvassing in specific environments (home, work, recreational areas, pubs, etc.),
- Winning over fathers who are leaders in the community (since those are the ones who will bring in others),
- Using incentives such as meals, babysitting services or free transportation,
- Using services that fathers can offer, such as handyman skills, in order to raise their interest in project activities.

▶▶ Projects will be more likely to succeed... if traditional recruitment is abandoned in favour of a more proactive approach: if the fathers don't come by themselves, go out and get them.

4. An approach adapted to the specific reality of fathers: flexible, informal intervention that plays to the fathers' strengths.

A few common principles seem to guide the interventions in the 15 projects

examined in-depth:

- Intervention should take the needs of fathers into account and use all applicable strategies, both formal and informal, for reaching out to them.
- Project staff should be accessible and mobile so they can use every opportunity that presents itself to reach out to fathers.
- Intervention should accentuate and emphasize fathers' strengths.
- Activities should take place in a warm, attractive atmosphere, with the emphasis on fun.
- Activities should be "active": sports, carpentry with their kids, outings, etc.

▶▶ Projects will be more likely to succeed... if they tend toward a flexible and informal approach, emphasize fathers' strengths, value them and leave a lot of room for fun.

5. Intervention that promotes the fathers' empowerment: getting dads to appropriate activities and participate in decision-making.

The fathers in the 15 projects highlighted in this catalogue are at least consulted when they begin taking part in activities. Consultation is the first step toward empowerment; however, several projects go even further and include fathers on the project team. This gives

the fathers a chance to get involved in organizing activities and to participate in the decisions concerning the overall direction of the project. This turns some fathers into paternal-involvement advocates in their communities.

▶▶ Projects will be more likely to succeed... if fathers participate at every stage, from activity planning to project evaluation; if practitioners act primarily as guides for the process of fathers taking over the projects themselves.

6. Strong and respected leadership: teams led with passion.

Slightly more than half of the spokespeople for the 61 projects surveyed confirmed that their team had a single leader. This was particularly true of teams with fewer than four staff. Leadership was often shared on the larger teams.

Facilitation was generally done by men, and these men often become positive role-models of masculinity and fathering for other fathers. On the other hand, project coordination was more likely to be handled by women.

We also counted several male-female facilitating teams among the projects surveyed. Indeed, certain practitioners felt that a man-woman facilitation

tandem is the ideal team for leading groups.

»Projects will be more likely to succeed...
if practitioners can rely on several passionate leaders willing to defend the project.

7. The integration of activities into the fathers' immediate environments: attempts at intervening in everyday life are still shaky.

Of the 61 projects surveyed, including the 15 studied in detail, most of the intervention programs aimed at fathers are based in health and social services establishments or in community organizations. Not much happens in the places usually frequented by fathers or their children (e.g., the workplace or daycare centre). This lack is partially compensated for by the fact that a number of project workers interact informally with fathers in their daily life, in such places as pool halls, street sales, parks, coffee shops or at home.

»Projects will be more likely to succeed...
if they reach fathers and their children where they live their everyday lives (home, work, school, recreational sites or daycare centres) and if these environments are used as bases for intervention.

8. Intensive intervention with the most vulnerable fathers: a still timid tendency.

Intensive intervention simultaneously affects several areas of a father's life, employing a variety of strategies and often engaging him on a predictable and sustained basis. Taken together, the 61 projects surveyed did not display such an intensity of intervention. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that the projects primarily targeted fathers in the public at large rather than fathers struggling with major difficulties, which made it unclear and very burdensome how to implement intensive intervention.

On the other hand, among the 15 projects that we felt had the best chances of succeeding, several project managers applied this intensive approach by making available a variety of activities in which a permanent nucleus of fathers diligently take part. A trend emerges in the combination of activities that makes it possible to reach fathers as a function of diverse points of view: individual support, a support group and a recreational group as well as father-child activities and family-oriented activities.

It is also to be noted that the few projects targeting fathers in difficulty are the ones that offer the most intense intervention. Evaluative research shows that this greater intensity of intervention



is necessary if any concrete effects are to be brought about among the most vulnerable clienteles such as those from disadvantaged neighbourhoods or those going through transition periods.

In this regard the presence of a permanent project worker contributes to the intensity of intervention because it introduces an element of consistency and continuity in the project and thus fosters the participation of fathers in all of the activities offered.

► Projects will be more likely to succeed... if they provide a range of activities that make it possible to reach the most vulnerable fathers in different spheres of their existence, and in an intense and sustained fashion; and if these activities are carried out in a context of consistency and continuity, especially with the presence of the same project worker.

9. Public awareness campaigns: awakening, changing or strengthening public opinion.

The 15 projects described in this catalogue averaged two public awareness activities each—a much higher average than the other projects surveyed. Here are some examples:

-A travelling exhibition of children's

drawings illustrating how they perceive their fathers,

- An appreciation of fathering campaign,
- An organized neighbourhood celebration starring fathers,
- The distribution of a series of eight informational door hangers to all of the households in the neighbourhood.

Some promotional tools employed in other projects surveyed also deserve mention:

- A guide for fathers on caring for infants,
- A Web site (< www.dadscan.org >),
- A poster about breast feeding,
- A video on what it's like to be an adolescent father.

► Projects will be more likely to succeed... if project workers organize or take part in public awareness activities or design promotional tools.

10. Political pressure and action (lobbying): indirect strategies of influence.

The projects for divorced fathers that work toward increased equity and justice in family law were the only ones among the projects surveyed that directly influenced government policy or direction. But a closer look reveals that the political nature of certain other

projects manifested itself instead through association with regional policy makers, influential researchers or managers of organizations within their communities. These partners often become torchbearers for fathering issues within their own organizations or they influence the directions of funding agencies and government policies.

► Projects will be more likely to succeed... if people who can influence public policy makers or who want to advance the social cause of fathers are associated with it.

11. A multiplicity of targets and of strategies for action: the priority must be fathers themselves, but taking account of the context.

On average, the 15 projects in this catalogue initiated more than twice as many activities as the others (4.4 versus 2.1). As with all the other projects, the most common activities were those designed specifically for fathers.

However, these 15 projects also stood out in another important respect: even if their primary target was the father, they also plan to widen their scope to include activities that enrich fathers' immediate environments or raise awareness in the

larger environment.

► Projects will be more likely to succeed... if they undertake activities that simultaneously target fathers and their families as well as fathers' immediate and larger environments.

12. Organizational support: the beneficent protection of a larger organization.

Most of the 15 projects were part of an umbrella organization whose mission was often broader than the project itself and provided it a certain organizational and financial stability. Essentially, these were CLSCs, multi-service community organizations, community family centres, schools, a public health board and a workplace.

These umbrella groups participated in various ways in the projects, and project leaders derived many benefits on a number of levels: financial, human, material and organizational. In particular:

- Project staff are paid out of the organization's budget.
- The organization takes care of the necessary steps to fund the project.
- The organization can cover unexpected budget shortfalls or help out financially during difficult months
- The organization can provide meeting rooms, childcare services, equipment

and administrative support staff.
-The project benefits from the organization's reputation in the community or from the fact that it has an existing clientele (often women) who have connections with fathers.
-Support from the directors of the organization (recognition, adherence to the project, direct involvement) facilitates project initiatives and operations while ensuring its survival.

► A project will be more likely to succeed... if it supported by an umbrella organization whose mission is harmonious with the project's own objectives and from whose resources, clientele and network of partners it can benefit.

13. A support network for project workers: a lack of mutual and organizational support.

Creating support networks is vital for practitioners if they are to avoid isolation and burn-out, especially in an area such as paternal involvement, which is constantly evolving. However, among all the projects surveyed only a very few had activities aimed at supporting project workers.

Based on the experience of the project leaders who were interested in this factor, it can be said that the following means can contribute efficiently to

support practitioners working with fathers and transform them into influential agents of change in their communities:

- Create a coalition of practitioners belonging to various resource groups within a community.
- Form male-female dyads in order to enable them to play the role of agents of change and consciousness-raising within their organizations.
- Hold meetings so that practitioners can support and discuss with each other.

Project leaders insist that it is important that project administrators recognize the necessity of supporting project workers and follow up on it.

► A project will be more likely to succeed... if it provides activities that support its project workers, on the condition that the administrators of the organizations who employ them support the promotion of paternal involvement.

14. Quality partnerships: more partners means more activities.

A close look at all the projects reveals that the more partners there are, the more activities they offer. Partnerships help projects respond better to a wider range of needs of a greater number of fathers because they foster the sharing

of intervention skills. And even if the 15 projects described above had more partners than the primary sample of the 61 projects, they represent the same sectors: health, social services and community organizations.

Even though partnership is not always easy and can present any number of difficulties, the leaders of the 15 highlighted projects point out many advantages:

- Recruiting participants for project activities is facilitated.
- Both projects and umbrella organizations can make use of partnerships to shine in the community and be better known.
- The web of contacts formed through partnerships helps the project exert greater influence on other organizations in the milieu, and raises awareness of the importance of the role of the father and of adapting services to the needs and realities of fathers.
- Partnerships allow skills and resources to be shared and used more efficiently, ultimately translating into more services being offered to families.
- Belonging to a network of partners improves a project's chances of survival, most notably because it affords access to a pool of administrative and financial expertise, making it easier to get grants (especially since funding agencies often make partnership a

prerequisite) and helping to make up for any lack of human or material resources.

-Forming partnerships helps to create a local, regional or provincial network of organizations that have the same goals. This kind of network makes it easier to define common principles, to run combined activities and to share skills. It even make it possible to envision a broader plan of action to bolster promote paternal involvement.

-Partnerships create more favourable conditions for evaluative activities through the development of an evaluation plan and designing tools for data collection in a spirit of cooperation.

▶▶ Projects will be more likely to succeed...

if they collaborate with partners from various disciplines because that empowers them to respond to the whole range of fathers' needs in the fruitful context of dialogue and mutual benefit.

15. Stable and diversified funding: insufficient and shaky funding harms project longevity.

Nearly all of the 61 projects surveyed suffered from chronic under-funding, which clearly resulted in a perpetual lack of human and material resources.

As a result, project leaders end up running out of gas and the projects' chances of survival diminish.

By contrast, the 15 projects reported here had a variety of funding sources; notably by relying more on contributions and private foundations. That perhaps explains the fact that these projects had a lifespan on average two years longer than the other projects surveyed.

All the same, one constant must be noted: all the projects, including the 15 described here, have an inadequate budget at their disposal and cannot count on sufficient long-term funding. Many receive only short-term funding (one-time or one-year grants) that often ends before the activities themselves do.

This under-funding is the source of a whole series of irritants and inconveniences:

- It forces activities to be suspended, especially during the summer, meaning projects cannot fulfill the expectations of target clientele.
- It hinders the permanent presence of a project worker.
- It prevents the hiring of fundraising personnel.
- It puts team members under constant stress and consumes much of their energy.
- It slows down the pace at which a project can be implemented.

►►Projects will be more likely to succeed... if they have diversified sources of funding, if partners share their resources, and if the sources of funding assure long-term support.

16. Rigorous project evaluation: there is a concern with needs but still little over results.

Project evaluation is the use of rigorous and systematic methods to identify with precision certain important aspects of a project's operation or effectiveness. It is also an opportunity for staff to question and improve their practices.

Slightly over half of the projects surveyed had no procedure for systematically evaluating their activities. The project leaders who said they had an evaluative procedure dwelt most often on analyzing needs, describing the clientele or evaluating participant satisfaction. Only ten projects tried to assess the effects of their intervention on participants by evaluating, for example, the fathers' feeling of competence after taking part in the project. Evaluations were carried out in equal measure by researchers and project staff.

One of the objectives of this survey was to cast a critical eye on the impacts of interventions as measured by systematic evaluations. However, none of the targeted project leaders sent in their evaluation reports or a summary of the evaluation. It is thus not possible to conduct a more detailed analysis of this important issue.

There are a number of factors that hamper project evaluation. There is, of course, the lack of financial resources necessary for thorough evaluation (notably, for hiring researchers, perfecting evaluative tools, creating control groups, hiring staff to carry out the evaluation and write reports). To this can be added the project workers' lack of time or sample sizes that are too small to conduct valid statistical analyses.

Finally, it should be remembered that though researchers often have acquired the necessary competence to carry out evaluations, practitioners can also be trained to this end and can participate actively, along with researchers, in the evaluation process.

►►Projects will be more likely to succeed... if they are endowed with a rigorous evaluative mechanism combined with the support of researchers.

Something to be proud of.

We asked respondents to describe a project activity that they were particularly proud of and to give the reasons why. Five main reasons brought about this sense of pride.

The philosophy of intervention.

This philosophy of intervention colours the content as much as the form of activities and one finds such comments as: "giving proof of flexibility," "adapting the content of the discussion groups to the fathers' realities," "discussing a variety of issues," or "going out to fathers' homes."

Contributing to the creation or the strengthening of the fathers' social support network.

Project spokespeople expressed pride in rallying fathers to demonstrate their solidarity and fellowship, in facilitating group discussions and in helping participants give and receive moral and emotional support.

The interest and steadfastness of participants.

The increased capacity of fathers to display their sensitivity and to express their emotions.

Bringing people together within the family, whether it be the father and his child, spouses or ex-spouses.





More tools for the toolbox

It is our hope that this catalogue will be an inspiration to the people who already work passionately to support fathers in their commitment to their children as well as to those who plan to join the efforts.

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A large percentage of the projects surveyed here often view the father as the first and only target of intervention. This reflects the trend of intervention and prevention programs in North America, namely, to attribute only to the person the responsibility for changes that the intervention is trying to bring about (Prilleltensky et al., 1999). Certainly, it is important to put in place interventions that target individual changes, but it should be recognized that currently, this type of intervention is not being counterbalanced by programs that are oriented more toward the influence of the environment and

the contexts in which the role of the father is normally played out. Some of the projects in this inventory do elegantly illustrate that intervention can be broadened to include contexts that have been thus far ignored and that affect many aspects of fathers' lives. However, certain environments in which fathers and families develop are not represented in this catalogue, most notably the work environment, employers' associations, trade unions, and employment and financial support services. These gaps demarcate a huge area in which we must learn to intervene in coming years.

On the occasion of the *Présences de pères Symposium*³⁶, a preliminary version of this catalogue was presented to about one hundred people, including the leaders of the 15 projects. This first national, comprehensive conference on

fathering took place in November of 2000 within the context of Quebec's annual public health week. One of this event's huge successes was the opportunity for workers in fathering projects from all over Canada to meet. During the symposium, as well as during the study that culminated in this catalogue, we marvelled at the remarkable personal investment of the men and women involved in these projects.

Unfortunately, as our data illustrate, it happens quite often that this energy spent so willingly is not supported with the funding necessary to ensure a project's survival. Projects would, however, be much more likely to endure if, as in most states in the U.S., Canada had a national strategy for developing appropriate programs and policies for the promotion and support of paternal

involvement. The types of programs developed by our southern neighbours at the state level have five basic components: 1) public awareness campaigns on paternal involvement, 2) the prevention of unwanted or premature fatherhood, 3) economic support for fathers, 4) the reinforcement of fathers' involvement in the care and affection lavished on their children, 5) the implementation of an action plan and national coordination on the intervention with fathers (Bernard and Knitzer, 1999). It doesn't take a visionary to see that Canadian fathers—not to mention their children and spouses—would have much more support in fulfilling their vital role if they could count on such a system.



LIST OF THE 61 PARTICIPANT PROJECTS

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Project name	First name	Last name	Name of the center
The Dads project*	Carolyn	Arseneault	Catholic Community Services
Coopère de Rosemont*	Suzanne Audette	Diane Rose	CLSC Rosemont
Le Regroupement pour la valorisation de la paternité*	Yvon Lemay	France Alarie	Le Carrefour familial Hochelaga
Pères à Part Entière*	Dominique	Arama	
Valoriser le rôle du père et promouvoir son engagement parental*	Francine Allard	Marc Bergeron	Comité pères régional
Pères présents enfants gagants*	Colette Thibaudeau	Denis Beauchamp	CLSC La Vallée des Patriotes
Entre hommes*	Guy	Beaudet	Polyvalente Veilleux
Place aux pères!*	Muriel Ménard	Luc Ferland	Cible Famille Brandon
Initiative Place-Ô-Pères*	Diane	Grenier	La Petite Maison de Pointe-Calumet
Sucess by six: Parenting Group for Fathers*	Jussara Lourenco	Fatima Valentim	St. Christopher House
Young Fathers' Program*	Tim	Paquette	Centre Youville Centre
Fathering*	Kim	VandenBroek	Family Resources for Victoria County
Fathering from Afar - newsletter*	Donna	Pettinger	Military Family Resource Centre
Fathers for equality*	Keith Harris	David Campbell	Victoria Men's Centre
New beginnings- Young Fathers Program*	Rick Hein	Debbie Jarvis	Abbotsford community services
Pères séparés inc. Separated fathers	Sylvain	Camus	Pères séparés inc.
RePÈRE (relation d'entraide pour une paternité renouvelée)	André	Guimond	
Un père engagé, Formation aux intervenants	Francine Ouellet	Gilles Forget	DSP Montréal-Centre
Groupe de rencontres pour pères	Sonia	Langevin	Station Famille
Rencontres de pères (causerie)	Normand	Faust	Carrefour familial Hochelaga
Being mother Being father	Paul	Conroy	CLSC NDG/MIt-Ouest
Samedi d'être père	Jean-François	Leblanc	Entre Parents de montréal-Nord Inc.
Rencontres prénatales	Marc Caron	Pierre Desjardins	CLSC St-Léonard

* projects in this book

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695, Robert Cliche	Saint-Joseph de Beauce	QC	G0S 2V0	4183976841	4183976883	guy.beaudet@csbe.qc.ca
15, rue Monday	St-Gabriel-de-Brandon	QC	J0K 2N0	4508359094	4508353935	cible.famille.brandon@qc.aira.com
861, boulevard de la Chapelle	Pointe-Calumet	QC	J0N 1G2	4509747556	4509741960	petitemaison@qc.aira.com
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Box 8082	Victoria	BC	V8W 3R7	2503860145		keithnharris@canada.com
2420, Montrose Avenue	Abbotsford	BC	V2S 3S9	6048506984	6048558765	Rick_Hein@sd34.abbotsford.bc.ca
5810, rue Sherbrooke est	Montréal	QC	H1N1B2	5148961409	5142552852	ps_i2001@yahoo.com
39 A, boul. Gouin Ouest	Montréal	QC	H3L 1H9	5143320089	5143328365	
1301, Sherbrooke Est	Montréal	QC	H2L 1M3	5145282400		
2385, Jolicoeur	Montréal	QC	H4E 1X9	5147622525	6047629383	
3575, rue Lafontaine	Montréal	QC	H1W 1V5	5145239283	5245295646	cafaho@cam.org
2525, boul. Cavendish bureau 110	Montréal	QC	H4B 2Y4	5144851670	5144856406	
4828, boul. Gouin est	Montréal-Nord	QC	H1H 1G4	5143291233	5143291233	
5540, Jarry Est	St-Léonard	QC	H1P 1T9	5143283460	5143282976	

Project name	First name	Last name	Name of the center
Ciné-forum	Marc	Caron	CLSC St-Léonard
Smart Dad	Deborah	Forde	
Animation d'un échange entre futurs papas	Jacques	Bourgeois	Centre de Santé Sainte-Famille
Atelier CESAME pour l'estime de soi	Eleni	Niflis	Société d'aide à l'enfance de Laval Ouest
Entre pères	Jacqueline Buteau	Suzanne Coache	CLSC Richelieu
Le chapeau de papa, je le mets	Estelle	Ouellette	L'ami-e du Quartier
Ateliers de jeux et de socialisation père-enfant	Lysiane	Martin	Carrefour naissance famille du Bas-Richelieu
Être parents jeunes/ support à l'allaitement : rôle du père	Céline	Benny	Défi-Famille Matawinie
Je me sens mieux	Sylvie	Lafontaine	Réseau d'appui aux familles monoparentales Estrie
Services aux pères	Mario	Denault-Landry	Naissance Renaissance- Estrie
Qui père, gagne	Jules-Henri Gourges	Shirley Cantin	Ressources-Naissance
Entraide pères-enfants séparés de l'Outaouais	Jacques	Dupuis	CAP Santé
Groupe Pères	Yvon	Rousseau	CLSC des Hautes Marées
Activités Pères Enfants	Danny	Roy	CLSC Jacques-Cartier
Entraide entre pères	Gilles Ayotte	Gérard Brisson	Le Groupe image au Témiscamingue
Intervention auprès des pères (Formation)	Thérèse Hivon-Lizée	Dominique Renaud	Régie Régionale d'Abbotti Témiscamingue, DSP
Être Père	Yvon	St-Hilaire	CLSC-Centre de Santé des Sept-Rivières
Fathers' Nobody's perfect	Mark	Taylor	Toronto Public Health, Parkdale Health Centre
Father's focus group	William	Watson	Family Practice, St. Michael's hospital
Fathering workshops	Rick	Goodwin	Men's project of Ottawa Carlton
D.A.D.S. of Durham region	Sylvia	Robillard	John Howard Society of Durham
Dads' Class	Neil	Campbell	St-Mary's Annex room 411
Dads Can	Nicky	Cordy	St-Mary's Annex room 411
The new baby owner's manual for dads	Pam Carr	Marilyn Heath	Addington Health Unit
Father to father- discussion rgoup for fathers	Adam	Moris	Peterborough Family Resource Centre
Ontario region fathering initiative	Phillippe	Lelièvre	Peterborough Family Ressource Centre

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22, rue Notre-Dame Nord. CP 2000	Ville-Marie	QC	J0Z 3W0	8196222773	8196293257	
7190, 21ème avenue	Laval	QC	H7R 3G8	4509623367	4509623367	
633, 12ème Avenue	Richelleu	QC	J3L 4V5	4506587561	4506584390	
655, Fillion	St-Jérôme	QC	J7Z 1J6	4504311424	4504387762	
27, rue de la Reine	Sorel	QC	J3P 6J3	4507430359	4507438529	cnfbr@sorel-tracy.qc.ca
244, Ste-Louise, CP 398	St-Jean-de-Matha	QC	J0K 2S0	4508860458	4508861440	defifamille@autray.net
584, London	Sherbrooke	QC		8198223451		
1190, rue Bowen sud	Sherbrooke	QC	J1G 2H1	8195693119	8195696177	
260, rue De l'Église C.P. 43026	St-Romuald	QC	G6W 7N2	4188311796	4188341186	resnais@globetrotter.net
92, Boul. Saint-Raymond suite 203	Hull	QC	J8Y 1S7	8199200352	8197715566	pater@travel-net.com
3108, chemin Ste-Foy	Ste-Foy	QC	G1X 1P8	4186512572	4186574569	
62, boulevard Valcartier	Loretteville	QC	G2A 2M5	4188433001	4188434639	
32-B, rue Notre-Dame Ouest. CP 563	Lorrainville	QC	J0Z 2RO	8196222773	8196293257	
1, 9ème rue	Rouyn-Noranda	QC	J9X 2A9	8197643264	8197971947	lize@cablevision.qc.ca
405, av. Brochu	Sept-Iles	QC	G4R 2W9	4189622572	4189621858	
1115, Queen Street West	Toronto	ON	M6J 1J1	4163920888	4163920631	mtaylor2@city.toronto.on.ca
30 Bond St.	Toronto	ON	M5B 1W5	4168677426	4168677498	atsonw@smh.toronto.on.ca
180, Argyle Ave. room 327	Ottawa	ON	K2P 1B7	6132306179	6132306173	
492, Simcoe Street South	Oshawa	ON	L1H 4J8	9055798482	9054350352	jhsodu@oix.com
35, Grosvenor Street	London	ON	N6A 1Y6	5196466095	5196676836	
35, Grosvenor Street	London	ON	N6A 1Y6	5196466095	5196676836	nickkie@dadsan.org
221, Portsmouth Ave	Kingston	ON	K7M 1V5	6135491232	6135497896	carr99@govonca2.gov.on.ca
201, Antrim Street	Peterborough	ON	K9H 3G5	7052927164	7057489177	
201, Antrim Street	Peterborough	ON	K9H 3G5	4504510459		plelièvre@videotron.ca

Project name	First name	Last name	Name of the center
Young father's group	Jerry Andrechek	Kim Boatman	St. Monica House
Parenting classes/Family support program	Judy	Stephen	Timmins Native Friendship Centre
Breast feeding poster	Marilyn	Heath	Porcupine Health Unit
Family conference	Bernice	Korzenoski	Kenora association for community living
Moms/Pops/Tots drop-in	Jane	Thompson	Family and Community Action Program
Focus for fathers	Edward	Bader	Catholic Community Services of York Region
Teen fathers workshops	Dianne	Brunette	Louise Dean Centre- Catholic family services
Access Parenting Program/ Outreach support for dads (25 and below)	John	Gotowiec	Westcoast Family Resources Society
Fathers without custody or access support group	Jerry	Arthur-Wong	BC Men's Resource Centre
Fatherhood: Job description Please!	Hanne	Fair	James Bay community project
The Nurturing Fatherhood program	Guy	Thisdelle	Kids Turn of Greater Vancouver Society
The fathering project	John	MacGilchrist	Family Education and Support Centre

Address	City	Prov.	Postal code	Phone	Fax	E-mail
231, Herbert Street	Waterloo	ON	N2J 1V1	5197430291	5197430292	
316, Spruce street south	Timmins	ON	P4N 7C3	7052686262	7052686266	
169, Pine Street South	Timmins	ON	P4N 8B7	7052671181	7052643980	info4you@porcupine.on.ca
501, 8th Avenue South	Kenora	ON	P9N 3Z9	8074675225	8074675247	kaclcs@voyageur.ca
1400, Bayly Street, Office mall 1, unit 16B	Pickering	ON	L1W 3R2	8002147163	9058399687	fcap@weeb.net
21, Dunlop, suite 101	Richmond Hill	ON	L4C 2M6	9057707040	9057707064	ccsyr@accessv.com
120-23rd Street NW	Calgary	AB	T2N 2P1	4037777635	4032838899	diane.brunette@cfs-ab.org
2240, Commercial Drive	Vancouver	BC	V5N 4B5	6048746840	6042546169	John_Gotowiec@telus.net
2-590 West Broadway	Vancouver	BC	V5Z 1E9	6048789033		familyed@vcn.bc.ca
547, Michigan St.	Victoria	BC	V8V 1S5	2503887844	2503887856	hfair@jbcp.bc.ca
23078-70A ave	Langley	BC		6042441704	6048880992	kidsturn@home.com
22554, Longheed Hwy	Maple Ridge	BC	V2X 2V1	6044676055	6044675668	familyed@vcn.bc.ca



On Fathers' Ground
A portrait of projects to support and promote fathering



Groupe de recherche et d'action
sur la victimisation des enfants



Alliance de recherche
sur le développement des
enfants dans la communauté

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