The Culture of Fatherhood: Relationships, Rituals, and Return on Investments

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The DAD Projects

Kids At Play Therapy

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Land Acknowledgement

"I acknowledge and honor that we are on the unceded ancestral territory of the Northwest Tribes. Even today the tribes continue to fight for their rights to exist throughout their traditional homelands. I express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to ancestors past, present elders, and future generations of these people that are still here continuing to persevere, illuminate, and share their ancient heritage."

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- ► Relationships
- ► Ritual
- Return on Investment

- ► Learn
- ► Share
- ► Integrate

From https://wafatherhoodcouncil.org/washington-interagency-fatherhood-council

The Culture of Fatherhood

culture - "....the shared set of (implicit and explicit) values, ideas, concepts, and rules of behaviour that allow a social group to function and perpetuate itself. Rather than simply the presence or absence of a particular attribute..... [culture] is understood as the dynamic and evolving socially constructed reality that exists in the minds of social group members

http://intqhc.oxfordjournals.org/content/16/5/345.full

cultural knowledge - information, skills, attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, values, and other mental components of culture that people socially learn during enculturation.

cultural relativism - understanding the ways of other cultures and not judging these practices according to one's own cultural ways.

http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/anth370/gloss.html

"I'm gonna be a Dad!"



Fatherhood is a *Meaningful* Occupation

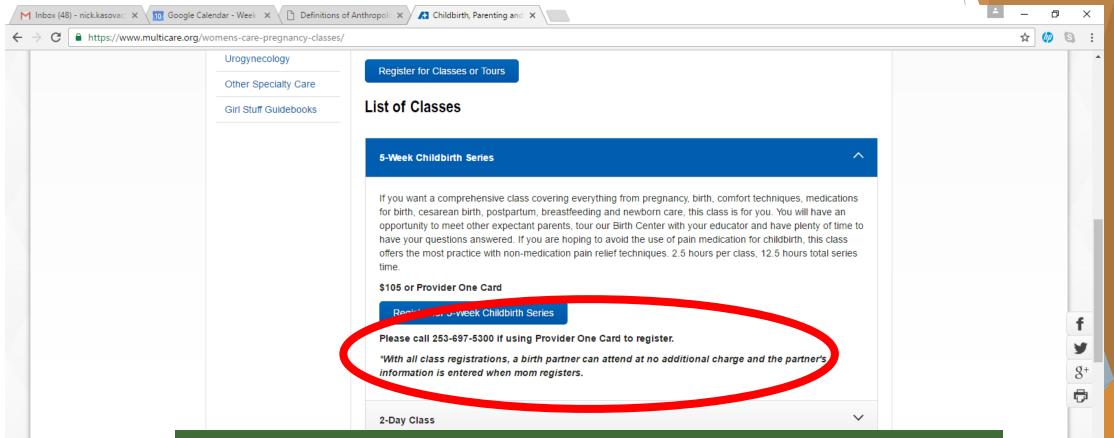
- "Occupation" refers to activities, roles, and rituals that occupy an individual's time that has necessity and/or meaning for them
- ► Historical Influences ("Ghosts In the Nursery" Selma Freiberg)
- Cultural Influences (Religious, Ethnic, Familial, Communal)
- ► This role is in the context of a "relationship"
- ► Relationship is "meaningful" for both father and infant it's dynamic

When the Father-Infant Relationship is <u>disrupted</u>.....

Occupational Deprivation

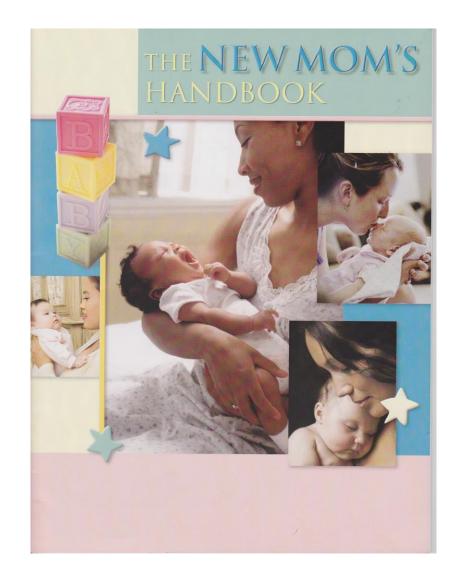
"A state of preclusion from engagement in occupations of necessity and/or meaning due to factors that stand outside the immediate control of the individual." (Whiteford, 2000, p. 201)

Birthing Class



"With all class registrations, a birth partner can attend at no additional charge and the partner's information is entered when mom registers."

"New Mom Handbook"



Where's the Father???

Diapering Girls

Baby girls may have a swollen vulva (outer genital area) and may have a whit mucous discharge from the vagina for several days after birth. The discharge may even be blood-tinged from the effects of the mother's hormones. This not a cause for concern. Gentle washing of the vulva and wiping from from to back is all that is necessary.

Diapering Boys

When wiping baby boys, be sure to lift the scrotum to remove any stor. Even small amounts of leftover fecal material can cause irritation.

Stools

The substance in the newborn's intestinal tract is called meconium and a dark, thick and tar-like. Colostrum (breast milk during the first three days) as as a laxative and helps move the meconium out. The baby will usually have his type of stool for several days. Use petroleum jelly to help clean this sticky stol off the baby's skin. The baby's stol will then begin to turn a brownish-green c lor and finally, by about the third or fourth day, will be yellow, as the baby take in breast milk and the digestive process begins.

The frequency of bowel movements in babies can vary widely, deper ling on the child and whether you are bottle-feeding or breastfeeding. Your l aby may have a stool soon after each feeding or three or four times a day.

By three to six weeks, breastfed babies may have only one bowel movement in five to seven days. This is normal as long as the stools are soft and he baby is otherwise healthy, gaining weight and eating regularly.

If you are concerned about the frequency of your baby's stools, call you healthcare practitioner.

Breastfed babies will have soft, mustard-colored stools with little odor a cottage-cheese-like curds.

Notify your healthcare practitioner if your baby has the following:

- Diarrhea characterized by liquid stools, watery in texture, and weight loss.
- Constipation characterized by hard balls of stool that cause discomfort for more than a few minutes and/or bleeding around the rectum.

Tips for Dads Many dads feel left out, especially when the mom is breastfeeding, but there are plenty of ways for the father to bond with the newborn. Dad should try the following tips to give Mom a break and strengthen his relationship with the new baby:

Rock the baby.
Change the baby's diaper.
Comfort the crying baby.
Bathe the baby.
Burp the baby.
Walk the baby using

a front pack or stroller. • Do skin-to-skin care (see page 19).



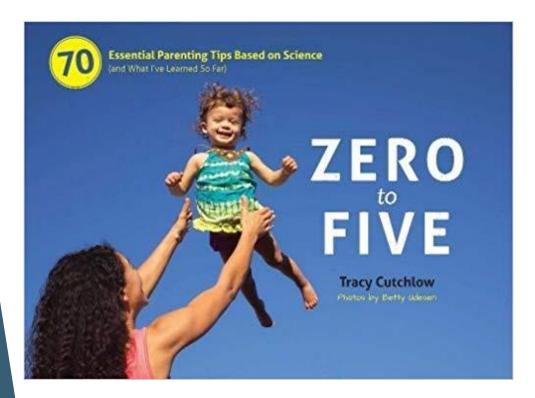
New Mom's Handbook

Not on the cover.....

Not in the Table of Contents...

Page 21 –

<u>Only</u> in the "margin" (out of 36 pages)





Page 18 Chores – first pic of Dad



Page 32 First pic with Dad & Infant

Examples of "Potential" Father Exclusion/Father-Infant Disruption

- Prenatal
- Labor & Delivery
- Couplet Care/Postpartum
- Breastfeeding Support
- Postpartum Follow Up
- Infant/Parent/Family Research
- Professional Articles/Research
- Pediatrics
- Early Childhood Organizations
- Programs
- Agencies

• Policies

- Peers
- Work
- Government (DHS, DES, DCYF, Courts)
- Maternal Gatekeeping
- Grandmothers
- Refusal of Visitation (especially Teens)
- Artwork/Photography
- Print Media
- Social Media

Father's brain is sensitive to childcare experiences

PC Fathers' Brains changed because of "primary caregiving"

"Primary-caregiving fathers exhibited high amygdala activation similar to primary-caregiving mothers, alongside high activation of superior temporal sulcus (STS) comparable to secondary-caregiving fathers, and functional connectivity between amygdala and STS. *Among all fathers, time spent in direct childcare was linked with the degree of amygdala-STS connectivity.*" (Abraham et al, 2014)

Relationships – Rituals - ROIs

- Caring for his infant/child is what builds the relationship...
- ▶ Nurturing Care establishes routines that become rituals.....
- The time spent engaging in rituals that are consistent, predictable, and reliable yields a return on investment
 (ROI) that will last a lifetime....with compound interest

What do you notice?



The Lego® Principle

"Why is Lego[®] the most ingenious toy in the world?"

~ Sophie's World ~ by Jostein Gaarder

- ► Easy to assemble
- All pieces fit together despite different sizes
- ► Unbreakable and still look new
- Construct any object
- Deconstruct and reconstruct with same pieces





More Lego® Principle

▶ What is the most important characteristic of Lego ℝ?

~ Nicholas Kasovac ~

• The "connection" between the pieces....

.....otherwise, they are useless and cannot achieve any of the above.

- ▶ It is the same as with your child the "connection" is the most important thing.
- "Every time you see a Lego® toy, think about the connection with your child."

Relationship/Connection is Most Important!

- It underlies all the developmental domains (social/emotional, language, gross motor, fine motor, cognitive)
- It's the precursor to Life Course Health Development Physical & Mental (ACEs)
- ✤ It's the most important factor in developing resiliency as a "skill"
- ✤ It will be the basis for every relationship for the child's entire life

In order to develop normally, a child requires progressively more complex joint activity with one or more adults who have an irrational emotional relationship with the child. Somebody's got to be crazy about that kid. That's number one. First, last and always.

Urie Bronfenbrenner

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Where Can You Make a Difference?

Chronosystem

Changes Over Time Historical Events Biological Changes Physiological Changes

Macrosystem

Social Values Cultural Values Customs Believs

Exosystem

Economic System Education System Government Agencies

Mesosystem

Connections between family, neighborhood, and school

Microsystem

Immediate Family Neighborhood School

CHILD

Summary

► What did you LEARN?

► Where will you SHARE?

► How will you INTEGRATE?



Butterfly Effect

What is <u>one</u> change that you can make...

...that will change *everything*?!

Thank You!







