



Engaging Fathers Presenter Notes



This guide provides information about the slide contents and background information for presenters. Estimated time to present this module is just over three hours.

Some activities require self-reflection and discussion of potentially sensitive topics. Reading the slides, notes, discussion topics, and activities ahead of time will help prepare the instructor to present topics more fully and anticipate areas that may require more guidance.

References throughout the presenter notes and in this module's accompanying resource list can also help instructors prepare to present this module.

It is recommended that presenters be familiar with the Framework and complementary materials developed by the Office of Head Start's National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center website:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-engagement>.



SLIDE 1 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION: ENGAGING FATHERS

This module focuses on ways that early childhood educators can work alongside and engage fathers in early learning programs. This module is for educators working with children from birth to age 5.

Note that you may want to bring children’s books for participants to review later in this module (Slide 41) when they are thinking about how children’s books represent men and fathers.

Begin by sharing background information about yourself. Then provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves.

Overview

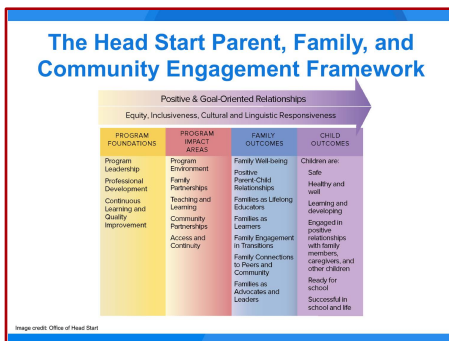
This module will focus on:

- Understanding the roles of fathers in children’s well-being and development.
- Responsive ways to partner with fathers to foster children’s development and learning.
- Strategies to create a welcoming environment for fathers.

SLIDE 2 OVERVIEW

This module focuses on:

- Understanding the roles of fathers in their children’s well-being and development.
- Responsive ways to partner with fathers to foster children’s development and learning.
- Strategies to create a welcoming environment for fathers.



SLIDE 3 THE HEAD START PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

With a solid program foundation in place for parent, family, and community engagement, program leadership and staff can partner with parents, families, and communities to promote family engagement and positive outcomes for families and children.

Family engagement also includes a specific focus on father engagement. The activity on the next slide will ask participants to discuss how the topic of engaging fathers aligns with the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework.

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REFERENCES

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2013). *Head Start father engagement birth to five programming guide*.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/docs/seven-step-father-engagement-guide.pdf>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2011). *The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting family engagement and school readiness, from prenatal to age 8*.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/policy-im/pfce-framework.pdf>



Where Does It Fit?

Which parts of the Framework does this module topic relate to?

- Turn and exchange ideas with a partner.
- Be ready to share your thoughts with the whole group.

SLIDE 4

DISCUSSION: WHERE DOES IT FIT?

Materials: Flip chart and marker

Share the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework with participants. You may want to print out a few copies of it, ask participants to look at it online, or review it as a group.

Ask participants to think about how the module topic (*Engaging Fathers*) fits within the Framework. Guide them to look at the Program Impact Area of the Framework in particular. Write their responses on the flip chart for the group to see.

Participants will revisit this activity at the end of this module, so you may want to see what they discover over the course of the module.

Ultimately, participants should identify that family engagement strategies in this module align with these impact areas:

- Program Environment. Program staff help create a safe and welcoming environment for fathers.
- Family Partnerships. Program staff and fathers build relationships to support family and child development goals.
- Teaching and Learning. Fathers are equal partners in encouraging children's development and learning.

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Participants may also focus on family engagement outcomes, such as Positive Parent-Child Relationships, where fathers develop bonds that nurture and promote their child's learning and development.

REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2011). *The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting family engagement and school readiness, from prenatal to age 8*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/policy-im/pfcef-framework.pdf>



SLIDE 5 RESOURCES

The *Head Start Father Engagement Birth to Five Programming Guide* aligns with the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework and offers ideas for father engagement throughout early learning programs.

REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2013). *Head Start father engagement birth to five programming guide*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/docs/seven-step-father-engagement-guide.pdf>

A Program-Wide Approach

- A focus on the quality of full-program engagement
- Opportunities for educators and other program staff to further develop competence and confidence in partnering with fathers

SLIDE 6 A PROGRAM-WIDE APPROACH

When early learning programs facilitate and promote positive father engagement, there will most likely be a positive effect for children, families, and communities. Engaged fathers contribute to the well-being of their children and families.

In the *Head Start Father Engagement Birth to Five Programming Guide*, father engagement is described as "...making a commitment to a partnership. Engagement is rooted in positive relationships. With involvement, there is an emphasis on being present. With engagement, there is a focus on creating and sustaining ongoing relationships. The intent is to support families and to benefit children's learning and development." (Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, 2013, p. 1)

REFERENCES

Palkovitz, R. (2007). Challenges to modeling dynamics in a developmental understanding of father-child relationships. *Journal of Applied Developmental Science*, 11, 190-195.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2013). *Head Start father engagement birth to five programming guide*.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/docs/seven-step-father-engagement-guide.pdf>



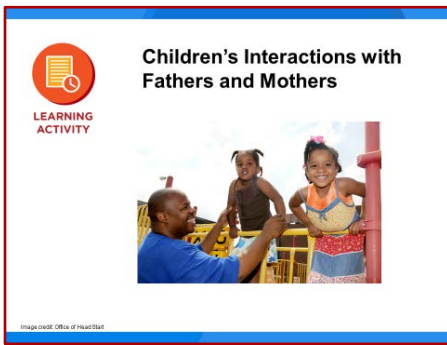
By the end of this module, you should be able to:

- Describe the impact on children when fathers are involved in their lives.
- Identify ways to encourage the relationships of fathers and children.
- Use different approaches to create a welcoming environment for fathers and other important men in children's lives.

SLIDE 7 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, participants should be able to:

- Describe the impact on children when fathers are involved in their lives.
- Identify ways to encourage the relationships of fathers and their children.
- Use different approaches to create a welcoming environment for fathers and other important men in children's lives.



SLIDE 8

LEARNING ACTIVITY: CHILDREN'S INTERACTIONS WITH FATHERS AND MOTHERS

Materials: *Children's Interactions With Fathers and Mothers* handout, chart paper or dry erase board, markers

In this activity, participants think broadly about children's interactions with mothers and fathers.

Divide the participants into small groups. Distribute the activity handout to each participant. Review the directions, and give participants time to discuss the questions in small groups.

Ask participants to share ideas from their small groups with the whole group. Record ideas in a place that is visible to all participants. Note repeated ideas and similar responses. Leave participants' ideas up throughout the session in a visible location, and refer to them as you move through the material.

Points to highlight:

Men demonstrate the same capacity to nurture children as women do, but there are often differences in how mothers and fathers interact with young children. These differences are important and help prepare children for the experiences they will have with different people as they grow.

Expectations for fathers and mothers vary according to culture. For instance, different cultures define *good fathering*, plus the level of fathers' expected involvement with children, differently.

It is important for early childhood educators to recognize that their own experiences with important men in their lives may also influence their ideas about father-child relationships. Educators should be aware of their own feelings in this area as well as those of families.

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The article *Appreciating How Fathers Give Children a Head Start* shares the idea that:

Fatherhood is just as essential to healthy child development as motherhood. The professional journal, *Review of General Psychology*, finds that “Evidence suggests that the influence of father love on offspring’s development is as great as and occasionally greater than the influence of mother love.” Fathering expert Dr. Kyle Pruett explains in *Fatherneed: Why Father Care is as Essential as Mother Care for Your Child*, “Fathers do not mother.” *Psychology Today* states that “Fatherhood turns out to be a complex and unique phenomenon with huge consequences for the emotional and intellectual growth of children.” Erik Erikson, a pioneer in the world of child psychology, explained that father love and mother love are qualitatively different kinds of love. Fathers “love more dangerously,” Erikson states, because their love is more “expectant, more instrumental” than a mother’s love. A father, as a male biological parent, brings unique contributions to the job of parenting a child that no one else can provide. (Youth and Families Head Start Bureau, 2004, p. 8)

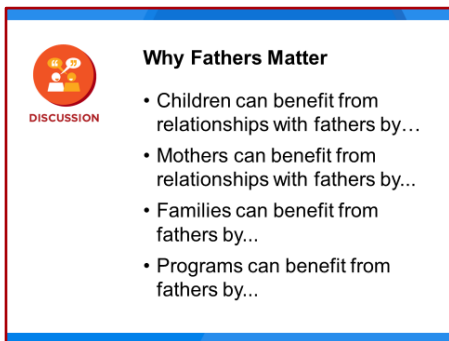
REFERENCES

- Miller, W., & Maiter, S. (2008, October). Fatherhood and culture: Moving beyond stereotypical understandings. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 17*, 279-300.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2013). *Head Start father engagement birth to five programming guide*.
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/docs/seven-step-father-engagement-guide.pdf>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families Head Start Bureau. (2004, June). *Building blocks for father involvement: Building block 1: Appreciating how fathers give children a head start*.
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/building-blocks-01-appreciating-how-fathers-give-children.pdf>



SLIDE 9 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FATHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN

This section will invite participants to explore the relationships of fathers and their children.



SLIDE 10 DISCUSSION: WHY FATHERS MATTER

Materials: Four pieces of chart paper, markers

In what ways do fathers matter to children? To mothers? To families? To programs?

Post four pieces of chart paper around the room. Divide the participants into four groups, and give each group a marker. Ask them to brainstorm endings to each of these sentences and write their responses on the chart paper. Each small group can focus on one topic or rotate across all four pieces of chart paper.

Ask groups to share their responses with the whole group.

Highlight that when fathers are involved in children's lives, they:

- Contribute to their children's well-being and development, including school readiness. More than 100 studies on parent-child relationships showed that the presence of a loving and nurturing father positively impacted children's healthy social and emotional development and school success as much as nurturing, loving relationships with their mothers.
- Support the positive parenting of mothers. Fathers' perceptions of their partners' beliefs in their abilities to parent children well can also boost their confidence in their parenting skills and motivation to parent.
- Add to the well-being of the family.
- Show positive gains in their own development and life decisions. Fathers tend to find more meaning and joy in life, and they abuse substances or commit crimes less frequently.

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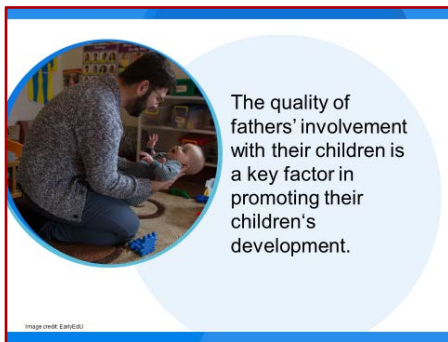
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In addition, emphasize that just as families come into early learning programs with different values and experiences, they also have varying family structures, such as blended families, single fathers or mothers, mothers and grandmothers, foster parents, and grandparents.

REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2013). *Head Start father engagement birth to five programming guide*.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/docs/seven-step-father-engagement-guide.pdf>



SLIDE 11

The quality of fathers' involvement with their children is a key factor in promoting their children's development.

It is well documented that both mothers and fathers bond with their newborn infants. Their brains react the same way when babies cry. Fathers may experience amazement and pride in the birth.

Fathers may have additional emotional reactions to the birth of a child. They may experience tension as they are pulled between helping their partner, maintaining financial or other commitments, and caring for older children. Some fathers also feel a sense of helplessness if there are complications at birth or if they do not feel confident helping their partner.

REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2013). *Head Start father engagement birth to five programming guide*.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/docs/seven-step-father-engagement-guide.pdf>

Fathers' Unique Roles

Father and mother parenting styles can overlap, but often have unique differences.

Fathers tend to:

- Encourage more exploration and independent behavior in young children.
- Use language that stretches and challenges children's language competency.
- Use complementary discipline and parenting strategies.

SLIDE 12 FATHERS' UNIQUE ROLES

While new fathers may experience many of the same emotional reactions as new mothers, they do tend to parent differently.

Research indicates that fathers tend to encourage more exploration and independent behavior in young children, use language that stretches and challenges children's language competency, and use complementary discipline and parenting strategies.

Complementary interactions of fathers may include more:

- Physical play with children
- Problem-solving
- Constructive risk-taking

REFERENCES

Pruett, Kyle D. (2000). *Fatherneed: Why father care is as essential as mother care for your child*. New York, NY: Free Press.

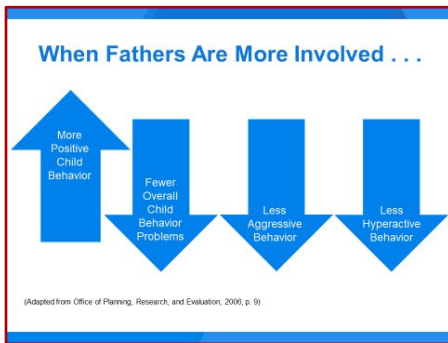
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (n.d.). *Engaging fathers*. In Best Practices in Family and Community Engagement Video Series. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/engaging-fathers>



SLIDE 13 THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE

It is important to remember that culture plays a large role in determining how mothers and fathers interact with each other and their children.

For instance, depending on their own upbringing, fathers may have varying levels of comfort in nurturing and playful roles.



SLIDE 14

WHEN FATHERS ARE MORE INVOLVED . . .

Research highlights the link between father involvement and child development. Fathers influence their children’s development and engage in both nurturing and educational activities. Positive fathering promotes improved developmental outcomes in social and emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and other areas.

The quality of male parenting is important. The more extensive that fathers’ attachment, involvement, and emotional and economic investment is with their children, the greater the gains that children make in reaching learning outcomes and developing social skills, empathy, and positive self-esteem. These positive outcomes are independent of the impact of mothers’ parenting.

The absence of fathers can have negative consequences on children’s development and outcomes. In the long term, the absence of fathers can increase the likelihood that children will drop out of school, exhibit disruptive behavior, and experience challenges as adults, such as poor health.

REFERENCES

Spielberger, J., Gouvea, M., Dinata, E., & Fleischman, L. (2015). *Father involvement in early childhood development: A brief report from the Palm Beach County Family Study*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

https://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/Father%20Involvement%20in%20Early%20Childhood%20Development_final.pdf

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. (2006, December 15). *“Friendly FACES”—FACES findings: New research on Head Start outcomes and program quality*. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/friendly-faces-faces-findings-new-research-on-head-start-outcomes-and>

Impacts on Father-Child Interactions

- The father's relationship with his own parents and his partner's parents
- His partner's attitude toward his father role
- The timing of fatherhood (life stage, career stage)
- The communities of support around the father
- His residential status with his children

SLIDE 15 IMPACTS ON FATHER-CHILD INTERACTIONS

Many factors influence a father's interactions with his children:

- His own experiences with his parents are important. What was his relationship like with his own father? What male role models did he have?
- If he has a partner, his partner's parents may also play a role. Are they supportive of him and his decisions?
- If he has a partner, his partner's attitudes toward a father's role are critical. As discussed earlier, a partner's expectations and confidence in a man's fathering ability is an important consideration in parenting.
- A variety of life stressors also impact a father's connections. Young or teen fathers face different stressors than older parents. The pressures a man faces professionally and personally may influence the time and energy he has to connect.
- A father's friends, neighbors, and family members are important. Does he attend events with other fathers and children?
- A father's residential status is also a factor. Fathers who do not live with their children have fewer opportunities to interact.

REFERENCE

Smith, J. A. (2009, June). *The daddy brain*. Berkeley, CA: The Greater Good.

http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/the_daddy_brain

Recognizing and Encouraging



Educators can:

- Recognize and understand the influence of culture on manhood and fatherhood.
- Encourage a father's efforts to connect with, nurture, and enjoy his child at each developmental stage.

SLIDE 16 RECOGNIZING AND ENCOURAGING

It's important for early childhood educators to recognize and understand the relationship between a father and child in a way that is culturally receptive and responsive, as well as a father's efforts to connect with and guide his child at all ages and stages of development.

Ways to Support

- Observe and stay curious.
- Find out how fathers and their children like to spend time together.
- Acknowledge responsive interactions.
- Explore with fathers which program activities allow them to contribute most to their children's learning.

SLIDE 17 WAYS TO SUPPORT

These are practices that can help an early childhood educator support fathers' relationships with their children:

- Observe and stay curious.
- Find out how fathers and their children like to spend time together.
- Acknowledge responsive interactions.
- Explore with fathers which program activities allow them to contribute most to their children's learning.



VIDEO

Helping Fathers FIND Their Strengths

The videos on the next two slides highlight a fatherhood initiative at the University of Washington.

SLIDE 18 HELPING FATHERS FIND THEIR STRENGTHS

Next, participants will watch two videos that describe a fatherhood initiative at the University of Washington. The videos describe results of the FIND (Filming Interactions to Nurture Development) intervention for Latino fathers to support their interactions with their children.



VIDEO: Helping Fathers FIND Their Strengths

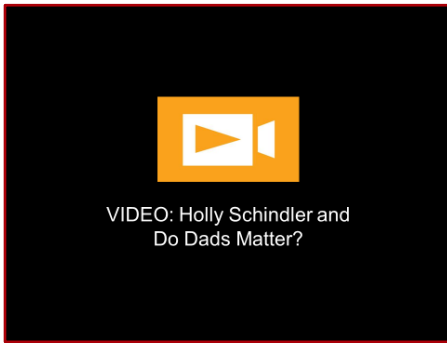
SLIDE 19 VIDEO: HELPING FATHERS FIND THEIR STRENGTHS

Click the icon to access the video *Helping Fathers FIND Their Strengths*.

Note: The PowerPoint presentation must be in Slide Show mode to link to the video.

REFERENCE

University of Washington, College of Education. (2016, September). *Helping fathers FIND their strengths* [Video file]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYdMGnBnR8k&feature=youtu.be>



SLIDE 20

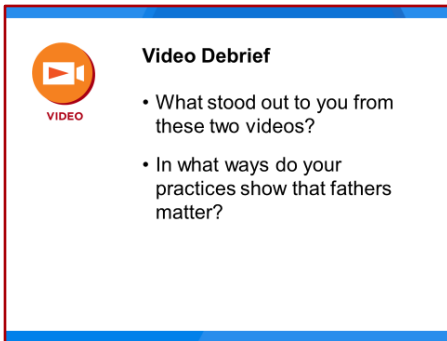
VIDEO: HOLLY SCHINDLER & DO DADS MATTER?

Click the icon to access the video *Holly Schindler & Do Dads Matter?*

Note: The PowerPoint presentation must be in Slide Show mode to link to the video.

REFERENCE

University of Washington, College of Education. (2016, September). *EDU Talks: Holly Schindler & Do Dads Matter?* [Video file]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QuNTp6RaRIM>



SLIDE 21

VIDEO DEBRIEF

Read the questions to support a discussion about the two videos.

Possible highlights include:

- Fathers make powerful and unique contributions to their children's ongoing development and learning.
- Early childhood programs can examine their program practices to include the voices of fathers.
- Noticing strengths of fathers can help enhance their ongoing interactions with their children.
- The role of fathers can include providing nurturing care to their children in addition to acting as providers for their families.



SLIDE 22

CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR FATHERS

This section will help participants explore ways to create a welcoming environment for fathers.

Engaging and Welcoming Fathers



Program staff can engage fathers with welcoming attitudes and approaches to:

- Everyday routines
- Father events
- Program environment
- Classroom spaces

Image credit: Office of HeadStart

SLIDE 23 ENGAGING AND WELCOMING FATHERS

Early learning program staff can engage fathers with welcoming attitudes and approaches during:

- Everyday routines like arrival and departure
- Events for fathers to engage with their children
- Design of the physical program environment
- Design of classroom spaces

Upcoming slides will describe strategies in these areas in more detail.

Messages Matter

When mothers, teachers, and others in a child's life show confidence in a father's parenting, a father will feel more **motivated, competent, involved, and satisfied** in his parenting role.

SLIDE 24 MESSAGES MATTER

Mothers, partners, educators, and others in children's lives play a part in supporting the role of fathers. When parenting partners show confidence in a father's parenting ability, he feels more motivated and competent as a parent. This creates a positive loop in which fathers continue to develop enriching and enjoyable relationships with their children.

Program staff also convey important messages to fathers. Educators can convey in everyday interactions with fathers that they see them as capable and confident parents.

REFERENCE

Bouchard, G., Lee, C., Asgary, V., & Pelletier, L. (2007). Fathers' motivation for involvement with their children: A self-determination theory perspective. *Fathering: A Journal of Theory, Research, and Practice about Men as Fathers*, 5(1), 25-41.

https://selfdeterminationtheory.org/SDT/documents/2007_BouchardLeeAsgaryPelletier_F.pdf

REFLECTION

How do you find out how fathers feel when they come in and spend time in your program?

Image credit: EarlyEdU

SLIDE 25 REFLECTION

Reflection can help early childhood educators continue to consider and discover how personal experiences, beliefs, and values influence perspectives about engaging fathers.

Ask participants to reflect on this question: How do you find out how fathers feel when they come in and spend time in your program?

Early childhood educators can learn from fathers what is important and make efforts to get to know them as individuals and as family members.

If participants don't know how fathers feel about visiting their children's early learning program, invite them to think about ways they might find out.

How Can You Welcome Fathers in Everyday Routines?

- Arrival
- Departure
- Volunteer opportunities

Image credit: EarlyEdU

SLIDE 26 HOW CAN YOU WELCOME FATHERS IN EVERYDAY ROUTINES?

Arrival and departure are often main communication points for families and early childhood educators. It is also important to think about ways to invite fathers into the program as volunteers.

Arrival and Departure

- Greet fathers by name.
- Ask about the child's and father's day.
- Invite fathers to share about their children and parenting.
- Recognize a father's role as a primary caregiver and lifelong educator of his child.
- If parents arrive together, talk to both equally.
- Address fathers in all types of family structures equally.
- Be sensitive to fathers' needs, especially those who do not live with their children.

SLIDE 27 ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Fathers feel welcome when they are recognized as important and equal caregivers. Educators can:


- Greet fathers, all parents, and other caregivers by name.
- Ask about the father's and child's day, and engage in friendly conversation.
- Invite fathers to share about their children and parenting. For example, ask when an infant last ate, how a doctor's appointment went, or how to best help a toddler transition to the early learning environment.
- Recognize a father's role as a primary caregiver and lifelong educator of his child.
- If parents arrive together, talk to both. Ask questions equally.
- Address fathers in all types of family structures equally.
- Be sensitive to fathers' needs, especially those who do not live with their children.

Educators and other program staff may need to work together to arrange their schedules to allow time for brief conversations with fathers, mothers, and other caregivers at arrival and departure. Educators and parents can discuss convenient times to meet for longer conversations.

In some cultures, mothers provide the majority of care and are responsible for decisions about children. While it is important to be sensitive to family norms and preferences, early childhood educators should feel comfortable asking fathers questions about their children's care and addressing both parents during discussions about their children. They can reach out to two-father households, find out the terms that fathers prefer their children to call them, such as *daddy* or *papa*, and remember to think about the unique context of fathers who do not live with their children.

If time allows, facilitate a discussion about fathers who do not live with their children. Possible questions are:

- How can you engage fathers who do not live with their children?
- How might everyday routines be different for non-residential fathers?



Arrival at Family Child Care


As you watch this video, notice the interactions between the educator, father, and young children.

SLIDE 28

ARRIVAL AT FAMILY CHILD CARE

Next, participants will watch a video of a family's arrival at child care. Ask participants to consider this question while viewing the video:

What do you notice about the interactions between the educator, father, and young children?



VIDEO: Arrival at Family Child Care

SLIDE 29


VIDEO: ARRIVAL AT FAMILY CHILD CARE

Click the icon to access the video *Arrival at Family Child Care*.

Note: The PowerPoint presentation must be in Slide Show mode to link to the video.

REFERENCE

EarlyEdU. (2017). *Arrival at family child care* [Video file].
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/engaging-fathers-arrival-family-child-care>



Video Debrief

The educator:

- Greets the father and both children by name.
- Asks: "How are you today?"
- Listens as the father tells about the boys' breakfast.
- Checks in: "How did batting practice go last night?"
- Answers the father's questions.


SLIDE 30

VIDEO DEBRIEF

Before showing the responses on this slide, ask participants to share their comments about the video. The slide is animated so that responses appear one by one.

Highlight that the educator:

- Greets the father and both children by name.
- Asks: "How are you today?"
- Listens as the father tells about the boys' breakfast.
- Checks in: "How did batting practice go last night?"
- Answers the father's questions.



Getting on the Bus


- Watch this silent video of an interaction between a bus aide and a father.
- Afterward, you will work with a partner to prepare a role play for the interaction based on what you saw and what you would want to hear.

SLIDE 31 GETTING ON THE BUS

Share with participants that they will watch another video. This time, however, the video will be silent.

After watching the video, participants will work in small groups to prepare a role play based on the situation in the video. Participants will script a possible interaction between the educator, child, and father.

Ask participants to create positive interactions. If they need help getting started, review the types of interactions they saw the educator have with the father in the previous video.



VIDEO: Getting on the Bus


SLIDE 32 VIDEO: GETTING ON THE BUS

Click the icon to access the video *Getting on the Bus*.

Note: The PowerPoint presentation must be in Slide Show mode to link to the video.

REFERENCE

EarlyEdU. (2017). *Getting on the bus* [Video file].
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/engaging-fathers-getting-bus>



Video Debrief

Find a partner and write a script with possible interactions to go with the video.

Be ready to do a role play, acting out the parts in your script.

SLIDE 33 VIDEO DEBRIEF

Provide 15 to 20 minutes for participants to prepare their scripts. Participants may want to view the video again.

Ask for volunteers to act out their scripts.

Volunteers



- Invite fathers or male volunteers to take on roles they enjoy.
- Support active play.
- Notice and comment on connections between fathers and children.

Image credit: Eusebio

SLIDE 34 VOLUNTEERS


Another idea for engaging fathers is to welcome fathers as volunteers. Volunteering in the program can be a powerful opportunity for fathers. It also provides a chance for early childhood educators to develop warm relationships with fathers and their children. When fathers volunteer, program staff can observe fathers in authentic interactions with their own and other children.

Since some fathers may not be able to volunteer during the day, educators and other program staff can work with fathers to find ways for them to be involved or to create opportunities in early morning, evening, or other times that work for them.

Early childhood educators can invite fathers to share ideas and ways they would like to volunteer. This includes offering opportunities for fathers to be playful and active with their children. Educators can ask fathers what they enjoy doing with their children: Do they play with blocks, enjoy sports, read books, make music, or create art? Educators and fathers can design volunteer opportunities around fathers' strengths and interests.

REFERENCE

U.S. Cooperative Extension Service, eXtension Foundation. (2015, September). *Supporting dads in child care: Let's play!* <http://articles.extension.org/pages/66930/supporting-dads-in-child-care:-lets-play>

 **Volunteers in the Classroom**

Think about these questions while watching this video:

- What positive interactions do you see between the father and child?
- What might this experience be like for this father? The child?
- What else might the educator do?

SLIDE 35 VOLUNTEERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Share with participants that they will watch a video of a father volunteering in a classroom. Ask them to consider these questions while watching the video on the next slide:

- What positive interactions do you see between the father and child?
- What might this experience be like for this father? The child?
- What else might the educator do?



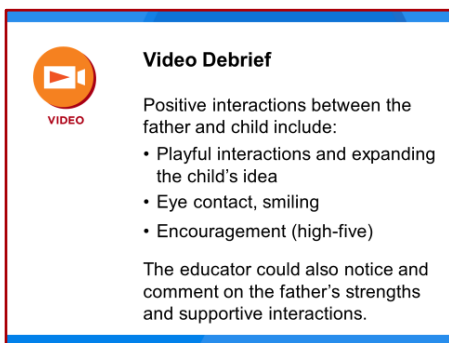
SLIDE 36 VIDEO: VOLUNTEERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Click the icon to access the video *Volunteers in the Classroom*.

Note: The PowerPoint presentation must be in Slide Show mode to link to the video.

REFERENCE

EarlyEdU Alliance. (2017). *Volunteers in the classroom* [Video file]. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/engaging-fathers-volunteers-classroom>



SLIDE 37 VIDEO DEBRIEF

Before showing possible responses on the slide, ask participants to share their comments about the video. This slide is animated so that responses appear one by one.

Possible interactions to highlight:

- Playful interactions and expanding the child's idea
- Eye contact, smiling
- Encouragement (high-five)

The father and child appear engaged and are interacting with one another. The educator could also notice and comment on the father's strengths and supportive interactions.



SLIDE 38 IMAGES OF FATHERS

Early learning program spaces also make a difference for fathers. Educators and other program staff can make sure that men can be seen in a variety of roles, including caring and nurturing ones, throughout the program:

- Staff roles and volunteering
- Posters
- Flyers
- Artwork

Inviting Program Spaces

- Open floor space or adult-size furniture
- Décor that appeals to both men and women
- Resource library with materials of interest to fathers, such as books on fatherhood
- Male staff role models
- Posters showing fathers in a variety of family structures

SLIDE 39 INVITING PROGRAM SPACES

Programs can also consider:

- Open floor space or adult-size furniture
- Décor that appeals to both men and women
- A resource library with materials of interest to fathers, such as books on fatherhood
- Male staff role models
- Posters showing fathers in different family structures

Classroom Images



Include photos of fathers and other important men in children's lives.

SLIDE 40 CLASSROOM IMAGES

In addition to program spaces, classroom spaces should be welcoming to fathers. Educators should include photos of fathers and other important men in children's lives.

Classroom Books



Look at the books in your classroom.

- In what ways do they represent men?
- How do they represent fathers?

SLIDE 41 CLASSROOM BOOKS

Materials: *Children's Booklist Focusing on Men and Fathers* handout

Educators can examine their classroom libraries for representations of men and fathers.

You may want to bring a variety of children's books with you to review with participants.

The booklist offers suggestions for adding diverse representations of fathers and families to reading areas.

Program-Wide Practices

Some practices are:

- Make sure that staff composition reflects cultures and languages of participating families.
- Focus on all adults promoting healthy child development and setting goals.
- Offer fathers' groups and father-focused workshops.
- Explore fathers' needs for services, support, and resources.

SLIDE 42 PROGRAM-WIDE PRACTICES

Some practices are:

- Make sure that staff composition reflects cultures and languages of participating families.
- Focus on all adults promoting healthy child development and setting goals.
- Offer fathers' groups and father-focused workshops.
- Explore fathers' needs for services, support, and resources.

Early learning programs can help ensure that all program staff recognize and value the individuality of fathers and honor them as part of the whole family, as well as members of cultural groups in the community. Program leadership can help staff understand and learn more, not only about individual fathers and fatherhood, but also about cultural groups in the community.

In addition, program leadership can encourage staff to reflect on daily practices, such as:

- How do we greet fathers?
- How are fathers welcomed into the classroom environment?
- How do we learn from fathers about their roles and what would be supportive of their roles?
- Are home visits scheduled when fathers are available?

Programs can consider ways to engage fathers across all program services and supports (program-wide commitment). In addition, programs should continually evaluate approaches to engaging fathers and make changes to improve program services and outcomes.

It is also important for programs to consider the forms that they give to families. Educators and other program staff can consider these types of questions:

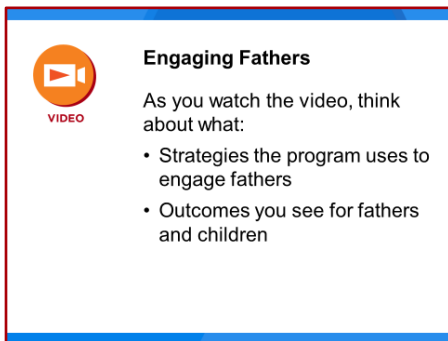
- Are there spaces on forms for both parents to provide information or forms for divorced or single fathers?
- Are both parents included on email lists and automated phone call lists for school cancellations or emergencies?
- Are gender neutral terms used on the form to welcome LGBT families?

Continued on next page

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REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2013). *Head Start father engagement birth to five programming guide*.
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/docs/seven-step-father-engagement-guide.pdf>



Engaging Fathers

As you watch the video, think about what:

- Strategies the program uses to engage fathers
- Outcomes you see for fathers and children

SLIDE 43 ENGAGING FATHERS

Participants will view a video of an early learning program that is putting into action father engagement practices.

Ask participants to watch and listen for:

- Strategies to engage fathers
- Outcomes for fathers and children

Note that at the end of the video are additional questions that you could have participants discuss.



VIDEO: Engaging Fathers

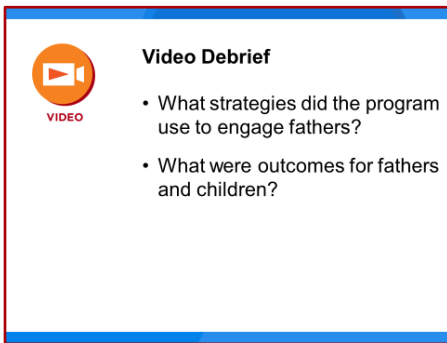
SLIDE 44 VIDEO: ENGAGING FATHERS

Click the icon to access the video *Engaging Fathers*.

Note: The PowerPoint presentation must be in Slide Show mode to link to the video.

REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (n.d.). *Engaging fathers*. In Best Practices in Family and Community Engagement Video Series.
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/engaging-fathers>

A slide titled "Video Debrief" with a video icon and two bullet points. The icon is a red circle with a white play button and the word "VIDEO" below it. The text is as follows:

Video Debrief

- What strategies did the program use to engage fathers?
- What were outcomes for fathers and children?

SLIDE 45 VIDEO DEBRIEF

Ask participants to share:

- Strategies they saw the program use to engage fathers
- Outcomes for fathers and children

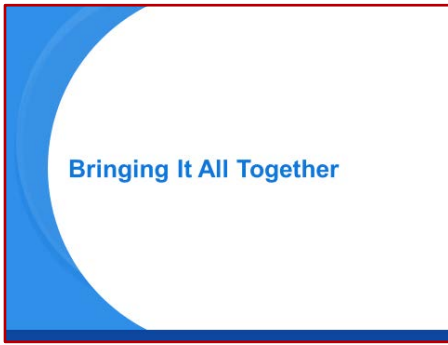
Possible responses from participants about program strategies for father engagement are:

- Support and parenting groups
- Training for new fathers
- A presence in local celebrations
- A program-wide cultural shift toward father engagement

Responses about outcomes for fathers and children may include:

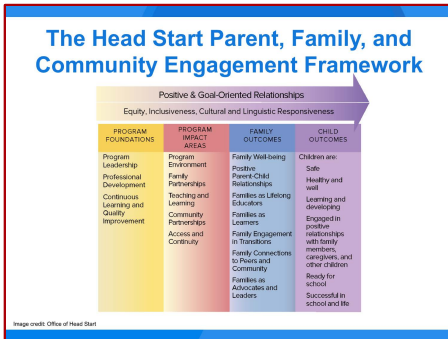
- Fathers who feel supported in their parenting
- Fathers sharing with educators their efforts to boost children's learning and development
- Fathers who feel empowered and important
- Children's increased school readiness

You may want to have participants think about connections to the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework introduced at the beginning of this module or discuss additional questions posed at the end of the video. Participants will next revisit the Framework and how father engagement fits into it.



SLIDE 46 BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

This final section summarizes the main points.



SLIDE 47 THE HEAD START PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK


Remind participants that the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework shows that when family engagement is systemic and integrated across Program Foundations and Program Impact Areas, family and child outcomes can be achieved.

A comprehensive approach to family engagement can help programs partner with families to foster children's development and learning. One specific family engagement focus is father engagement.

Participants will refer to the Framework during the next activity.

REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2011). *The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting family engagement and school readiness, from prenatal to age 8*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/policy-im/pfcea-framework.pdf>



Revisiting Where Does It Fit?

Which parts of the Framework does this topic relate to?

- Turn and exchange ideas with a partner.
- Be ready to share your thoughts with the whole group.

SLIDE 48

DISCUSSION: REVISITING WHERE DOES IT FIT?

Materials: Flip chart and marker

Ask participants to revisit the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework and identify where they think this module topic (*Engaging Fathers*) fits within the Framework.

Write down participant ideas on the paper for everyone to see. Discuss ways that their responses may be the same or different from what was discussed at the beginning of the session.

This exercise can serve as a reflective activity for participants as they think about what they learned during the module and how this fits into wider program efforts to engage families.

Ultimately, participants should identify that family engagement strategies in this module align with these impact areas:


- Program Environment. Program staff help create a safe and welcoming environment for fathers.
- Family Partnerships. Program staff and fathers build relationships to support family and child development goals.
- Teaching and Learning. Fathers are equal partners in encouraging children's development and learning.

Participants may also focus on family engagement outcomes, such as Positive Parent-Child Relationships, where fathers develop bonds that nurture and promote their child's learning and development.

REFERENCE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (2011). *The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting family engagement and school readiness, from prenatal to age 8*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/policy-im/pfcea-framework.pdf>

Presenter Notes



SESSION SUMMARY

- Fathers are critical to child development and family well-being.
- Early childhood educators and program staff can adopt practices that encourage the relationships of fathers and their children.
- Educators and programs can create welcoming environments for fathers that boost positive outcomes for fathers, children, and families.

SLIDE 49 SESSION SUMMARY

This slide lists the main points of this module:

- Fathers are critical to child development and family well-being.
- Early childhood educators and other program staff can adopt practices that encourage the relationships of fathers and their children.
- Educators and programs can create welcoming environments, physically and emotionally, for fathers that support positive outcomes for fathers, children, and families.



CHILDREN & FAMILIES

NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood
Parent, Family and Community Engagement

For more information about this resource, please contact us:
PFCE@ecetta.info | 1-866-763-6481

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Developed in collaboration with EarlyEdU Alliance: A Higher Education Collaborative for Head Start and Early Childhood Teaching.

SLIDE 50 CONCLUSION

This concludes the module *Engaging Fathers*.

For more information about this resource, please contact us:

PFCE@ecetta.info | 1-866-763-6481



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Parent, Family and Community Engagement

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