

Engaging African American Fathers during the Prenatal Period using Health Literacy Strategies

K. Barnekow, D. Pate, K. Pritchard, G. Morris.



Background and Significance



- Infant mortality
- A Lifecourse perspective
- Fatherhood and occupation
- Health literacy



Research Objectives

The purpose of this study was to gather input from African American fathers, and establish a partnership among academic partners and community providers that would set the stage for intervention.



Methods

Using action research methods the first year of this effort centered on establishing partnerships, conducting 4 focus groups and analyzing the focus group data (Israel, Eng, Schulz, & Parker, 2005).

A preliminary analysis of the focus group data has been completed.

- Academic partners reviewed transcripts and developed themes
- Member checking with members of the original focus groups was completed



Participants

Thirty-five men participated in the focus groups.
4 focus groups and 1 large group meeting for member checking.

The participants ranged in age from 21 to 60 and they were recruited from fatherhood organizations serving an urban center in the Midwest.



Focus Group Interview

What are some of the major issues that men face in the city, black men?

What is it you think fathers would want to know when their babies are being developed?

Were you involved in the prenatal visits ... how was that for you when you went?

How do you think we should try to communicate the importance of fatherhood involvement during the prenatal period to men?

Would you think that there would be another way to educate dads or alert them to what's going on?

How have you been treated by the doctors and nurses when you go to prenatal visits?

Do you feel that they don't always recognize your role?



Preliminary analysis

Fathers experienced significant participation in the lives of their children.

Factors within the urban environment negatively influence their participation during the prenatal and postnatal period. These factors include a ***lack of employment opportunities, lack of education, increased stereotyping, prohibitive policing, relationship challenges, and lack of recognition by health care providers*** in regard to their role.

Fathers are interested in receiving information about pre and postnatal care through technology and peer mentoring.



Lack of opportunities

Employment, education and housing

“We’re out of jobs”

“Lack of employment”

“I only know about black men though, most of my peers are black and the opportunity ain’t really here” . . .



Racism and Stereotyping

“Yeah, I mean, it’s like they don’t expect us to have nothing. We can’t have a nice car. We can’t have nice clothes, otherwise, we’re doing something.....”

“All black people...we can’t have it nice, otherwise we doing something, we did something wrong to get it?”



Prohibitive Policing

“Racism played a big part (in my life circumstances) at 18 for those of you that might not know about A.L. Smith this is gone but that is where I started atpolice use to harass me on my way back and forth to work and one of the things that they would tell me is “a nigger like you ain’t got no business making this kind of money. I’m going to see if I can get you to (lose your job)...even with me, locking me up prior to me getting to work to try to cause them to want to fire me for not coming to work. I was blessed that it didn’t happen, but it happened to me a number of times...didn’t find anything on me as far as drugs or anything wrong criminally on me...they just detained me.”



Violence

“There’s too much violence in (city name) and the world period...you got kids killing kids...its ridiculous you know you got guys that will shoot you while you have your baby in your arms”



Incarceration

“They say they don’t hold it against you if you like got a felony and whatever, but they don’t want to deal with you though or be bothered with you.”

“...then they told me to fill out an application to get hired on.. but they did not tell me that once I applied, and once I applied, they found out that I was a felon. They said for that alone, I could not work there anymore for a whole year and I could not apply back for the job.. . . so if I would've never applied, I could continue to work there as a temp.”



Transportation

"I said that I do not have a license and they say well how did you get here (to the job)...They like, you've got to have a drivers license....."

"..ride in the cab, like say your girl got insurance, and she can go to the doctor and have a checkup or whatever with the baby, they not going to let you ride. You going to pay. . . ."



Health Literacy

Health literacy is defined as gathering, interpreting, and using information to make suitable health-related decisions (Institute of Medicine, 2004). Individuals who have adequate health literacy are more likely to participate in preventative health care, be empowered to ask health-related questions, and exert control over daily life (Nutbeam, 2008).



Taxonomy for interactive health literacy

Interactive health literacy includes the cognitive and social skills needed to interpret and act upon health-related information.

Remembering

Understanding

Applying

Analyzing

Evaluating

Creating



Understanding Information and knowledge

"I think it'd be important for people to know that statistic that you just said that infant mortality rate, I had no idea that babies was dying like that...I think if people knew that they would be more interested in .. they know, going to be straight, she's going to have a baby . . ."

I think you should know just as much as she know, I mean, because she one that pregnant. I mean, it take both of you all to make the baby... . . .

It's better than not knowing at all....

We probably should to see what's going on too, to have more knowledge...



Understanding information and knowledge

“Like it should be like, they should be like telling the fathers what's your baby and what this could happen and this could happen, just not the mother because she is carrying the baby, because the father . . . he could hear some things that he needs to know . . . there's roles for both of them.”



Applying knowledge



I would say something that the father should be conscious of like at the prenatal stages to always try to, you know, keep the mother in a positive vibe, in a positive environment because all that energy, like that negative energy and stuff like that, that rubs off on the child, you know what I'm saying? If the child can hear you all arguing, and the child can hear you cussing and disrespecting the mother like.....just try to keep the mother in a positive state always, you know, just cater to her, you know what I'm saying? (keep the negative out)...

Evaluating treatment by healthcare providers

“Surprised”

“We had a black woman...you know, she did. She was real nice to me though, you know what I mean” Yeah, she was, she made me feel comfortable, you know. She didn’t like push me out the room and all. She let me come in. You know. She talked to me a lot, you know what I’m saying, about resources and places to get clothing and diapers and a lot of that stuff not. We had a real good doctor, man.”



Sharing information - texting

"..... Like that'd be perfect, because now your doctor will really, like he's there with you. He like send you texts. You know this coming from your main source. . . this is your doctor. You trust this person."

"people learn different ways too...people learn by audio and people learn by visual"

"Technology is everything. You know now it's more convenient, you know what I'm saying? So you know if we're not there, we are there?"



Sharing information through mentoring

“It’s kind of like Each One Teach One.....I think that’d be good right there....you know what I mean you could actually sit down and give it them in the raw and they can take heed to it or not....but they heard you..... it something that going to stick in their head when they walk out that door...so sitting across from each other and just talking one on one and whatever in a group.”



Our team



Acknowledgements

Wisconsin Partnership Program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health: Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families

