

The Blueprint

News from the Fatherhood
Research & Practice Network

New FRPN Study Published

Jay Fagan, Abbie Henson, & Jessica Pearson (2021). Low-income mothers' participation in the Understanding Dads™ intervention and changes in self-reported coparenting, *Journal of Family Social Work*, DOI: [10.1080/10522158.2020.1852640](https://doi.org/10.1080/10522158.2020.1852640)

Does conducting workshops for mothers on coparenting help to improve their relationships with fathers who are enrolled in fatherhood programs? To answer this question, FRPN co-directors and staff conducted a study of the National Fatherhood Initiative group-based intervention, Understanding Dads™. Mothers (N = 127) recruited from six fatherhood programs in the United States were interviewed prior to and following their participation in the six-session group workshop and three months later. The findings showed that mothers reported fewer disagreements and less undermining of fathers following participation in the intervention. After participation, mothers also reported greater confidence in their ability to coparent cooperatively with the father. The authors suggest that fatherhood programs may want to include mothers in programming to improve coparenting relationships, and that Understanding Dads™ may be a promising evidence-based curriculum for fatherhood programs to use.



FRPN Studies Dealing with Online and Text Messaging in Fatherhood Programs

Check out four FRPN-funded studies that deal with the use of online and text messaging techniques to better engage participants in fatherhood programs and to improve coparenting and father engagement with children.

[A Qualitative Interview Study Regarding Barriers and Facilitators of Engagement in Two Online Education Programs for Separating or Divorcing Parents](#) examines usage and satisfaction with online parenting programs designed to improve coparenting and child wellbeing among unmarried parents ordered to access them via a court website.

[Participation Dosage in Key to Kane: A Pilot Text-Messaging Intervention for Fathers](#) assesses changes in self-reported parenting behaviors among fathers who were sent brief text messages about parenting and child development three times a week over 12 weeks.

[A Randomized Controlled Trial to Examine the Impact of Cell Phone Technology on Engagement and Retention of Fathers in a Fatherhood Program](#) explored whether program attendance and programmatic outcomes were better for fathers randomly assigned to receive twice weekly text messages for 12 weeks as compared with fathers randomly assigned to receive increased financial incentives keyed to participation, and services as usual.

[Testing the Feasibility of an Interactive, Mentor-Based, Text Messaging Program to Increase Fathers' Engagement in Home Visitation](#) tested the effectiveness of Healthy Start home visitors sending weekly text messages to fathers in their caseload to boost engagement with the program.

While none of the studies found that online and text message approaches increased program usage, interactivity, retention, or improvements in parenting behavior, they were relatively easy to use and did generate client satisfaction. Fatherhood programs and researchers are encouraged to consider developing and studying hybrid approaches that combine in-person interventions with online and text messages.

FRPN Website Features One-of-a-Kind Database on Fatherhood Research

The FRPN website hosts the only database devoted entirely to published research conducted to evaluate fatherhood programs, interventions, curricula, and services. The materials posted are from reliable sources including hundreds of journal articles, federal reports, and websites. The database is organized by topic, publish date, and type of study. Learn more about the different types of [evaluation research studies](#) and [view the database](#).

ACF Introduces Research & Evaluation Agenda

The Administration for Children & Families has released its first research and evaluation agenda. The agenda covers research and evaluation activities and plans in nine areas, including adolescent pregnancy prevention and sexual risk avoidance, child care, child support enforcement, child welfare, Head Start, health profession opportunity grants, healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood, home visiting, and welfare and family self-sufficiency. [View the agenda](#).

Contact Us to Learn More

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The Fatherhood Research and Practice Network was supported by grant #90PR0006 from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents are solely the responsibility of the Fatherhood Research and Practice Network, Temple University and the Center for Policy Research and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

