



ENGAGING FATHERS

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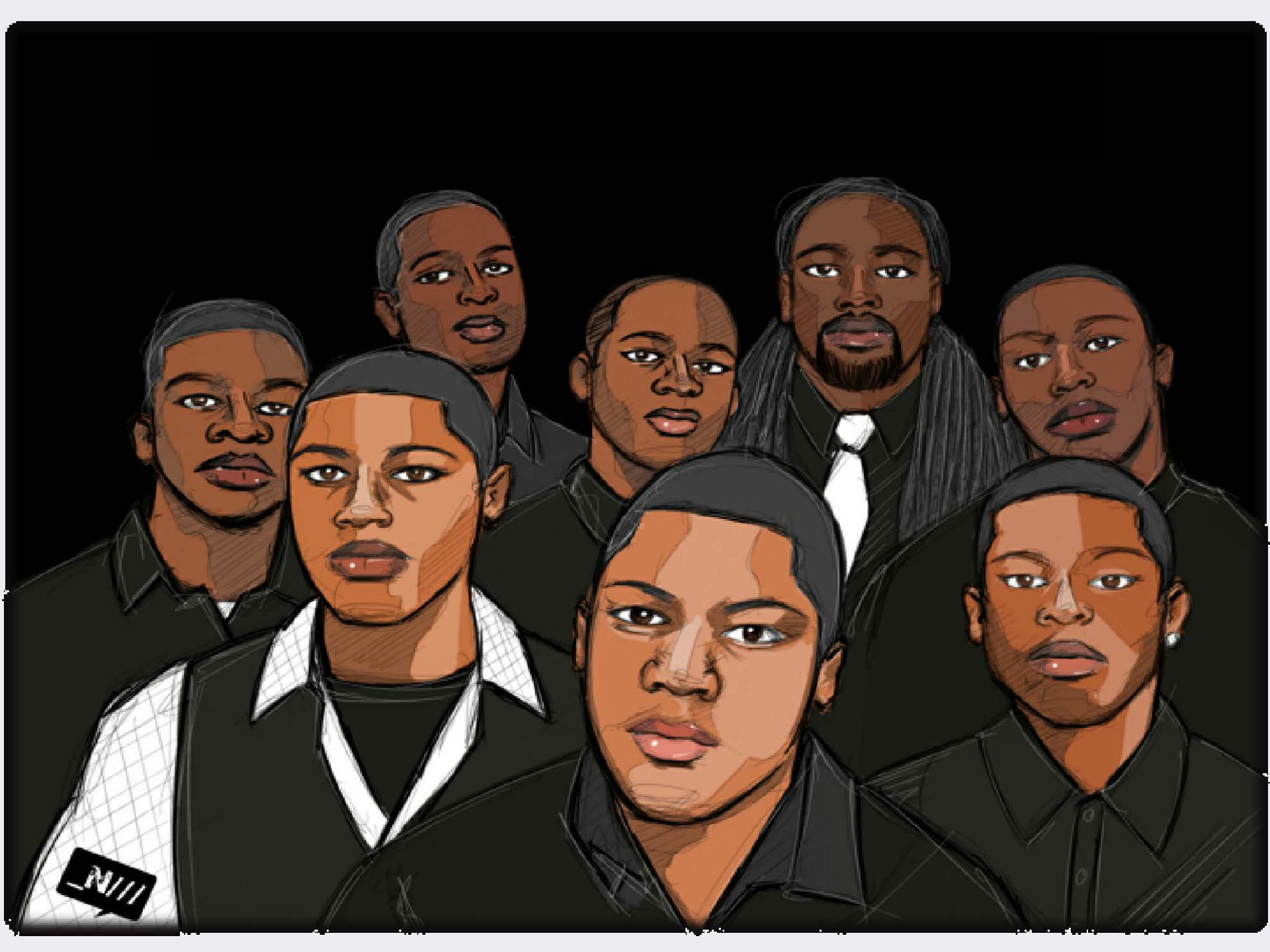
FINDING FATHERHOOD

I found fatherhood the day my son was born.











WHY CONSIDER FATHERS

The benefits are:

- A key feature of studies examining parental influences on child development published in the last five years is the separation of father and mother effects.
- The evidence shows fathers' influence as a separate, important factor in children's successful transition through infancy to adulthood.
- Even in areas where fathers' impact on children can be harmful, professionals and government are increasingly recognizing the need to engage fathers in services for the sake of their children (Maxwell et al., 2012).

WHY ENGAGE FATHERS?

When fathers are engaged in Home Visiting Programs they:

- Develop greater knowledge & understanding of child development
- More and higher-quality involvement with child
- Greater parental competence
- Improved communication skills
- Greater sensitivity to babies' (and partners') cues
- Less use of spanking and less intrusiveness (McAllister et al, 2004)





GROUP ACTIVITY

Time to stand and move around!!!





THE MEDIA ON FATHERHOOD

How does the media shape the way we see fathers?

America's use of TV is estimated:

- Nearly every home (97%) has at least one TV
- The average home contains nearly 3 TVs.
- Americans watch TV 3-5 hours a day.
- Adults watch nearly 38% more TV than children.



The Fatherhood Image in TV and Advertising

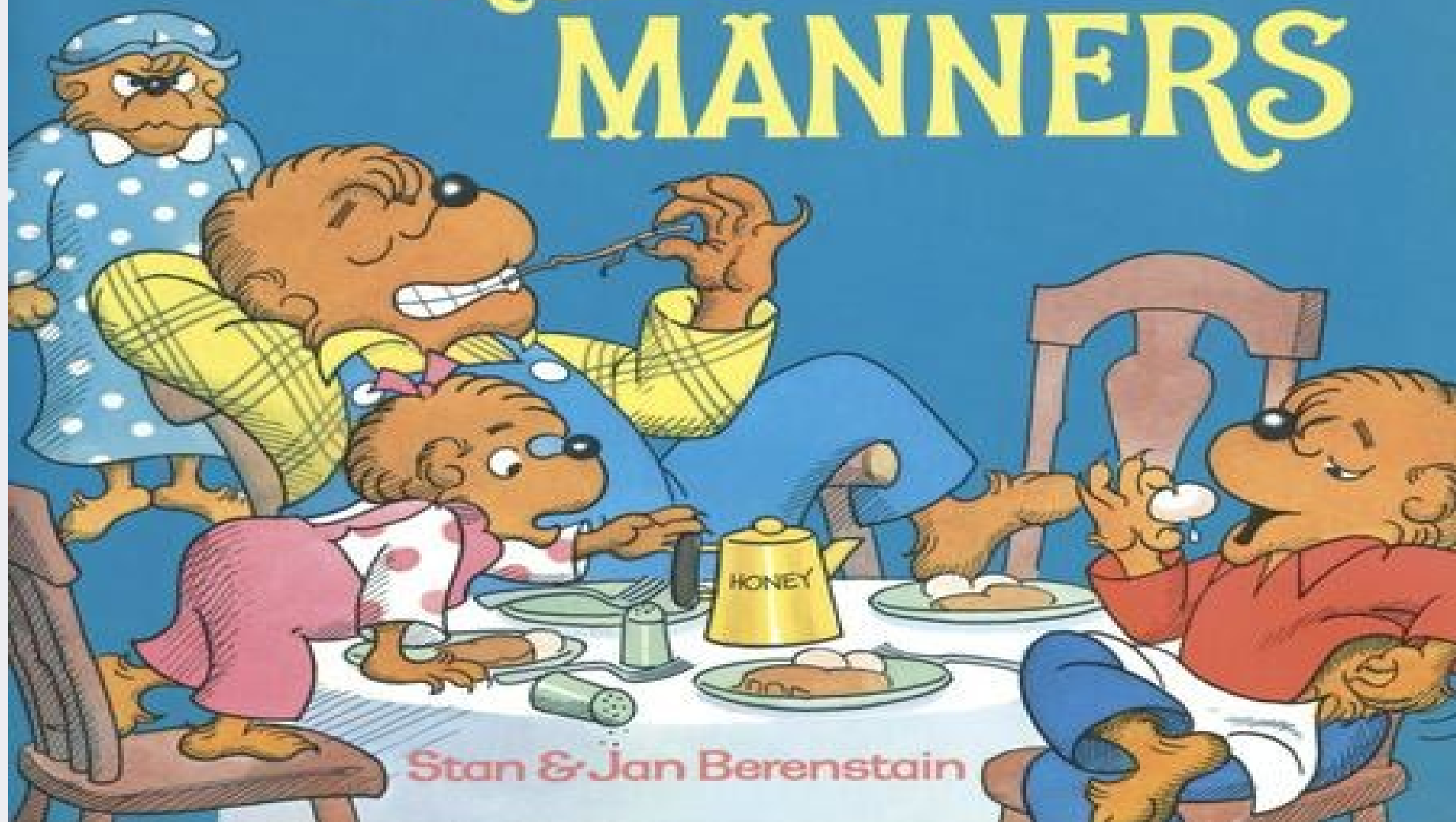


THE END OF THE DUMB DAD ERA



The portrayal of fathers in commercials and advertising play a huge role in how we perceive and create biases about dads.

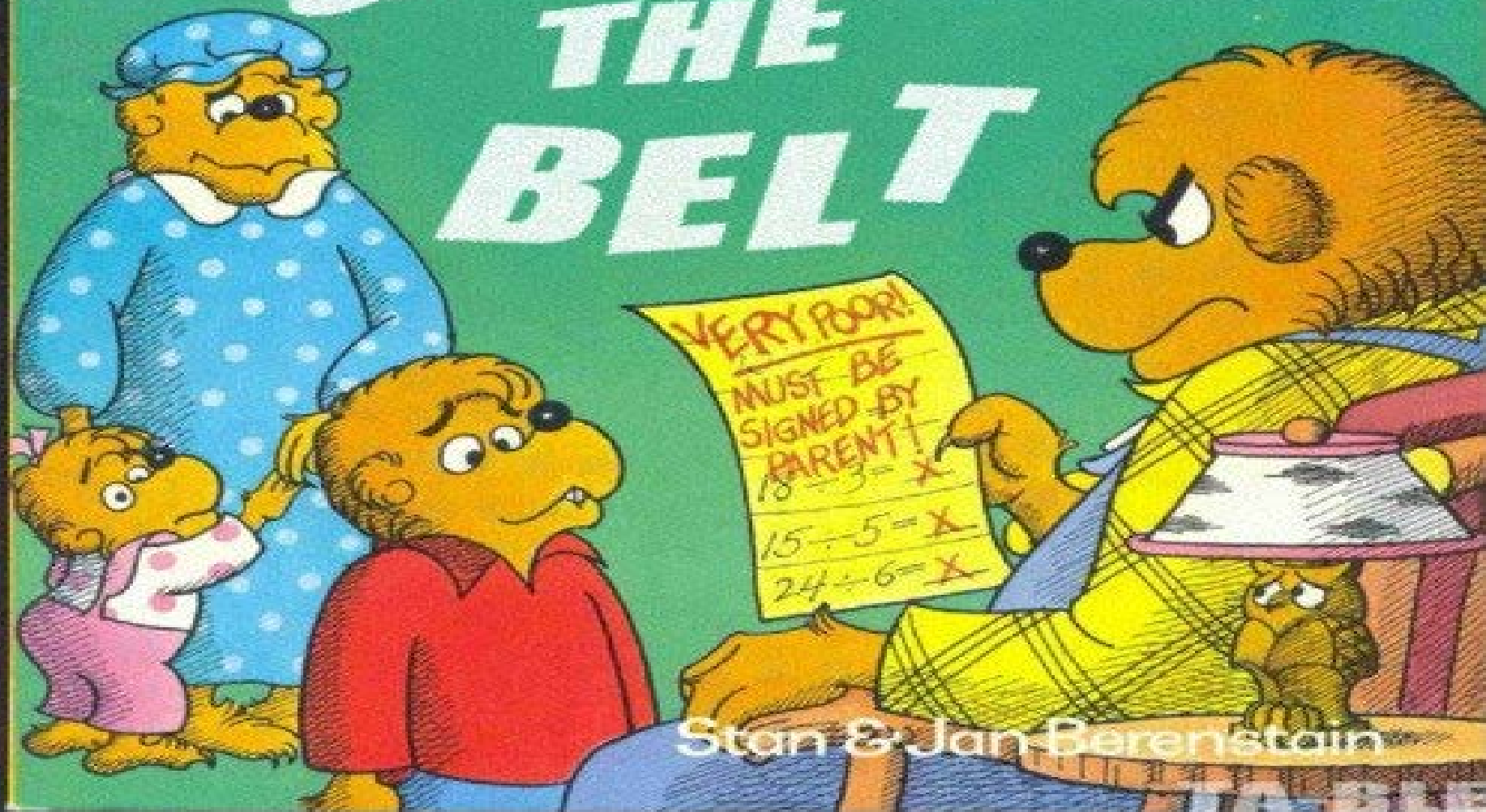
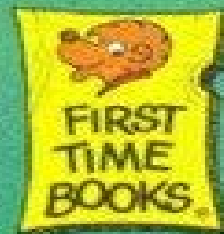
The Berenstain Bears
**FORGET THEIR
MANNERS**



Stan & Jan Berenstain

The Berenstain Bears'

GO GET THE BELT



MOM!!
Can you help me open
this water bottle?!





GROUP ACTIVITY

**Turn to the person next to you and
share your thoughts!!!**





THE NAMING OF FATHERS

The Impact of labels/language on the self-worth of fathers

NAMES CALLED	CHARACTERISTICS	IMPACT ON PERCEPTION
FOB	Professional term	Group feedback
Deadbeat	Heartless man who walks away from family	Group feedback
The Baby Daddy	Drops by to visit, brings money sometimes.	Group feedback
Sperm Donor	Worthless, Dodges child support	Group feedback



CHALLENGES TO GET DADS INVOLVED

There are many reasons why fathers may be less involved in home visiting services including:

- Competing use of resources may mean services cannot be delivered outside of normal working hours when more fathers could attend.
- Assumptions made by systems that do not include or can actively exclude the involvement of fathers.
- Mothers fail to identify the father or are unwilling to include them.
- Workers traditionally focus home visiting services on the mother often due to assumptions about gender roles.
- Fathers may avoid contact with workers as they view parenting as the mother's role or that interventions are not focused upon their perceived needs or preferred activities.

TOP TEN REASONS FOR NON-INVOLVEMENT OF FATHERS

1. Poor relationship with mother of child
2. Staff Attitudes, Perceptions, and Biases
3. Negative attitude of father
4. Scheduling visits and activities
5. Offending behavior

The background of the slide features a soft-focus photograph of a man and a young child walking away from the camera on a beach. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow that reflects on the water and sand. The silhouettes of the man and child are dark against the bright, hazy sky.

TOP TEN REASONS FOR NON-INVOLVEMENT OF FATHERS

6. Organizations environment not father friendly, no written materials that appeal to fathers.
7. Engagement with support services
8. Temperament of father
9. Relationship with extended family
10. Accommodation/housing and lack of transportation

STRATEGIES TO ENGAGING FATHERS

1. Start from the assumption that fathers want to be involved.
2. Build off the strengths of fathers
3. Treat each father as an individual
4. Suspend judgment – Fathers share the other half of the story.

STRATEGIES TO ENGAGING FATHERS

5. Empower fathers.
6. Be open and transparent when including fathers in the process of engagement.
7. Share the “Good News” fathers need to hear all the benefits that their presence can have on the lives of his children.



GROUP ACTIVITY

Time to stand and move around!!!



A photograph of three muscular men, likely professional wrestlers, standing in a row. They are all shirtless, wearing black wrestling trunks. The man on the left has a shaved head and extensive tattoos on his arms and chest. The man in the center has a shaved head, a goatee, and is wearing white wristbands; he is looking upwards with his mouth open. The man on the right has short brown hair and a beard, with tattoos on his arms. They are standing in front of a dark background with a yellow and red shield-like logo. The text "THE CULTURE OF MANHOOD AND FATHERHOOD" is overlaid in the center in a large, bold, dark blue font.

THE CULTURE OF MANHOOD AND FATHERHOOD

THE MAN BOX

MEN ARE

- Violent
- Mean
- Bullies
- Tough
- Angry
- Active
- Strong
- Successful
- In control
- Control Women

FEELINGS

- Scared
- Ashamed
- Alone
- Powerless
- Hopeless
- Vulnerable
- Helpless
- Worthless
- Confused
- Sad

MEN

- Have no emotions
- Can take it
- Take Charge
- Don't Cry
- Don't Back Down
- Players
- Rugged
- Never shows weakness
- Macho
- Answers to no one

The Socialization of Men/Fathers

SOCIETAL FACTORS

Influencing Men and Fathers

- **Discouraging the expression of emotions – “real men don’t cry”**
- **Anger is an acceptable male emotion**
- **Dominant, Disconnected, and Dangerous**
- **Being physically strong**
- **Ambition and competition**
- **Athletic ability**





BARRIERS TO MEN SEEKING HELP

- **Difficulty admitting that there is a problem.**
- **Difficulty in asking for help and intolerance of depending on others.**
- **Difficulty in accepting, identifying and processing the more tender or “soft” emotions.**
- **A fear of intimacy and vulnerability.**



STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIORS

Engaging Fathers

- **Normalize a fathers experience.**
- **Minimize reflection on affect & emotions.**
- **Provide direct feedback**
- **Use metaphors to help fathers visualize their situation in a concrete, relatable way.**





GROUP ACTIVITY

Time to stand and move around!!!



DEVELOPING THE RELATIONSHIP

Principles of Partnership

- Partners share power
- Everyone desires respect
- Everyone has strengths
- Everyone needs to be heard
- No Judgments
- Partnerships is a process



Appalachian Family Innovations. (2003). Partners in change: A new perspective on child protective services (curriculum). Morganton, NC: Author.



THE NEW VIEW ON FATHERS

**How Media has shifted
its lens on Fathers**



THANK YOU!!!

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