

A photograph of a man and a young boy sitting together and reading a book. The man is on the left, wearing a denim jacket, and the boy is on the right, wearing a striped sweater. They are both looking at the book with interest. The background is blurred, showing some colorful objects. The text is overlaid on the image.

Transforming Systems Through Fathers' Voices

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WASHINGTON STATE FATHERHOOD INTERAGENCY COUNCIL

Survey Background

Funded by Fatherhood Research and Practice Network

Input and distribution provided by WA State Fatherhood Interagency Council

Administered online for 3 weeks

Offered in English and Spanish

440 Fathers Accessed, 348 Completed

Survey Topics

ALL FATHERS (N=348)

Greatest challenges as a father

Desired supports as a father

FATHERS W/ CHILDREN AGE 3 OR YOUNGER (N=85)

Participation in healthcare

Paternity establishment

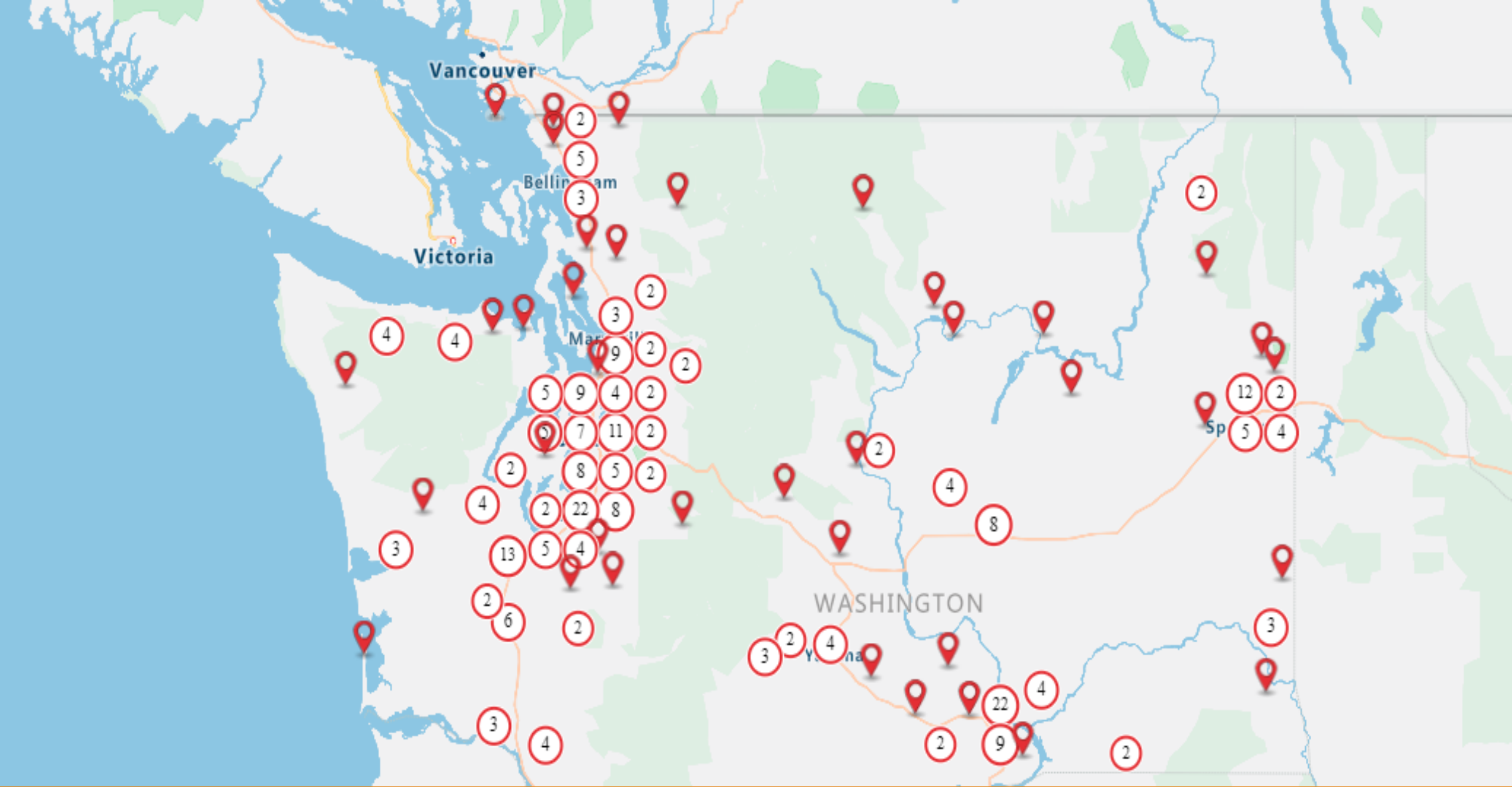
Barriers to participation in healthcare

Desired supports at time of child's birth

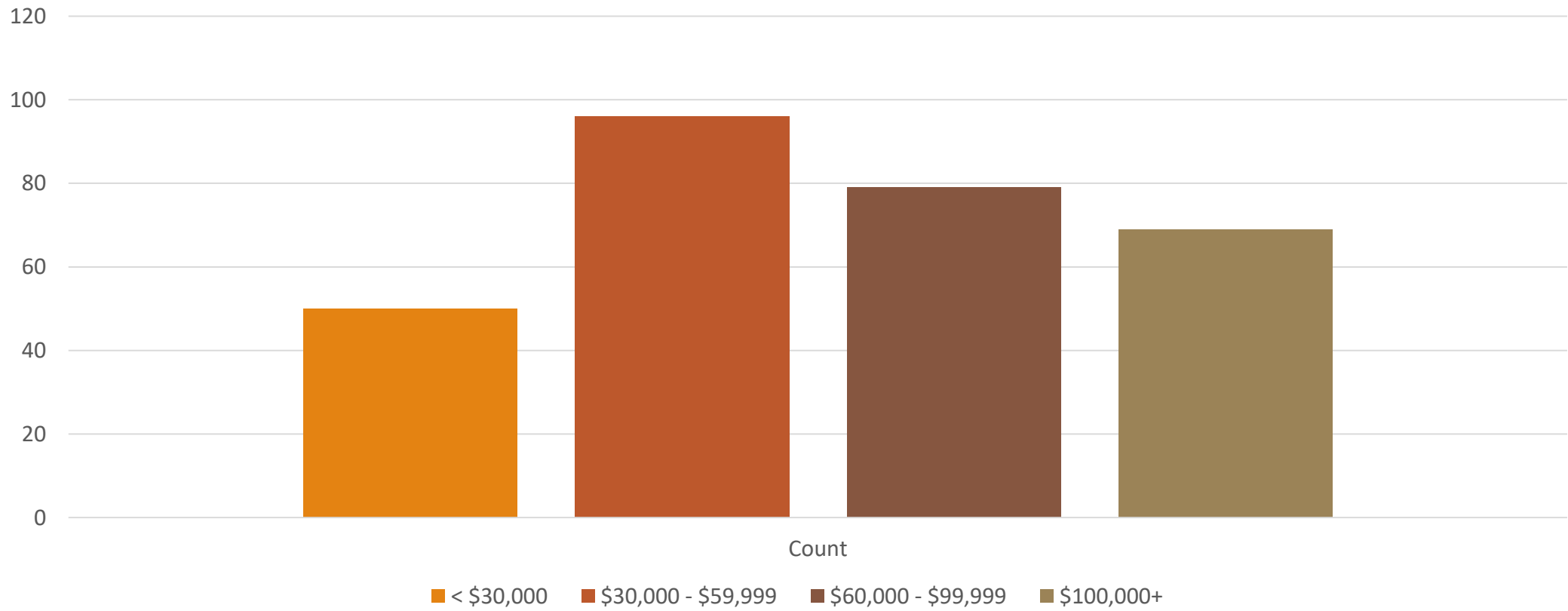
A photograph of a father holding a young child outdoors. The father is in the background, smiling, and the child is in the foreground, looking slightly to the side. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent grey filter. The text 'Sample: All Fathers' is prominently displayed in the center, followed by a horizontal line and the subtitle 'WHO PARTICIPATED? WHOSE VOICES ARE MISSING?'.

Sample: All Fathers

WHO PARTICIPATED? WHOSE VOICES ARE MISSING?



Household Income



Race and Ethnicity


Response	Percentage
White or Caucasian	70.0
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish	6.4
American Indian or Alaska Native	4.2
Black or African American	3.6
Asian	1.9
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1.7
Middle Eastern or North African	.3
Other	5.3
<i>Prefer Not to Answer</i>	<i>6.7</i>

Other Characteristics

Average Age of Fathers: 41 Years (Range 23-73)

77% with a least 1 child in the household

58% with some college education or more

A photograph of a man with short dark hair and a light beard, wearing a white t-shirt, leaning over a baby. The baby is lying on its back, looking up at the man. The man is smiling and looking down at the baby. The background is a plain, light color.

Findings: All Fathers

GREATEST CHALLENGES

DESIRED SUPPORTS

5 Greatest Challenges

(1) Custody and parenting time agreements

(2) No services available for fathers

(3) Social stigmas about fatherhood

(4) Issues related to child support

(5) Financial insecurity

Desired Supports: Custody

Stop the preferential treatment of mothers over fathers. If they're both good parents, make parenting equal.

Recognize my equal right to parent my own child.

Provide more basic custody rights to fathers without court intervention.

(1) Custody and parenting time agreements

(2) No services available for fathers

(3) Social stigmas about fatherhood

(4) Issues related to child support

(5) Financial insecurity

Desired Supports: Services for Fathers

It would be nice to see father support groups that allow dads a way to connect with each other and help each other grow as fathers.

Providing paid paternity leave that facilitates bonding with one's newborn child

Programs and outreach available to men as it would be with women

- (1)** Custody and parenting time agreements
- (2)** No services available for fathers
- (3)** Social stigmas about fatherhood
- (4)** Issues related to child support
- (5)** Financial insecurity

Desired Supports: Reduce Social Stigmas

Start with changing the stigma of dads only being responsible for providing financially for his family. Dads are more than that. They are positive male role models and excellent advisors. Dads are just like moms in a sense of having to wear different hats for the family. Dads have a lot to offer a child; they are not limited to just being a provider.

Help by accepting us as fathers.

Allowing fatherhood to be an admirable position in the family

(1) Custody and parenting time agreements

(2) No services available for fathers

(3) Social stigmas about fatherhood

(4) Issues related to child support

(5) Financial insecurity

Desired Supports: Child Support Issues

When we pay child support we should be opted into visitation regardless of a parenting plan .

Child support enforcement flatly refuses to collect child support for me. It would be helpful if they would end their unbalanced policies.

Allow for fathers to have the ability to earn enough money to live on while still paying child support.

(1) Custody and parenting time agreements

(2) No services available for fathers

(3) Social stigmas about fatherhood

(4) Issues related to child support

(5) Financial insecurity

Desired Supports: Financial Security

Subsidizing child care, increasing access to child care, increasing amount of child care available in various regions

Lower taxes, invest in education, invest in child care

Better housing help, better help with food assistance

(1) Custody and parenting time agreements

(2) No services available for fathers

(3) Social stigmas about fatherhood

(4) Issues related to child support

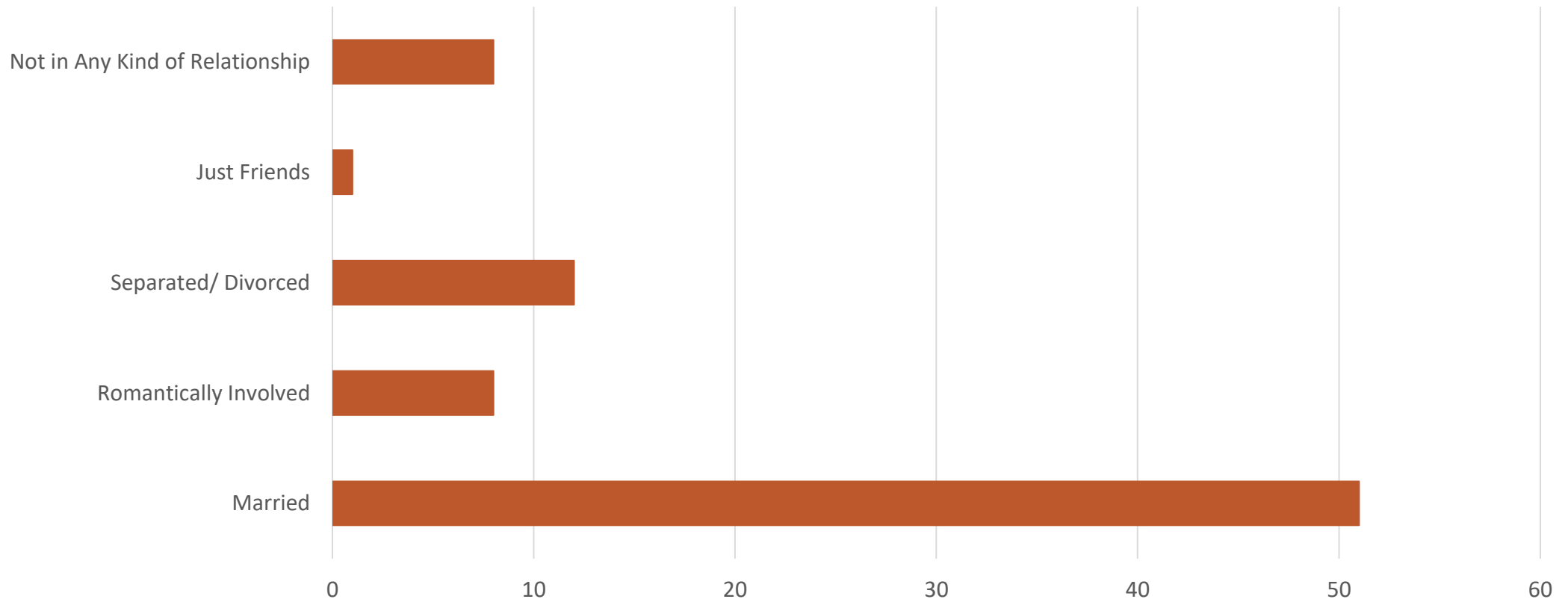
(5) Financial insecurity



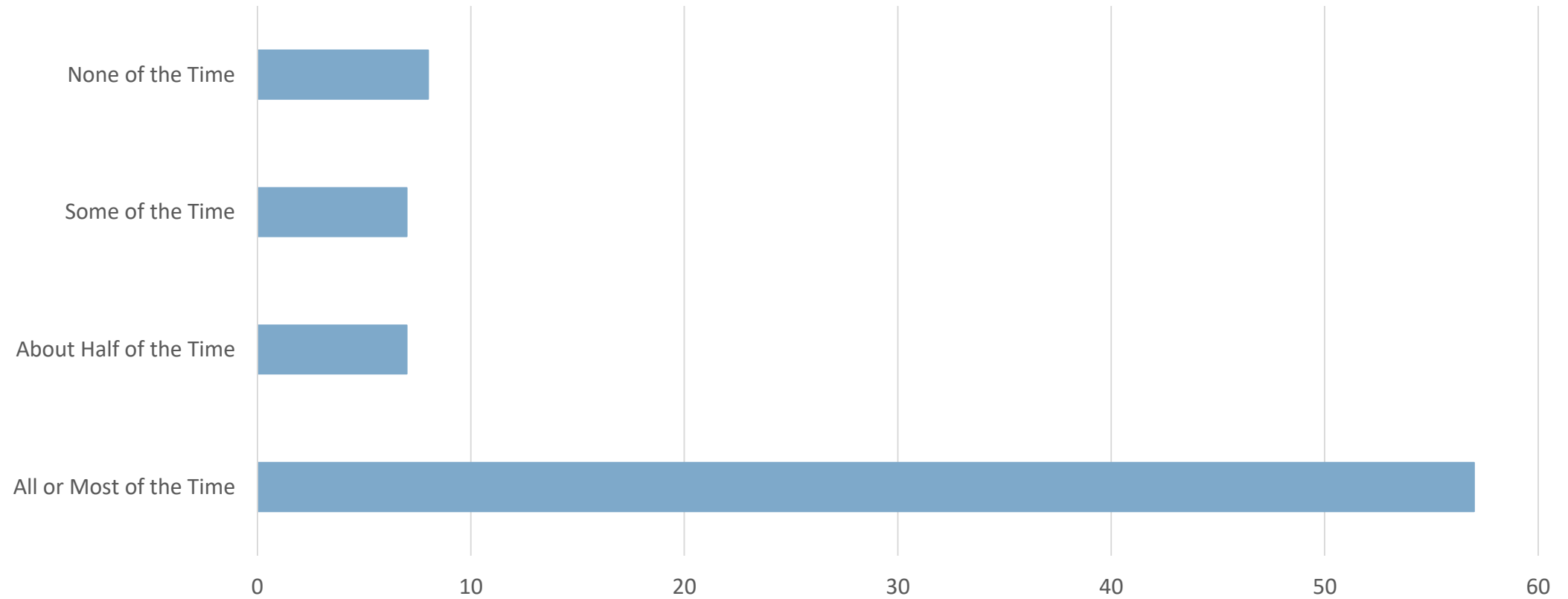
Sample: Fathers of Children Age 3 or Younger

WHO PARTICIPATED? WHOSE VOICES ARE MISSING?

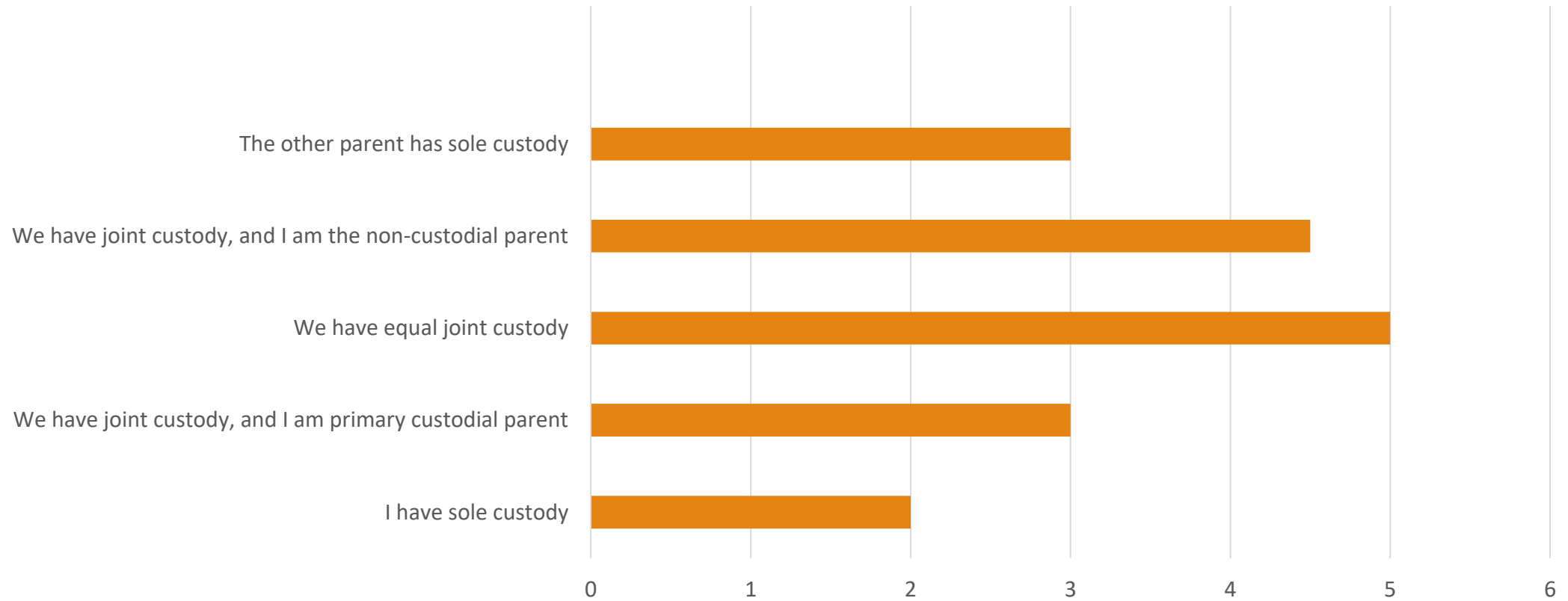
Relationship with Child's Mother



Child Lives with Father



Court Ordered Custodial Arrangement (N=17)





Findings: Fathers of Children Age 3 or Younger

PARTICIPATION IN HEALTHCARE

PATERNITY ESTABLISHMENT

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN HEALTHCARE

DESIRED SUPPORTS AT TIME OF CHILD'S BIRTH

Fathers Participate from the Start

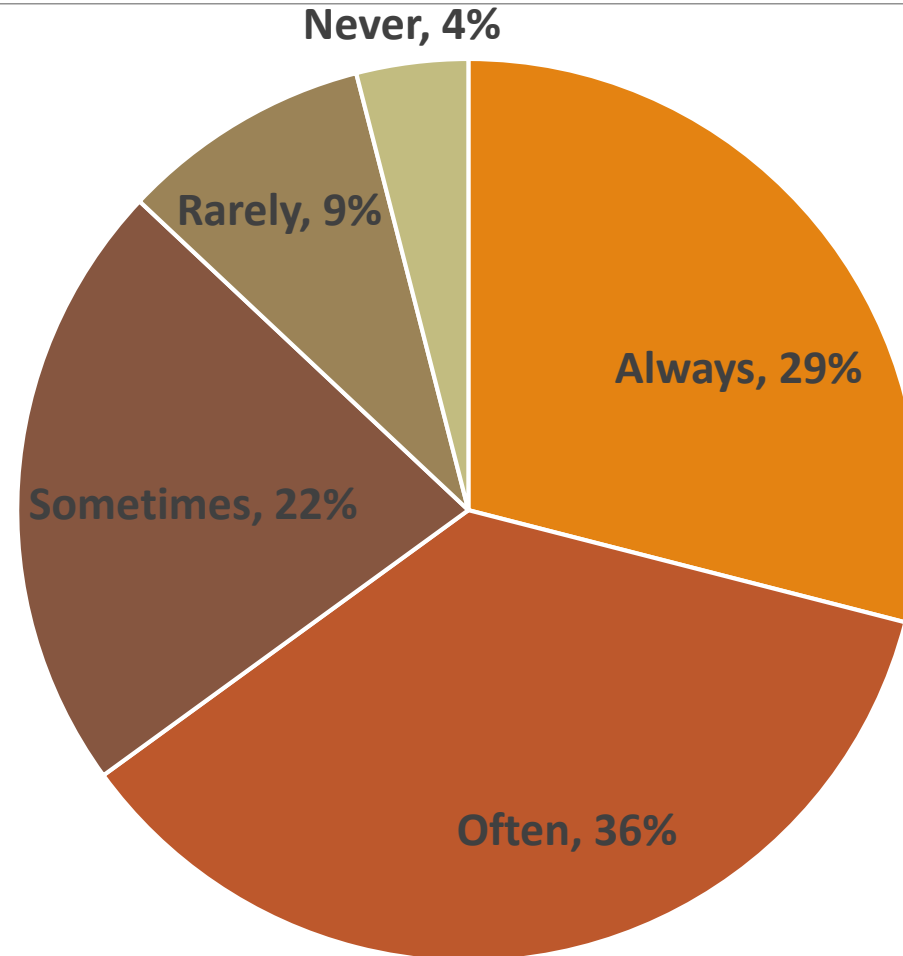
71% attended doctor's visits always or often during pregnancy

88% were present at the birth

Of Unmarried Fathers Present At Birth (n=21)...

Only **52%** reported that anyone at the hospital talked to them or gave them information about establishing paternity.

Fathers Continue to Participate in Regular Check-Ups



5 Barriers to Attending Check-Ups

(1)

Can't take time off of work

(2)

More convenient for child's mother

(3)

Have too many things going on

(4)

Family of child's mother doesn't want father involved

(5)

Can't pay the co-pay for the visits

Resources that Would have Been Helpful when Child was Born



Discussion

Revisit “what’s on your radar” exercise.

What surprised you? What made you concerned? What made you hopeful?