



# Working with the African-American Father: The Forgotten Parent

Training Tips, Activities and Transfer of Learning Activities



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# Introduction

**Curriculum Authors: Deborah Fitch, MSW; Kahalifa King, MS**

**Course Length:** 6 hours

**Course Description:**

This training is designed for Child Welfare Social Workers, supervisors, managers, contract agency staff, and other professionals such as advocates, attorneys and judges who are working with African-American families and are interested in reducing disproportionality in Child Welfare Services.

**Introduction:**

Training about working with African–American families has traditionally placed most of its emphasis on working with the mother with scant attention being paid to the father except as being an absent parent. Current research findings confirm that race is a factor in child welfare decisions at every decision point in the system, the degree of disproportionality increasing as cases progress through the child welfare system (Needell, 2009). This curriculum, “Working with the African-American Father: the Forgotten Parent” is intended to bring the discussion of African-American fathers and their roles in their children lives to the forefront. The training addresses Fairness and Equity principles along with the role of the African-American father.

Historically, Child Welfare Services have systematically minimized the role and the involvement of the African-American father. This practice may be traced back to the legally sanctioned practice of chattel slavery imposed on and endured by the African-American family. Although slavery and the actions of tyrannical owners destroyed any opportunity for both the male and female slave to develop as viable parents, our focus for this project is centralized to the Black male, as father.

This historical backdrop is the foundation of the systemic mind sets that fed and continue to feed the minimizing of the African-American father in Child Welfare Services as well as other institutions which impose biased practices and distorted views of the African-American male and especially his acceptance as a viable parenting father. In the book, ***Black Fathers: An Invisible Presence in America*** Michael E. Connor and Joseph White state, “In the parlance of social psychology, social work and urban social scientists, African-American fathers have often been described as ‘absent’, ‘missing’, ‘non-residential’, ‘non-custodial’, ‘unavailable’, ‘non-married’, ‘irresponsible’, and ‘immature.’”

This training is designed to introduce the trainees to the subject with a broad brush as a means to inform, inspire and provoke action. The training is presented with four foci: Overview of fathers in



America, Historical/Current Impacts, Introduction to African-American Males/Fathers, Resources and Considerations for Change.

**Introductory Training Tips:**

1. It is recommended by the authors that this training be co-trained with a lead trainer and an assistant. Although not mandatory, if possible, at least one of the trainers (lead trainer) should be African-American and preferably an African-American male. If trained with a single trainer, the curriculum should be trained by a trainer culturally versed, open and sensitive regarding the African-American male experience, and very comfortable with the content.
2. The term Blacks and African-American are used interchangeably throughout the curriculum.

# SEGMENT 1: Welcome & Orientation

## Total Time 20 minutes

### Activity 1A: Welcome, Housekeeping

Time: 5 minutes

Materials: N/A

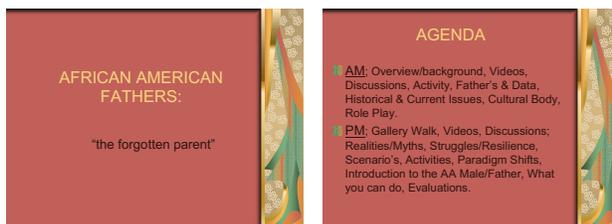
Trainee Content: Curriculum Goals, Competencies and Learning Objectives  
Agenda  
Transfer of Learning

PowerPoint Slides: 1-2

### Training Activity Steps:

1. Welcome participants to the first of its kind training, “Working with the African-American Father: the Forgotten Parent.” Note that the training is experiential and fluid. Encourage participation and acknowledge the topic as difficult but much needed by child welfare.
2. Review the curriculum goals, learning objectives and competencies.
3. Review the agenda.
4. Refer trainees to the trainee content Transfer of Learning. Encourage them to refer to this document throughout the day, making notes of things they want to share with others in the office or incorporate in their daily work.
5. The trainer may wish to “poll” the participants to find out by which counties the participants are employed.

*End of activity.*





### Activity 1B: Positive Assumptions Icebreaker

Time:	10 minutes
Materials:	Clock or stopwatch
Trainee Content:	N/A
PowerPoint Slide:	3

**Activity Description:** The exercise encourages participants to consider the impacts of making assumptions about others whether the assumptions are positive or negative. Participants will share their experiences which may elicit feelings ranging from discomfort to feeling good. An important lesson of this exercise is to have participants recognize that people usually default to negative assumptions about other people without considering that others will do the same about them.

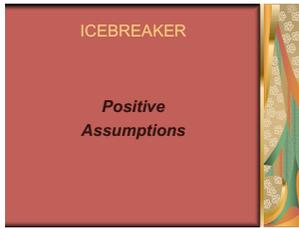
#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Inform participants that we are going to engage in something that we all do, but it is something that we do not like having others do to us.
2. Ask participants to pair up with someone that they do not know. After pairing up, inform them that this is a verbal exchange exercise.
3. Ask them to decide between them who will speak first. Instruct trainees that they will each have 30 seconds to share **positive assumptions** about their partner. They must use the entire time. They are not to switch until the trainer instructs them to do so. Observe interactions.
4. At 30 seconds, stop the exchange. Do not elicit feedback. Ask them to switch and repeat the exercise for the other partner.
5. Ask participants to share their experiences, feelings and thoughts. What was easy and what was difficult? What was it like to listen to someone share a positive assumption about you? What was it like to give a positive assumption?
6. Remind participants how easily we make assumptions about others (i.e. someone walking into a room, or wearing a particular garment, etc.). Our challenge is to recognize that we can be more positive in our ASSUMPTIVE views towards others. Often our negative views are misguided and/or wrong. Keep this in mind throughout the day.

*End of activity.*



## Public Child Welfare Training Academy





### Activity 1C: Introductions

Time: 5 minutes

Materials: N/A

Trainee Content: N/A

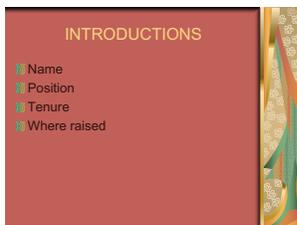
PowerPoint Slide: 4

**Activity Description:** This segment allows participants to recognize the various levels of experience in the room.

#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Have each trainee give his or her name, position, tenure in CWS, where he or she was raised and share an assumption regarding Black men (fathers) within 30 seconds.
2. Add up the collective years of experience, consider the impact of regional influences and consider where the group is regarding their collective experience and their initial assumptive feelings and thoughts about the Black father.
3. Note the total number of years the trainees have in CWS and acknowledge the amount of knowledge and experience represented within the group.

*End of activity.*



## Segment 2: Background and Purpose

### Total Time 25 Minutes

#### Activity 2A: Overview of the Reasons for the Training

Time: 5 minutes

Materials: N/A

Trainee Content: N/A

PowerPoint Slide: 5

**Activity Description:** Discuss the following information to emphasize the depth and gravity of the subject matter, as well as the need to confront it head-on.

#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Discuss the following as the reasons to engage in this training:
  - **Explore:** Impacts of absent African American fathers
  - **Consider:** Historical biases of Child Welfare Services (CWS) and its impact on families
  - **Learn:** New ideas/trends
  - **Support:** Affirming trends and practices in CWS working with African American fathers
  - **Reinforce:** What has worked for involving fathers and fatherhood

*End of activity.*





**Activity 2B:** Purpose & Introduction of Curriculum

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: N/A

Trainee Content: N/A

PowerPoint Slide: 6

**Activity Description:** This introduction provides a background for trainees to understand that this curriculum was created by a professional peer with over 25 years of experience in CWS.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Provide the following background information.

*How this came about:*

This training was the brain child of Deborah Fitch, an M.S.W who worked in Child Welfare Services for 26 years. It was inspired by her own personal experiences with a loving and healthy relationship with her African-American father and the realities she experienced as a professional in the field. Deborah learned that not all fathers were like hers and that bias against fathers seemed to be the norm within Child Welfare Services. Child Welfare social workers need to be challenged to examine their practices. Her concerns and viewpoints are supported by the information and research that has been uncovered during the development of this curriculum. The vastness of the subject requires much more than we could ever offer in this training.

2. Describe the scope of the training.

*Training Curriculum Approach:*

This curriculum is designed to introduce trainees to the subject with a broad brush as a means to inform, inspire and to spur them to action. The curriculum will no doubt go through many revisions as this is the first of its kind. We welcome your feedback.

*The training is presented as an overview with four foci:*

- a. Overview of Fathers in America
- b. Historical/Current Impacts of Child Welfare Services
- c. Introduction to Black Males/Fathers
- d. Resources/Considerations for Change

*End of activity.*



## Public Child Welfare Training Academy

Why this Training

- How this came about
- Author's experience with developing curriculum & learned realities
- Approach to training

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### Activity 2C: Perceptions of Black Fathers

Time:	5 minutes
Materials:	Focus group video clip
Trainee Content:	Focus Group Transcript Part 1
PowerPoint Slide:	7

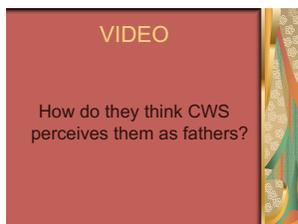
**DVD Instructions:** This video clip is not publicly available. Trainers may wish to contact the Public Child Welfare Training Academy for copies and permission to use the clip or they may use the transcript.

**Activity Description:** This segment exposes participants to the subject matter as it is perceived and experienced by the African American male/father. It is hoped that this will provoke discussion and the beginning of empathy for the situation of Black fathers in the “system.” The video clip shows a focus group of Black males discussing issues regarding CWS and African American fathers/men. All of the men in the video except the facilitator grew up without a father or male figure in the home.

#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Show the facilitator in the video clip asking the question, “**How do they think CWS perceives them as Black Fathers?**” If using the transcript instead of the video, ask trainees the question and move to step 2 before referring trainees to the trainee content.
2. Immediately pause the video after this question, then ask participants what they think the answers will be. Listen to one or two responses. **DO NOT ALLOW FOR ANY DISCUSSION.**
3. Proceed by showing how the fathers in the video responded to the question. Stop the video at the pause. Alternately, refer trainees to the trainee content and ask the trainees to read the transcript.
4. Inform participants that they are encouraged to consider these perceptions as experienced from the Black father/male. Note that their experiences with CWS create the beliefs of these men. This also supports the necessity for this training.

*End of activity.*





## Segment 3: Overview of Fathers

### Total Time 75 Minutes

#### Activity 3A: Fathers in America

Time:	30 minutes
Materials:	N/A
Trainee Content:	American Fathers
PowerPoint Slide:	8

**Activity Description:** The purpose of this segment is to provide a gateway into the subject matter by discussing fathers in general. Participants may relate personally about their fathers and their roles in their lives. The data gives participants a basic foundation regarding the role of father in America. This is presented to encourage discussion and reassurance regarding the subject that will begin to focus on Black fathers specifically.

#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Provide the following information via lecture format.

##### *American Fathers*

Historically, fathers were known to have the last word in family affairs or so we thought. Often the mother would touch the heart of dad and things would somehow magically change. Dad had a place of reverence and respect. Although mom raised the children and was the queen, dad was, after all, the man of the house, the bread winner, the disciplinarian. It must be noted, however; that dad did not receive his recognition as a parent until 1909.

2. Ask the trainees how many of them celebrate Father's Day in some form. Briefly discuss the variety of ways participants celebrate Father's Day.
3. Provide the following information via lecture format.

##### *Designating Father's Day as a Holiday*

Born in Arkansas in 1882, Sonora Smart and her family moved to Washington State. Her mother died when she was a teen. At the age of 28, after hearing a Mother's Day sermon she had memories of her mother and wanted a special day to honor her father, William Smart, a Civil War veteran who was left to raise 6 children on a farm. While listening to the sermon, Sonora thought it would be appropriate to honor fathers, like her own. She sat down with her Pastor, Dr. Conrad Bluhm, to write the original Father's Day Resolution which was approved by the Ministerial Alliance at its June 6, 1910 meeting, held at the YMCA. By Mayoral Proclamation, the First Father's Day was held on June 19, 1910. (A red rose symbolizes the celebration of Father's Day.) Sonora married Bruce Dodd a well-known poet and lived in Spokane until she died at the age of 96, in 1978 (Hunneman, 2005).

It wasn't until 1966 when the first Presidential proclamation by Lyndon Johnson was issued honoring fathers and designating the third Sunday of June as Father's Day. In 1972, President Richard Nixon signed the public law that made Father's Day a permanent annual celebration.

4. Refer trainees to the trainee content American Fathers and discuss the following statistics regarding fathers.

- **"Fathers Day" Data:** 66.3 million fathers
- **Mr. Mom Data:** 143,000 stay at home fathers with children under the age of 15 (out of work force) caring for over 245,000 children
- **Single Fathers Data:** 2.3 million, 11% raising (3) or more children under 18 years old

5. Segue to the CWS Study information in the next segment.

*End of activity.*





**Activity 3B: Involving Fathers**

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: N/A

Trainee Content: N/A

PowerPoint Slide: 9

**Activity Description:** This segment provides research information from the U.S. Health and Human Services regarding the impact of involving fathers as a nationwide concern and movement. This study was overarching and did not provide disaggregated data relative to race, culture, ethnicity or other demographics that may be unique to any particular group. The trainer is encouraged to become familiar with this information and present it with a comfortable delivery.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Provide the following information regarding the rationale behind the study.

*New Interest from CWS:*

According to the 2006 study “Father Involvement in Child Welfare” (Malm, Murray & Geen) by **THE URBAN INSTITUTE**, a contractor for the U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services: “Over the past decade an interest in fathers and their contribution to family stability and children’s healthy development has heightened the attention paid in the child welfare field to identifying, locating and involving fathers.”

*Benefits:*

Through engaging fathers, agencies learn important medical information impacting insurance, survivors, child support benefits, potential caregivers, reunification/relative guardianship and permanency options.

The research was motivated by the fact that information and effort was lacking, and because few studies have examined absent fathers as placement resources, and there is no research about child-father visitation or on the effects of involving absent fathers in the lives of children being served by CWS.

2. Describe the specific goals of the study.

*Research Considerations:*

- The extent CWS policy and practice involves absent fathers of foster children in casework and permanency planning
- Various methods used by agencies to identify fathers of children in foster care, to establish paternity (alleged vs. legal father) and to locate the fathers
- Challenges to involvement related to stereotyping, characteristics and circumstances and the subsequent outcomes related to these beliefs held by some social workers
- Practices and initiatives that may increase father involvement
- Methods child support agencies may use to assist CSW in identifying and locating absent fathers
- Other resources available to CWS to identify and locate absent fathers.

### 3. Describe the findings of the study.

#### *Results:*

- ***Identification*** of fathers is improved by early efforts and by accessing multiple sources to identify fathers.
- Few respondents sought assistance from support agencies to ***locate*** fathers. Special circumstances made it difficult to contact fathers, i.e. incarceration, homelessness, unstable housing, out of the country, etc.
- ***Involving*** nonresident fathers in case planning increased the percentage of fathers expressing interest in having children live with them, increased the percentage of fathers considered as placement resources, and increased the percentage of fathers who visited their children while in foster care.
- The ***barriers*** encountered included the percentage of fathers who were substance abusers, involved in the criminal justice system, non-complaint with services, in difficult relationships with the child's mother, or involved in multiple problems.
- The ***policies and practices*** that affect involvement include worker training on fathers, worker characteristics, differences in methods used to locate fathers, differences in working with or engaging the father, and administrator's philosophical views.

#### *End of activity.*





**Activity 3C: Policies Related to Fathers**

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: N/A

Trainee Content: N/A

PowerPoint Slide: 10

**Activity Description:** This segment helps participants feel comfortable talking about policies/practices involving fathers. It also helps participants gain a general baseline about what types of practices are in place regardless of the families' ethnicities.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Have table groups discuss what specific policies and /or practices are in place at their office/department to involve absent fathers (please consider issues of the: who, what, when and how of these applications). If there are none, discuss issues surrounding why these policies do not exist and what may be done to change this status quo.
2. Debrief: Allow groups to share the discussions.

*End of activity*





**Activity 3D: African American Fathers and Men**

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: N/A

Trainee Content: African American Men

PowerPoint Slides: 11-12

**Activity Description:** The purpose of this segment is to provide participants with research data and information relative to the impact of systemic influences on African American men as fathers. These statistics provide factors and influences that may impede the involvement of the Black father with his children and factors that may contribute to absenteeism. The segment is intended to illuminate the life of Black men in general and offer an opportunity to consider these factors in CWS in the pursuit of the safety, permanence and well being of Black children. This is not expressed as an excuse for absence, rather as a presentation of realities faced by the Black male.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Provide the following statistical background.
  - **African American Men Data** (Rasheed & Mikal, 1999)
    - The average life expectancy for Black men is 64.6 years (vs. 72.9 years for White men).
    - The HIV infection mortality rate is 72.9% (vs. 52% for White males): the HIV mortality rate for African American males has more than doubled in the past 10 years.
2. Discuss the statistics and how the reality they represent affects Black men. Note that “researchers, social scientists, academicians, practitioners, politicians, and other public service figures have pondered these staggering figures relative to the plight of African American men..... All these professionals tend to agree that there are a myriad of factors operating within this contemporary scenario, and that racism, poverty, and a unique form of (Black male) gender oppression all play prominent roles” (Rasheed & Mikal, 1999).
3. Ask for feedback or input regarding the data from the trainee content and the quote from the above authors.

*End of activity.*



## Public Child Welfare Training Academy

**AFRICAN AMERICAN FATHERS AND MEN**

- Data that impact daily living of African American fathers and men

**HISTORICAL ROOTS**

- Look for issues that impact present day Black families and fathers
- Discussion
- Substitute Father



**Activity 3E: Behaviors that Contribute to Biases**

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Video clip of *Claudine*  
Flip chart paper  
Markers

Trainee Content: N/A

PowerPoint Slide: 13

**DVD Instructions:** The clip starts 1 hour, 6 minutes and 34 seconds into the movie when Claudine hosts a party where Rupert is a no show. Play the clip for 2 minutes and 15 seconds.

**Activity Description:** The purpose of this segment is to realistically consider the perpetuation of behaviors of Black men that contribute to biases within Child Welfare Services. There is a group activity following the video clip.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Give each table group flip chart paper and markers. Ask them to select a moderator, a recorder and a spokesperson.
2. Ask them to chart their responses to the discussion question, **“How do Black men contribute to their own plight and self-sabotage?”**
3. Encourage participants to have an open discussion regarding these contributions and what factors/influences may be considered relevant to the attitudes that black men may have.
4. Ask each spokesperson to report back to the large group.
5. Ask the participants to discuss the contributing behaviors. The trainer can initiate a discussion list by using examples below if necessary. Some points for the trainer to consider or offer to the group as appropriate:
  - Domestic violence
  - Devaluing of women
  - Substance abuse/self-medicating
  - Gambling
  - Extra-marital affairs
  - Victim attitude
  - Justifying their behaviors because of racism, their interactions with their mothers, fear, or societal pressures.



*End of activity*

A slide with a dark red background and a decorative vertical border on the right side. The border features a pattern of small white icons and a larger, colorful abstract design. The text on the slide is as follows:

VIDEO/ACTIVITY

- Video (Claudine)
- (Discussion) How do Black men contribute to their own plight and self-sabotage?



## Segment 4: Historical Impact

### Total Time 40 Minutes

#### **Activity 4A:** History of Social Welfare Impacts on Black Men and Black Families

Time:	20 Minutes
Materials:	Video clip of <i>Roots</i> Video clips of <i>Claudine</i>
Trainee Content:	Claudine (Optional)
PowerPoint Slide:	14

#### **DVD Instructions:**

- *Roots* Scene: The clip is from episode three and starts 24 minutes into the episode when Beverly Todd as Fanta enters the gate and John Amos as Kunta (Toby) says, “Fanta, here.” Play the clip for 3 minutes and 27 seconds.
- *Claudine* Scene 1: The clip starts 34 minutes and 49 seconds into the movie when the social worker comes to the house for the first time. Play the clip for 2 minutes and 35 seconds.
- *Claudine* Scene 2: The clip starts 50 minutes and 23 seconds into the movie when Rupert is at home when the social worker comes to the house. Play the clip for 3 minutes and 12 seconds.
- *Claudine* Scene 3: The clip starts 58 minutes and 11 seconds into the movie when Claudine and Rupert are at the welfare office. Play the clip for 2 minutes and 11 seconds.

**Activity Description:** This segment serves to motivate discussion regarding past practices that may have spilled into today’s practices and decision making in service delivery and treatment towards Black families as a whole and Black fathers in particular. The segment also asks participants to consider the mind sets that families and community still have regarding CWS. Open discussion is encouraged and initiated by the trainer. The segment also addresses the considerations exposed in the studies presented in training.



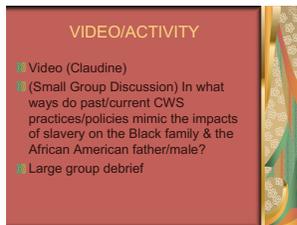
**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Inform trainees that you will be showing clips from the movies *Roots* and *Claudine*. Ask participants to look for issues that have impact on today's family and Black men.
2. Show the clip from *Roots*.
3. Ask the participants how slavery, segregation, Jim Crow laws and integration influenced Black family dynamics, the role of African-American men/fathers and influenced CWS bias. Focus the discussion on the impact of slavery and its influence on the role of Black fathers. Also consider its impact on relationships between men and women.
4. Introduce the derogatory term of the "substitute father" and how this is seen by the Black community, meaning that welfare or CWS was the children's "Daddy," and took the role of being responsible for the children.
5. Remind trainees of practices from slavery and their residual effects on the mind sets of families involved with CWS and others influenced by the "substitute father" regulation, when mothers and children could not receive aid if the father or a male was living in or outside the household prior to Welfare Reform Act 1996 (King v. Smith 1968).
6. Next, show the first video clip from *Claudine*. This scene allows the trainee to understand the impacts of early practices and policies of CWS which are still believed to persist by many in the public today.
7. Stop the video and ask the trainees how they think the family views CWS in the scene.
8. Show the second *Claudine* video clip. This scene depicts the thoughts and behaviors that CWS recipients engage in when the social workers come to their home. Not only are items hidden from the social worker but the male is also hidden. Many people still believe that they must hide the truth from CWS due to fear and lack of trust.
9. Stop the video and discuss how the mother, the children and specifically the boyfriend may have felt.
10. Show the third *Claudine* video clip. This scene reveals the operational dilemmas and the dysfunctions imposed on the couple. It also shows the resilience of the couple. Combined, all of these scenes provide a realistic view of a system that was set up to demean the woman and minimize the male in general. It also encourages the concept of "shacking up" instead of marriage.
11. Ask participants how they would label or report the behavior of parents that may present this way today. Optional: Ask trainees to answer the discussion questions on the *Claudine* trainee content in their table groups.



12. In small groups have trainees discuss in what ways past/current CWS practices/policies mimic the impacts of slavery on the Black family and African American father/male.
13. Debrief as a large group. Inform participants that this discussion may prove uncomfortable but hopefully will assist trainees in moving forward and shifting their practice of CWS to involve the African American father in any way.
14. Inform trainees that The Welfare Reform Act of 1996 signed by President Bill Clinton changed some of the policies and the culture of social services as seen in the video. For example, while the previous AFDC requirements had stringent work rules for 2 parent families, TANF rules instituted in 1996 allowed states to eliminate work rules for 2 parent families (Tamis-LeMonda & Cabrera, 2002).

*End of activity.*





**Activity 4B: Role Play (optional)**

Time: 20 Minutes

Materials: N/A

Trainee Content: Role Play

PowerPoint Slide: 15

**Activity Description:** This segment asks participants to consider how they may perceive the role of clients, fathers, and themselves. It also examines how other agencies, policies and procedures impact their decisions regarding safety, permanence, and well-being of children. This role play is designed to have participants stand in others' shoes and become involved with the seriousness of the subject matter. It is important that a level of safety has been established for the participants.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Inform participants that this role play exercise reveals biases, assumptions, beliefs, experiences, etc. toward a specific culture or person.
2. Ask for volunteers or select participants to act out the characters. Purposefully assign parts so that each participant represents a character that is different from the participant (e.g., a white female will play the role of a Black father).
3. Refer trainees to the Role Play trainee content.
4. After trainees act out the scenes, ask them what they think is the purpose of portraying a role different from themselves. Ask how it felt. Ask if the experience changed anything for them. Ask how the experience will influence their work.

*End of activity.*





## Segment 5: Cultural Body Formation

### Total Time 45 minutes

#### **Activity 5A:** Past and Current Factors

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Focus group video clip

Trainee Content: Focus Group Transcript Part 2

PowerPoint Slides: 16-17

**DVD Instructions:** This video clip is not publicly available. Trainers may wish to contact the Public Child Welfare Training Academy for copies and permission to use the clip or they may use the transcript.

**Activity Description:** Some of the discussion points below are taken from “Child Welfare Practice in a Multicultural Environment” (C. Kahalifa King). The points may be presented in lecture format or as questions to the large group.

#### **Training Activity Steps:**

1. Ask trainees how they think CWS practice has influenced Black people regarding their views of Black fathers. Ask them what role they think gender plays in this interaction. Include the concept that gender dynamics impact decision making in CWS/CPS which are systems where women are the majority employment populous. Note that people of color are underrepresented as employees in the “system” at all levels.
2. Play the video clip of a San Diego focus group discussion regarding the challenges for CWS Workers and the biases that exist. If the video clip is not available, refer trainees to the trainee content Focus Group Transcript Part 2.
3. Provide the following statistics. According to the National Association of Black Social Workers paper, *Preserving Black Families*, (2003) there are disproportional percentages of children of color in the child welfare system and there are disparities in service delivery. For example, Black children make up 15% of the population; however, they comprise 41% of youth in foster care.
4. Discuss the concept that the “system” taught mothers and children how to survive without Black men in general and fathers specifically.

- Ironically, research indicators lay claim that fathers/males are needed in the family dynamics for the child (US Dept of Health and Human Services), yet there are barriers that impede fathers' efforts even if they are motivated to engage or to be involved, (i.e. SW attitude, legal pursuits for child support resulting in jail time and criminal record, extreme unemployment, the mother's relationship/behavior with the father, etc.).

The trainer may wish to insert a brief discussion here about strategies to better engage with African American fathers, including:

- Initiating contact and actively seeking inclusion of fathers and paternal relatives
- Expressing to fathers the benefits of the paternal relationship for children
- Offering relevant and accessible services (Malm, Murray and Geen, 2006)

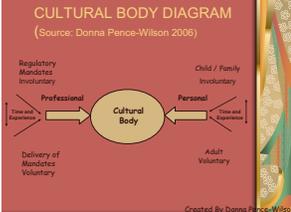
- Introduce the diagram on slide 17 and segue to the next segment which will guide participants in putting the concepts together.

*End of activity.*

**VIDEO/FACTORS**

- ❖ Past: Internal CWS dynamics on Black fathers, taught mothers survival without & the unimportance of Black men
- ❖ Current: Mothers & children accept the absence of Black fathers as norm

**CULTURAL BODY DIAGRAM**  
(Source: Donna Pence-Wilson 2006)



Created by Donna Pence-Wilson



**Activity 5B: Cultural Body Exercise**

Time:	30 minutes
Materials:	Colorful paper Markers Tape
Trainee Content:	N/A
PowerPoint Slides:	17-19

**Activity Description:** This segment provides participants an additional lens to consider when working with the African American father. The exercise allows the participant to consider the involuntary messages African American males received as children growing up in their family environment and how those messages influenced their beliefs, values and behaviors. In contrast, the segment uses the same approach to examine how involuntary messages (policies/procedures) influence professionals' decisions when working with families. Both dynamics form part of the cultural body which must function in order to carry out the mission of CWS.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Ask trainees to complete the Cultural Body Exercise individually. Explain that the exercise will help them see how implicit and explicit messages from their families of origin influence the way they see the world and how implicit and explicit messages from their agency influence the way they see the world.
2. Provide each table with multiple sheets of paper in different colors. Ask participants to take two sheets of paper and label one with the heading *Personal* and one with the heading *Professional*.
3. Ask the trainees to start with the *Personal* heading, listing the family beliefs systems from childhood and those messages that were taught as (involuntary) mandates from their parents/guardians. This establishes their Personal Cultural Body. Note that through time and experiences these family teachings may become more voluntary as people become adults. The messages are still there, but we have choices whether to use them or not.
4. Ask the trainees to consider the *Professional* heading next, noting the messages taught to them regarding policies, practices, etc. This can be messages received explicitly or it can be implied messages. This is their Professional Cultural Body. Note that after time and experience, individuals have some degree of choice as to how they carry out those mandates.
5. Remind the trainees that they have both personal and professional cultural influences (their combined Cultural Body) to consider when making decisions regarding their work with families being served. We must all be aware of how we often default to comfortable and often unconscious



feelings, thoughts and behaviors. These motivators influence our decision making in daily encounters.

6. Challenge the trainees to consider how they could identify and change the approach they use if it is based on their own culture.
7. Remind trainees that CWS is a culture with multiple levels of subcultures (i.e. directors, supervisors, line workers, and varying departments). Internally, these cultures often clash.
8. Elicit examples of social worker actions that send implicit and explicit messages. Be sure to include the following ideas:
  - Language that is used in case files which may influence and impact other social workers that may take over the case
  - Recording contacts/attempts to contact the father (supporting/encouraging contacts such as calls to fathers, no responses, father not interested or minimal contacts such as asking the mother once about the father then documenting that the mother has no knowledge of the father which leads the next worker to have the same belief.)
  - Social workers must consider the words they use and the words the families use, the interpretation of the words, and consider reframing the words without breaching any mandates, policies or procedures to incorporate more strength-based language
9. Refer back to the diagram on slide 17. This diagram is critical in providing a visual aid to blending cultural connections and changing paradigms that could lead to more father involvement!
10. Review the following systemic factors affecting Black fathers.

#### CURRENT SOCIETAL/SYSTEMIC INFLUENCES

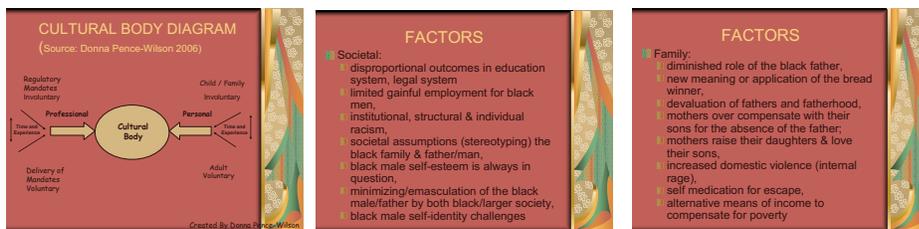
- Limited gainful employment for Black men, particularly high unemployment rate as compared to other groups (10% v. 5%) (Rasheed & Mikal, 1999)
- Disproportional outcomes in education, (i.e. drop-outs, special education, suspensions, etc.) (Rasheed & Mikal, 1999)
- Disproportional legal system involvement for black males, (50% of prison population) (Rasheed & Mikal, 1999)
- Institutional, structural and individual racism
- Societal assumptions (stereotyping) regarding the Black family and Black men
- Health concerns affecting Black male self-esteem (high blood pressure, hypertension, stress, depression, mortality etc.) (Rasheed & Mikal, 1999)
- Minimizing/emasculating of the Black male/father by both the Black community and the larger community (self-hate, mistrust, man not needed, dead beat) (Rasheed & Mikal, 1999)
- Black male self-identify challenges (i.e. “double consciousness,” belonging doubt, what is a black male, am I Black enough or acting “white,” etc.) (Rasheed & Mikal, 1999)

#### FAMILY SYSTEM INFLUENCES

- Diminished role of the Black father

- New meaning (application) of the term “bread winner” as the income became associated with the mother under the AFDC rules
- Devaluation of the importance of being a man
- The exodus of fathers
- Mothers overcompensating with their sons for the absence of the father
- Increased domestic violence (internal rage)
- Self-medicating to escape from reality (drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc.)
- Reliance on alternative means of income to compensate for poverty

*End of activity.*



## Segment 6: Factors Influencing Absenteeism

### Total Time 30 minutes

#### Activity 6A: Absenteeism

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper  
Markers  
Focus group video clip

Trainee Content: Focus Group Transcript Part 3, Focus Group Transcript Part 4

PowerPoint Slide: 20

**DVD Instructions:** This video clip is not publicly available. Trainers may wish to contact the Public Child Welfare Training Academy for copies and permission to use the clip or they may use the transcript.

**Activity Description:** This segment gives consideration to the mind sets of African American fathers/men as to their motivations or other factors influencing absenteeism.

#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Ask trainees to form new table groups.
2. Give each table group flip chart paper and markers. Ask trainees to list what they believe are the reasons for Black fathers' absenteeism.
3. After participants list/discuss what they believe are the motivations for absenteeism, but before they report out to the large group, show the focus group video clip or refer trainees to the trainee content Focus Group Transcript Part 3.
4. Following the video, ask trainees to review their lists and note any factors they might change based on the video or trainee content.
5. Ask each table group to report out their list to the large group and use the report out to stimulate a large group discussion on the factors that influence absenteeism. The conversation is likely to include the following:
  - Left the country for better financial opportunities
  - More money for the family if the father is not around
  - The father's criminal/gang life places the child/family in danger

- The father doesn't like the mother or doesn't want to be with the mother
  - The mother's revenge
  - Ongoing child support cases
  - Underemployment
  - The mother's partner
  - The child is a secret from the father's family
  - The father wants to get himself together
  - The child is too much of a burden/responsibility
  - Incarceration
  - Substance/Alcohol abuse
  - Lack of cultural support for involvement due to historical factors (Brown et al, 2009)
6. Discuss the following impacts absenteeism has on children (National Child Welfare Resource Center for Family Centered Practice, 2002). Children with absent fathers are more likely to:
- Have emotional problems
  - Become involved with drugs
  - Become involved with criminal behaviors
  - Experience problems in school
  - Have difficulty establishing positive relationships
  - Have contact with juvenile systems
  - Have health problems
7. Show the next focus group video clip or refer trainees to the trainee content Focus Group Transcript Part 4. In this scene, a young man speaks about leaving home at the age of 15 to help lessen the burden for this mother and to seek a better life for himself.
8. Discuss the video. Consider the impact of absenteeism on the mindset of a young Black male who is not a father. He is a young man who did not grow up with his father. He is not a father, but he is willing to leave his family to make a better life for himself and his mother. A key factor is that his older brother also left home and they now work at the same center helping each other.

*End of activity*



## Segment 7: Gallery Walk

### Total Time 30 minutes

#### Activity 7A: Beliefs about Black Men

Time:	30 minutes
Materials:	Flip chart paper Markers
Trainee Content:	Gallery Walk (Optional)
PowerPoint Slide:	21

**Activity Description:** This segment asks participants to consider their current thoughts about Black men and to begin the process of speaking within a group regarding their personal views, thoughts and/or experiences. The discussion is intended to assist participants in considering their indoctrinated beliefs about the Black father and man. It asks participants to consider how these factors impact the goals of CWS and to consider how their personal and professional biases result in minimizing the involvement of Black fathers. Trainer note: If scheduling permits, this exercise is best conducted right before or immediately after lunch.

#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Post flip chart paper on the walls around the room with the following headings:
  - *I believe that Black fathers .....*
  - *I know that Black fathers .....*
  - *I have been taught that Black fathers.....*
  - *When I talk about Black men, I think.....*
  - *When I am close to Black men, I feel.....*

These headings are also available in the trainee content Gallery Walk.

2. Ask trainees to walk around and write under each of the following headings what they know or believe about Black men.
3. When everyone has walked around and written their statements, go to each chart and read the statements out loud.
4. Ask trainees to engage in brief roundtable discussions at their table groups regarding their statements.
5. Ask the large group of trainees to describe the experiences. Make note of any positive statements.



6. Ask trainees what impact this has on their professional decision making regarding safety, permanence and well-being.

*End of activity.*





## Segment 8: Truth vs. Myth

### Total Time 45 minutes

#### Activity 8A: Myths about Black Men

Time:	15 minutes
Materials:	Video clip of <i>What Black Men Think</i>
Trainee Content:	N/A
PowerPoint Slide:	22

**DVD Instructions:** The video clip is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISSm41HNQFk>. Play the whole 1:48 clip.

**Activity Description:** As a contrast to the results of the previous exercise activity, this segment gives participants an alternative view regarding the myths about African American men. Trainees are asked to consider these myths as an every day struggle that Black males endure in their personal life experiences. Trainees examine how these myths may influence their decision points as social workers in their assumptive role to secure Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for children.

#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Read the statement below to encourage trainees to illuminate positive aspects of the African American Male.  
In the book, *Black Fathers: an invisible presence in America*, Connor and White, (2006) reference an interview conducted by Earl Ofari Hutchinson, a sociologist in Los Angeles with a cross-social group of 5 Black men, which challenged the image of Black father as irresponsible by highlighting what they were doing right as African American fathers/males to enrich family life and support their children's healthy development.
2. Show the video clip.
3. Ask trainees what their reaction was to the video. Ask them to describe what it showed. Did it support their bias? How will it impact their thinking?



*End of activity.*





**Activity 8B: Black Men’s Commitment as Fathers**

Time:	30 minutes
Materials:	Video clips from <i>Pursuit of Happyness</i>
Trainee Content:	N/A
PowerPoint Slide:	23

**DVD Instructions:**

- *Pursuit of Happyness* Scene 1: the clip starts 48 minutes and 17 seconds into the film when Chris and Linda are coming up a flight of stairs. Play the clip for 2 minutes and 15 seconds.
- *Pursuit of Happyness* Scene 2: the clip starts 1 hour, 24 minutes and 33 seconds into the film as Chris and his son are sitting on a wooden bench. Play the clip for 3 minutes and 51 seconds.
- *Pursuit of Happyness* Scene 3: the clip starts 1 hour, 29 minutes and 7 seconds into the film as a woman in a blue smock enters a shelter office. Play the clip for 2 minutes and 32 seconds.

**Activity Description:** The segment seeks to share and create an awareness within the group of thoughts regarding the struggles of African American men as “committed fathers” given all of the institutional/systemic forces against them, such as, income, job availability and (in the video example) an unsupportive and absent mother. Participants are encouraged to consider and focus on issues regarding safety, permanency and well-being.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Inform participants that this video clip depicts a true story that addresses the various stereotypes about Black fathers being unavailable for their children. It also shows the limitations of services available to Black fathers. Show the first clip.
2. Tell trainees that this scene expresses the commitment of the father regarding the custody of his son, and challenges the stereotypical myths regarding black fathers being lazy, uncommitted and irresponsible.
3. Ask trainees what their immediate reaction was regarding the father’s position toward the mother about their son.
4. Show the second video clip.
5. Tell trainees that this scene depicts the father’s need to protect his son’s emotional safety through creativity and determination. The scene in the men’s room clearly examines the depths of single fathering in the face of poverty and homelessness and further reveals the character of the man as a



father. It also shows the pains he will endure and the lengths to which a committed Black father can, will, and does go to in an effort to maintain his relationship with his child and protect his child.

6. Ask trainees if poverty and/or homelessness are forms of child abuse.
7. Show the third video clip.
8. Tell trainees that this scene clearly exposes the gender biases against men as single fathers relative to support and services afforded to them within the overall system of social and community welfare and delivery of services. The shelter was only for mothers and their children.
9. Ask trainees if they think the father should have left his son at the shelter for women. Ask them to explain why or why not. What options should/could the father have taken? Should the father have left the child with the mother? What impact did the restroom scene have on them?

*End of activity.*





## Segment 9: Responsibility

### Total Time 55 minutes

#### Activity 9A: Personal Responsibility

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: N/A

Trainee Content: N/A

PowerPoint Slide: 24

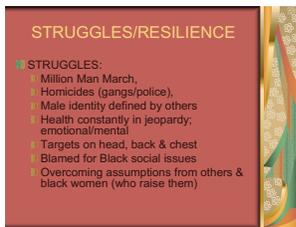
**Activity Description:** This segment covers the struggles African American men face as they attempt to address their own issues to better themselves. The content shows that often Black men in general must continue daily in the struggle to overcome or deal with ongoing attempts to thwart them in their efforts to take personal responsibility.

#### Training Activity Steps:

1. Discuss the efforts African American men have made to take responsibility and better themselves. An example of this is the Million Man March. The purpose of the event was for Black men in America to atone for their behavioral mistakes, ask forgiveness, and begin a new approach as Black men, fathers and spouses.
2. Ask trainees if the march was a success or a failure. Note the following during the discussion:
  - over one million men came in brotherhood to the event voluntarily
  - Black women complained that they were left-out; many did not “like” the organizer (Minister Louis Farrakhan, Nation of Islam)
  - non-Black America was afraid of that many Black men coming together in our nation’s capital (let alone any place else)
3. Discuss the following struggles faced by African American men as they attempt to address their own issues to better themselves:
  - The US government refused to allow the Nation of Islam to receive \$1 billion offered by Kaddafi
  - Their identity as men is defined by others

- They must overcome constant battles and assumptions from others especially Black women
  - They are blamed for most Black social issues
  - They must strive to gain emotional/mental healthiness and maintain self image without being judged
  - They struggle to be understood as Black men in America while feeling constantly under siege from all sides
4. Note that in the face of the negative views toward them, Black men have shown remarkable resilience in many forms. Forms that mainstream America would not consider as positive or would find fault with.

*End of activity*





**Activity 9B: Group Activity**

Time:	20 minutes
Materials:	Video clip from <i>Claudine</i> Video clip from <i>South Central</i>
Trainee Content:	N/A
PowerPoint Slide:	25

**DVD Instructions:**

- *Claudine*: The clip starts 44 minutes and 54 seconds into the movie when Rupert is shooting dice with Claudine's son who is ditching school. Play the clip for 3 minutes and 13 seconds.
- *South Central*: The clip starts 1 hour, 26 minutes and 44 seconds into the movie when the father risks his life to get his son out of the gang life. Play the clip for 8 minutes and 36 seconds.

**Activity Description:** This segment serves to share and create awareness within the group of thoughts regarding the struggles of African American men as "committed fathers" given all of the institutional/systemic forces against them, such as, income and job availability. Participants are encouraged to consider and focus on issues regarding safety, permanency and well-being.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Show the first video clip.
2. Discuss the scene with participants. Note that this scene depicts an alternative approach to child support from a father image/substitute. Discuss the involvement of Rupert as representative of many African American fathers/males. His language and threat of "whopping the boy's ass" is a norm. Explain why this should not be seen as an abusive situation in which the child must be removed.
3. Show the second video clip.
4. Ask the trainees why we hold on to the belief that gangsters or other fathers cannot change their lives for their children if given the opportunity, encouragement and information. Note that in the U.S. there are 353,000 single Black fathers and 13,000 raising four or more children alone (U.S. Census, 2000).
5. Ask trainees to consider these factors related to resiliency:
  - Black men have excelled in arenas that were forbidden to them. Once there they must constantly prove themselves to survive, e.g. Tiger Woods.



- Some would have us believe that since there are seemingly more Blacks (men) in the limelight (entertainment/athletics) and other forms of minimal visibility that racism and bias are things of the past. This perpetuates a false sense of success.
- In our time we are witnessing American history being made with the nomination of Barack Obama for the President of the United States by the Democratic Party, and his election as President of the United States, yet race has been and continues to be at the forefront and behind the scenes of his nomination and election.
- Data were unavailable as to what percentages of fathers are receiving any type of assistance from either CWS or cash aid assistance.

*End of activity.*





**Activity 9C: Current Practices and Policies**

Time:	30 minutes
Materials:	Flip chart paper Markers
Trainee Content:	Scenarios
PowerPoint Slide:	26-27

**Activity Description:** This segment creates an open discussion that enables participants to include current practices and policies utilized in CWS to address the issues within the scenarios. Participants will engage in dialogue that may be contrary to their respective department's practices and beliefs. This activity is designed to assist in considering new information from peers and others as a resource for change. There are 3 different scenarios depending on the number of trainees; one or more tables may have the same scenario.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Provide each table group with flip chart pages and markers. Ask each table to list and discuss the following question: What are the reasons that Black fathers are not involved in the parenting of their children?
2. Once completed, have each table share a couple of their findings/thoughts.
3. Refer trainees to the scenarios in the trainee content.
4. After reading and discussing the scenarios as a table, each table will:
  - Make a plan for getting more information from the mother or other sources.
  - Develop a strategy with the father to bring him into the picture.
  - Make a decision about the situation.
  - Articulate one reason why it's important for this child to have a father in his or her life.
  - Describe how the social worker could minimize the hostile attitude towards the inclusion of the father. Consider the three elements of safety, permanence and well-being.
5. Ask each table to share their thoughts with the large group.

*End of activity.*

ACTIVITY, SCENARIO, ASSUMED ROLE	FAMILY SCENARIOS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Discuss: What are the reasons Black fathers are not involved in the parenting of their children?</li><li>2 Make a list.</li><li>3 Discuss how CWS influences non involvement of the fathers.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Read scenarios. Make a plan to get more info from mother</li><li>2 Develop an approach to the father to involve him.</li><li>3 Make a decision to take action. Consider safety, permanence &amp; well being in your decision making/actions</li><li>4 Share one reason why it is important for the child to have father in his or her life.</li></ul>

# Segment 10: Resources and Considerations for Change Total Time 30 minutes

## Activity 10A: Paradigm Shifts

Time:	20 minutes
Materials:	N/A
Trainee Content:	Paradigm Shift
PowerPoint Slide:	28

**Activity Description:** This segment asks trainees to consider how systems will need to change to end systemic bias against African American fathers. The trainee content has headings with general information to assist participants in considering the processes to engage fathers in general. It serves as a starting point for those that truly wish to change the status quo.

### Training Activity Steps:

1. Refer trainees to the trainee content Paradigm Shift and ask them to discuss how the systems affect their efforts to involve the non-custodial parent, particularly the African-American father (Sonenstein, Malm & Billing, 2002).

*End of activity.*





**Activity 10B: Efforts for Father Involvement**

Time: 10 minutes

Materials: Diagram (below)

Trainee Content: N/A

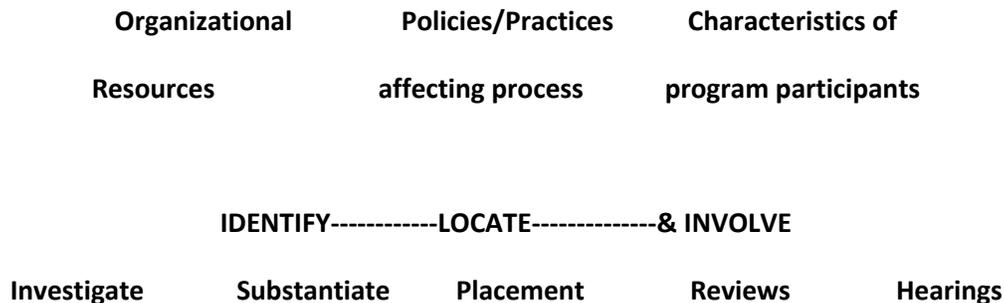
PowerPoint Slide: 29-31

**Activity Description:** This segment provides a visual guide (diagram) of the efforts, policies and practices CWS uses to identify, locate and involve nonresidential/non-custodial fathers. The trainees engage in open discussion to consider the decision stages involving the father (Urban Institute, 2006).

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Refer to the diagram below and discuss PowerPoint slide 29.

**DIAGRAM OF EFFORTS TO INVOLVE FATHERS**



**OUTCOMES**

**Less time in foster care - stronger ties with children and Fathers - Decreased court costs**

2. Ask trainees if they believe they can impact more fathers being involved.
3. Share the *10 Promising Practices for Fatherhood Programs* (National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, Child Trends, 2006) listed below. This information is provided as suggested considerations in developing programs for father involvement.
  - Teaching methods and materials that are culturally appropriate for fathers being served
  - Staff members who believe in the program and have relevant training and coaching

- A high staff-participant ratio
- One-on-one relationships between staff and participants
- Clear, specific program goals
- Theory-based approaches that have influenced parenting behaviors in other contexts
- Varied teaching methods that focus on fathers as individuals
- Sufficient time to complete important core program activities
- Incentives to engage fathers and families
- Curricula replicated with fidelity

*End of activity.*



**EFFORTS**

Admin/Organizational Resources → Policies/Practices Affecting process → Characteristics of Program Participants

**Identify** → **Locate**

**Involve**

Investigation → substantiation (adjudicatory hearing) → placement (disposition hearing) → periodic reviews → permanency hearing

**POTENTIAL OUTCOMES**

For Child (Placement/Time w/ Family/Case) | For Father (Relevant/Engaged/Involved) | For Agency (Risk/Reduced/Case)

**10 PROMISING PROGRAM PRACTICES**

(Source: National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse, CHFD Trends, 2009)

- 1 Teaching methods & materials that are culturally appropriate
- 2 Staff members who believe in the program & have relevant training & coaching
- 3 High staff – participant ratio
- 4 One-on-one relationships between staff & participants
- 5 Clear, specific program goals

**PROMISING PRACTICES (con't)**

- 6 Theory based approaches that have influenced parenting behaviors in other contexts
- 7 Varied teaching methods that focus on fathers as individuals
- 8 Sufficient time to complete important core program activities
- 9 Incentives to engage fathers & families
- 10 Curricula replicated with fidelity

# Segment 11:

## Introduction of the Black Male/Father Figure

### Total Time 15 minutes

**Activity 11A:** Applause for Black Men

Time:	15 minutes
Materials:	Video clip <i>Montage</i> or Montage PowerPoint slides
Trainee Content:	N/A
PowerPoint Slide:	32

**DVD Instructions:** The *Montage* video clip is not publicly available. Trainers may wish to contact the Public Child Welfare Training Academy for copies and permission to use the clip, they may use the PowerPoint slide show posted with this curriculum or they may develop their own montage of photos showing African American fathers with their children. The recommended sound track for the presentation is “Color him Father” by the Winstons.

**Activity Description:** This segment creates an alternative method for participants to see, hear and know the African American male. This approach allows the trainer to bring a sense of personality into the training arena. It challenges the personal comfort of the trainee and changes the status quo of the training environment as we know it. It also prepares the participants for the range of information to be presented regarding the African American father/man. As an option trainer may ask the participants to close their eyes for dramatic effect. This is probably the first time that any of the trainees have ever stood up and given a standing ovation to African American fathers/men.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. In your most theatrical voice and presentation, ask participants to close their eyes.
2. State the following:

“Allow me to introduce

- **the one who** mastered the science of mathematics and built the pyramids
- **the one who** studied and mapped the stars, navigated the oceans and planted seeds of culture around the globe long before the Vikings and Columbus



- **the one who** fathered the concept and application of medicine
- **who** took Europe out of the dark ages and gave the Spaniards their Motif
- **the one who** discovered and introduced the value of precious metals and gems
- **the one who** not only embodied the sanctity of family but also lived a life of family unity and commitment to community
- **the one who** not only lived a life of respect for deity, but also honored the land as its custodian and not its conqueror
- **the one who** introduced the beauty and appreciation of the arts

“And yes ladies and gentlemen, it is

- **the same one who** lost his majestic throne of world civilization
- **the one who** was conquered when his land was invaded, his people stolen and shipped away
- **the same one who** unwittingly gave or even sold his captured enemies to others from another part of the world
- **the one who** went to places once visited as world travelers, only to return as chattel property with no name
- **the one who** fought for freedom for himself and others only to be relegated to second-class citizenship and considered 3/5 of a human
- **the one who** was lynched in his military uniform fighting for the freedom that he never had

”Yes my brothers and sisters, it is

- **the same one who** contributed positively to the betterment of American society in the height of black codes and Jim Crow
- **the same one who** grew tired and rebelled against domestic tyranny called racism, discrimination, bias and prejudice, camouflaged in the illusion of Civil Rights and confusing Affirmative Action
- **the one who** is at the top of the list of everything negative and at the bottom of list of things that are positive in the community, America and the world
- **the one whose** battle cry was “burn, baby, burn”

“Yet,

- it is **the same one who** kept the faith in the darkest hour
- **the one who** demands, begs, performs, cries, kills, disappears, self-hates, overachieves and steals just to cope and be heard and to become visible and noticed as a human being
- **the one who** is falsely accused, jailed and struggles for self-identity after being plagued by “justifiable homicides”
- **the one who** walks his child to and from school
- **the one who**, when given half of an authentic chance, would rather produce than consume
- **the one who** strives for love amidst the confusion of relationship

“Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my greatest pleasure, and my most humble honor to introduce the liberating, intelligent, compassionate, the most envied, the resilient, **the one** who is considered the most endangered species on the planet and yet the most feared, now open your eyes and join me as we give a standing ovation and a very warm welcome to ...

the **AFRICAN AMERICAN FATHER!**”

3. Show the video clip, *Montage* or the powerpoint. Let it play all the way through.
4. Begin clapping and have participants join in by standing and clapping too.
5. After the clapping has subsided, allow a few seconds of silence and pan the room.
6. Briefly poll the group to sense their reactions of how this exercise felt.

*End of activity.*





## Segment 12: Opportunity for Change Total Time 25 minutes

### **Activity 12A:** Action Plan for Change

Time:	15 minutes
Materials:	Flip chart pages Markers
Trainee Content:	N/A
PowerPoint Slide:	33

**Activity Description:** This segment provides trainees with an opportunity to close out the training with meaningful input. They will identify issues that may be impeding the involvement of African-American fathers. Also trainees will identify specific actions to change current practice.

### **Training Activity Steps:**

1. Provide each table group with flip chart pages and markers.
2. Ask trainees to answer the questions below and write their ideas on the flip chart pages.
  - Challenges: What contributory factors have CWS patterns added to long term practices within your organization that minimize the involvement of African American fathers?
  - Change: What do you believe needs to be done to increase the involvement of African American fathers?
  - Action: What can you do as an individual worker to begin to change the current practices to include the Black male/father?



*End of activity*

**OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE:  
IT'S ON YOU**

- 1. What contributory factors have CWS patterns added to the long term practices within your organization that minimize the involvement of African American Fathers?
- 2. What do you believe needs to be done (changes) to increase the involvement of African American Fathers?
- 3. What can you as an individual worker do (action) to begin to change the current practices to include the Black father/male?





**Activity 12B: Evaluation and Closing**

- Time: 10 minutes
- Materials: Video clip *Montage* or Montage PowerPoint slides
- Trainee Content: Evaluation form
- PowerPoint Slide: 34

**DVD Instructions:** The *Montage* video clip is not publicly available. Trainers may wish to contact the Public Child Welfare Training Academy for copies and permission to use the clip, they may use the PowerPoint slide show posted with this curriculum or they may develop their own montage of photos showing African American fathers with their children. The recommended sound track for the presentation is “Color him Father” by the Winstons.

**Activity Description:** This segment provides closure, giving the trainer an opportunity to acknowledge the work done by the group and allowing the trainees an opportunity to give feedback to the trainer.

**Training Activity Steps:**

1. Thanks the trainees for the effort and attention. Acknowledge the personal nature of the work done in the group. If time permits, invite trainees to share any notes they made on the trainee content Transfer of Learning.
2. Ask trainees to complete written evaluation forms and allow them to make any verbal comments if they would like.
3. Read the closing slide aloud to the group.
4. Repeat *Montage*.

*End of activity.*

