

Potential Monetary Value of Responsible Fatherhood Program Outcomes for Fathers and Children

A Framework for Monetizing the Future Stream of Two-generation Benefits and Avoided Cost

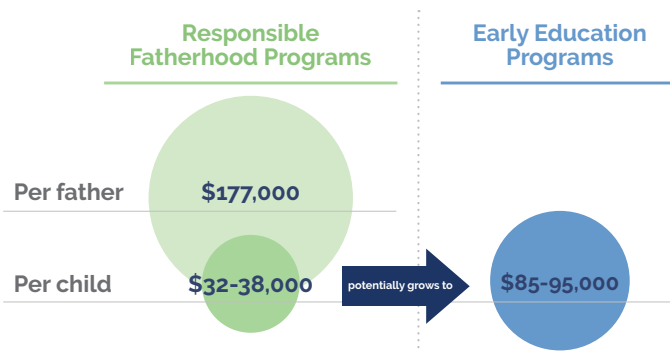
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This report shows how to monetize the economic returns and avoided costs of outcomes typically associated with Responsible Fatherhood programs, plus additional potential, two-generation, long-term child development and family well-being outcomes of father engagement. Its goal is to be a catalyst for fatherhood researchers and programs to make an economic case to policymakers about the monetary value of investing in Responsible Fatherhood programs and broader father engagement.

The published research on father involvement and parenting programs shows some, but not all, of the potential outcomes of fatherhood programs that have monetary value. To provide an estimate of a broader set of potential benefits of Responsible Fatherhood programs, this report also relies on the published research regarding the monetary values of high-quality early education program outcomes.

As shown in the figures below, the total estimated monetary value of the stream of expected future benefits due to successful participation in a Responsible Fatherhood program could reach about \$177,000 per father and about \$32,000 to \$38,000 per child. By adding high-quality, early childhood education, the potential monetary value per child grows to an estimated \$85,000 to \$95,000.

Estimated \$ value of all outcomes



The monetary values fall into three categories:

Individuals and the public – through increased lifetime earnings and productivity, increased child support payments, value of improved health, and reduced crime victimization

K-12 schools – through reduced special education and grade repetition costs

State government – through reduced costs of juvenile and adult crime; through lower welfare, Medicaid, substance abuse, and unemployment costs; and through higher tax revenues

Figure 1: Per-father estimated monetary value of successful participation in a Responsible Fatherhood program

	Potential lifetime value for one father
Increased lifetime earnings	\$149,000
Increased child support payments	\$9,878
Increased taxes paid	\$11,131
Value of increased community involvement and leadership per father	\$1,500
Crime victimization savings	\$3,637
Recidivism savings to government	\$1,390
Total estimated value of all potential outcomes	\$176,536⁵

Figure 2: Per-child estimated lifetime value of Responsible Fatherhood programs alone and total value when coupled with high-quality early education

Benefits to individuals and the public	Per-child lifetime value of high-quality early education \$85,000 to \$95,000
Additional lifetime income due to education	\$15,632 to \$23,388
Lifetime value of preventing child abuse on child's productivity	\$5,768
Value of improved health	\$29,000
Crime victimizations savings	\$1,550
Cost savings to K-12 education	
Savings in special education costs	\$1,207
Savings in fewer students repeating a grade	\$117
Cost savings to government and taxpayers	
Savings in reduced arrests and incarceration costs	\$861
Savings in Medicaid health care costs	\$3,066
Savings in MFIP cash and food assistance	\$18,910
Reduced costs of abuse, neglect, and out-of-home placements	\$616
Substance abuse savings	\$4,427
Unemployment insurance savings	\$173
Additional income tax and sales tax revenues	\$3,899 to \$5,833

Note. Total estimated value and gains are rounded.



Conclusions

This study makes a strong economic case for investing in comprehensive Responsible Fatherhood programs, which would include GED programming, job placement services, diversion services as an alternative to incarceration, parenting education with play and learn groups, and strong links to early education programs.

The per-father and per-child present values throughout this report could overestimate or underestimate the present values of future benefits and savings. While this study calculates the present values of current benefits and savings in future years to account for the value of money over time, it does not account for any potential changes in the incidence rate of each outcome and dollar value of social benefits over time. Further, while this study adds to the outcomes typically included in studies of fatherhood programs, it still does not include all the potential cost savings associated with father program and early education program outcomes, largely due to the lack of research that measures or monetizes many potential outcomes. Finally, while this study examines the potential monetary value of Responsible Fatherhood program outcomes for fathers and children, it is not a cost-benefit study that compares the value of those benefits to the costs of the programs to produce those benefits.

Nonetheless, this study provides a prototype for future cost-benefit or return on investment research. That research would entail fatherhood programs systematically collecting appropriate data about their participants to generate accurate and robust outcome studies of the programs' benefits plus documenting the total costs to deliver the programs.

Future studies would account for any potential changes in the incidence rate of each outcome and dollar value of social benefits over time and devise methods to adjust the projected benefits and savings. Future studies should also enhance the research literature to add new father and child outcomes with sufficient supporting evidence to monetize them, consider comparative studies that account for local and state variations in social and economic conditions, and examine the benefits of intentionally connecting or integrating fatherhood and early childhood education programs.



This study makes a strong economic case for investing in comprehensive Responsible Fatherhood programs.

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