

Fatherless Homes Statistics

RE: Youth Suicide and Divorce/ Single parent Homes:

"In a study of 146 adolescent friends of 26 adolescent suicide victims, teens living in single-parent families are not only more likely to commit suicide but also more likely to suffer from psychological disorders, when compared to teens living in intact families." Source: David A. Brent, (et. al.) "Post-traumatic Stress Disorders in Peers of Adolescent Suicide Victims: Predisposing Factors and Phenomenology." *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 34 (1995): 209-215.

"Fatherless children are at dramatically greater risk of suicide." Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, Survey on Child Health, Washington, D.C., 1993.

"Three out of four teenage suicides occur in households where a parent has been absent." Source: Jean Beth Eshtain, "Family Matters: The Plight of America's Children." *The Christian Century* (July 1993): 14-21.

"A family structure index - a composite index based on the annual rate of children involved in divorce and the percentage of families with children present that are female-headed - is a strong predictor of suicide among young adult and adolescent white males." Source: Patricia L. McCall and Kenneth C. Land, "Trends in White Male Adolescent, Young-Adult, and Elderly Suicide: Are They Common Underlying Structural Factors?" *Social Science Research* 23 (1994): 57-81

"In an earlier study by Kalter and Rembar at [Children's Psychiatric Hospital, University of Michigan], a sample of 144 child and adolescent patients, whose parents had divorced, presented [for evaluation and treatment] with three most commonly occurring problems:

63% Subjective psychological problem (defined as anxiety, sadness, pronounced moodiness, phobias, and depression)

56% Poor grades or grades substantially below ability and/or recent past performance

43% Aggression toward parents

Important features of the subgroup of 32 latency aged girls were in the same order:

69% indicating subjective psychological distress 47% academic problems 41% aggression toward parents.

Clinical Observations on Interferences of Early Father Absence in the Achievement of Femininity by R. Lohr, C. G. A. Mendell and B. Riemer, *Clinical Social Work Journal*, V. 17, #4, Winter, 1989



"In summary, 30% of the children in the present study experienced a marked decrease in their academic performance following parental separation, and this was evident three years later. Access to both parents seemed to be the most protective factor, in that it was associated with better academic adjustment...Moreover, data revealed that noncustodial parents (mostly fathers) were very influential in their children's development...These data also support the interpretation that the more time a child spends with the noncustodial noncustodial parent the better the overall adjustment of the child."

Factors Associated with Academic Achievement in Children Following Parental Separation, L. Bisnaire, PhD; P. Firestone, PhD; D. Rynard, MA Sc American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 60(1), January, 1990

"While in most instances adolescents from recently disrupted household were more negatively affected by their parents' divorce, some findings did identify long-term effects of earlier disruption. Adolescent girls who had experienced parental divorce when they were younger than six or between six and nine years old reported becoming involved with alcohol or drugs in proportions higher than did girls from intact families. Adolescent girls whose experience of divorce occurred before they were six more frequently reported skipping school than did girls from intact families or girls whose parents divorced when they were between the ages of six and nine."

"These findings underscore the vulnerability of adolescents whose parents have divorced within the last five years. The impact of the marital disruption was most pronounced among girls, who skipped school more frequently, reported more depress ehavior, and described social support in more negative terms than did boys from recently disrupted homes."

The Effects of Marital Disruption on Adolescents: Time as a Dynamic A. Frost, PhD; B. Pakiz, EdM, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 60(4), October, 1990

"Among teenage and adult populations of females, parental divorce has been associated with lower self-esteem, precocious sexual activity, greater delinquent-like behavior, and more difficulty establishing gratifying, lasting adult heterosexual relationships. It is especially intriguing to note that, in these studies, the parental divorce typically occurred years before any difficulties were observed..

"At the time of the marital separation, when (as is typical) father leaves the family home and becomes progressively less involved with his children over the ensuing years, it appears that young girls experience the emotional loss of father egocentrically as a rejection of them. While more common among preschool and early elementary school girls, we have observed this phenomenon clinically in later elementary school and young adolescent children. Here the continued lack of involvement is experienced as an ongoing rejection by him. Many girls attribute this rejection to their not being pretty enough, affectionate enough, athletic enough, or smart enough to please father and engage him in regular, frequent contacts".

"Finally, girls whose parents divorce may grow up without the day to day experience of interacting with a man who is attentive, caring and loving. The continuous sense of being valued and loved as a female seems an especially key element in the development of the conviction that one is indeed femininely lovable. Without this regular source of nourishment, a girl's sense of being valued as a female does not seem to thrive."





Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children: A Developmental Vulnerability Model Neil Kalter, Ph.D., University of Michigan, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 57(4), October, 1987

"...when the non-custodial parent is perceived as "lost," the young adult is more depressed. When a divorce occurs, the perception of the non-custodial father has been shown to change in a negative direction, while the perception of the mother (whether custodial) remains relatively stable. "

"Because divorce is a process, not an isolated event, the effects of the divorce may be cumulative and early intervention would therefore be beneficial.

The continued involvement of the non-custodial parent in the child's life appears crucial in preventing an intense sense of loss in the child.... The importance of the relationship with the non-custodial parent may also have implications for the legal issues of custodial arrangements and visitation. The results of this study indicate that arrangements where both parents are equally involved with the child are optimal. When this type of arrangement is not possible, the child's continued relationship with the non-custodial parent remains essential."

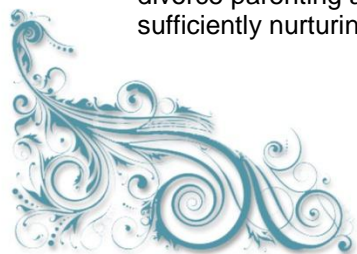
Young Adult Children of Divorced Parents: Depression and the Perception of Loss, Rebecca L. Drill, Ph.D., Harvard University. Journal of Divorce, V. 10, #1/2, Fall/Winter 1986

"The impact of parental divorce and subsequent father absence in the wake of this event has long been thought to affect children quite negatively. For instance, parental divorce and father loss has been associated with difficulties in school adjustment (e.g. Felner, Ginter, Boike, & Cowen), Social Adjustment (e.g. Fry & Grover) and personal adjustment (e.g. Covell & Turnbull)..."

"The results of the present study suggest that father loss through divorce is associated with diminished self-concepts in children...at least for this sample of children from the midwestern United States."

Children's Self Concepts: Are They Affected by Parental Divorce and Remarriage Thomas S. Parish, Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 1987, V 2, #4, 559-562

"It is ironic, and of some interest, that we have subjected joint custody to a level and intensity of scrutiny that was never directed toward the traditional post-divorce arrangement (sole legal and physical custody to the mother and two weekends each month of visiting to the father.) Developmental and relationship theory should have alerted the mental health field to the potential immediate and long range consequences for the child of only seeing a parent four days each month. And yet until recently, there was no particular challenge to this traditional post-divorce parenting arrangement, despite growing evidence that such post-divorce relationships were not sufficiently nurturing or stabilizing for many children and parents."





"There is some evidence that in our well-meaning efforts to save children in the immediate post-separation period from anxiety, confusion, and the normative divorce-engendered conflict, we have set the stage in the longer run for the more ominous symptoms of anger, depression, and a deep sense of loss by depriving the child of the opportunity to maintain a full relationship with each parent."

Examining Resistance to Joint Custody, Monograph by Joan Kelly, Ph.D. (associate of Judith Wallerstein, Ph.D) From the 1991 Book Joint Custody and Shared Parenting, second edition, Guilford Press, 1991.

2) JUVENILE DELINQUENCY/ CRIME/ GANGS

Juveniles have become the driving force behind the nation's alarming increases in violent crime, with juvenile arrests for murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault growing sharply in the past decade as pistols and drugs became more available, and expected to continue at the same alarming rate during the next decade. "Justice Dept. Issues Scary Report on Juvenile Crime," San Francisco Chronicle (9/8/95). "Crime Wave Forecast With Teenager Boom," San Francisco Chronicle (2/15/95). Criminal behavior experts and social scientists are finding intriguing evidence that the epidemic of youth violence and gangs is related to the breakdown of the two-parent family. "New Evidence That Quayle Was Right: Young Offenders Tell What Went Wrong at Home," San Francisco Chronicle (12/9/94).

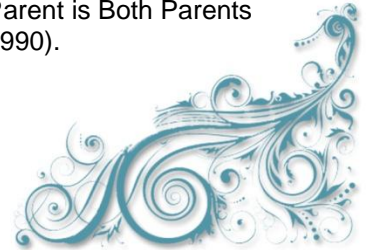
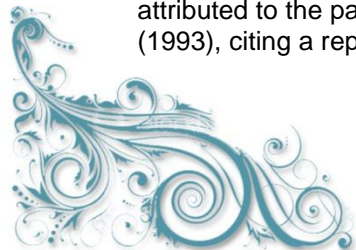
3) TEENAGE PREGNANCY

"Daughters of single parents are 53% more likely to marry as teenagers, 164% more likely to have a premarital birth, and 92% more likely to dissolve their own marriages. All these intergenerational consequences of single motherhood increase the likelihood of chronic welfare dependency." Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, Atlantic Monthly (April 1993). Daughters of single parents are 2.1 times more likely to have children during their teenage years than are daughters from intact families. The Good Family Man, David Blankenhorn. 71% of teenage pregnancies are to children of single parents. U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. 4) CHILD ABUSE

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states that there were more than 1,000,000 documented child abuse cases in 1990. In 1983, it found that 60% of perpetrators were women with sole custody. Shared parenting can significantly reduce the stress associated with sole custody, and reduce the isolation of children in abusive situations by allowing both parents' to monitor the children's health and welfare and to protect them. 5) POVERTY

"The National Fatherhood Institute reports that 18 million children live in single-parent homes. Nearly 75% of American children living in single-parent families will experience poverty before they turn 11. Only 20% in two-parent families will experience poverty." Melinda Sacks, "Fatherhood in the 90's: Kids of absent fathers more "at risk", " San Jose Mercury News (10/29/95). "The feminization of poverty is linked to the feminization of custody, as well as linked to lower earnings for women. Greater opportunity for education and jobs through shared parenting can help break the cycle." David Levy, Ed., The Best Parent is Both Parents (1993). 6) KIDNAPPING

Family abductions were 163,200 compared to non-family abductions of 200-300. The parental abductions were attributed to the parents' disenchantment with the legal system. David Levy, Ed., The Best Parent is Both Parents (1993), citing a report from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice (May 1990).





Marriage Matters

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The State of Fatherhood 37.9% of fathers have no access/visitation rights. (Source: p.6, col.II, para. 6, lines 4 & 5, Census Bureau P-60, #173, Sept 1991.)

"40% of mothers reported that they had interfered with the non-custodial father's visitation on at least one occasion, to punish the ex-spouse." (Source: p. 449, col. II, lines 3-6, (citing Fulton) Frequency of visitation by Divorced Fathers; Differences in Reports by Fathers and Mothers. Sanford Braver et al, Am. J. of Orthopsychiatry, 1991.)

"Overall, approximately 50% of mothers "see no value in the father`s continued contact with his children...." (Source: Surviving the Breakup, Joan Kelly & Judith Wallerstein, p. 125)

Only 11% of mothers value their husband's input when it comes to handling problems with their kids. Teachers & doctors rated 45%, and close friends & relatives rated %16.(Source: EDK Associates survey of 500 women for Redbook Magazine. Redbook, November 1994, p. 36)

"The former spouse (mother) was the greatest obstacle to having more frequent contact with the children." (Source: Increasing our understanding of fathers who have infrequent contact with their children, James Dudley, Family Relations, Vol. 4, p. 281, July 1991.)

"A clear majority (70%) of fathers felt that they had too little time with their children." (Source: Visitation and the Noncustodial Father, Mary Ann Kock & Carol Lowery, Journal of Divorce, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 54, Winter 1984.)

"Very few of the children were satisfied with the amount of contact with their fathers, after divorce." (Source: Visitation and the Noncustodial Father, Koch & Lowery, Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 50, Winter 1984.)

"Feelings of anger towards their former spouses hindered effective involvement on the part of fathers; angry mothers would sometimes sabotage father's efforts to visit their children." (Source: Ahrons and Miller, Am. Journal of Orthopsychiatry, Vol. 63. p. 442, July `93.)

"Mothers may prevent visits to retaliate against fathers for problems in their marital or post-marital relationship." (Source: Seltzer, Shaeffer & Charing, Journal of Marriage & the Family, Vol. 51, p. 1015, November 1989.) In a study: "Visitation Interference - A National Study" by Ms. J Annette Vanini, M.S.W. and Edward Nichols, M.S.W., it was found that 77% of non-custodial fathers are NOT able to "visit" their children, as ordered by the court, as a result of "visitation interference" perpetuated by the custodial parent. In other words, non-compliance with court ordered visitation is three times the problem of non-compliance with court ordered child support and impacts the children of divorce even more.Originally published Sept. 1992

Courtesy Bill Wood

