

**ENGENDERING FATHERHOOD: PROVISION  
OF SERVICES AND PROFESSIONAL  
ATTITUDES TOWARD  
YOUNG FATHERS**

By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

American social attitudes toward fatherhood appear to be changing as many older fathers claim new interests in the child-rearing decisions (Palm & Palkovitz, 1988). Fathers are asserting that they feel closer to their children and more a part of their children's lives than the generations before them (Daly, 1993; Marsiglio, 1993). Perhaps this transition is an indication that the role of the father is more than providing a paycheck; moreover a father's role also serves as an important resource for the social, emotional, and cognitive development of their children (Elster & Lamb, 1986). Although this positive transformation is taking place among older fathers, is this change taking place among the under twenty-five cohorts of young fathers who are married or partnered to adolescent mothers? Is society suggesting these young men's fatherhood roles and parent/child relationships are equally important and including them in this new engendering of fatherhood? If society's attitude toward young fathers is really changing, then it appears reasonable to assume that more social services would also be available specifically to this particular cohort. Yet, when considering young fathers in this state, neither the existing services nor the prevalent professional attitude among practitioners are known. Therefore, the aim of this present study is to discover the number and categories of available services for young fathers; what the prevalent attitude among professionals toward young dads is; and if the existing attitude among professionals toward young fathers predict the number of available services to them.

This chapter will include a brief review of the literature on the typical characteristics associated with the young American father; followed by this

present study's purpose, its significance, the definitions of associated key terms, the conceptual framework that guides this study and the particular research questions that drives this current work.

### Background: America's Young Father as a Person

For years there have been debates within the research literature on the characteristics that best represent the biological father of an adolescent mother's infant. Much of the research indicates these young men are not a homogeneous group (Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, & Chase-Landale, 1989). Typically they are under the age of twenty-five and slightly older than the adolescent mother (Elster, 1991; Fernandez, Ruch-Ross, & Montague, 1993; Hardy, Duggan, Masnkyn, & Pearson, 1989; Larson, Hussey, Gillmore, & Gilchrist, 1996; Marsiglio, 1995; Miller & Moore, 1990; Smollar & Ooms, 1987). In fact, for this south-central state the mean age of young men who father a teen mother's infant is 21.1 years (J. E. Campbell, personal communication, January 28, 1997).

Similarly, as a result of these debates within the literature, it has been confirmed that indeed, some young fathers are inclined to be irresponsible, uncommitted or more likely to divorce (Montemayor, 1986). Other fathers are prone to be uninvolved with his infant's mother or his baby (Larson, Hussey, Gillmore, & Gilchrist, 1996) and unlikely to acknowledge paternity (Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, & Chase-Landale, 1989). Furthermore, some young dads are high school drop outs, in prison, or unemployed (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993) and are insensitive to their infants cues (McGovern, 1990). Such behavioral characteristics tend to place a young father's new family's well-being at risk (Montemayor, 1986; Furstenberg et al, 1989; Lerman & Ooms, 1993, Marsiglio, 1995; Neville & Parke, 1991; Smollar & Ooms, 1987).

On the other hand, there are many young fathers who desire to be actively involved with their babies, even if this means minimal contact or no commitment to the infant's mother (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Barret & Robinson, 1982; Danziger & Radin, 1990; Elster, 1991; Larson, Hussey, Gillmore, & Gilchrist, 1996; Lerman, 1993; Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Marsiglio, 1988, 1995; McGovern, 1990; Meyers, 1993; Miller & Moore, 1990; Smollar & Ooms, 1987). In fact some are raising their baby as single parents, with their parents' help (Lerman, 1993; Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Marsiglio, 1995). The research literature also brings to light that the desire to be involved even holds true when young dads continue to live with their parents (Lerman, 1993) or when the young mothers provide most of their infant's primary care needs (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994).

However, there are instances when young father involvement declines or they do not remain in contact with their offspring and the baby's mother after a period of time. These situations are associated with the challenges of maintaining a cooperative relationship with the mother of their infants, time constraints and geographical distance (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994). To further explain, some young dads may encounter the relationship challenge of being replaced with a new boyfriend by his infant's mother (Larson, Hussey, Gillmore, & Gilchrist, 1996) or the quality of the couple relationship becomes distant or child centered due to financial disputes (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994). Time constraints include the difficult task of balancing an irregular work schedule and school responsibilities (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994). Other reasons young fathers aren't involved are connected to the importance of achieving a sense of autonomy for the young man. Therefore, accepting the responsibilities of fatherhood may be difficult if the young man's perceptions of fatherhood include giving up a sense of control over his own life (Teti & Lamb, 1986).

Although contributing money for his infant's well-being is important, many young dads are participating in the fathering experience by providing more than financial support. For example, some young fathers contribute by providing tangible items such as, diapers, clothing, child care on a regular basis, and emotional support to both the mother and child (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, & Chase-Landale, 1989; Hardy & Duggan, 1988; Hardy, Duggan, Masnkyn, & Pearson, 1989; Larson, Hussey, Gillmore, & Gilchrist, 1996; Neville & Parke, 1991; Smollar & Ooms, 1987; Westney, Cole, & Munford, 1986). Based on their understanding of others' needs, their own limited economic and educational resources, most young fathers believe they contribute what they can to the well-being of their offspring. Moreover, it is not unusual for young fathers to marry if they are financially self sufficient and have a high school diploma (Miller & Moore, 1990).

Entering fatherhood at a young age can present disadvantages or barriers for some young males. For instance, some young fathers are disadvantaged in fulfilling the demanding role of parenting, due to their own incomplete developmental tasks (i.e. adolescence) (Elster, 1991; Meeus & Dekovic', 1995; Petersen & Crockett, 1992) and unrealistic infant and child development expectations (Neville & Parke, 1991). Educational and job training achievements are also common deficiencies among many young dads. These deficiencies in educational and job training set up career achievement barriers that are difficult for the young father to overcome in order to financially support his new family (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Elster, 1991; Neville & Parke, 1991).

The lack of knowledge of their paternity or their refusal to claim paternity are other disadvantages and barriers experienced by many young fathers and affect father-infant relationships (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, & Chase-Landale, 1989; Montemayor, 1986). The refusal to claim



paternity sets up a judicial barrier for the father to exercise his legal right to be included in the child rearing decisions. The lack of knowledge is a barrier that inhibits the opportunity to provide some family stability through economic or socio-emotional support to his infant (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Robinson & Barret, 1986). Similarly, there are young fathers who have insufficient knowledge of child development and parenting skills (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Lamb & Elster, 1986; McGovern, 1990). Their insufficient knowledge about child development and parenting skills can be a result of society's conflicting messages of the importance of the young father's involvement with his child (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993), lack of available support services that meet the father's needs (Daly, 1993; Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993; McGovern, 1990), and lack of participation in child care experiences before becoming a parent (McBride & Darragh, 1995; McGovern, 1990; Palm & Palkovitz, 1988).

Furthermore, previous data suggests effective young father programs are sparse (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994). Most pregnancy or parent education programs have intentionally not focused on the father (Merrill, 1991; Meyers, 1993) or failed to recognize the many demands these young men face as they try to determine their adult roles (Larson, Hussey, Gillmore, & Gilchrist, 1996). The literature also suggests that mother focused programs have not considered the cost to the child (Fernandez, Ruch-Ross, & Montague, 1993) so little contact with the father seems to be the norm (Meyers, 1993). In spite of the consequences and the issues raised in this study, the rate of young parenthood continues to rise (Miller & Moore, 1990; Wisensale, 1992).

Although the following data are not yet confirmed about younger fathers, McLoyd's (1989) study indicates there are some advantages for fathers who utilize social support networks. For instance, social support systems were found to shield older fathers against the negative psychological impact of



unemployment. Likewise, social network satisfaction was found to be very important to the prediction of change in older father's use of parenting skills. Another study pointed out that men who are more child oriented have more social and psychological resources and increasingly display positive parent-child interactions and parenting skills (McBride & McBride, 1993; Woodworth, Belsky, & Crnic, 1996). It would be interesting to see if replication of either of these studies would indicate the same results for young fathers.

Research indicates young fathers are receptive to help if it is offered to them (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Robinson & Barret, 1986) and that a close relationship bond between father and child produces positive outcomes for the child (Barratt, 1991; Bayrakal & Kope, 1990; Biller, 1993; Furstenberg & Harris, 1993; McBride & McBride, 1993). Therefore, the need for programming directed at young fathers is evident. Practitioners have a unique opportunity to assist young fathers in becoming a consistent, nurturing presence in the lives of their children. However, professionals who work with young fathers come from many disciplines and little is known about their attitudes toward young fathers.

### The Statement of the Problem

Based on the conceptual analysis of the young fatherhood literature, Kiselica & Sturmer (1993) emphasized that society is conveying to young fathers a confusing message. This in part, is a function of society's unclear and conflicting definitions of young father images or roles (Daly, 1993; Glossop & Theilheimer, 1994; Palm & Palkovitz, 1988; Robinson & Barret, 1986) and the lack of guidance or social support available to the young father (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Fernandez, Ruch-Ross, & Montague, 1993; Robinson & Barret, 1986; Smollar & Ooms, 1987).

Parent involvement is largely dependent on the social context in which one lives (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Glossop & Theilheimer, 1994; Palm & Palkovitz, 1988) and can influence the developmental outcomes not only for the father, but for his child as well (Bayrakal & Kope, 1990; Biller, 1993; Furstenberg & Harris, 1993; Montemayor, 1986; Robinson & Barret, 1986). Positive young dad involvement is beneficial to the healthy development of his baby (Fernandez, Ruch-Ross, & Montague, 1993; Furstenberg & Harris, 1993). Moreover, the young father can become an asset for the young mother if he is allowed to actively participate in support programs with her (Merrill, 1991). Therefore, lack of opportunity for young fathers to be effectively involved has important ramifications not only for his personal growth and development, but for his baby and even the infant's mother (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993).

More than ever before in American society, it has become increasingly clear that careful targeting is the primary strategy to address needs for support and empowerment of the developing young father (Smollar & Ooms, 1987; Wisensale, 1992; Zeldin & Price, 1995). Furthermore, there is an apparent need to create a useful link between the university research process and the community at large with information that will facilitate positive father and child development (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993) as well as, allow the young man healthy participation in adult roles (Zeldon & Price, 1995). However, the number and types of available social services (Smollar & Ooms, 1987) and the professional attitude toward young fathers (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993) has received little attention in current scholarship. Likewise, collecting data through adolescent mothers is not a reliable approach (Barret & Robinson, 1982). Before policy makers, researchers or family life educators can make recommendations to meet the needs of young fathers or know for sure if young dads and their offspring will benefit, an investigation of types and number of services

(Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, & Chase-Landale, 1989) as well as professional attitudes toward young fathers needs to be completed (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993).

### Purpose of the study

The goals of the present study are to first extend the Kiselica & Sturmer (1993) study by reporting the number and categories of available services for young fathers; then to discover if existing attitudes among professionals toward young dads predict the number of available father-focused services. Stated specifically, this study asks: 1) Will professional attitudes be negative towards young fathers? 2) Will the number of available services to young fathers be similar to the number of services available to young mothers? 3) Will the attitude of professionals toward young fathers predict the number of available services to them? 4) Will the categories of available services for young fathers be equivalent to the categories of available services for young mothers? 5) Will professional attitudes be positively higher in regard to young mothers? A second goal is to address the concepts of available social support services and professional attitudes as it applies to young fathers, focusing on the categories and number of available services and professional attitudes toward young fathers. Another goal is to discover, synthesize and to extend useful research knowledge on young fathers to the community at large in order to further engender positive young fatherhood. A final goal is to offer implications to the university and community sector in how they can play a more effective role in the delivery of social support services.

### Significance of the Study

Current investigation of the literature reflects the fact that more established literature is needed concerning young fathers (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993),

specifically within this south-central state. This study is significant because the benefits that might accrue are: the data may give researchers and practitioners new information about existing practitioner attitudes toward young fathers. In addition, the data may provide a further understanding about the categories and number of available services for young fathers. Present study findings may also generate discussion about the promotion of conditions, through the delivery of social support services, that can positively affect the young fathers parental responsibilities, parenting abilities or parent-child involvement. This investigation may further indicate how practitioners can expand their understanding of young fathers through other research. Last but not least, children will benefit as their families and society as a whole are strengthened as the delivery of services and young father parenting proficiencies are improved.

#### Definition of Terms

*Engendering Fatherhood:* Encompasses the development, creation, or causes to exist an image or form in regard to American males who have offspring.

*Young father:* Involves the developmental stage of adolescence through young adulthood that marks advances in physical, cognitive and socio-emotional growth for males, who are between the chronological ages of 14 and 25, and have offspring during this period. On an average they are three to five years older than the adolescent mother who is typically under the chronological age of twenty (Fernandez, Ruch-Ross, & Montague, 1993; Hardy, Duggan, Masnyk, & Pearson, 1989; Larson, Hussey, Gillmore, & Gilchrist, 1996; Robinson & Barret, 1986). For this south-central state the mean age of young men who are the father of a teen mother's infant is 21.1 years (J. E. Campbell, personal communication, January 28, 1997).

*Available social support services:* Focuses on the components of categories and number of services presently open to young fathers.

*Professional attitude toward young fathers:* Involves a mental position or a particular feeling of emotion in regard to young fathers.

**Conceptual Framework: Human Ecology Theory**

The human ecology theory and the person-contextual model (appendix A) are used to guide and show how multiple interacting forces linking within the human ecosystem can powerfully shape the young father's responses to being an involved parent (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). The model is a depiction of the active young father's dynamic interactions characterized within the human ecosystem using a synthesis of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) and Bubolz & Sontag's, (1993) human ecology ideas.

Specifically, human ecology theory conveys that an individual is influenced by multiple levels of the environmental context and presents the interactional effects between variables at different levels of the social ecological context. The major concepts are the human ecosystem, the environment, roles, perception, adaptation, transition and the affects of human development. Within the human ecosystem a family system interaction takes place with its environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This includes the "physical-biological, social-cultural and the human built environments" (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993; pp.435-437) This means the family members operate autonomously, but are interdependent of each other to get their needs met for survival. Roles are a set of activities and reciprocal relations expected of a person occupying a particular position within a particular societal setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Developmental change occurs when the individual is exposed to and participates in the function of different roles within different social settings. The degree of change depends upon the readiness and

perceptions of the developing person. Individual perception is one's interpretation of the events within the environment and one's perception of how the environment affects human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The interpersonal structures of a setting enhance developmental potential if there exists a mutually acceptable balance of power and affective relations among dyads or triads (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Adaptation takes place when the family members go through a process of becoming aware of particular information, gathering the information, selecting the best response or goal from the information and modifying it to fit the family's needs (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). Ecological transition is the occurrence of change in a person's position when the context is altered. When this transition occurs it activates both a consequence and a developmental process for the individual system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The basic process governing the young father is briefly explained using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) concepts of the micro, meso, exo, and macro-systems to describe the four interacting levels of the human ecosystem environment. The microsystem is the core of the family system and represents the home setting, where direct causal sequences on development occur because face to face interactions take place among the family members. For the young father this could represent his family of origin or the formation of his new family, namely his adolescent partner and child. Next is the mesosystem setting, such as, the day care center, school or work place that directly affects the individual family member involved. The exosystem is the setting that indirectly affects family members development through other member behavior shown in the microsystem. For example, the young father may be directly involved in school and this prohibits him from having a full time job. The power and consequences of this situation affect his partner and child in the ability to adequately provide and meet their basic survival needs. The macrosystem is the societal impact on the



microsystem through cultural norms, belief systems and laws. At this level decisive and developmental changes influence the young father by the modification of social conditions. For example, the making of policies and programs, along with professional attitudes and roles toward his involvement with his child and the provision of young father services (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bubolz & Sontag, 1993).

### Research Questions

Five research questions were developed to guide the progress of this study. They are as follows:

1. Will the number of available services to young fathers be similar to the number of services to young mothers?
2. Will the categories of available services for young fathers be equivalent to the categories of available services for young mothers?
3. Will professional attitudes be negative towards young fathers?
4. Will professional attitude scores be significantly lower for young mothers?
5. Will the attitude of professionals toward young fathers predict the number of available services to them?

### Hypotheses

This study will examine the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. The number of available services for young mothers will be greater than the number of available services for young fathers as measured by Kiselica & Sturmer (1993) Teen Parent Services Survey.

Hypothesis 2. The categories of available services for young fathers will be equivalent to the categories of available services for young mothers as measured by Kiselica & Sturmer (1993) Teen Parent Services Survey.

Hypothesis 3. The level of professional attitude as measured by the Kiselica (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) will be less than the scale midpoint toward young fathers.

Hypothesis 4. The level of professional attitude as measured by the Kiselica (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) will be significantly lower in regard to young mothers than in relation to young fathers.

Hypothesis 5. The level of professional attitude as measured by the Kiselica (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) will predict the availability of services for young fathers as measured by Kiselica & Sturmer (1993) Teen Parent Services Survey.



## CHAPTER II

CHILDREN BORN TO UNMARRIED PARENTS AND PARENTING

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter will first be presented by a review of the literature on the historical social context surrounding young fatherhood. Next will come a review of the literature on how society's perceptions on parenting and their involvement affects young males as a person; the needs of young fathers and the availability of father-focused services will be discussed. A summary of the concerns for young fathers and the importance of practitioners assisting young fathers in becoming a consistent, nurturing presence in the lives of their children will conclude this chapter.

#### Historical Social Context

The issues of children born to unmarried parents and the differing intensities of community disapproval are not new phenomena within the United States of America. In the past, unconventional terms such as bastardly, misbegotten, fatherless and illegitimate have been used to underscore the marginalized status of the child. Today, the focus has shifted from the child to the parents with the common term "illegitimate child" used less and replaced with such words as "unwed", "never married" and "single" mother or father (Lerman & Ooms, 1993).

For decades social meanings of unwed fatherhood, parental rights and issues surrounding their children have differed among most societies. Dating back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of England, societies have tried various strategies to minimize the costs and consequences of premarital sexual

practices. Some strategic examples consist of public shaming and punishing both parents by public whipping or sitting in stocks for failure to support their child; and setting up laws preventing the premaritally conceived child from receiving any family inheritance (Lerman & Ooms, 1993).

Some laws of the land still greatly influence our American society today. One such law is the 1733 English law which states that any man who was named as the father of a misbegotten child was liable for payment of support for that child. Another law is the "poor law of 1834" which placed the responsibility of the out of wedlock child on the mother. This particular law was written because unmarried women were viewed as sinners and their male partners were not considered to be responsible for their children, who were socially condemned as "illegitimate cads" (Lerman & Ooms, 1993).

During this time of mainstream patriarchy, fathers were trying to maintain some generational continuity through teaching religious guidance and passing on learned skills, property, and ancestral names to their sons. These close family interactions and patriarchal societal beliefs gave fathers a legitimate reason to intervene and exercise control of their adult children's lives, particularly in such matters as arranging or forbidding marriages, career training choices and inheritance of property. Some fathers were viewed as harsh and punitive and other fathers were seen as assertive by taking counsel with his wife in regards to their children in an effort to maintain close family interaction and interdependence (Stearns, 1991).

American life continued to be fairly predictable until the early part of the twentieth century, which brought the Great Depression and the emergence of public schools. These social changes caused the image of fatherhood to fluctuate from teacher/child raiser to economic provider/ bread winner (Daly, 1993). Many fathers lost control of their land and their family power decreased.

Consequently, fathers were exposed to more domestic activities and had the opportunity to be more child centered (Stearns, 1991). A number of publications even promoted the new concepts of the "compassionate family and father". This generated additional social interest in the father's domestic role and gave support for men to be more responsible for daily child-rearing tasks such as, teaching, playing or taking their children on outings. Despite these notions many fathers still proceeded to be devoted to providing economically for their children. In some cases the Depression reduced father/child contact, nevertheless there were fathers who were able to remain emotionally bonded and held high personal identification to their families (LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993). As time went on mainstream society shifted again and encouraged fathers to let their wives have full responsibility for the children. As this notion gained popularity fathers once again were perceived as showing their love by providing economically and "mother's love" for support and nurturance were more important. These fluctuating social changes brought the division of family roles and labor and the "compassionate father" image continued to decline. Men appeared to internalize that mothers were more skillful in parenting than fathers; hence married women were perceived as setting the American family standards (Stearns, 1991).

Contrary to the notion that women were "setting the family standards", unwed mothers continued to receive inadequate services or financial assistance because society's attitudes and laws remained stuck in the previous century. Although these insufficient laws brought about social and economic barriers for the unwed mother to experience, it did not seem to affect the illegitimate birth rates. Birth rates did slightly decline from time to time, but the high costs to raise out of wedlock children continued to ascend and this presented society with greater concerns of how they were going to deal with this dilemma (Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Stearns, 1991).

Society also became aware of the impact some of the aforementioned laws had on the children of unmarried parents; and took on the responsibility for providing better support and protection of children through law modification. One such change in the law was the 1935 enactment of the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program. The primary goal of the program was to help widows, but public aid was also given to the children of divorced, separated, and unwed mothers, which brought some relief to the socially unaccepted child (Lerman & Ooms, 1993). Certainly American legal restrictions were liberalized, but the stigma of children born to unmarried parents remained (Lerman & Ooms, 1993).

The 1940s brought new child rearing standards, particularly among the middle class, that encouraged less emotional restraint on boys and weakened the legitimacy of the aggressive male role model (Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Stearns, 1991). The fifties was a time of the "American family ideal" and the persistence to maintain traditional family values was the norm. Many fathers saw themselves as a supplement to mothers or filling in when needed. Their role mainly included being the disciplinarian when the children would not mind their mother and economic provider. There was still distance between the father and his offspring. This parent-child distance created what is now a popularly known term called the "generation gap". Nevertheless, a consensus among researchers existed that proposed parent-child relationships were determined by the capacity of parental guidance (Walters & Walters, 1980).

During the 1960's there was a call for greater social recognition of equality among all people regardless of age (Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Stearns, 1991) which produced a new way of thinking for the 1970's family. For example, social acceptance of a woman's right to work outside the home and a move to discourage competitive achievement in children and encourage cooperative learning as a social preference began(Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Stearns, 1991).

Fathers were once again seen as more nurturant and as an equally important part of a child's developmental growth. A greater number of men began to receive custody of their children in divorce (Walters & Walters, 1980). Births to unmarried parents continued and society appeared to view children from these nontraditional families as in need of repair (Horowitz, 1995).

However, another profound change of social attitudes was evidenced with the making of a law that further protects and brings an opportunity for empowerment to stigmatized children of unmarried parents (Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Stearns, 1991). This protection and empowerment was accomplished with the Uniform Parentage Act of 1973 which gave the illegitimate child legal equality with the child born to married parents, as long as paternity was established (Stearns, 1991). Now these contemporary families who come in an assortment of types and sizes were beginning to be viewed as meeting the individual members needs through affection, support, and availability and were no longer considered harmful to the child (Horowitz, 1995).

Fathers once again attempted to adapt their roles with these historical changes by promoting a friendlier, warmer, more involved father-child relationship and a less disciplinary image. Although not well supported, some believe this was an attempt to match the decreasing maternal commitment toward child-rearing for the working mother. It seems more likely it is the fathers' attempt to seek a balance between intimacy among family members or a sense of kinship, and to maintain proper authority and respect (Stearns, 1991).

Although new laws and societal attitude changes have alleviated most of the humiliation that never married mothers carried, it has also encouraged the growth of tolerant attitudes toward premarital sexual activity (Stearns, 1991). For example, most communities no longer view unwed pregnancy as intolerable or support marriage as the "best solution" for the individuals involved. This holds

particularly true for teenage pregnancies, with some experts suggesting that teenage marriages are inherently unstable (Lerman & Ooms, 1993).

There are many reasons why young people under the age of twenty-five become pregnant. A few reasons are: inconsistency of contraceptive use; change in societal values and beliefs; a conscious selection of a role which represents one's identity, and intentionally becoming pregnant due to lack of family closeness (Ku, Sonenstein, & Pleck, 1993; Merrick, 1995; Miller & Moore, 1990; Rodriguez & Moore, 1995). Nevertheless, today young parenthood is generally accepted as the result of a sequence of decisions made by both partners, including the decision to be sexually active and not to use contraception and to choose parenthood over adoption (Elster, 1991). Yet, for a long time young mother pregnancy programs did not intentionally focus on involving the father, therefore little contact with the father seemed to be the norm (Meyers, 1993) and the young parent birth rate continued to rise.

#### Current Research Work

Young fatherhood studies continued to be limited until the mid 1980's (Hanson, Morrison, & Ginsburg, 1989; Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Miller & Moore, 1990; Pirog-Good, 1995). Researchers then shifted their interests because the pregnancy rates within contemporary America continued to be problematic. Society could no longer afford to ignore the needs of young fathers if they wanted to see an increase in pregnancy prevention. Research concerning young fathers has largely focused on the areas of: antecedents of young fathers (Erickson & Gecas, 1991; Gecas & Seff, 1990; Hanson, Morrison & Ginsburg, 1989); characteristics of young fathers (Miller & Moore, 1990; Pirog-Good, 1995; Robinson & Barret, 1986; Smollar & Ooms, 1987); adolescent identity development (Erikson, 1969; Marcia, 1994; Montemayor, 1986) and the young



couple's interpersonal relationships (Barret & Robinson, 1982; Cervera, 1991; Rodriquez, & Moore, 1995).

Other studies have focused on: fatherhood roles, responsibilities and commitment readiness (Lerman, 1993; Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Marsiglio, 1988, 1995; Westney, Jackson-Cole, & Munford, 1986); transition to parenthood (Belsky & Miller, 1986; Cowan & Cowan, 1995); the fathers level of involvement with his new family (Danziger & Radin, 1990; Hardy & Duggan, 1988; McGovern, 1990); the need for father-focused programs and the provision of child support (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993; McBride & McBride, 1993; Pirog-Good, 1993; Pirog-Good & Good, 1995). Similarly work on the cultural changes in the contexts of social, political and economic influences upon their young families has been done (Bozett & Hanson, 1991; Daly, 1993; Ku, Sonenstein, 1993; LaRossa & Reitzes, 1993; Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Stearns, 1991).

However, little consideration has been given to whether young fathers have something important to contribute, other than money, to the well-being of their off-spring. In addition little is known about whether community support through available services to young fathers will encourage positive father involvement and have an indirect benefit on the well-being of his off-spring (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994). Last, the prevalent professional attitudes of those who offer services to young fathers is not known. Possible explanations for these questions may explain the limited father involvement in males under the age of twenty-five.

#### Parenting Perceptions and Father Involvement

There exists a widespread agreement that families have always been part of changing society and a fundamental social unit. For many years millions of

Americans have perceived father involvement and the "ideal" American family were like the "Beaver Cleavers" or the "Donna Reed" families portrayed on television. These mythological families basically consisted of mom, dad, two kids and a dog (Horowitz, 1995). Then television producers added the extended family as part of the family "ideal" on programs such as "The Walton's", "The Little House on the Prairie" and "The Bill Cosby Show". Each televised program presented positive family life but, little was shown of how fathers effectively work out conflicts in work or between family members. The paternal model presented is one of kind, funny, sensitive and warm fathers who are interested in the welfare of their children, but have limited parent-child interaction.

More currently, media portrays the diversity and lifestyle changes of the American family on "Roseanne" and "The Nanny" as not so "ideal" with adults using inappropriate conflict management styles within their interpersonal relationships. The paternal model presents the father as funny, sometimes insensitive, indecisive; and an insecure father who is not entirely interested in the welfare of his children, but whether there is something "cold to drink" in the refrigerator. The latter show in contrast presents the father model as a dad who is single, available, educated and successful in his career, but unable to develop an intimate relationship because of his own insecure sense of self. Neither one of these fathers are directly involved in positive parent-child interaction.

These presentations of family may not be what some would consider our "family ideal". Nevertheless, these encounters through television, movies, advertising and various other trendy publications continue to shape, to some extent, American perceptions about the cultural images of fatherhood roles and link a set of self meanings to commitment for young fathers (Marcia, 1994). Family interpersonal experiences as well as peers and coworkers also serve to



reinforce these perceptions or to challenge them (Burke & Reitzes, 1991; Marsiglio, 1993, 1995; Thoits, 1991).

Indeed societies view of the family and parent-child interactions has drastically changed because of the impact of greater diversity and lifestyle changes. Some have even gone so far as to say that "What matters for success is not whether your father was rich or poor but whether you had a father at all." (Pitzer & Hessler, 1992, p. 20). Others have conveyed that what matters most is not whether you had a biological father present, but whether you had a close relationship tie with a significant male role model (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993).

But how does American society define parenting? Horowitz (1995), defines parenting as consisting of numerous and vital sets of tasks, roles, rules, communication, resources and relationships. The primary function of parenting is to responsibly manage and flexibly maintain one's own family. Individuals who successfully parent, try to adequately use their time, financial, and social resources to carry out parental roles, such as nurturing, protecting, and feeding a child. Successful parents provide an environment in which a child can develop physically, cognitively, emotionally and socially; with the goal in mind of preparing the child with adequate skills for social participation and lifetime personal responsibility.

For the young father, the occurrence of early parenthood can be at odds with the typical school age social expectations and become emotionally problematic (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Cervera, 1991; Elster, 1991; Gecas & Seff, 1990; Neville & Parke, 1991). Aside from the fact that parenting is an important function, some researchers point out that young fathers receive no or little formal support or preparation for parenting (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Horowitz, 1995; Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993). An important question remains to be

asked, why are young fathers receiving limited parenting social support and is this significant to the development of his child?

Although a recent search of the literature contends little is really known about whether a young fathers involvement will have a positive affect on their child's development (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993), it is well known that older fathers do have a positive influence by providing affection and nurturance to their baby and this makes significant contributions to their infants social and cognitive development (Parke, 1996; Pruett, 1996). Furthermore, prospective fathers who were provided with knowledge of infant and child development tended to be more supportive toward the mother and infant (McGovern, 1990). These notions indicate that many fathers are highly motivated to be involved with fatherhood responsibilities (Barret & Robinson, 1982).

Some recent reports have found that the baby's father can be very caring, helpful, and involved with the mother as well as, with the infant care decision making responsibilities (McGovern, 1990; Westney, Jackson-Cole, & Munford, 1986). In fact reports also indicate that when fathers have access to their newborns, they tend to hold and rock them more than their baby's mother. These studies are consistent with the notion that fathers can be as nurturing as mothers (Pruett, 1996). An involved father is important for a positive father/baby attachment process and through providing financial and emotional support their children have better cognitive, and social skills than do absent father children (Cervera, 1991; Pitzer & Hessler, 1992).

However, mother and fathers tend to relate to their infants in different ways and infants tend to react differently to each parent (Parke, 1996). Although there are minimal gender differences, young fathers are more apt to engage in responsive and social play (repetitive turn taking, smiling and laughing) than mothers (McGovern, 1990), therefore dads are seen as novel and exciting

(Parke, 1996). An infant learns that another person other than their mother can care for them, plus separations and reunions or fun activities are a part of non-maternal nurturing (Pruett, 1996). Cervera (1991) and Pirog-Good (1995) posit that fathers who are consistently available to their infant not only contribute a more positive stable environment, but enrich their child's self image. If positive father involvement continues, it builds upon the child's inner "locus of control" and when they become teens, the ability to resist peer pressure becomes more evident because they tend to be more sure of their own values.

Very few people start out knowing how to be a good parent, in fact a lot is done by testing to see what works. Mothers and fathers do not have to be alike in their interactions with their infant or always agree because infants learn early to anticipate different things from each gender. What an infant does need is dependable parental commitment and a loving, stable environment (Parke, 1996). In the 1996 Family Resource Coalition Report on fatherhood and family support Judy Carter made a very just and profound statement that needs to not be forgotten; "The best way to help families achieve positive outcomes for their children is to ensure the active involvement of both parents in those children's lives" (Carter, 1996, p. 3).

### Meeting Young Father Needs

Family life practitioners can strengthen the family ties of young fathers to their children by knowing the needs of young dads and designing resources to fit those needs (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Parke, 1996). Young fathers say they need the opportunity to be more directly involved with their infants (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994) and be able to be good financial providers to their children without outside help (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Teti & Lamb, 1986). In order to be a successful father they believe they need to be gainfully employed, have the

freedom to continue their education, to improve job readiness and parenting skills without fear of being sued for child support (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994).

In addition to the needs mentioned in the previous study, young fathers indicated they needed help in dealing with family of origin problems, prenatal education (Parke, 1996), setting goals for the future, relationship problems with his infant's mother and understanding their own disappointment in becoming a father (Hendricks, 1988).

The sources of help most young men would seek are: first their families of origin then a social service agency (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994), particularly if the agency provided information regarding their legal rights and responsibilities as a father (Hendricks, 1988). Although many of the following "father needs" suggestions were advocated for fathers in general, they should be considered for application to young father programs. Simms & Sandell's (1996) evaluation of program data suggests fathers need a "father friendly" network system. A place where the fathers can openly explore their own childhood and what manhood is for them. They need a place where they can freely develop their own character, participate in their "rights of passage" to fatherhood and not a place of criticism. There needs to be a place where the source of help is for fathers with diverse backgrounds, along with high expectations of fathers and respect towards young fathering. There needs to be a common message from social support providers that it is all right for his father/infant relationship to have priority over going out with his friends (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Simms & Sandell, 1996). Father competence needs to be built up by teaching problem solving, parenting, and communication skills so that they will not be reluctant to actively participate in their children's rearing (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Simms & Sandell, 1996). A volunteer force of father mentors or a father buddy system needs to be present to

model relationship building and parenting skills, as well as for support and encouragement (Simms & Sandell, 1996).

These program elements help convey that the most important thing a father can do for his child is to let that child know they are loved by having a direct and active influence in his child's development. It also aids fathers to recognize that they can break the cycle of poor father-child relationships and fatherhood success is not beyond their reach (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Simms & Sandell, 1996; Smith, 1988).

The potential benefits in fulfilling these needs in young fathers not only helps develop the character of the man, but develops the parent and his capacity to care for his children; hence there is the greater likelihood of a healthy reciprocal outcome for the whole family (Hendricks, 1988; Pruett, 1996). A second potential benefit that can accrue is the possible male connectedness that supports men to value and embrace their leadership role as fathers in their communities and families (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Hendricks, 1988; McBride & McBride, 1993; Simms & Sandell, 1996). Finally the results of father focused support network systems can reveal the importance for fathers to emotionally support the mothers of their children in an active and productive way (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Gore, 1996; Hendricks, 1988; McBride & McBride, 1993; Simms & Sandell, 1996).

#### Available Services to Young Fathers

Current research studies reveal that throughout America social support services for fathers are encouraged by many, but are offered from a limited number of sources specifically targeted for young fathers (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994). The reason for limited programs may be due to the nation's social policies not effectively promoting services for young fathers (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994).

A few of the agencies found offering these services within one northeastern state are: "Planned Parenthood, the State Division of Family and Children, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Child Support Services, YMCA and YWCA, the Red Cross, the Urban League, department of social work at numerous hospitals and clinics, and many youth programs affiliated with local churches" (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993, p. 489).

Some studies indicated that the primary services offered by these agencies are: pregnancy testing (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993), birth control counseling (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993), prebirth classes (Parke, 1996), sexual responsibility counseling (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993), individual and group counseling (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Hendricks, 1988; Huey, 1991), nutritional counseling (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993), parent education (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993; McBride & McBride, 1993; Meyers, 1993), academic education (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994), sexual education (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993), family health education (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993), early childhood development (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993) and vocational training programs (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Smith, 1988), with the majority of programs being predominantly for women (Johnson & Palm, 1991).

Caution should be exercised because of the limitations that exist in some of these studies. For example some of the studies have small selective representative samples, no follow-up to determine if the programs themselves had a long lasting direct effect on the young dad participants and his offspring, or the study did not provide statistical assurance for their findings (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Hendricks, 1988; Huey, 1991). Other constraints that programs have are that prebirth classes prepare the young dad for the birthing process, but it does not prepare him for what comes later, nor does it allow him the opportunity to practice his fathering skills (Parke, 1996). Therefore, the timing of when to



offer certain services may need to be reconsidered. This evidence indicates that gaps exist among the father-focused services in meeting the needs of young American fathers. Considering the high pregnancy rate among the young American population and the fact that service providers or society as a whole cannot meet all the needs of young mothers and their infants, provision of services to young dads may very well be the "missing keys" to the reduction of adolescent pregnancy (Kahn & Bolton, 1986). Programs for young dads need to be expanded and designed to fit the situation of the young man (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; McBride & McBride, 1993; Parke, 1996). The question remains to be answered are practitioners who suggest that father-focused programs are necessary, but little is being done, conveying a mixed, yet subtle societal attitude or perpetuating the double standard of how important young fathers are today?

### Summary

As previously mentioned, the primary reason for past research data limitations has been the limited literature on young fathers. Nevertheless, the 1980's brought new interest about adolescent fathers (Smollar & Ooms, 1987) and a young man's fatherhood continues to be a topic of great interest in the nineties (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993). More recent data indicates that young fatherhood rates are high and there seems to not be a sign of it diminishing (Lerman, 1993; Lerman & Ooms, 1993; Marsiglio, 1993,1995; Pirog-Good, 1995).

There are many specific concerns about young fathers and their off-spring (Smollar & Ooms, 1987). Some believe society has sent young fathers a mixed message: "We expect you to be a responsible parent, but we won't provide you the guidance on how to become one" (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993, p. 489). The concerns that appear crucial are the young fathers who tend to be more at risk if they are poor, a minority, have low self esteem and external locus of control, and

come from unstable households (Pirog-Good, 1995). Equally crucial is the role of all young father's in doing more than providing a paycheck, but being an important resource for the social, emotional, and cognitive development of his child (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993; Cervera, 1991).

The literature clearly shows the importance for professionals to support young fathers which in turn, promotes high father self-esteem and commitment (Burke & Reitzes, 1991; Marcia, 1994; Thoits, 1991). Similarly, it is crucial to promote identity enhancing social conditions which facilitate identity achievement in young fathers (Furstenberg & Harris, 1993). Furthermore, data continues to support the importance in providing young expectant or new fathers with creative and current programs. These kinds of programs have the potential to encourage the young dad to explore available alternatives and make the best choice for himself, instead of doing nothing. Clearly, it is time to make a greater investment in our generations that hold our future in their hands. An important question that needs to be answered is will social service practitioners respond to the call and provide more father-focused programs?



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction and Design

This research study was guided by a systematic, quantitative, and descriptive design. Generally, descriptive designs use fact finding surveys that accurately and systematically characterize an area of interest. The facts and characteristics to be revealed and described are: the categories and number of available services to young parents and professional attitudes toward young parents. The findings will give a better understanding of the kinds of available services to young fathers and the prevalent professional attitude toward young parents that exists among social services delivery practitioners. Results of this research will be valuable to those who study fathers and to those who work directly with young fathers and their families.

#### Sample

The most difficult problem in this study was locating a representative sample because it was not known what services were available for young fathers within this south-central state. Therefore, participants were selected from four major service providers to young mothers throughout this south-central state. These state agencies include: The Department of Human Services for Oklahoma; Oklahoma Association of Community Action; Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Services; and Oklahoma State Department of Health. The sample pool from which the subjects were drawn numbered 206. The names of directors obtained for the agencies revealed duplicate respondents, therefore it was necessary to eliminate some subjects which reduced the total sample pool to 191.

One hundred and twenty-nine county social service providers responded to the survey. Ninety-seven percent of the seventy-seven counties were represented by at least one participant from one of the represented agencies. Two counties were not represented because there was no response from the addressees.

### Instruments

An adaptation of Kiselica & Sturmer's (1993) Teen Parent Services Survey (TPSS) and Kiselica's (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) were the instruments used for this study. The TPSS is a basic eleven category (nominal) check list of the categories of services that may be available to the public. Under each category is a subcategory representing 66 different types of services commonly offered to young adults as mentioned in the literature review (see appendix E). The authors' pilot study showed the "TPSS was comprehensive, had content validity, and was easily understood as a survey of services for young teenage parents." (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993, p. 490). The respondent is instructed to place an "M" for mothers or "F" for fathers or an "MF" for both mothers and fathers next to each service offered to young parents under the age of twenty-five. Blank spaces indicate the service is not offered by that agency. Data is separated according to whether the service is for the mother, father, both mother and father or by an "X" response. The raw data coding procedure for the Teen Parent Services Survey (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993) was a "0" for each service not offered, a "1" for each service offered to young mothers; a "2" for each service offered to young fathers, a "3" for both mothers and fathers and a "4" for check (X) only response. Both missing data and the "X" response data were not included in the analysis.

Permission to extend or modify this instrument was given by the senior author (M. S. Kiselica, personal communication, August 27, 1996). The following

changes were made in hopes to ascertain a better picture of the available services open to young fathers within this south-central state. The category title of parent training was changed to parent education. Under the subcategories family health education was inadvertently eliminated; additions were: child care information, day care awareness training, adolescent development, adult development, housekeeping, problem solving, conflict resolution, personal safety training, stranger awareness training for children, drug/alcohol programs, before/after school programs, bereavement/grief counseling, career counseling, religious counseling, psychiatric services, employer/employee mediation skills, emergency food, shelter, and health care services (see appendix E). The name of the contact person question was eliminated from the survey form to assure confidentiality of the respondent and a numerical code was added. Targeted population age and support group available with the agency hours were also added to get an idea as to what time of day or evening the majority of services were offered.

Categories and total number of services for mothers and fathers were derived by summing the responses that indicated the service to be available to each parent individually and to both mother and father. Available services for young fathers was calculated by dividing the total sum of available services by the total sum of overall services to get a percentage. The percentages were then compared to determine if there was a significant difference between services available to young mothers and fathers.

The ATTPS (1996) is a new 27 item instrument designed to use a six point likert-type scale to assess attitudes toward teenage mothers and fathers authored by Mark S. Kiselica. A recent report by the author stated the scale has two subscales: the attitude toward teen mothers and the attitude toward teen fathers (see appendix F). Internal consistency reliabilities for the overall scale using

Scores could range from a low of 27 (positive) to a high of 162 (negative) attitudes.

#### Data Collection Procedure:

Oklahoma state office administrators of the four different social service agencies were telephoned to determine if these agencies provided services to young parents. From these contacts a seventy-seven county mailing list was compiled. Each county service agency director within the state received a letter (see appendix B) explaining the reasons for the survey and consent form, along with directions to follow to fill out the adaptation of the "Teen Parent Services Survey" (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993) and "Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale" (Kiselica, 1996). The first mailing occurred during the third week of January, 1997. Within the letter, each county agency director was asked to sign the provided consent form for verification of their voluntary agreement to participate (see appendix D).

Each county agency director was asked to identify their primary services available to young parents under the age of twenty-five. As a courtesy, the addressees were offered an opportunity to request a copy of the study findings by returning their unattached address label or a slip of paper that indicated the request, even if they decided not to participate in the study. The only data that can be identified with the participant is the agency name and address on the "Teen Parent Services Survey". This was necessary in order to correspond with the "no response" participants with a follow-up letter. To ensure confidentiality of the collected data, the questionnaires were locked in a filing cabinet and the only persons who had access to them were the researchers and their assistants. Once the self report questionnaires were completed the

Cronbach's alpha is .82; the teenage father subscale is .70; the teenage mother scale is .74. Although complete statistical information was not given at the time of the correspondence, the author gave assurance that the content validity, which measures the domain of interest attitudes and the internal consistency (the extent to which there is cohesiveness or interrelatedness among test items) are high (M. S. Kiselica, personal communication, October 15, 1996).

A later correspondence conveyed (M. S. Kiselica, personal communication, November 18, 1996) the construct validity is undetermined because the recent statistical work, eight factor analysis, showed the scale was not measuring some of the underlying variables. A three factor analysis is presently being run to determine the underlying variables. The author also communicated that it seems when people respond to the questionnaire items, they are not separating by gender, but instead they are responding in general.

Examples of the questions (see appendix F) asked are: "If a girl gets pregnant, I think she deserves to pay for her mistake; the teenage father is more impulsive and unstable than are other boys his age; I feel disgust toward pregnant teenagers; the teenage father is very concerned with the teenage mother during the pregnancy; I feel angry toward teenage fathers; I admire girls who continue school when they become pregnant; the teenage father offers little or no support to the teenage mother after the child is born".

To prevent a response set by subjects, both positive and negative questions were asked about young parents and ordered randomly. Consequently, the first step for this coding procedure was to reverse code nine questions as directed by Kiselica, (1996). Then total scores were derived by summing the responses to the 27 questions from response choices of a six point likert-type scale ranging from "1" for disagree strongly to "6" for agree strongly.

respondent mailed the questionnaires in the provided self addressed and prepaid postage envelope.

The second mailing occurred during the first week of February, 1997. Each county service agency director who did not respond to the first mailing received another letter (see appendix C) explaining again the reasons for the survey and consent form, along with directions to follow to fill out the adaptation of the "Teen Parent Services Survey" (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993) and "Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale" (Kiselica, 1996) before the stated deadline date. Once again, each county agency director was asked to sign the provided consent form for verification of their voluntary agreement to participate (see appendix D).

All records of the survey's received and survey's returned with no response were maintained for the purpose of sending out a follow-up letter and recording and analyzing of the raw data. These records were maintained by direct computerized data entry using the SPSS and Microsoft works software programs. The SPSS program was used because it has the potential ability for handling missing values, naming and recoding variables, and various statistical operations necessary to arrange the data and provide a statistical outcome.

The procedure for the statistical test applications used to investigate the research questions are as follows. First, frequencies and percentages were calculated from the categories and subcategories of services that could be offered to the mothers, the fathers, or no service offered at all to report the category and number of services available to young fathers. Then a statistical t-test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the means of the category of services offered to mothers and to fathers, likewise between the means of services available to mothers and to fathers. To evaluate the prevalent attitude toward young fathers a scale midpoint was set for both mothers and fathers; then a comparison of total scores and statistical t-tests were

conducted. Last but not least, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate professional attitudes toward young fathers and the predictability of services.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Data Analysis and the Quantitative Results

The quantitative data presented describes the prevalent professional attitude towards young fathers and the number and categories of available services offered to young fathers within this south-central state. Analysis of the data is interwoven with the findings to describe the statistical test applications used to investigate the research questions. The data analysis and results are presented in four sections. The first section discusses the participant response to the survey. Section two reports the category and number of services available to young fathers. The third section evaluates the prevalent attitude toward young fathers. Finally, professional attitudes toward young fathers and the predictability of services is considered in the fourth section.

#### Survey Response

From the first mailing to 191 agencies, there was a 46% ( $n = 88$ ) response return; so a three week follow-up letter was sent during the first week of February, 1997. The letter was sent to remind addressees of the importance of this particular study and to encourage the "no response" participants to return their questionnaires for inclusion in the present inquiry. A forty-five surveys were returned from the second mailing; leaving a total survey response of 69.6% ( $n = 133$ ). Upon first inspection of the returned surveys, it was discovered that four of Kiselica & Sturmer's (1993) Teen Parent Services Survey (TPSS) and Kiselica's (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) responses were not usable; leaving a total return of sixty-seven percent decipherable out of

the 191 agencies surveyed. These four questionnaires were not used for four very different reasons. For example, one respondent indicated that they were retired, therefore unable to appropriately respond to the questionnaire. Two returned surveys revealed the current address was unknown for one and the other conveyed that the position was not filled, therefore it was impossible to respond to the questionnaire. The last survey was returned with a statement of refusal to participate in this present study.

In wondering why some agencies did not respond to the survey, one can only speculate. Nevertheless, some possible reasons are that maybe the agency offers services in conjunction with other agencies and did not want to inflate the research. Other possibilities are: some mailings may have gotten lost in the mail or an agency is experiencing a turn over in personnel or the survey was addressed to the wrong person, causing a no response from that agency.

During the data entry and analysis an additional seven of the TPSS surveys were found not interpretable since they contained ineligible markings that did not indicate to whom their response pertained (mother or father) or after the respondent left the questionnaire blank. Consequently, out of the remaining 129 surveys, one hundred and twenty-two or 94.5 % were decipherable. Likewise, out of Kiscelica's (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) responses, an additional twelve out of 129 were not interpretable; leaving 90.6 % ( $n = 117$ ) interpretable. Similarly, it was found that the subscale responses for Kiscelica's (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTMS, mothers) had nine not interpretable answers, leaving 89.9 % ( $n = 116$ ) interpretable. The statement concerning mothers that was most often left unanswered was "The teenage mother has frequent contact with her child after the child is born". Subscale responses for Kiscelica's (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTFS, fathers) had twelve not interpretable, leaving 90.6 % ( $n = 117$ )

interpretable. The statement concerning fathers that was most often left unanswered was "The teenage father is more responsible than are other boys his age". Overall, there were more statements concerning fathers left with no response than for mothers. Some possible reasons were indicated on the response survey. For example, some responded with ambivalence toward the question by stating "Some do, some don't" while others responded by conveying that they did not understand the meaning of the question.

Although two counties were not represented because there was no response from the addressees; ninety-seven percent of the counties were represented by at least one participant from one of the represented agencies. Overall, there was at least eighty-nine percent of the ( $n = 129$ ) returned surveys that were interpretable; therefore it can be assumed that the survey is representative of the total population of agencies surveyed in terms of location across the state.

### Services Available

Frequencies were calculated from the categories and subcategories of services that could be offered to the mothers, the fathers, or no service offered at all. Tables 1, 1.1, and 1.2 shown at the end of this chapter, represents a comparison of the data with the eleven service categories and the sixty-six subcategories of services; along with the percentage of total services for mothers and fathers. All of the percentages were then compared to determine if there was a significant difference between services available to young mothers and fathers.

Table 1 calculations of the categories and total number of services for mothers and fathers were derived by summing the responses that indicated the service to be available to each individual parent and for both mother and father (see table 1). A percentage comparison of services offered to young mothers

and fathers is found in table 1.1. The percentages of available services for young fathers were calculated by dividing the total sum of available father services within that category by the total sum of services within that category for mothers and fathers. Likewise, the percentage of mother services were calculated by dividing the total sum of available mother services by the total sum of services for mothers and fathers. Each category percentage was calculated by separately dividing the total sum of services for mothers and the total sum of services for fathers by the total number of all subcategory services, times the total responses ( $n = 129$ ).

Table 1.2 represents the percentage of all surveyed services to young mothers and fathers. Calculation of total number of subcategory services for mothers was determined by dividing the subcategory sum by the total survey responses. Likewise, calculation for fathers was determined by dividing the subcategory sum of services by the total sum of survey responses.

A few agencies were found to offer father-focused services in some categories to young males under the age of twenty-five (see table 1). For young fathers the frequency data findings are presented and arranged in ranking order from the highest to the least number of agencies who offered services along with the total number of services enumerated within parenthesis. The top categories of services open to fathers only are: health services ( $n = 11$ ), life skills training ( $n = 6$ ), parent education ( $n = 5$ ), requirement/outreach services ( $n = 4$ ), services for children ( $n = 1$ ) and basic living skills ( $n = 1$ ).

The reported subcategory services offered specifically to fathers ( $n = 28$ ) by agencies are again listed along with the total count in parentheses. Services specifically for fathers are: pregnancy testing ( $n = 1$ ), abortion counseling ( $n = 1$ ), sexual responsibility counseling ( $n = 1$ ), prenatal care ( $n = 2$ ), postnatal care ( $n = 2$ ), pediatric care ( $n = 2$ ), breast-feeding training ( $n = 2$ ), child care ( $n = 1$ ), early

childhood development ( $n = 1$ ), parenting skills training ( $n = 1$ ), child care information ( $n = 2$ ), day care awareness training ( $n = 1$ ), WIC ( $n = 1$ ), budgeting ( $n = 1$ ), consumer education ( $n = 1$ ), problem solving ( $n = 1$ ), conflict resolution ( $n = 1$ ), personal safety training ( $n = 2$ ), crisis/hotline ( $n = 1$ ), shelter ( $n = 1$ ), transportation ( $n = 1$ ), and food ( $n = 1$ ). Overall, the findings show that there are twenty-two different types of subcategory services offered from agencies to young dads from six different service categories. Another equally important finding is, by dividing the state into four quadrants, nine father-focused services are available in the northwest, six in the northeast, two within the southwest, and eleven are available in the southeast (see appendix G).

Given all the services offered to mothers and fathers, a higher number of services are offered to young mothers. A majority of services to young fathers are included in the provision of services open to young mothers. These data indicate the scant number of father-focused services offered are less than two percent of services offered to mothers and only nineteen percent of the categories are offered to fathers (see table 1.1). Another way to view the data is to look at the percentage of all possible services offered and calculate father services. From this data, the percentage of all the services offered, only .33 % of possible services were reportedly directed toward fathers, while 1.37 % of possible services were focused toward mothers (see table 1.2).

To find out how large the difference is between the means of total subcategory services available specifically to mothers and to fathers and to investigate if it is possible that the differences may have occurred by chance; a statistical t-test was conducted. As indicated in a previous study (Kiscelica & Sturmer, 1993) and was hypothesized (hypothesis 1) in this present study, the frequency results found a fewer number of services specifically targeted for young

fathers than services targeted for mothers with a statistical significance [ $t = 4.22$  ( $df = 236$ )  $p = 0.0001$ ].

Another hypothesis concerned with categories of available services predicted that the categories of available services for young fathers would be equivalent to the categories of available services for young mothers as measured by the Kiselica & Sturmer (1993) Teen Parent Services Survey. This hypothesis was also examined by summed frequencies and a statistical t-test. Again, the rationale for the statistical t-test calculation was to determine if there was a mathematically significant difference between the two means that represent the categories of services for mothers and fathers.

The frequency data indeed indicated differences were found in the number of categories of services available to mothers and fathers. The statistical t-test findings indicate there is not a significant statistical difference between the two means of service categories for mothers and fathers [ $t = 1.67$  ( $df = 18$ )  $p = 0.43$ ]; therefore the hypothesis of equivalent services to mothers and fathers was supported. Although there is not a statistical significance, the frequency data confirms Kiselica & Sturmer's (1993) previous study conclusion that indeed the provision of services offered to young parents would not be equal, but lean toward a greater number of services being offered to young mothers.

### Prevalent Attitudes Toward Young Fathers

To assess the hypothesis that the level of professional attitude as measured by the Kiselica (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) would be less than the scale midpoint toward young fathers; a midpoint of 43 for mothers and 49 for fathers was set, based on differential scoring for mothers and fathers. Recalling that a low score indicates a positive attitude and a high score indicates a negative attitude; the mean score for mothers was 30, which is less



than the 43 midpoint. Similarly the mean score for fathers was 43, which is less than the 49 midpoint. This finding suggests that professionals have a supportive attitude toward young parents, but a less positive attitude toward young dads than mothers. Although the results show that a more positive attitude exists for mothers, this hypothesis was confirmed with the mean of father scores falling below the set midpoint.

To test the hypothesis that the level of professional attitude as measured by the Kiscelica (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) would be significantly lower in regards to young mothers (ATTMS) than in regards to young fathers (ATTFS), a two tailed t-statistic was conducted [ $t = -1.35$  ( $df = 233$ )  $p = .101$ ] after the mean raw scores (ATTMS,  $M = 30.47$  & ATTFS,  $M = 43.06$ ) were converted to z-scores. The results revealed an approaching significance between attitudes towards young mothers scores and young fathers scores. Therefore, attitudes toward young fathers is not significantly less positive in regards to young mothers, which does not confirm the proposed hypothesis (hypothesis 4).

#### Predictability of Services to Young Fathers

To test the hypothesis that the level of professional attitude as measured by the Kiscelica (1996) Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (ATTPS) would predict the availability of services for young fathers as measured by Kiscelica & Sturmer (1993) Teen Parent Services Survey, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. It is important to acknowledge that the regression analysis only describes whether or not a significant quantitative relationship exists between attitudes and availability of services.

The independent variable was professional attitudes toward young fathers and the dependent variable was the number of available services. To determine



how well professional attitudes explains availability of services the calculation of r-squared (co-efficient of determination) is also examined. The portion of the total variance is listed in table 3 for each service category. The total variation in services occurs because of the variation in professional attitudes. The higher the value of r-squared the more likely that attitudes are attributed to availability of services and not to other variables or randomness.

The regression analysis showed that the attitudes did not predict the availability of services (approx.  $F = .03$ ;  $p = .86$ ); hence this hypothesis is not supported. However, table 2 illustrates that professional attitudes did significantly predict the provision of the following service categories: parent education, services for children and counseling. Attitudes were most significantly predictive in provision of services in the following subcategories: parenting skills, early childhood development, adolescent development and parent support groups.

Table 1

A Comparison of Services To Young Mothers and Fathers

Categories of Services	Subcategories of Services	Services Mothers	Services Fathers	Services Both	No service Offered	Service Total M/F
Health	Pregnancy testing	17	1	2	109	20
	Prenatal care	14	2	3	109	19
	Postnatal care	12	2	1	114	15
	Pediatric care	6	2	11	110	19
	Birth control counseling	3	0	28	98	31
	Abortion counseling	1	1	8	119	10
	Sexual responsibility counseling	2	1	21	104	24
	Home health care	0	0	13	116	13
	Nutritional counseling	3	0	48	76	51
	First aid training	0	0	7	121	7
	Sex education	0	0	20	109	20
	Breast feeding training	18	2	8	99	28
	Children	Adoption services	2	0	34	91
Child care		1	1	46	79	48
Foster care		1	0	36	90	37
Parent Education	Early childhood development	3	1	70	52	74
	Parenting skills training	3	1	72	50	76
	Child care information	3	2	84	35	89
	Day care awareness training	2	1	61	61	64
	Adolescent development	1	0	45	82	46
	Adult development	1	0	36	92	37
	Parent support groups	0	0	22	105	22

Table continues to the next page

Table 1 (cont)

A Comparison of Services To Young Mothers and Fathers

Categories of Services	Subcategories of Services	Services Mothers	Services Fathers	Services Both	No service Offered	Service Total M/F
Parent Education	Grandparent support groups	0	0	12	116	12
Basic living Skills	Food	3	0	54	70	57
	Clothing	2	0	33	92	35
	Financial aid	3	0	47	77	50
	Housing	1	0	24	103	25
	WIC	5	1	20	102	26
Life Skills Training	Budgeting	2	1	55	67	58
	Consumer education	1	1	50	74	52
	Assertiveness training	0	0	16	113	16
	Housekeeping	1	0	27	99	28
	Problem solving	0	1	34	91	35
	Conflict resolution	0	1	32	96	33
	Personal safety training	0	2	21	104	23
	Stranger awareness training	0	0	29	100	29
Academic Education	Mainstream school curriculum	0	0	4	125	4
	Special/remedial school curriculum	0	0	4	125	4
Education	Alternative school curriculum	0	0	7	122	7
	Drug/alcohol programs	1	0	9	119	10
	Before school programs	0	0	5	124	5
	After school programs	0	0	9	120	9
	Counseling	Individual personal adjustment	0	0	17	112
Grandparent counseling		0	0	7	122	7
Group counseling		1	0	11	117	12

Table continues to the next page

Table 1 (con't)

A Comparison of Services To Young Mothers and Fathers

Categories of Services	Subcategories of Services	Services Mothers	Services Fathers	Services Both	No service Offered	Service Total M/F
Counseling	Couple counseling	0	0	6	123	6
	Bereavement/grief counseling	0	0	7	122	7
	Career counseling	0	0	17	112	17
	Religious counseling	0	0	0	129	0
	Psychiatric service	0	0	6	123	6
Employment	Job-seeking skills	1	0	62	65	63
	Job keeping skills	0	0	47	81	47
	Employee/employer mediation skill	0	0	14	115	14
	Vocational/technical training	0	0	14	115	14
Social/Recreational	Informal gatherings	0	0	15	111	15
	Field trips	0	0	16	112	16
Requirement/ Outreach	Crisis/hot line	0	1	22	105	23
	Shelter	1	1	9	117	11
	Transportation	1	1	21	106	23
	Food	0	1	26	101	27
	Health care	0	0	19	110	19
	Drop-in centers	0	0	5	124	5
	Public service announcements	0	0	27	102	27
	Use of other media	0	0	17	112	17
Other Services	Legal assistance	0	0	1	128	1
	Offer other services	1	0	14	113	15
Total Services		117	28	1568	6737	1713

Table 1.1

A Percentage Comparison of Services Offered To Young Mothers and Fathers

Categories of Services	Subcategories of Services	% Services Mothers	% Services Fathers	% Services Mothers/Cat	% Services Fathers/Cat
Health	Pregnancy testing	94.44	5.56		
	Prenatal care	87.50	12.52		
	Postnatal care	85.71	14.29		
	Pediatric care	75.00	25.00		
	Birth control counseling	100.00	0.00		
	Abortion counseling	50.00	50.00		
	Sexual responsibility counseling	66.67	33.33		
	Home health care	0.00	0.00		
	Nutritional counseling	100.00	0.00		
	First aid training	0.00	0.00		
	Sex education	0.00	0.00		
	Breast feeding training	90.00	10.00	87.36	12.64
	Children	Adoption services	100.00	0.00	
Child care		50.00	50.00		
Foster care		100.00	0.00	80.00	20.00
Parent Education	Early childhood development	75.00	25.00		
	Parenting skills training	75.00	25.00		
	Child care information	60.00	40.00		
	Day care awareness training	66.67	33.33		
	Adolescent development	100.00	0.00		
	Adult development	100.00	0.00		
	Parent support groups	0.00	0.00		
	Grandparent support groups	0.00	0.00	72.22	27.78

Table continues to the next page

Table 1.1 (con't)

A Percentage Comparison of Services Offered To Young Mothers and Fathers

Categories of Services	Subcategories of Services	% Services Mothers	% Services Fathers	% Services Mothers/Cat	% service Fathers/Cat
Basic living Skills	Food	100.00	0.00		
	Clothing	100.00	0.00		
	Financial aid	100.00	0.00		
	Housing	100.00	0.00		
	WIC	83.33	16.67	93.33	6.67
Life Skills Training	Budgeting	66.67	33.33		
	Consumer education	50.00	50.00		
	Assertiveness training	0.00	0.00		
	Housekeeping	100.00	0.00		
	Problem solving	0.00	100.00		
	Conflict resolution	0.00	100.00		
	Personal safety training	0.00	100.00		
	Stranger awareness training	0.00	0.00	40.00	60.00
Academic	Mainstream school curriculum	0.00	0.00		
Education	Special/remedial school	0.00	0.00		
	Alternative school curriculum	0.00	0.00		
	Drug/alcohol programs	100.00	0.00		
	Before school programs	0.00	0.00		
Counseling	After school programs	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
	Individual personal adjustment	0.00	0.00		
	Grandparent counseling	0.00	0.00		
	Group counseling	100.00	0.00		

Table continues to the next page

Table 1.1 (con't)

A Percentage Comparison of Services Offered To Young Mothers and Fathers

Categories of Services	Subcategories of Services	% Services Mothers	% Services Fathers	% Services Mothers/Cat	% service Fathers/Cat
Counseling	Couple counseling	0.00	0.00		
	Bereavement/grief counseling	0.00	0.00		
	Career counseling	0.00	0.00		
	Religious counseling	0.00	0.00		
	Psychiatric service	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
Employment	Job-seeking skills	100.00	0.00		
	Job keeping skills	0.00	0.00		
	Employee/employer mediation skill	0.00	0.00		
	Vocational/technical training	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
Social/Recreational	Informal gatherings	0.00	0.00		
	Field trips	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Requirement/ Outreach	Crisis/hot line	0.00	100.00		
	Shelter	50.00	50.00		
	Transportation	50.00	50.00		
	Food	0.00	100.00		
	Health care	0.00	0.00		
	Drop-in centers	0.00	0.00		
	Public service announcements	0.00	0.00		
	Use of other media	0.00	0.00	33.33	66.67
Other Services	Legal assistance	0.00	0.00		
	Offer other services	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
Total Services				80.56	19.44



Table 1.2

n = 129

The Percentage of All Surveyed Services To Young Mothers and Fathers

Categories of Services	Subcategories of Services	Services Mothers	Services Fathers	% All Mothers	% All Fathers	
Health	Pregnancy testing	17	1	13.2	0.8	
	Prenatal care	14	2	10.9	1.6	
	Postnatal care	12	2	9.3	1.6	
	Pediatric care	6	2	4.7	1.6	
	Birth control counseling	3	0	2.3	0.0	
	Abortion counseling	1	1	0.8	0.8	
	Sexual responsibility counseling	2	1	1.6	0.8	
	Home health care	0	0	0.0	0.0	
	Nutritional counseling	3	0	2.3	0.0	
	First aid training	0	0	0.0	0.0	
	Sex education	0	0	0.0	0.0	
	Breast feeding training	18	2	14.0	1.6	
	Children	Adoption services	2	0	1.6	0.0
		Child care	1	1	0.8	0.8
Foster care		1	0	0.8	0.0	
Parent Education	Early childhood development	3	1	2.3	0.8	
	Parenting skills training	3	1	2.3	0.8	
	Child care information	3	2	2.3	1.6	
	Day care awareness training	2	1	1.6	0.8	
	Adolescent development	1	0	0.8	0.0	
	Adult development	1	0	0.8	0.0	
	Parent support groups	0	0	0.0	0.0	
Parent Education	Grandparent support groups	0	0	0.0	0.0	

Table continues to the next page

**Table 1.2** (con't)

n = 129

**The Percentage of All Surveyed Services To Young Mothers and Fathers**

<b>Categories of Services</b>	<b>Subcategories of Services</b>	<b>Services Mothers</b>	<b>Services Fathers</b>	<b>% All Mothers</b>	<b>% All Fathers</b>
Basic living Skills	Food	3	0	2.3	0.0
	Clothing	2	0	1.6	0.0
	Financial aid	3	0	2.3	0.0
	Housing	1	0	0.8	0.0
	WIC	5	1	3.9	0.8
Life Skills Training	Budgeting	2	1	1.6	0.8
	Consumer education	1	1	0.8	0.8
	Assertiveness training	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Housekeeping	1	0	0.8	0.0
	Problem solving	0	1	0.0	0.8
	Conflict resolution	0	1	0.0	0.8
	Personal safety training	0	2	0.0	1.6
	Stranger awareness training	0	0	0.0	0.0
Academic	Mainstream school curriculum	0	0	0.0	0.0
Education	Special/remedial school	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Alternative school curriculum	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Drug/alcohol programs	1	0	0.8	0.0
	Before school programs	0	0	0.0	0.0
	After school programs	0	0	0.0	0.0
Counseling	Individual personal adjustment	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Grandparent counseling	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Group counseling	1	0	0.8	0.0

Table continues to the next page

Table 1.2 (con't)

n = 129

The Percentage of All Surveyed Services To Young Mothers and Fathers

Categories of Services	Subcategories of Services	Services Mothers	Services Fathers	% All Mothers	% All Fathers
Counseling	Couple counseling	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Bereavement/grief counseling	0	0		
	Career counseling	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Religious counseling	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Psychiatric service	0	0	0.0	0.0
Employment	Job-seeking skills	1	0	0.8	0.0
	Job keeping skills	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Employee/employer mediation skill	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Vocational/technical training	0	0	0.0	0.0
Social/Recreational	Informal gatherings	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Field trips	0	0	0.0	0.0
Requirement/ Outreach	Crisis/hot line	0	1	0.0	0.8
	Shelter	1	1	0.8	0.8
	Transportation	1	1	0.8	0.8
	Food	0	1	0.0	0.8
	Health care	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Drop-in centers	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Public service announcements	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Use of other media	0	0	0.0	0.0
Other Services	Legal assistance	0	0	0.0	0.0
	Offer other services	1	0	0.8	0.0
<b>Total Services</b>		<b>117</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1.37</b>	<b>0.33</b>

Table 2

Categorical Services Significantly Predicted by Professionals For Young Fathers

Independent Variable ATTPS	Dependent Variables Categories of Services	E	p	r <sup>2</sup>	(Adj)r <sup>2</sup>
		Children	7.27	0.008	0.059
Parent Education	8.11	0.005	0.066	.058	
Counseling	2.84	0.094	0.024	.015	
Employment	2.78	0.098	0.023	.015	
Requirement/ Outreach	3.35	0.069	0.028	.020	

**Table 3**

**Services Significantly Predicted by Professionals For Young Fathers**

Independent Variable ATTPS	Dependent Variables Subcategories of of Services	F	p	r <sup>2</sup>	(Adj)r <sup>2</sup>
	Sex education	4.30	0.040	0.036	.027
	Breast feeding training	4.06	0.046	0.034	.025
	Adoption services	9.63	0.002	0.077	.069
	Foster care	10.49	0.001	0.084	.076
	Early childhood dev.	13.67	0.0003	0.107	.099
	Parenting skills training	12.89	0.0005	0.101	.093
	Adolescent development	6.11	0.014	0.050	.042
	Parent support groups	4.39	0.038	0.037	.028
	Budgeting	3.74	0.055	0.031	.023
	Consumer education	4.54	0.035	0.038	.029
	Bereavement/grief counseling	2.93	0.089	0.025	.016
	Career counseling	4.47	0.036	0.037	.029
	Psychiatric service	3.32	0.071	0.028	.019
	Field trips	2.90	0.091	0.024	.016
	Crisis/hot line	4.87	0.029	0.041	.032
	Transportation	4.34	0.039	0.036	.028
	Food	3.41	0.067	0.029	.020

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Discussion

The present study replicated earlier research (Kiscelica & Sturmer, 1993) through the exploration and reporting of the number of service categories and the number of subcategory services available to young fathers and mothers under the age of twenty-five. Unlike earlier research, this study also investigated the prevalent professional attitudes toward young dads and whether this attitude would predict the availability of services to young fathers.

Not surprisingly the data confirmed Kiscelica & Sturmer's 1993 findings that the provision of services targeted specifically for young fathers is sparse. However, the present results only provided partial support of earlier findings because of a lack of statistical significance. The majority of services for young fathers are found to be included in the provision of services open to young mothers. Also, as noted by Kiscelica and Sturmer's (1993) study, the number of services offered to young fathers was not equal to the number of services offered to young mothers, however while trends in the data substantiated earlier findings, statistical significance was not found. A possible reason for the limited number of young fathers programs may be due to the nation's social policies not effectively promoting services for young fathers. Additional research is needed to discover if this indeed is a valid rationale for the inadequate provision of services for young dads.

Another Interesting finding of the present research was its support of two new hypotheses regarding professional attitudes and provision of services to young parents. The current findings show that professionals have a positive

attitude toward young parents, but a less positive attitude toward young dads than mothers. In addition, the professionals attitudes were found to be most significantly predictive in availability of services than in the availability of categories of services.

Several explanations are possible regarding how participants may have responded to the presented survey questionnaires and thus, affected the outcome of the present investigation. First, professional attitudes toward parents' scores may represent a respondent's socially expected answer instead of how they "really" believe or behave toward young fathers. Second, the respondents may be consciously conveying the message that they do not discriminate against any person regarding age, gender, or race, but provide an equal opportunity for all people to receive services. Third, the surveys may have been answered in a way to confirm that agencies offer services to young parents, but in reality these services are offered only when a parent asks for those services. It would be helpful to know the histories of these agencies and if they actually offer these services consistently or on a regular basis.

Future research could further the present study by conducting random face-face interviews with practitioners in the natural environment to potentially glean this information about the agency's history, their attitudes toward young parents, and the availability of services. This research would further the existing base of knowledge about the needs and services of young fathers.

Most importantly, the observations from the quantitative findings of the present study and from the review of the literature suggests that young fathers are expected to be responsible; but they are not provided with the guidance or effective services and programs in order to become a successful parent. The present results provide a key finding to be considered by researchers and family life practitioners; the need for services directed at young fathers is evident for this



particular south-central state. Providing father-focused service programs as a possible point for prevention and intervention may be the missing key related to reducing the rate of untimely young parenthood.

Based on the conceptual analysis of the young fatherhood literature, the results of this present study are consistent with earlier quantitative and qualitative research (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993; McBride & McBride, 1993; Pirog-Good, 1993; Pirog-Good & Good, 1995); which suggests that young fathers receive less father directed services than young mothers.

Findings from earlier research has reported there are many reasons why young people under the age of twenty-five become pregnant. A few reasons are: inconsistency of contraceptive use; change in societal values and beliefs; a conscious selection of a role which represents one's identity, and intentionally becoming pregnant due to lack of family closeness (Ku, Sonenstein, & Pleck, 1993; Merrick, 1995; Miller & Moore, 1990; Rodriquez & Moore, 1995). Nevertheless, today young parenthood is generally accepted as the result of a sequence of decisions made by both partners, including the decision to be sexually active, not to use contraception, and to choose parenthood over adoption (Elster, 1991). Furthermore, young fathers desire to economically provide and to have an active role in their child's life. Yet, for a long time young mother pregnancy programs have intentionally not focused on involving the father, therefore little contact with the father has become the norm (Meyers, 1993) and the young parent birth rate continues to rise.

Successful parenting today is a challenge for all parents and even more challenging for young parents. Still today young men are not as likely to have engaged in child care activities before becoming parents (Palm & Palkovitz, 1988). Although it is not uncommon today to observe a more equalitarian role between older parents, such as task sharing, effective communication skills and

role sharing responsibilities (Horowitz, 1995); in part, this may be difficult for a young father due to his limited life experience, knowledge (Smith, 1988; Smollar & Ooms, 1987) and lack of professional guidance; but with time and father-focused social support these effective parental role skills can be learned (Cervera, 1991; Smollar & Ooms, 1987).

Other studies about young dads under the age of twenty-five stress that these fathers have different needs. Young fathers say they need the opportunity to be more directly involved with their infants (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994) and be able to be good financial providers to their children without outside help (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; Teti & Lamb, 1986). In order to be a successful father they believe they need to be gainfully employed, have the freedom to continue their education, to improve job readiness and parenting skills without fear of being sued for child support (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994).

In addition to the needs mentioned in the previous study, young fathers indicated they needed help in dealing with family of origin problems, prenatal education (Parke, 1996), setting goals for the future, relationship problems with his infant's mother and understanding their own disappointment in becoming a father (Hendricks, 1988). Yet, this present study's findings indicate young fathers needs are not being met through the provision of father-focused social service programs.

Young fathers have not been given the opportunity to discover if they have something important to contribute to the well-being of their off-spring. In addition, little is known about whether community support through available services to young fathers will encourage healthy father involvement and have an indirect benefit on the well-being of his off-spring (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994). Future possible explanations for these questions may further clarify the limited father involvement in males under the age of twenty-five.

Results from the current study point to a unique opportunity for service providers to respond to the circumstances of young dads with creative father-focused services; and assist young fathers in becoming a consistent nurturing presence in the lives of their children. This will in return, have the potential to promote healthy development not only in the young father, but also in his young family members.

#### Limitations

Limitations to this study exist in several ways and must be acknowledged. First, the data were collected within a south-central state from only four major service delivery systems, therefore the sample may not be representative of all service delivery systems. Given the method of sample selection, through the use of purposive techniques, leaves the possibility of selection bias, therefore generalizability is limited to this particular population. Further research is needed before generalizability can be applied to other service delivery groups within this state, as well as from other regions of the United States.

Second, as with any self-report survey, there is no way to verify who actually filled out the report or to verify the accuracy to the self-report. It would be valuable to have additional information about available services and professional attitudes from other sources, such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Hospitals and clinics, domestic violence agencies, schools or even correctional facilities. Such information could be compared to the current study to check the accuracy of self report.

Third, the method of sample selection may have influenced the perceptions of the respondents. For example, there may be some self report bias due to contacting state directors, who may have informed county directors of the intended research. As future studies about young fathers are conducted this

potential bias can be eliminated to some extent from the knowledge of who actually serves young fathers.

Fourth, we have no demographic information such as, the characteristics of clients, number of clients served or how long the service is offered to the client. It would be helpful to know this information in order to clearly design father-focused programs for the demographic group in need of the services.

Fifth, there is no information about what the responses would be from young fathers themselves on the provision of father-focused programs or if their perception of the professional attitude extended to them is one of betrayal by the system if they are repeatedly denied services. Since this study focused on the service providers point of view, future research would be helpful if a survey of young parents attitudes toward provision of services, the kinds of services they use, and their perceptions of professional attitude extended to them from the social service delivery practitioner. This information would further extend understanding fathers' needs and help to design programs to fit those situations.

Sixth, although professional attitude is slightly associated with provision of services in a predictable manner, we do not know if these associations reflect causal processes. For example, a positive professional attitude and successful delivery of services to young fathers to be associated with fewer parenting problems or a reduction of the likelihood the family will continue to be at risk. It would be helpful if future research did a comparative study of professional attitudes toward young fathers, provision of services and the number of parenting problems experienced by young fathers.

## Recommendations

Efforts to improve availability of services to fathers can be done by working with the fathers, encouraging them to maintain contact with their children, and by talking about the types of services they need. Practitioners should not assume that availability of services are unimportant to young fathers. A positive connection to a service oriented resource could facilitate adjustments to fatherhood for some young men. Practitioners who design programs for young dads are urged to consider the relationship between professional attitude and facilitation of services. Perhaps an increased awareness of the effects of attitude on services can reduce barriers to young father programs.

Parent education research claims that prospective fathers who were provided with knowledge of infant and child development, tended to be more supportive toward the mother and infant ( McGovern, 1990). If indeed a community of service providers want the same outcomes for younger fathers then there should be creative programs implemented to meet the young father's needs and in return can promote high self esteem, more internal locus of control and more opportunities for educational achievement, whether it be in child development, parenting or skilled training for higher paid employment (Marsiglio, 1993; Pirog-Good, 1995; Smollar & Ooms, 1987). Some ways to reach fathers are through parenting programs facilitated by male parent educators who can serve as positive role models. Similarly, other incentives to get young dads involved are to offer meals or snacks or legal services at parenting programs (Achatz & MacAllum, 1994; McGovern, 1990).

Additional information on what leads to successful young fathering is needed. The current study has indicated that services for young fathers are lacking in this state. If indeed society expects young fathers to be responsible for the well-being of his off-spring and practitioners want responsible change and

equality for all, then we have a unique opportunity at the macro-system level to ensure father-focused services are available to these young men. Professional attitudes do predict the number of services offered, so it is important that practitioners keep this in mind when considering the needs of young fathers and the kinds of services offered to them.

It is time to further invest in the generation that holds our future in their hands and help them to discover how to engender fatherhood by giving them the opportunity to actively participate in the adult role of fathering. By taking this direction, the results have the potential to produce a healthy engendering of fatherhood for young males and may very well be the key to reducing the high pregnancy rate among teen mothers; which in turn may be valuable to both the researcher and the practitioner who are interested in the well-being of young fathers and their families.

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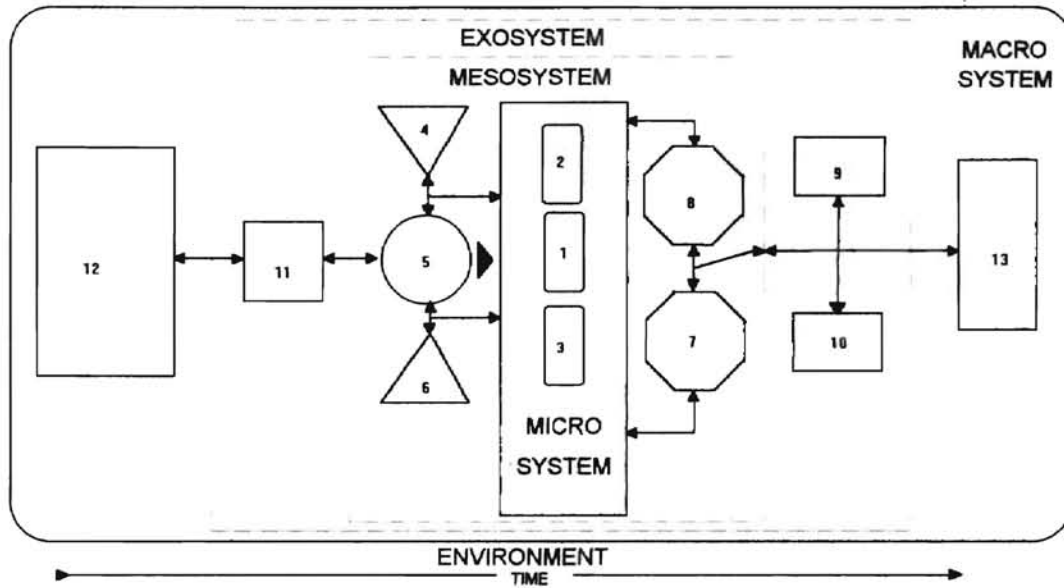
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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Young Father-Context Reciprocal Interaction Model**

# Young Father-Context Reciprocal Interaction Model

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bubolz & Sontag, 1993)



## Individual and Environmental Influences:

### Microsystem:

#### 1. Individual

- A. Young father
- B. Infant
- C. Active: Cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally
- D. Potential to be reciprocally interactive between settings
- E. Perception/attitude
- F. Role assignments
- G. Molar activities participant
- H. Ability to change

#### 2. Family

- A. Dyadic/triadic face to face home setting
- B. Parents/Partner
- C. Siblings
- D. Pets
- E. Communication
- F. Quality of interactions
- G. Affective relationships
- H. Attitude toward father

#### 3. Extended Family

- A. Grandparents
- B. Aunts/Uncles
- C. Cousins
- D. Fictive kin
- E. Geographical Location
- F. Affective relationships
- G. Attitude toward father

### Mesosystem:

#### 4. Daycare/High School

- A. Caregivers
- B. Teachers
- C. Peers/Friends
- D. Administrators/Directors
- E. Attitude toward father

#### 5. Workplace

- A. Fathers
- B. Mothers
- C. Financial resources
- D. Additional role assignments
- E. Attitude toward father

#### 6. Business

- A. Goods
- B. Services
- C. Availability
- D. Attitude toward father

#### 7. Church

- A. Any denomination or religious belief system
- B. Peers
- C. Teachers/Members
- D. Attitude toward father

#### 8. Health Care

- A. Hospital/Clinics
- B. Doctors/nurses
- C. Social services
- D. parenting programs
- E. Attitude toward father

### Exosystem:

#### 9. Local/State Legal System

- A. Enforcement of public policy, laws and rules

#### 10. University

- A. Education/Research
- B. Attitude toward father
- C. Public policy advocacy

#### 11. State Government Policy

- A. Making Individual/Family laws for fathers
- B. Allocation of funds

### Macrosystem:

#### 12. Country

- A. U. S. A.
- B. Overall consistency of culture

#### 13. Federal Government

- A. Allocation of exosystem funds
- B. Enforcement/modifications of macrosystem laws
  - 1. Supreme Court

**APPENDIX B**

**Cover Letter for County Survey: First Mailing**

## Cover Letter for County Survey: First Mailing

Dear «Last Name»,

The enclosed survey questionnaires are a part of the research I am presently conducting at Oklahoma State University in the department of Family Relations and Child Development. I am surveying a sample of social service agencies within Oklahoma to report on the types and number of services available to young fathers under the age of twenty-five and the level of attitude toward young dads.

I know you are very busy, but I value your input. These questionnaires should only require about 30 minutes of your time. Your answers will be completely confidential and used only for this research study. Attached are two copies of the consent form that provides details about the study and how the responses will be used. I will be happy to send you a copy of my research findings even if you choose not to participate. **Please place the answered survey questionnaires and one of the signed consent forms in the enclosed postage-paid envelope and return within the next few days.**

Again, your responses are greatly appreciated and thank you for your participation. The information you are providing will help researchers understand more about existing attitudes and available services for young fathers, as well as support my research. If you have any questions about this research, please contact the persons listed on the consent form.

Sincerely,

Jewel Sample  
OSU Graduate Student

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Cover Letter for County Survey: Second Mailing**

## Cover Letter for County Survey: Second Mailing

Dear «Last Name»,

A few weeks ago I mailed to you two short survey questionnaires as part of the research I am presently conducting at Oklahoma State University in the department of Family Relations and Child Development. My research can not move forward without your help. Please take a few minutes and fill it out. I have enclosed a survey for you. If you believe that some one else within your agency would better know the information in question, please forward it to the right person.

I know you are very busy, but **I value your input**. These questionnaires should only require about 10 minutes of your time. Your answers will be completely confidential and used only for this research study. Attached are two copies of the consent form that provides details about the study and how the responses will be used. I will be happy to send you a copy of my research findings even if you choose not to participate. **Please place the answered survey questionnaires and one of the signed consent forms in the enclosed prepaid envelope and return by February 25, 1997.**

Again, your responses are greatly appreciated and thank you for your participation. The information you are providing will help researchers understand more about existing attitudes and available services for young fathers, as well as support my research. If you have any questions about this research, please contact the persons listed on the consent form.

Sincerely,

Jewel Sample  
OSU Graduate Student



**APPENDIX D**

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

## INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby voluntarily agree to complete the Teen Parent Services Survey (Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993) and Attitudes Toward Teen Parents Scale (Kiselica, 1996) sent to me through the U. S. mail. I authorize Jewel Sample, Dr. Kay Murphy, and other trained researchers of their choosing to record information from my questionnaires for the purpose of reporting on available services for young fathers and professional attitudes.

I understand that this informed consent form will be kept in a locked cabinet along with my questionnaires to ensure confidentiality and the only persons who will have access to them will be the researchers and their trained assistants. I understand that comparisons will only be made between attitudes and agency services and not identify any individuals. I understand that I may request a free copy of the study results even if I do not chose to participate. Furthermore, I understand that one possible benefit to participating in this research study is to help researchers understand more about the types and number of available services for young fathers, who are under the age of twenty-five.

This is done as part of an investigation entitled "Engendering Fatherhood: Provision of Services and Professional attitudes toward young Fathers."

The purpose of the procedure is to report the number and type of available services for young fathers and the existing professional attitudes toward young parents.

I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty or fear of it effecting my current professional standing at the agency in which I am employed.

I may contact Jewel Sample at telephone number (405) 624-9062 or Dr. Kay Murphy at (405) 744-8353 for questions or comments about the research. I may also contact Gay Clarkson, executive secretary of University Research Services, 305 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; Telephone: (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_(a.m./p.m.)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Subject

**APPENDIX E**

**Teen Parent Services Survey**

# Teen Parent Services Survey

(Adapted by permission from Kiselica & Stumer, 1993)

Do you offer a program specifically for young parents under the age of twenty-five?  
Please help by filling out this form to gather information on available services to young parents within the south-central state communities and return it in the self addressed and stamped envelope provided.

Organization or Agency provider name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Targeted Teen Population age: \_\_\_\_\_ Support group available yes\_\_\_ no\_\_\_

During Daytime Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ During Nighttime Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Please place an "M" (mothers) or an "F" (fathers) next to each service offered at your agency for young mothers and fathers under the age of twenty-five. Place an "MF" next to each service offered to both parents.

1. Health Services

- 1.01\_\_\_ pregnancy testing
- 1.02\_\_\_ prenatal care
- 1.03\_\_\_ postnatal care
- 1.04\_\_\_ pediatric care
- 1.05\_\_\_ birth control counseling
- 1.06\_\_\_ abortion counseling
- 1.07\_\_\_ sexual responsibility counseling
- 1.08\_\_\_ home health care
- 1.09\_\_\_ nutritional counseling
- 1.10\_\_\_ first aid training
- 1.11\_\_\_ sex education
- 1.12\_\_\_ breast feeding training

2. Services for children:

- 2.01\_\_\_ adoption services
- 2.02\_\_\_ child care
- 2.03\_\_\_ foster care

3. Parent education:

- 3.01\_\_\_ early childhood development
- 3.02\_\_\_ parenting skills training
- 3.03\_\_\_ child care information
- 3.04\_\_\_ day care awareness training
- 3.05\_\_\_ adolescent development
- 3.06\_\_\_ adult development
- 3.07\_\_\_ parent support groups
- 3.08\_\_\_ grandparent support groups

4. Basic living needs:

- 4.01\_\_\_ food
- 4.02\_\_\_ clothing
- 4.03\_\_\_ financial aid
- 4.04\_\_\_ housing
- 4.05\_\_\_ WIC

5. Life skills training:

- 5.01\_\_\_ budgeting

6. Academic Education

- 6.01\_\_\_ mainstream school curriculum
- 6.02\_\_\_ special/remedial school
- 6.03\_\_\_ alternative school curriculum
- 6.04\_\_\_ Drug/alcohol programs
- 6.05\_\_\_ before school programs
- 6.06\_\_\_ after school programs

7. Counseling Services:

- 7.01\_\_\_ individual personal adjustment
- 7.02\_\_\_ grandparent counseling
- 7.03\_\_\_ group counseling
- 7.04\_\_\_ couple counseling
- 7.05\_\_\_ bereavement/grief counseling
- 7.06\_\_\_ career counseling
- 7.07\_\_\_ religious counseling
- 7.08\_\_\_ psychiatric services

8. Employment Services:

- 8.01\_\_\_ job-seeking skills
- 8.02\_\_\_ job keeping skills
- 8.03\_\_\_ employee/employer mediation skills
- 8.04\_\_\_ vocational/technical training

9. Social/ Recreational Services:

- 9.01\_\_\_ informal gatherings
- 9.02\_\_\_ field trips

10. Requirement/outreach services:

- 10.01\_\_\_ crisis/hot line
- 10.02\_\_\_ shelter
- 10.03\_\_\_ transportation
- 10.04\_\_\_ food
- 10.05\_\_\_ health care
- 10.06\_\_\_ drop-in centers
- 10.07\_\_\_ public service announcements
- 10.08\_\_\_ use of other media

- 5.02\_\_\_ consumer education
- 5.03\_\_\_ assertiveness training
- 5.04\_\_\_ housekeeping
- 5.05\_\_\_ problem solving
- 5.06\_\_\_ conflict resolution
- 5.07\_\_\_ personal safety training
- 5.08\_\_\_ stranger awareness training  
for children

(Adapted by permission from Kiselica & Sturmer, 1993)  
survey>

11. Other Services:

- 11.01\_\_\_ Legal assistance
- 11.02\_\_\_ offer other services (please specify)

Please turn this page over to complete the

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Attitudes Toward Teen Parent Scale**

## Attitudes Toward Teen Parent Scale (by permission from Kiselica, 1996)

Please answer the following statements by placing the number of the response that most agrees with your opinion. Use the following scale for your response:

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5	6

- \_\_\_ 1. Teenage boys usually break off the relationship when they get a girl pregnant.
- \_\_\_ 2. Pregnant girls should be required to quit school.
- \_\_\_ 3. If a girl gets pregnant, I think she deserves to pay for her mistake.
- \_\_\_ 4. The teenage father is more impulsive and unstable than are other boys his age.
- \_\_\_ 5. I feel disgust toward pregnant teenagers.
- \_\_\_ 6. The teenage father is very concerned with the teenage mother during the pregnancy.
- \_\_\_ 7. I feel angry toward teenage fathers.
- \_\_\_ 8. I admire girls who continue school when they become pregnant.
- \_\_\_ 9. The teenage father offers little or no support to the teenage mother after the child is born.
- \_\_\_ 10. I think having pregnant girls remain in school has a negative influence on the other students.
- \_\_\_ 11. It is more important for the teenage father to continue school than it is for the teenage mother.
- \_\_\_ 12. The teenage mother is more impulsive and unstable than are other girls her age.
- \_\_\_ 13. The teenage mother has frequent contact with her child after the child is born.
- \_\_\_ 14. The teenage father is more likely to sexually exploit teenage girls than are other boys his age.
- \_\_\_ 15. The teenage mother is more sexually active than are other girls her age.
- \_\_\_ 16. It is acceptable for teenage boys to be sexually active as long as they use contraceptives.
- \_\_\_ 17. The teen father has frequent contact with his child after the child is born.
- \_\_\_ 18. The teenage mother is more likely to manipulate teenage boys than are other girls her age.
- \_\_\_ 19. If a teenage boy gets a girl pregnant, he deserves to pay for his mistake.
- \_\_\_ 20. It is acceptable for teenage girls to be sexually active as long as they use contraceptives.
- \_\_\_ 21. Teenage fathers are frequently victims of girls who try to trap them with a pregnancy.
- \_\_\_ 22. The teenage father is more sexually active than are other boys his age.



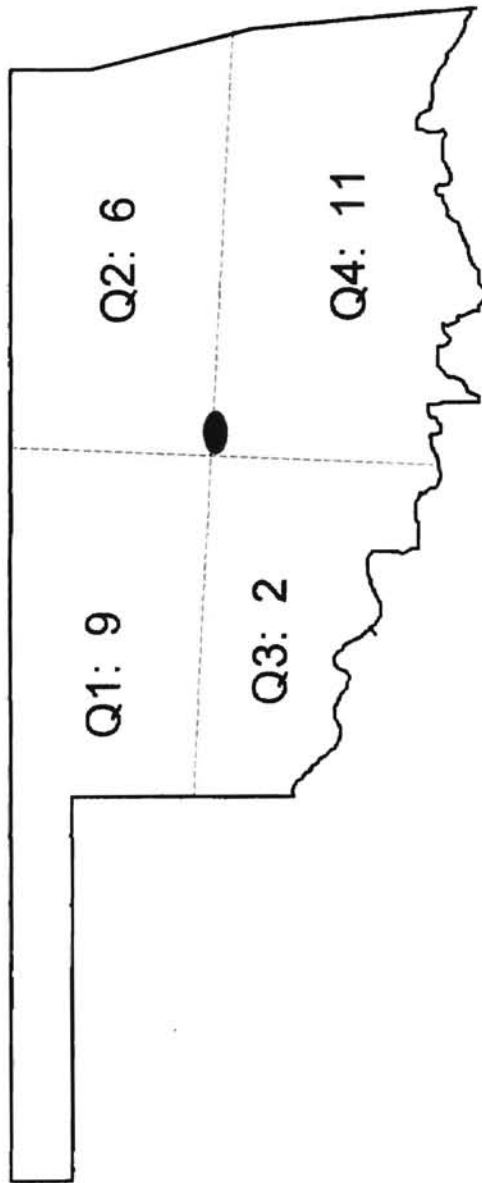
- \_\_\_ 23. Teenage girls who get pregnant are irresponsible.
- \_\_\_ 24. I feel sorry for teenage fathers.
- \_\_\_ 25. The teen mother has weaker moral values than do other girls her age.
- \_\_\_ 26. The teenage father is more responsible than are other boys his age.
- \_\_\_ 27. I feel sorry for teenage mothers.

(Kiselica, 1996)

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Oklahoma Services To Young Fathers**

## Services Targeted For Young Fathers By Quadrant



**APPENDIX H**

**Institutional Review Board Permission Form**

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: 12-19-96

IRB#: HE-97-031

Proposal Title: ENGENDERING FATHERHOOD: PROVISION OF SERVICES AND PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD YOUNG FATHERS

Principal Investigator(s): Kay R. Murphy, Jewel M. Sample

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING THE APPROVAL PERIOD.


APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.

ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

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Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Signature:

  
Chair of Institutional Review Board

cc: Jewel M. Sample

Date: January 8, 1997

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## VITA

Jewel M. Sample

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: **ENGENDERING FATHERHOOD: PROVISION OF SERVICES AND PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD YOUNG FATHERS**

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

### Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 2, 1950, the daughter of Christopher and Clara Huber.

### Education:

Graduated from Fort Supply High School, Fort Supply, Oklahoma in May 1968; received a Bachelor of Science degree in Family Relations and Child Development from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 1995. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Family Relations and Child Development at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 1997.

### Experience:

Graduate Student Volunteer from 1996 to 1997 for the Stillwater community. Actively participated in group collaboration to design a data gathering questionnaire to be used in implementing a computerized Stillwater community resource directory. Employed by the College of Human Environmental Sciences, Oklahoma State University as a Family Relations and Child Development Graduate Teaching Assistant from 1995 to 1997.

### Professional Membership:

Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Oklahoma State University (1995).  
Golden Key National Honor Society, Oklahoma State University (1994).  
Kappa Omicron Nu National Honor Society, Oklahoma State University, Chapter Omicron XI (1993).  
Phi Upsilon Omicron Honor Society in Home Economics (1993).  
Professional National Council on Family Relations (1993 to present)  
Oklahoma Family Resource Coalition (1996)