“Paternal Involvement in Pregnancy: A Closer look at Men’s Preconception Health

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Acknowledgements

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Housekeeping

• Obtaining credits
  – Groups viewing together should email randerson@marchofdimes.org

• Asking questions

• Accessing slides at a later date
“PATERNAL INVOLVEMENT IN PREGNANCY: A CLOSER LOOK AT MEN’S PRECONCEPTION HEALTH”
Who is Lorenzo?

Shelby, NC
BA, 2010
PhD, expected 2017

MPH, 2013
Learning Objectives

- By the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:
  - Define men’s preconception health
  - Identify key components of men’s preconception health and care
  - Discuss the role of men in supporting healthy birth outcomes
  - Identify barriers to male involvement during pregnancy and in the family, particularly for men from communities of color
  - Propose strategies and identify best practices to support fatherhood and encourage male involvement during pregnancy
The United States ranks 28th among developed countries in infant mortality.

NC infant mortality rate remains highest among US
- ~ 7 deaths per 1,000 babies (SCHS)

Infant mortality rate among non-Hispanic black women infants is more than twice that of non-Hispanic white infants, a persistent disparity despite efforts to reduce this disparity by reducing low birth weight and preterm births.
Highlighting the Issue

- Research supports that:
  - Evidence links prenatal care to improved birth outcomes (Lia-Hoagberg et al., 1990).
  - Low-income and nonwhite women in the United States, who are at greatest risk for poor birth outcomes, continue to receive the poorest prenatal care (Pagnini & Reichman, 2000).
  - Researchers are actively exploring how Paternal involvement (PI) may be a key to reducing the racial gap in infant mortality rate.
Highlighting potential solutions

- Paternal involvement (PI) has been recognized to have an impact on pregnancy and infant outcomes.
- Male involvement in pregnancy and childbirth influences pregnancy outcomes (Kaye et al., 2014).
- Positive paternal involvement during pregnancy, is significantly associated with
  - Reduced risk of
    - Negative maternal health behaviors
    - preterm birth, low birth weight and fetal growth restriction and infant mortality up to one year after birth.
    - Increases prenatal care uptake
Quick Activity 5 mins

Take a moment to draw 9 dots.
Draw 4 straight lines connecting each dot without picking up your pen.
Did anyone complete the task successfully?
Thinking Outside of the Box

*Dotted box = Reproductive Health paradigm*

Research on population and reproductive health tended to describe women’s disadvantaged position without mentioning men’s roles, usually because the data used were collected only from women.
Highlighting the IM Issue

INFANT DEATHS PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS

Black
All races
White

1935 '40 '45 '50 '55 '60 '65 '70 '75 '80 '85 '90 '95 '00 '05
Defining Preconception Health

- **Preconception Health** – the health of women and men during their reproductive years (the years they can have a child). -CDC

- **Preconception Health Care** – the medical care a woman or man receives from a health professionals that focuses on the parts of health that have been shown to increase the chance of having a baby.

- Goal: To eliminate infant mortality disparities and improve reproductive health outcomes.
Key Components of Men’s PH

- Healthy Mind
- Healthy Body
- Healthy Environment
Healthy Mind

- The causal role of psychological disturbances in the development of infertility is still a matter of debate.
- Mental health is connected to physical health.
- Mental health not only affects you, but also the partner and any children you may have.

- Men should...
  - Develop and maintain healthy relationships.
  - Share responsibilities with your partner.
  - Find ways to effectively deal with stress and seek help when feeling of sadness or depression occur.
Healthy Body

- Staying physically healthy is key for men also.
- Your health today is also linked to your ability to have healthy children in the future.

- Men should...
  - Achieve a healthy weight. Overweight men have higher risk of infertility (Du Plessis et al., 2010).
  - Visit the doctor/dentist regularly
  - Avoid smoking, alcohol, and drugs. These all can affect sperm count and quality (Harlev et al., 2015).
A broader understanding of wellness informs us of the ways in which our environment impacts our health.

Certain substances and environmental factors can cause damage to sperm or cause infertility.

Men should...

- Avoid exposure to radiation or chemotherapy agents (Strohmer et al., 1993).
- Avoid environmental toxins that may be used during hobbies or work.
Role of Men to Improve Birth Outcomes

- Emotional Help
- Support Women's Contraceptive Use
- Expand Contraceptive Options
- Prevent Spread of STD's
- Promote Gender Equality
- Be present!!
- Become educated on risk
- Financial Help
Role of Men to Improve Birth Outcomes

Men's influences on women's reproductive health: medical anthropological perspectives

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“Men are important actors who influence, both positively and negatively, both directly and indirectly, the reproductive health outcomes of women and children.”

Article begins by exploring reproductive rights, examining the concept from an anthropological perspective. The article also illustrates a number of salient examples of men’s relevance in the areas of contraception, abortion, pregnancy and childbirth and infertility.
WHERE IS THE F IN MCH? FATHER INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

Objectives: To: 1) review the historical contexts and current profiles of father involvement in African American families; 2) identify barriers to, and supports of, involvement; 3) evaluate the effectiveness of father involvement programs; and 4) recommend directions for future research, programs, and public policies.

Michael C. Lu, MD, MPH; Loretta Jones, MA; Melton J. Bond, PhD; Kynna Wright, PhD, MPH; Maiteeny Pumpuang, MPH; Molly Maidenberg, MSW, MPH; Drew Jones, MPH; Craig Garfield, MD, MAPP; Diane L. Rowley, MD, MPH
Lu et al., 2010

- Several historical developments (slavery, declining employment for Black men and increasing workforce participation for Black women, and welfare policies that favored single mothers) led to father absence from African American families.

- A multi-level, life-course approach is needed to strengthen the capacity of African American men to promote greater involvement in pregnancy and parenting as they become fathers.
Barriers to Male Involvement

- Major challenge is the limited understanding of men’s preconception health beyond sperm quality
- Barriers exist at every level of the socioecological model
  - Intrapersonal factors (knowledge)
    - Relationship factors (with mother & grandmother)
    - Community factors (unwelcoming healthcare system)
Barriers to Male Involvement

- Barriers to male involvement are intensified for low income minority fathers through institutional racism.
- Intrapersonal Factors
  - (education and employment)
- Relationship Factors
  - (maternal grandmother)
- Community Factors
  - (high incarceration rates)
- Society Factors
  - (black fathers are expendable)
  - Welfare policies
Young Families Connect

- www.youngfamiliesconnect.org
- Website is designed to provide young moms, dads and their families with information and resources that promote the health and safety of children and families.
Young Families Connect

- **Targeted Population**
  - Bladen, Onslow, Robeson, Rockingham and Wayne counties
  - Parents between the ages of 13 and 24

- **Conducted Listening Sessions with Young Dads**
  - Discuss health services available
  - Discuss challenges for involvement/parenting
  - Discuss ideas for breaking down barriers
What did we hear?

- Feeling like the “bad guy”
- Transportation is a challenge (there was a lot of emphasis on meeting the guys where they're at)
- Hard to balance work and everything else with becoming a dad.
- In some cases language barriers exist There has to be incentives to get the guys to come!
- Services need to be advertised more to dads
- Mentorship is needed, and is probably the best way to reach the guys
Ways to Improve Male Involvement

- Conduct more research
  - To enhance the basic risk knowledge
  - To evaluate social strategies/interventions and HEAR FROM MEN
  - To better define “involvement”

- Interventions aimed at improving involvement
  - Educational trainings (families AND providers)
  - Upgrading marketing & hospital environment
Conclusion

- Improving men’s preconception health is critical for insuring that all pregnancies are planned and wanted.
- Improving men’s preconception health can result in improved pregnancy outcomes by enhancing men’s biologic and genetic contributions.
- Men need to prioritize their optimal health and wellness and be present during the entire process.
Thank You!!

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“It is health that is the real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.” -MG
References


- Greene ME, Mehta M, Pulerwitz J, Wulf D, Bankole A, Singh S. Involving Men in Reproductive Health: Contributions to Development. Millennium Project. 2010


- S. S. Du Plessis, S. Cabler, D. A. McAlister, E. Sabanegh & A. Agarwal Division of Medical Physiology, Faculty of Health Sciences, Stellenbosch University, P. O. Box 19063, Tygerberg 7505, South Africa (S. S. Du Plessis, D. A. McAlister). Center for Reproductive Medicine, Cleveland Clinic, 9500 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44195, USA (S. Cabler, E. Sabanegh, A. Agarwal).


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Thank you!

• FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN AND OTHER PRECONCEPTION HEALTH TOPICS VISIT, WWW.EVERYWOMANNC.ORG

• FIND US ON FACEBOOK: HTTP://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/EVERYWOMANNC

• FOLLOW US ON TWITTER: @EVERYWOMANNC
March of Dimes North Carolina Preconception Health Campaign

- A STATEWIDE INITIATIVE AIMED AT IMPROVING BIRTH OUTCOMES IN NC BY REACHING OUT TO WOMEN WITH IMPORTANT HEALTH MESSAGES BEFORE THEY BECOME PREGNANT

- FORMERLY FUNCTIONED AS THE NC FOLIC ACID CAMPAIGN

- GOALS OF THE CAMPAIGN ARE TO REDUCE INFANT MORTALITY, BIRTH DEFECTS, PREMATURE BIRTH, AND CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS IN WOMEN, WHILE ALSO AIMING TO DECREASE UNINTENDED PREGNANCIES IN NC THROUGH PROMOTING REPRODUCTIVE LIFE PLANNING.

- SEEKS TO RAISE AWARENESS AND INSPIRE POSITIVE ACTION AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC, HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS, AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES.
## Upcoming Webinar

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<td>April 16, 2017</td>
<td>11:30am-1:30pm</td>
<td>Circle of Care Innovations: Interconception Care and the IMPLICIT Toolkit</td>
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