

# Promoting Father Involvement in Home Visiting and Parenting

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**Results from a Father Engagement Learning Collaborative**

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Parents as Teachers®



## OK MIECHV Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Learning Collaborative

Brings together Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program awardees and local agencies to develop, test, and implement changes in topics aligned with MIECHV benchmarks and build quality improvement capacity.

# Objectives

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- Father engagement literature review
- Overview of LC structure and CQI methodology
- Father engagement PDSA projects
- Results, lessons learned and promising strategies





# Evidence-based Home Visiting

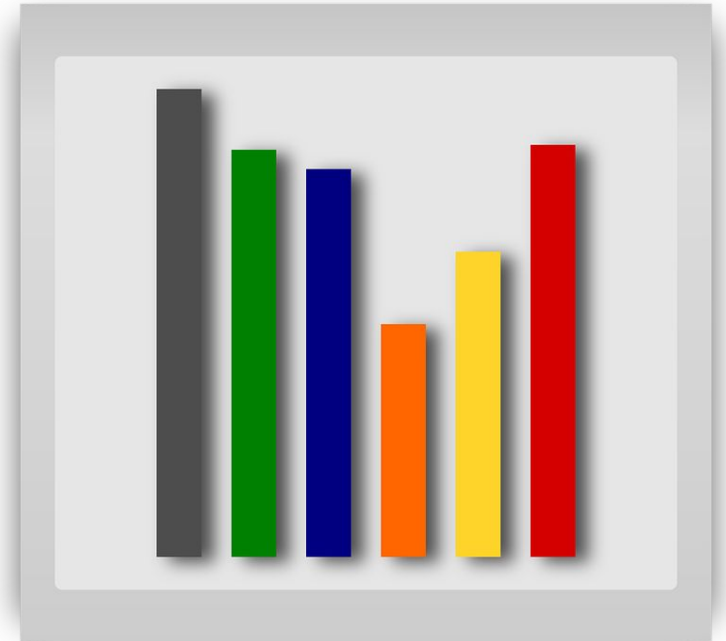
MIECHV aims to:

- Improve maternal and child health
- Prevent child abuse and neglect
- Reduce crime and domestic violence
- Increase family education and earning potential
- Promote children's development and school readiness
- Connect families to needed community resources and supports



# Evaluation of HV

- Evaluations of HV programs have yielded mixed results (Avellar & Supplee, 2013; Filene et al., 2013)
- High rates of program attrition limit program outcomes
  - Approximately 50% leave prior to their child's first birthday (Holland et al., 2018)
- Early attrition affects size and likelihood of intended program impacts
- Continued engagement is challenging



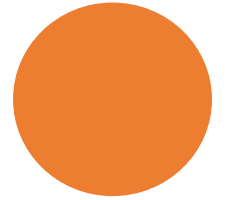
# Fathers in Home Visiting

- Historically fathers been overlooked
- Benefit from home visiting: improved child development knowledge, positive parenting practices, anger management, and connection to community resources (Sandstrom et al., 2015)
- Father involvement may improve family retention and maternal engagement (McGinnis et al., 2019; Stargel et al., 2020)
- Fathers' participation remains **infrequent** and **inconsistent** (Guterman et al., 2018)

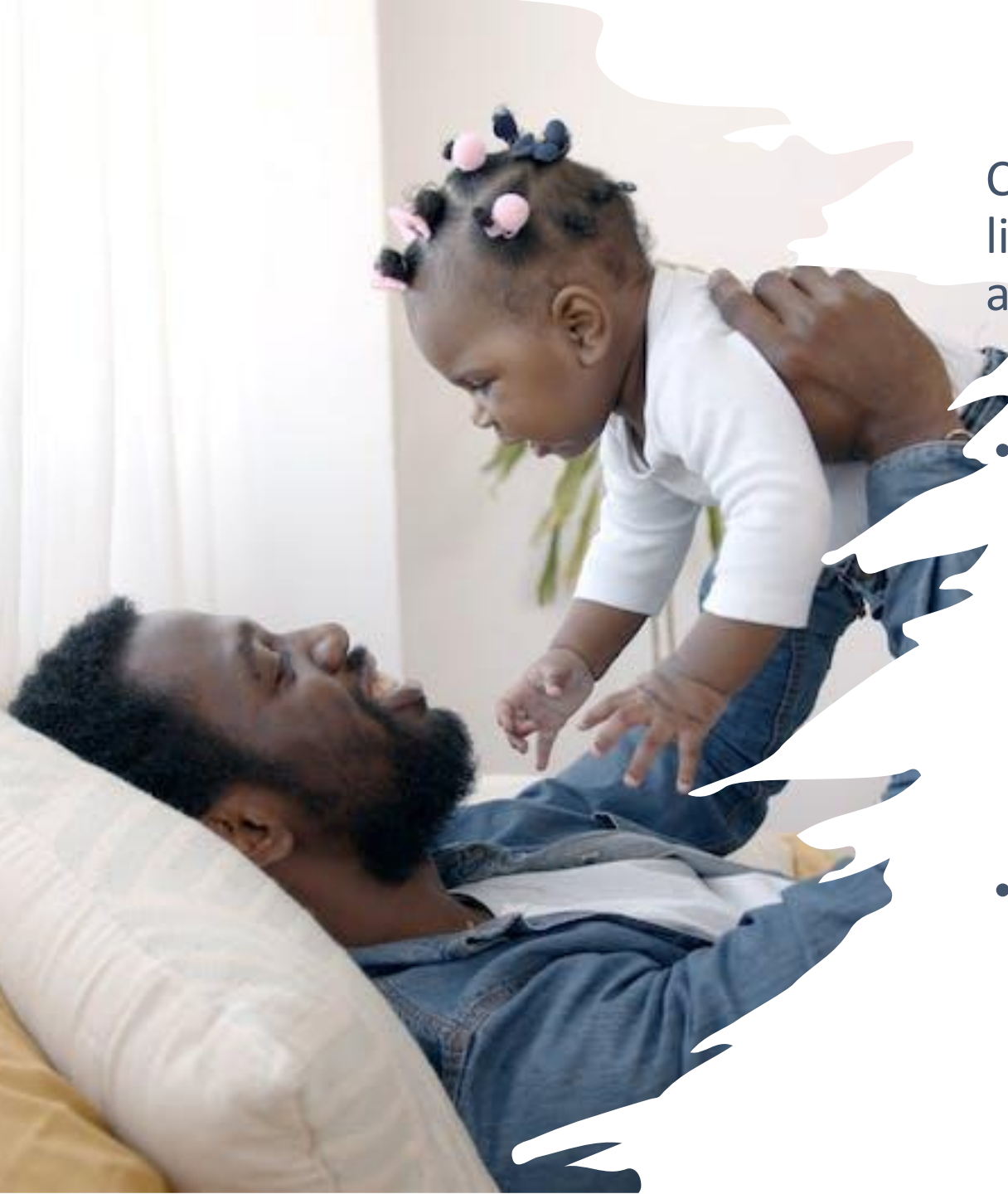


**Positive father involvement contributes to children's cognitive, social and emotional development, and academic success.**

- Cognitive development & language development
- Problem solving & math skills
- School achievement
- Social and emotional development
- Financial contributions, decreased family stress
- Improved maternal-child attachment







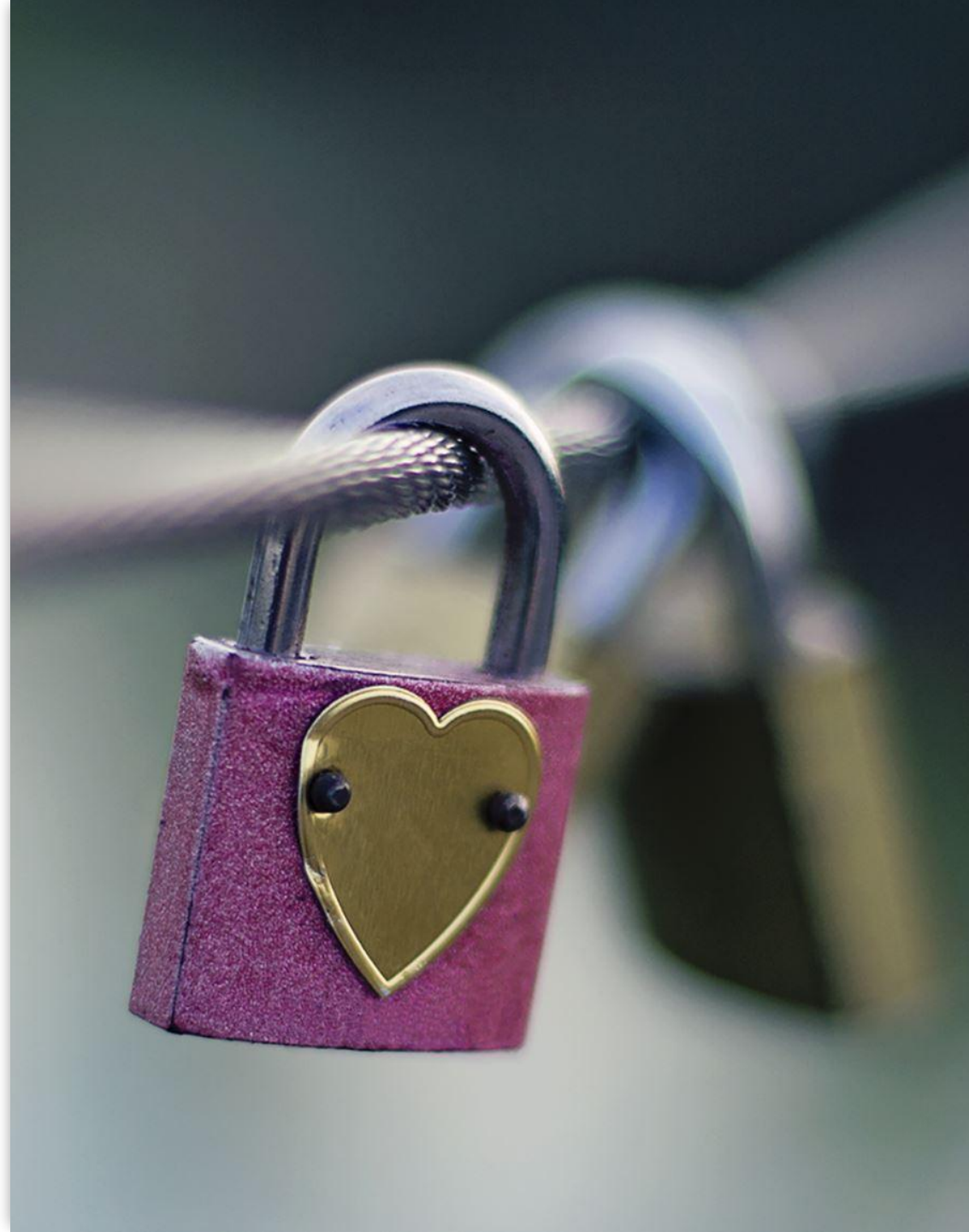
Children from low-income families are 25% less likely than their peers to be prepared for school at age 5 (Henry et al., 2020, Isaacs, 2012).

- Benefits of positive father involvement may be even greater when additional risks are present
  - Maternal depression, risk of abuse or neglect
  - Risk of academic or social difficulties
- Early involvement predicts continued involvement and improved child outcomes (Choi & Jackson, 2011, Fagan & Lee, 2012; Henry et al., 2020)



# Predictors & barriers

- Positive co-parenting relationship with the child's mother
- Fathers' parenting skills and confidence
- Positive beliefs about fatherhood and the importance of father involvement
- Economic stability is linked to fathers' involvement
  
- **Barriers:** incarceration, abusive behavior, or drug and alcohol problems, multi-partner fertility, depressive symptoms, stress, unintended pregnancy or low prenatal involvement, young age at birth of child



# Father Engagement LC

- **CQI topic:** The overall mission of the current CQI is to improve father engagement in co-parenting, through improved relationships with fathers, and increasing father engagement in home visiting.
- **SMART Aim:** Collective participation in a Father Engagement Learning Collaborative will significantly increase average father involvement ratings among all clients with an identified father figure by June 2021.



# Participants

- LIA ( $n = 11$ ) developed and implemented 30 PDSA interventions to increase father engagement.
- Enrolled families ( $n = 497$ )

## **Father figure definition:**

“the male identified as most involved in caregiving and committed to the well-being of the child, regardless of living situation, marital status, or biological relation. A father figure may be a biological, foster, or adoptive father; a stepfather; or a grandfather, etc. He may or may not have legal custody and may or may not be living in the home.”

# Involvement in Parenting Measure

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*When the father figure is available how often does he participate in routine caregiving activities....*

- Diapering or toileting
- Mealtime activities
- Providing comfort
- Managing behaviors
- Teaching the child new things
- Caring for the child without the mothers' help or supervision

(Answer options: Never, rarely, sometimes, often or always)

Duggan, 2004 Engagement, Responsibility Satisfaction Questionnaire (ERS)



# CQI Methodology



# CQI Learning Collaborative Goals



engage in  
collaborative  
learning



rapid testing for  
improvement



sharing of best  
practices



scaling of tested  
interventions



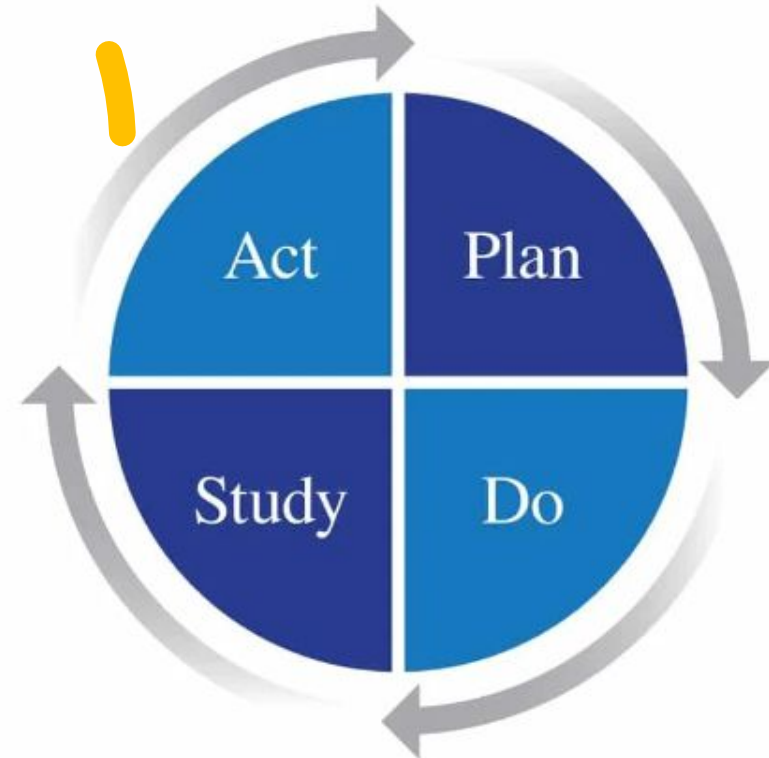
building quality  
improvement  
capacity

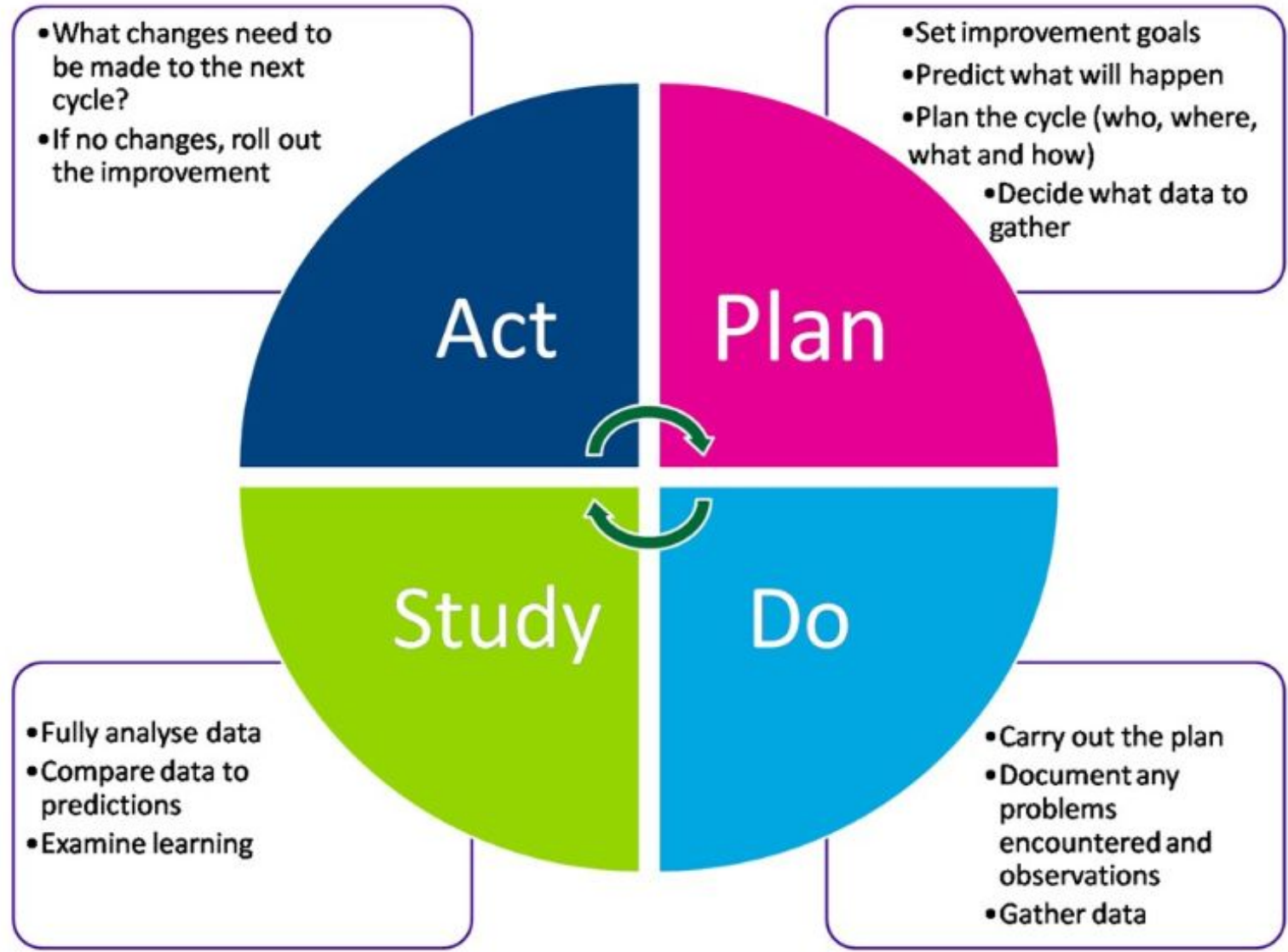
National Home Visiting Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (HV CoIIN)  
Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)  
Local Implementing Agencies (LIA)

# Plan-Do-Study-Act

## PDSA

- 18-month Father Engagement Collaborative
- 3 6-month Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycles
  - LIA develop, implement, and evaluate innovative change ideas
  - Monthly calls, learning sessions, presentations
- Repeatable steps used to improve existing practices
- Tests for improvement are small, short, and simple in nature and typically build on one another







CQI on  
Father  
Involvement

## SECONDARY DRIVERS

## CHANGE IDEA EXAMPLES

## AIM

### PRIMARY DRIVERS

Increase  
fathers'  
involvement  
in home  
visiting

More fathers  
at visits

Services tailored  
to be welcoming  
and useful to  
fathers

Recruitment of  
more fathers as  
Primary Caregivers

Fathers' presence  
and participation  
in child's and  
family's daily life

Importance of  
role of the father

### ***Direct communication with fathers (texts, reminders)***

Script for importance of father participation

Emphasis on fathers' importance in strengthening family unit

Flexible schedule to meet the needs of fathers

Non-traditional ways to be present (e.g., FaceTime)

### ***Welcome letters and materials***

Father-specific referrals to services

Increase invites for dads to participate in visits and events

Ask about fathers' needs, follow up on fathers' experiences

Provide more father-specific education and supports

Father-friendly events (Group Connections, Dad Café, community events)

Conversations/curriculum focus on fathers

Positive affirmations for dads

Recruit at venues where fathers more likely to be present

Generate awareness of benefits of services

### ***Increased activities with child, even if outside of visit***

### ***Encourage father to read to child***

Encourage father to go on doctor visits

Fatherhood education packets

PIPE video activity, father-child interaction activities/relationship builders, etc.

### ***Welcome letters and materials***

### ***Increased provider knowledge of father role***

Increased insight into relationships

Family planning education

Increase  
fathers'  
engagement

Increase  
fathers'  
involvement  
in parenting

# SMART Aim Development

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S



**SPECIFIC**

M



**MEASURABLE**

A



**ATTAINABLE**

R



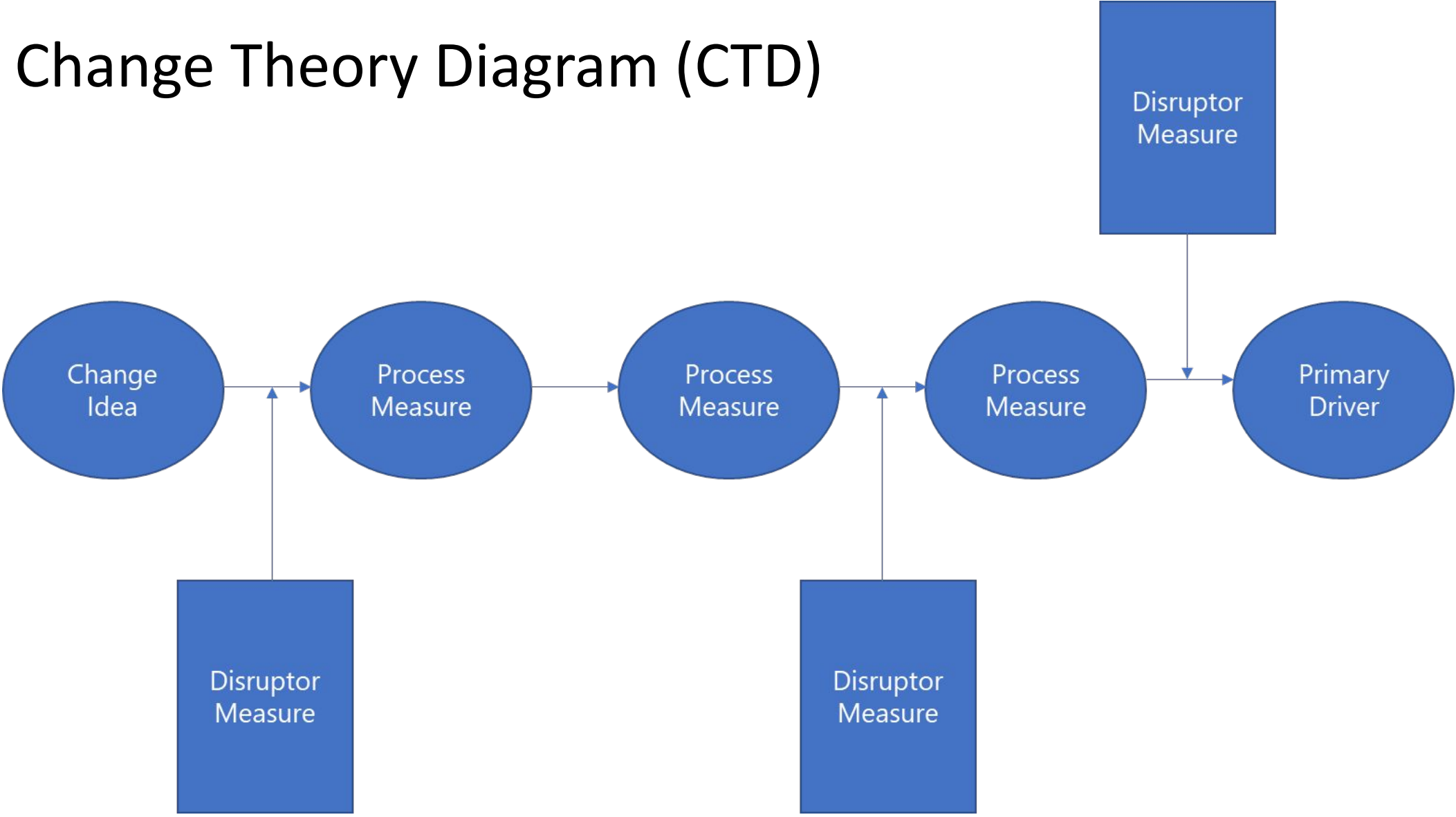
**RELEVANT**

T



**TIME-BOUND**

# Change Theory Diagram (CTD)



# Measures & PDSA Plan

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Ex. Process Measures	Ex. Outcome Measures	Ex. Disruptor Measures	Plan Steps
<p>Core Process Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li># of contacts w/ fathers</li><li># receiving fatherhood materials/content</li><li># father recruitment attempts</li><li># father referrals discussions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Core Outcome Measures</li><li>◦ Prop. of visits completed with fathers</li><li>◦ Prop. Of fathers attending monthly events</li><li>◦ Prop. of fathers completing activities</li><li>◦ Prop. successful father linkages to services</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Dad work schedule</li><li>◦ Dad/Mom interests</li><li>◦ Cultural barriers</li><li>◦ No transportation</li><li>◦ No FF available</li><li>◦ Domestic violence</li><li>◦ Fatherhood measure not collected from mother</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Who will implement the change (staff)?</li><li>◦ Who is targeted within the change (clients)?</li><li>◦ What</li><li>◦ Where</li><li>◦ When</li></ul>



# PDSA Change Ideas

- Direct contact with fathers
- Welcome letters and invitations
- Father friendly themes and activities
- Father-specific fact sheets about the importance of fatherhood or benefits of reading
- Incentives
- Materials to promote reading or support completion of father-child activities





## Dads Matter!

Fathers have a very important role in the life and development of their child. Whether you are the biological father or a male caregiver in the home, your role is critical to the development of your child.

## Reading Time is Bonding Time

When a father engages in high quality parenting behavior, a secure attachment may develop even when the father spends relatively little time with the child (Brown et al, 2007).

## Early Education Readiness

PATs vision is that all children will learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential. We believe that you, as the parent, are your child's first and most influential teacher and that all young children and their families deserve the same opportunities to succeed!

Children with actively involved fathers are: 43% more likely to earn A's in school and 33% less likely to repeat a grade than those without engaged dads. (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics)

## Do You Have Books?

PAT at CREOKS wants to be sure each family has what is needed for Dads and caregivers to read to their children. If your family needs books, please let PAT know! Your PE is available to deliver or mail out books to your home!



## PAT/HUGS at CREOKS



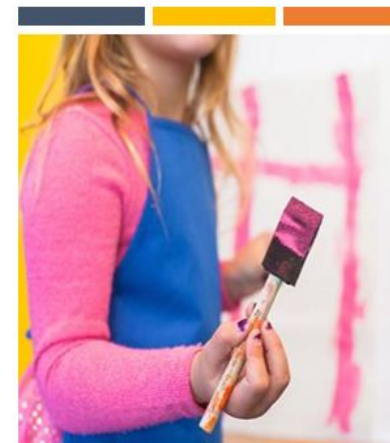
## Positive Outcomes for Fatherhood Engagement

- Fathers taught the skills of caring tend to be closer to their babies/young children at the time and also later. (The Father's role cross-cultural comparison)
- Fathers taught the skills of caring tend to be closer to their babies/young children at the time and also later. (The Father's role cross-cultural comparison)
- Greater father involvement in infant care and other household tasks is correlated with lower parenting stress and depression in mothers. (Maternal depression and newborn health newsletter)

## Child Literacy Stats Parents Need to Know

- Currently, 45 million Americans are functionally illiterate and cannot read above a fifth-grade level
- 50% of adults cannot read a book written at an eighth-grade level
- 57% of students failed the California Standards Test in English
- 1/3 of fourth-graders reach the proficient reading level
- 25% of students in California school systems are able to perform basic reading skills
- 85% of juvenile offenders have problems reading
- 3 out of 5 people in American prisons can't read
- 3 out of 4 people on welfare can't read

[www.literacyprojectfoundation.org](http://www.literacyprojectfoundation.org)



**“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.” – Emilie Buchwald**

## How Can We Help?

Dads, you now have the facts for why reading time with your children is so important. How about a goal of reading several times a week, if not daily? Are there any other factors getting in the way of your ability to read to your children? Let us know and let us help!

## PAT/HUGS Wants the Best for Your Family!

Thank you again for giving us the opportunity to work with you and your family! We are very excited to be a part of your parenting adventures and will be taking yearly surveys just to check in and see how we are doing!

# Welcome Letter and Fact Sheet



# The Value of Fathers

Research shows that children who have fathers that are involved and engaged in their lives are:

- Four times less likely to suffer from poverty.<sup>1</sup>
- Less likely to suffer emotional and behavioral problems.<sup>2</sup>
- Less at risk to experiment with drugs and alcohol.<sup>3</sup>
- More likely to stay out of prison.<sup>4</sup>
- Less likely to commit a crime as evidenced by a study that linked absent fathers with increased instances of juvenile delinquency.<sup>5</sup>
- Two times less likely to be involved in early sexual activity as a teen.<sup>6</sup>
- Seven times less likely to experience a teen pregnancy.<sup>6</sup>
- Two times less likely to die in infancy.<sup>7</sup>
- Eight times more likely to experience maltreatment, ten times more likely to experience abuse, and six times more likely to experience neglect when a single parent has a live-in partner that is not the child's biological parent.<sup>8</sup>

# El Valor de los Padres

Las investigaciones muestran que los niños que tienen padres que están involucrados y se dedican a sus vidas son:

- Cuatro veces menos probabilidades de sufrir pobreza.<sup>1</sup>
- Menos probabilidades de sufrir problemas emocionales y conductuales.<sup>2</sup>
- Menos riesgo de experimentar con drogas y alcohol.<sup>3</sup>
- Más probable que se quedes fuera de prisión.<sup>4</sup>
- Menos probabilidades de cometer un delito, como lo demuestra un estudio que vincula a los padres ausentes con el aumento de los casos de delincuencia juvenil.<sup>5</sup>
- Dos veces menos probabilidades de estar involucrados en la actividad sexual temprana como adolescente.<sup>6</sup>
- Siete veces menos probabilidades de experimentar un embarazo adolescente.<sup>6</sup>
- Dos veces menos probabilidades de morir en la infancia.<sup>7</sup>
- Ocho veces más probabilidades de sufrir un maltrato, diez veces más probabilidades de sufrir un abuso y seis veces más probabilidades de sufrir negligencia cuando un padre tiene una pareja que no es el padre biológico del hijo(a).<sup>8</sup>

Father involvement in caring for the child, and other household tasks, is correlated with lower parenting stress and depression in mothers.<sup>9</sup>

Fathers who are engaged in the care of their infants, bond with their newborn quickly and are more likely to enjoy fatherhood.<sup>10</sup>

La participación del padre en el cuidado del niño, y otras tareas domésticas, está correlacionada con un menor estrés parental y la depresión en las madres.<sup>9</sup>

Los padres que se dedican a el cuidado de sus bebés, se unen con su recién nacido rápidamente y son más propensos a disfrutar de la paternidad.<sup>10</sup>

Children who have involved fathers are two times more likely to go to college and find stable employment after highschool.<sup>11</sup>

Children whose fathers share meals, spend leisure time with, or help them with reading or homework, do significantly better academically, than those children whose fathers do not.<sup>13</sup>

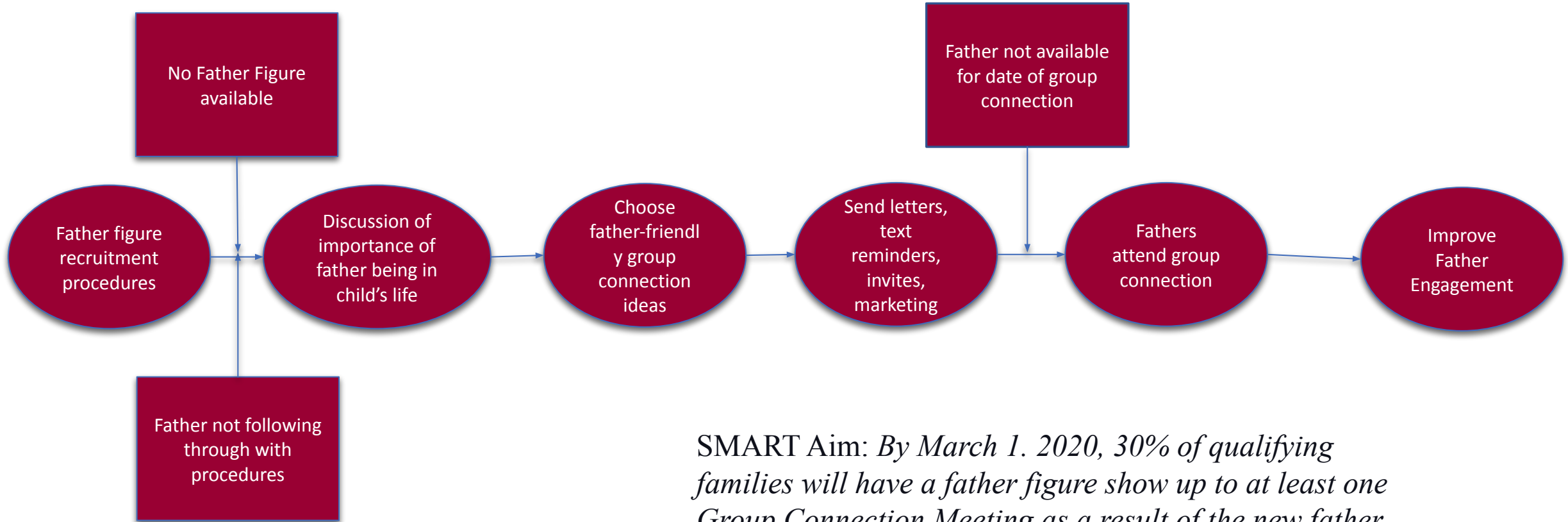
Los niños que tienen padres involucrados tiene dos veces más probabilidades de ir a la universidad y encontrar empleo estable después de la escuela secundaria.

Los niños cuyos padres comparten comidas, pasan tiempo libre con ellos o les ayudan a leer o hacer la tarea, lo hacen mucho mejor académicamente, que aquellos niños cuyos padres no lo hacen.<sup>13</sup>

Fathers who are taught skills for caring for newborns, tend to have a stronger bond with their infant at birth and there after.<sup>12</sup>

Los padres a los que se les enseñan habilidades para cuidar a los recién nacidos, tienden tener un vínculo más fuerte con su bebé al nacer y allí después.<sup>12</sup>

# Father Involvement in Home Visiting



*SMART Aim: By March 1, 2020, 30% of qualifying families will have a father figure show up to at least one Group Connection Meeting as a result of the new father figure recruitment procedures.*

# Disruptor measure example

father materials distributed

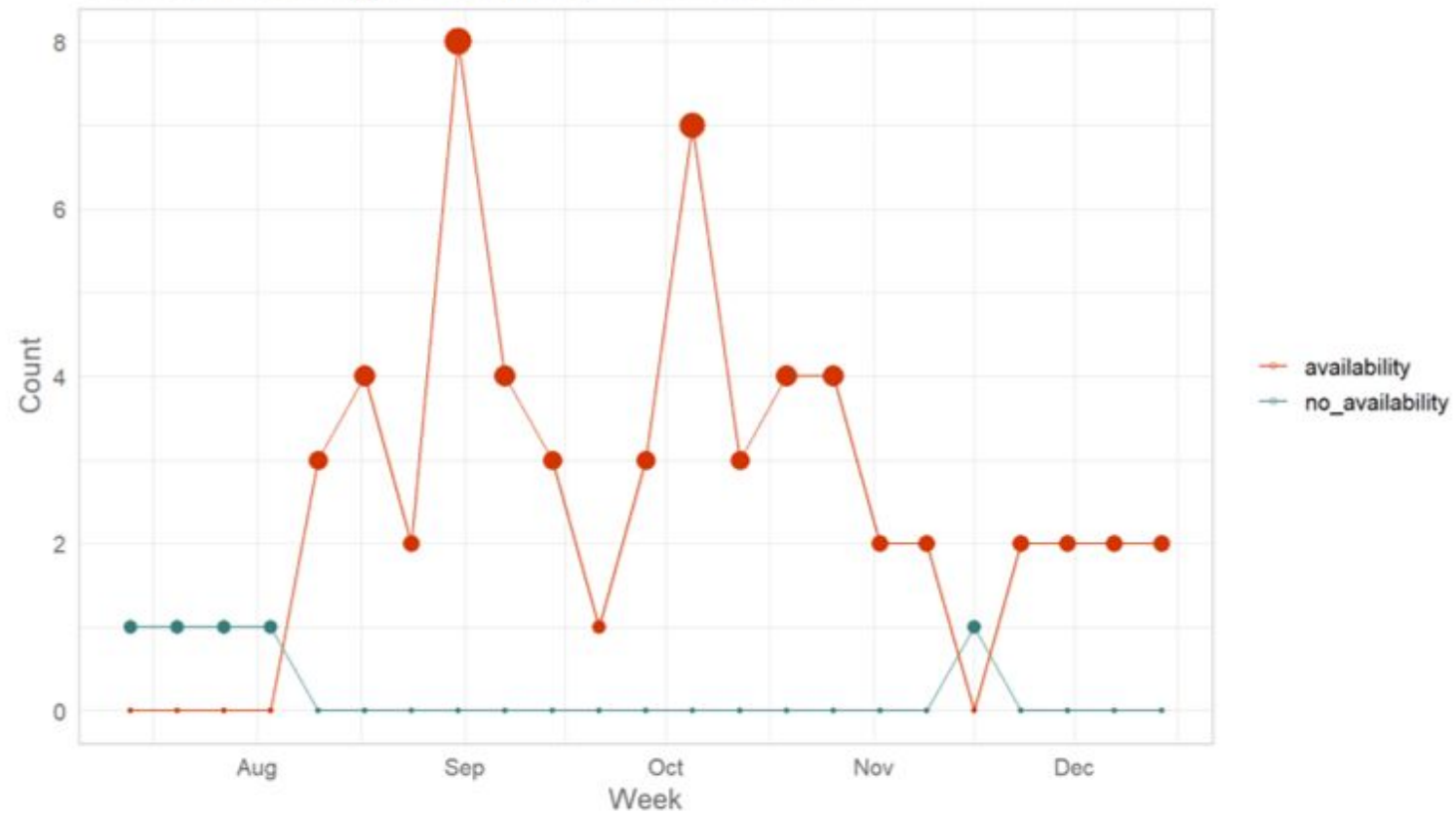
previous materials

fatherhood curriculum

welcome packet

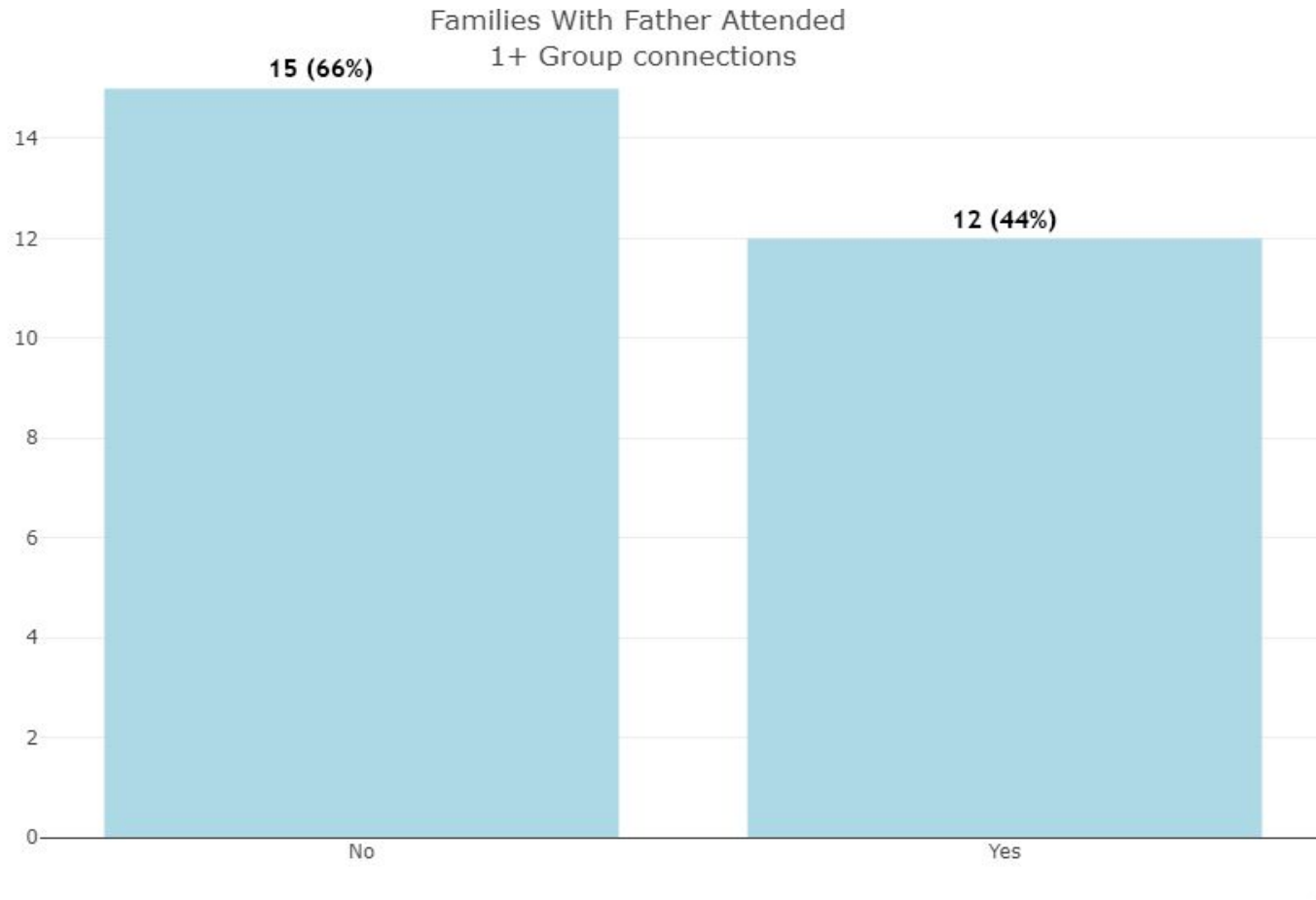
Disruptor

Count of Father Figure Availability to Join HV or GC





# Involving Fathers in Group Connections



Outcome: **44% of fathers attending a Group Connection**

Process: Majority received invitations, marketing materials, and text messages

Disruptor: 40% of fathers did not have a father figure

# Connecting with Dad

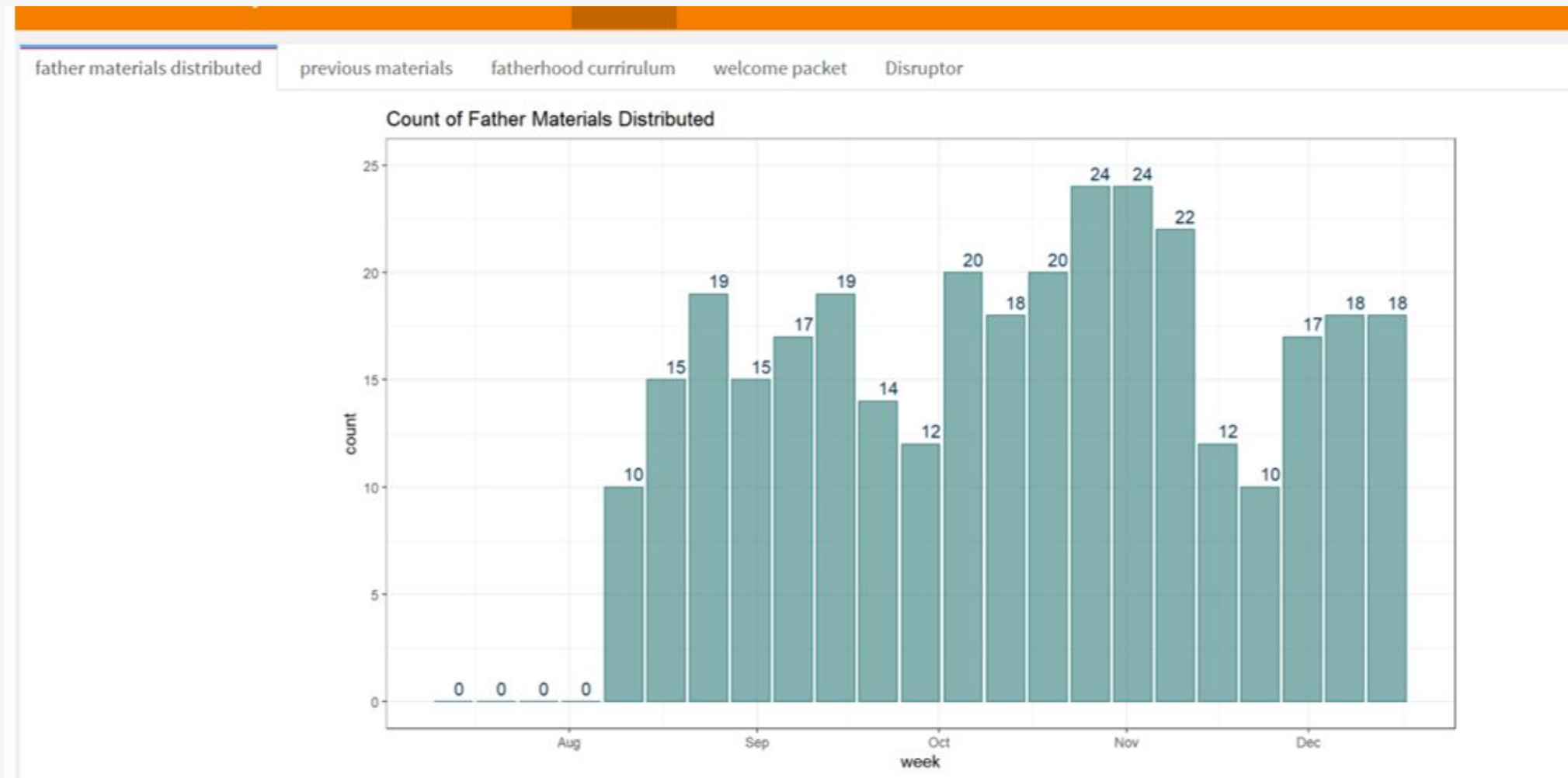
## Father Involvement in Home Visiting

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- SMART Aim: *To increase the number of fathers completing the provided activity at least once a month by 20% by March 1, 2020, by providing welcome packets and father specific activities.*
- Families receiving the welcome packet and mothers modeling the activity were monitored as process measures
- Father availability was measured as the disruptor measure



# Process measure example



# Daddy Read to Me!

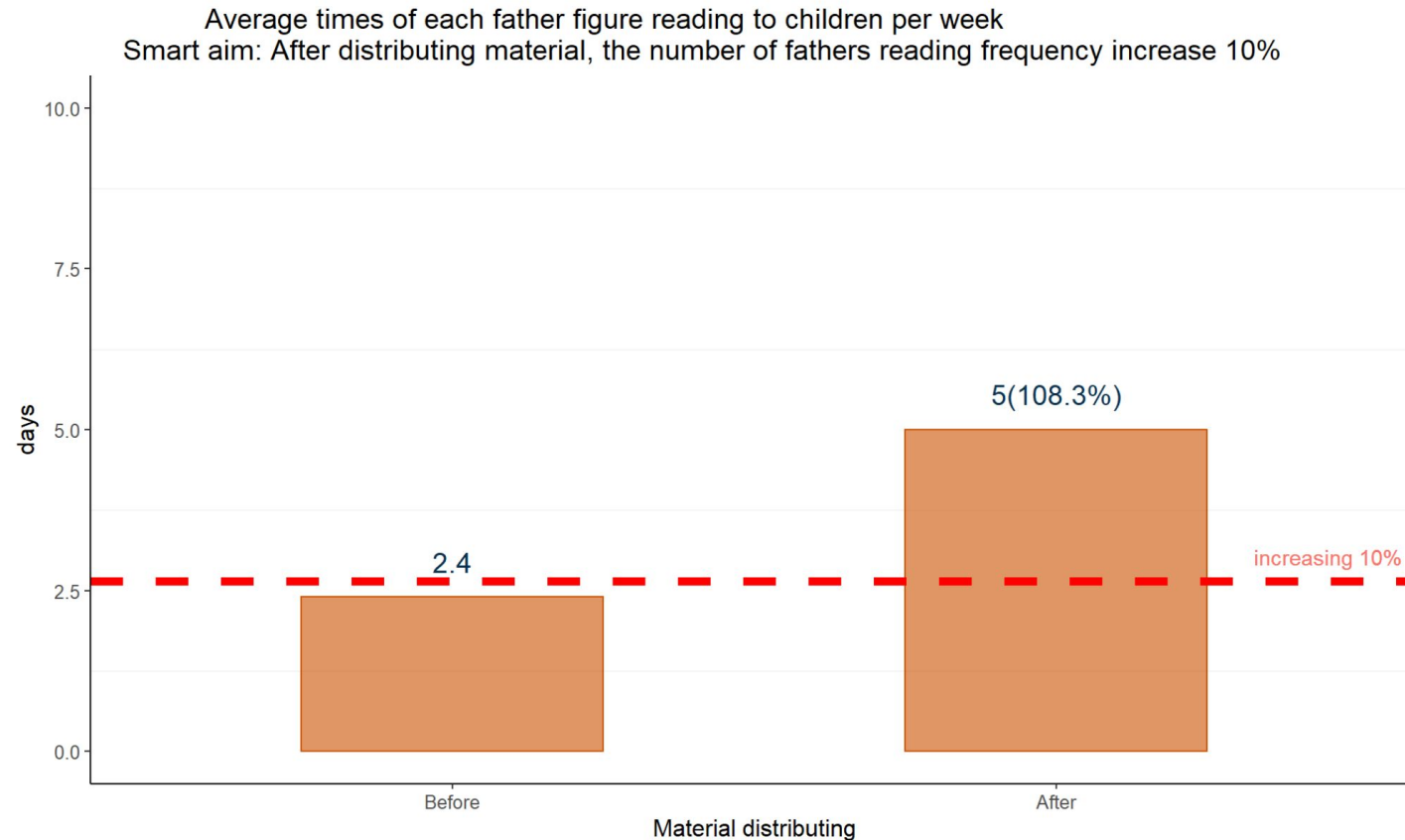
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- *SMART Aim: Increase proportion of fathers that read to children multiple times a week by 10% (relative to average in first month) by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, by regularly providing books/reading materials.*
- *Process: Delivery of fact sheets and books*
- *Disruptor: Literacy issues or lack of books in the home*



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

# Daddy Read to Me!



## Outcome: Reading Frequency

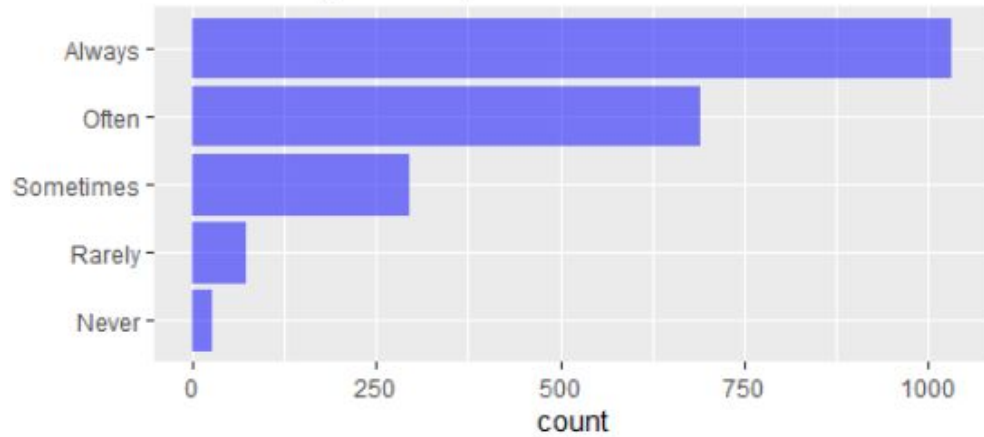
The smart aim was met as and exceeded the 10% increase of father-child interaction and reading time, showing a 108.3% increase.



# Core Measure: Father Engagement

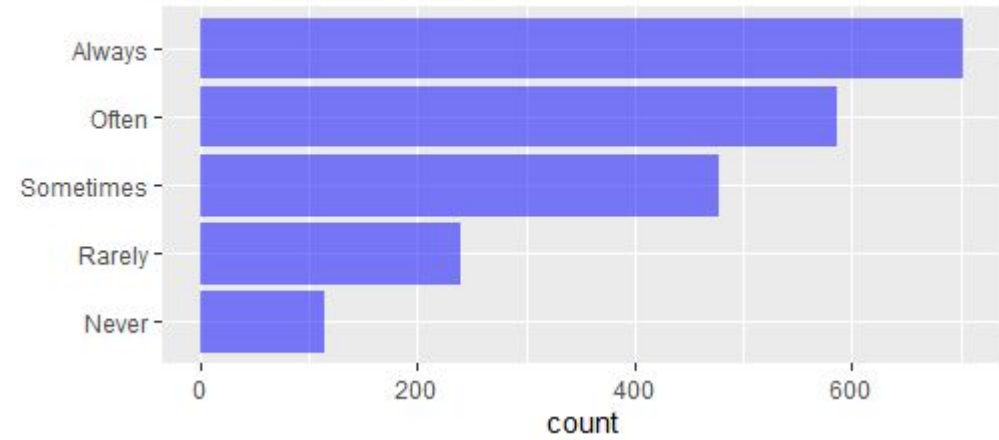
Father Figure Spends Time with the Child

Mean = 4.24 (SD = 0.91)



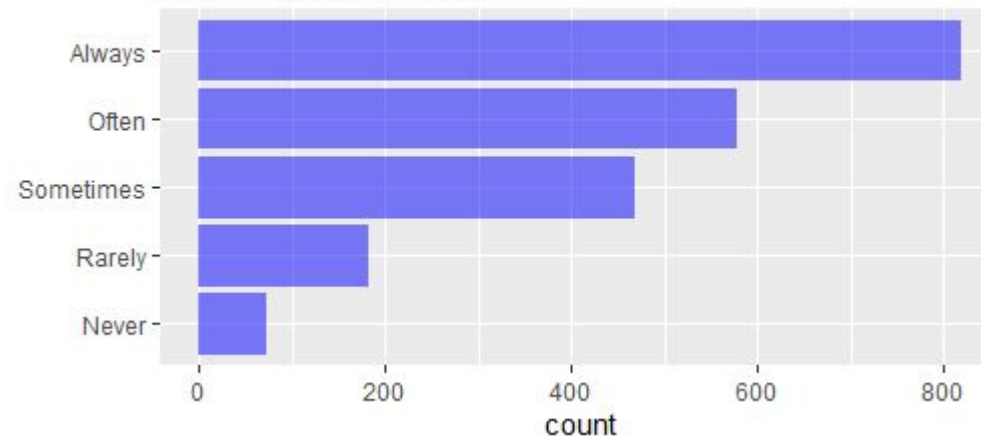
Father Figure Helps Manage Bathroom Routines

Mean = 3.72 (SD = 1.19)



Father Figure Helps with Mealtime Activities

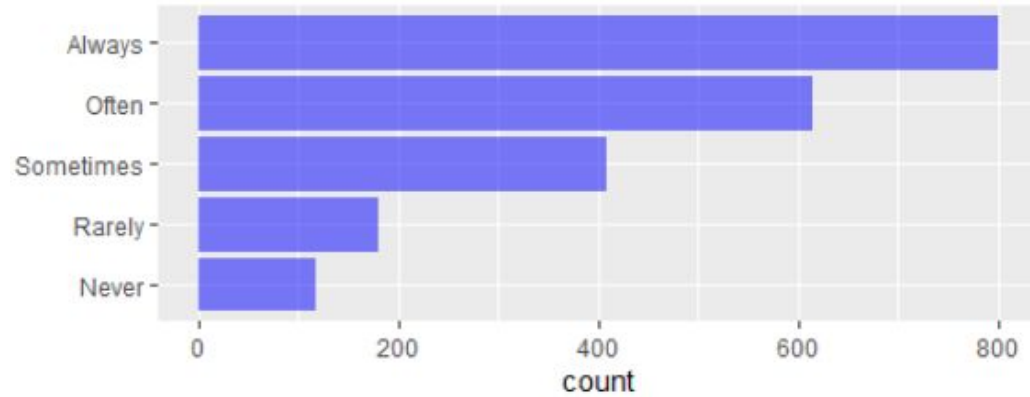
Mean = 3.89 (SD = 1.12)



# Core Measure: Father Engagement

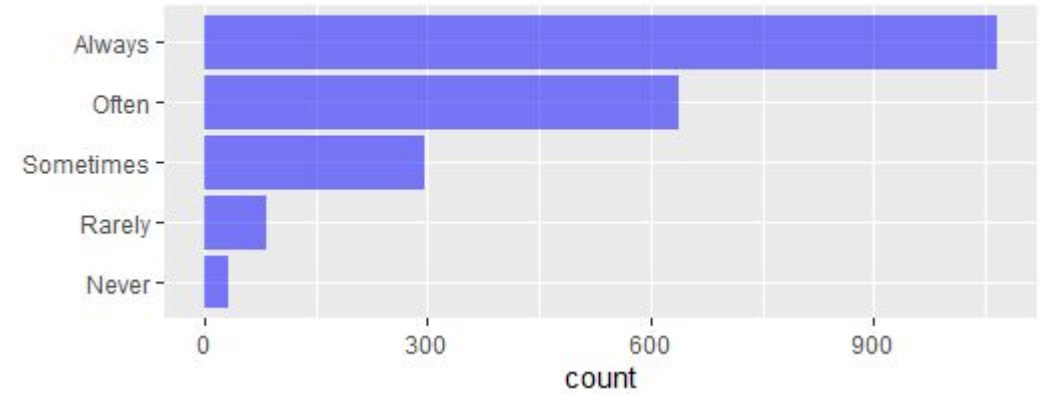
Father Figure Uses Mom's Desired Discipline Practices

Mean = 3.85 (SD = 1.18)



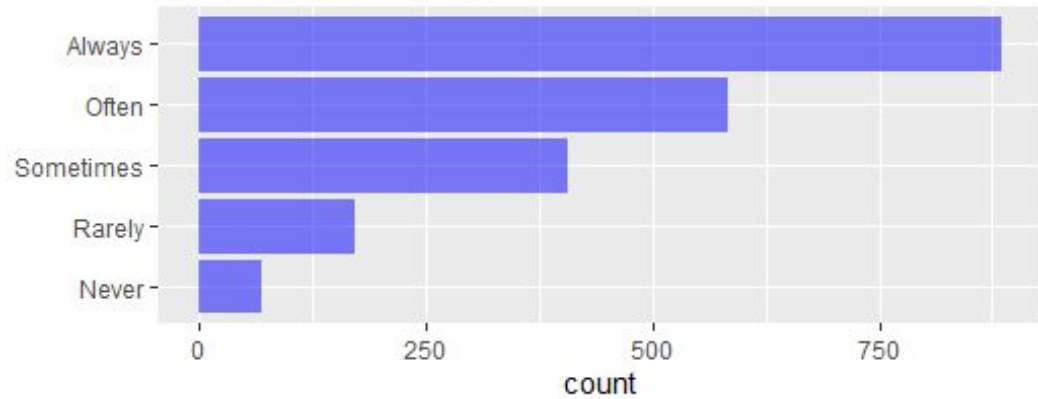
Father Figure Provides Comfort to the Child

Mean = 4.24 (SD = 0.94)



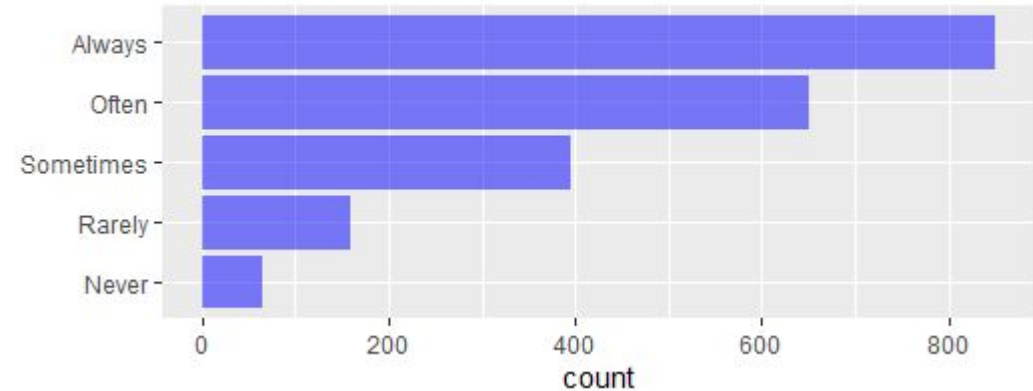
Father Figure Cares for Child By Themselves

Mean = 3.96 (SD = 1.11)



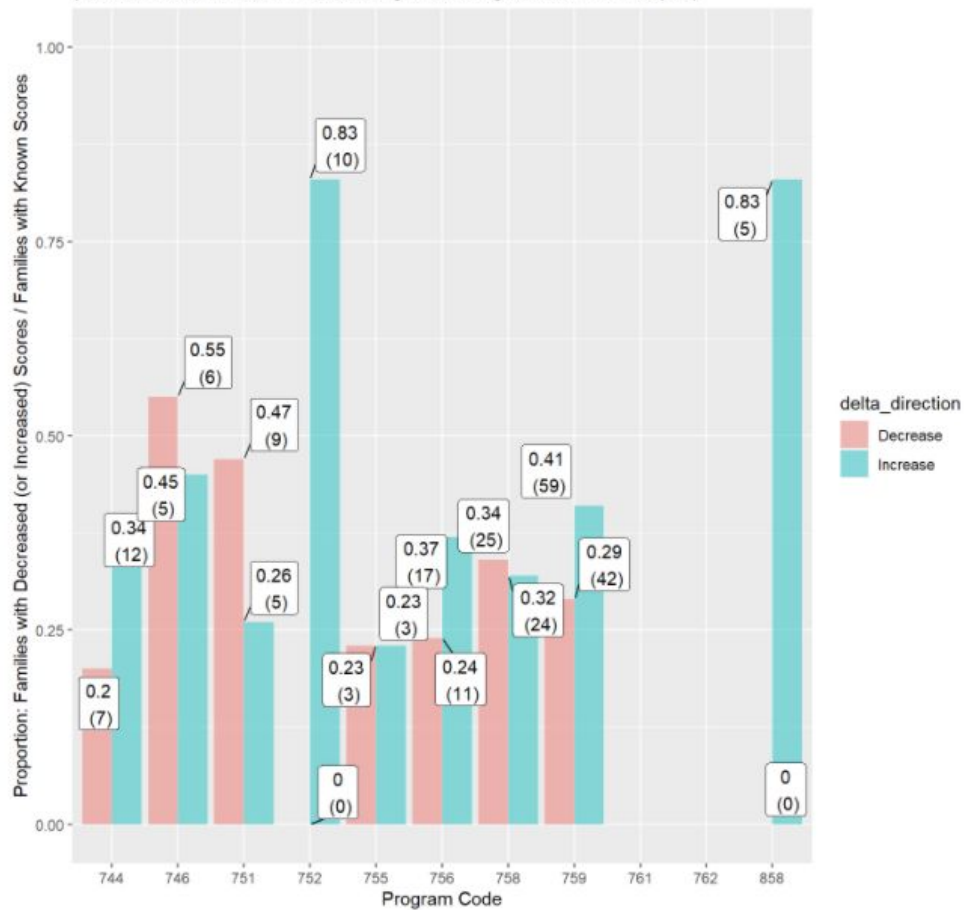
Father Figure Helps the Child Learn New Things.

Mean = 3.97 (SD = 1.08)

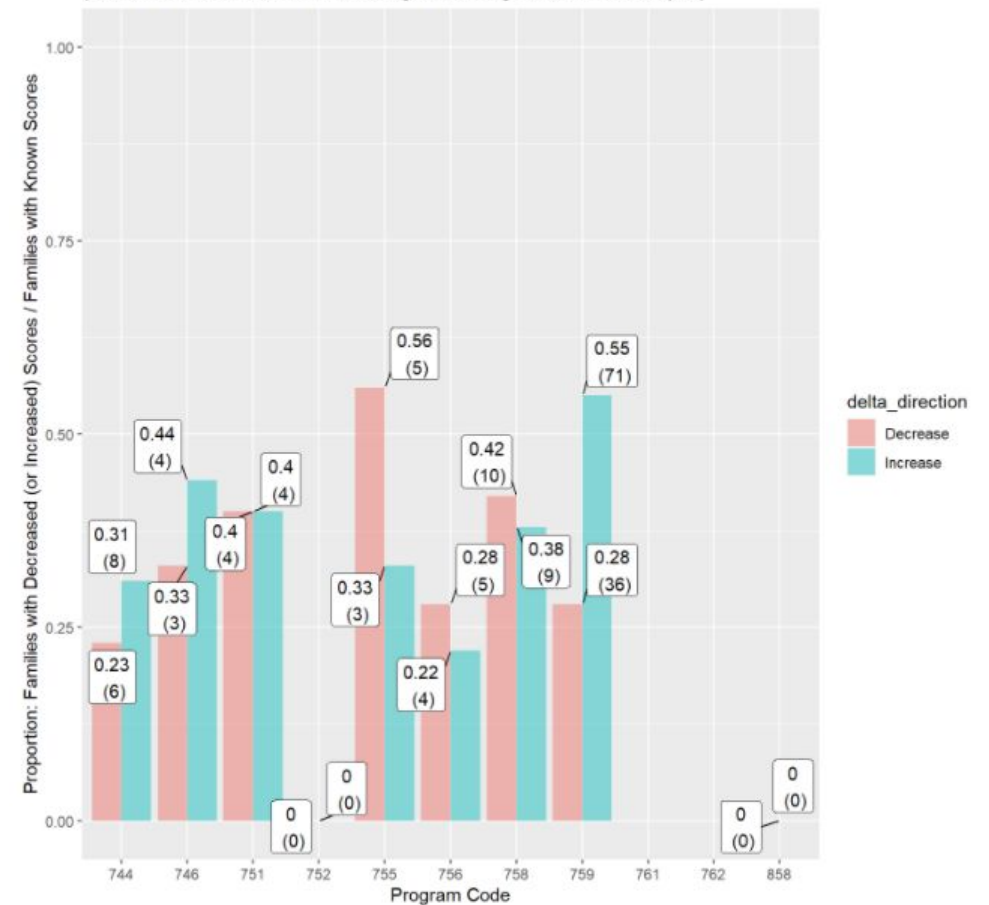


# 2m and 4m Mean Engagement Score Changes

Proportion: Families with Decreases or Increases in Father Engagement Satisfaction: 2 Months  
(Count of active families with Decreasing / Increasing scores 2 months apart)



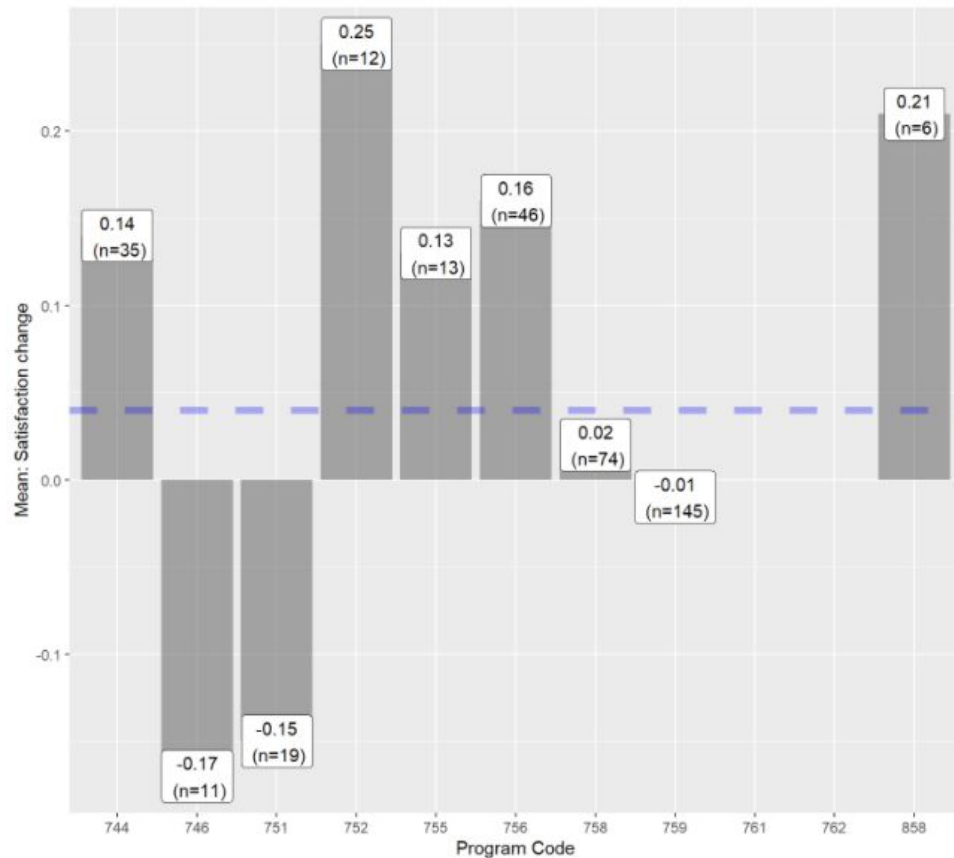
Proportion: Families with Decreases or Increases in Father Engagement Satisfaction: 4 Months  
(Count of active families with Decreasing / Increasing scores 4 months apart)



# 2m and 4m Mean Engagement Score Changes

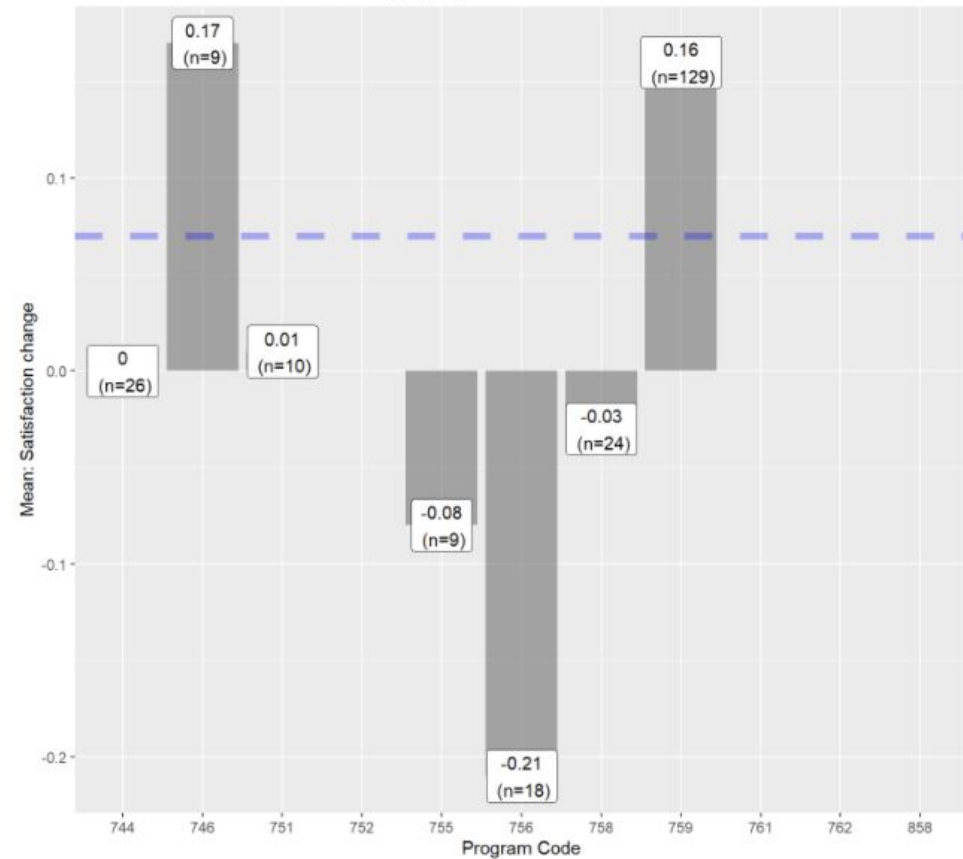
Change in Satisfaction Score : Two Months after first Score

Mean: Average of Satisfaction Scores at 2 Months minus Average of First Satisfaction Scores  
(n = number of cases with engagement measurements at desired intervals).  
Blue line represents model-wide average of 0.04



Change in Satisfaction Score : Four Months after first Score

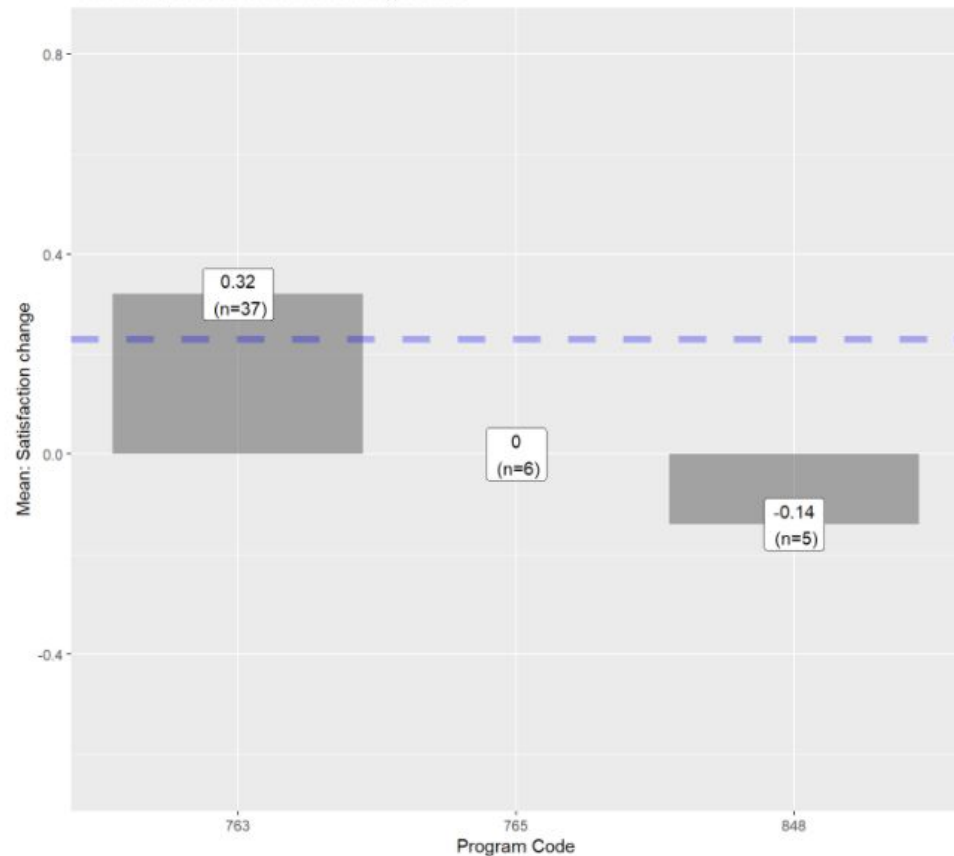
Mean: Average of Satisfaction Scores at 4 Months minus Average of First Satisfaction Scores  
(n = number of cases with engagement measurements at desired intervals).  
Blue line represents model-wide average (0.07)



# 2m and 4m Mean Engagement Score Changes:

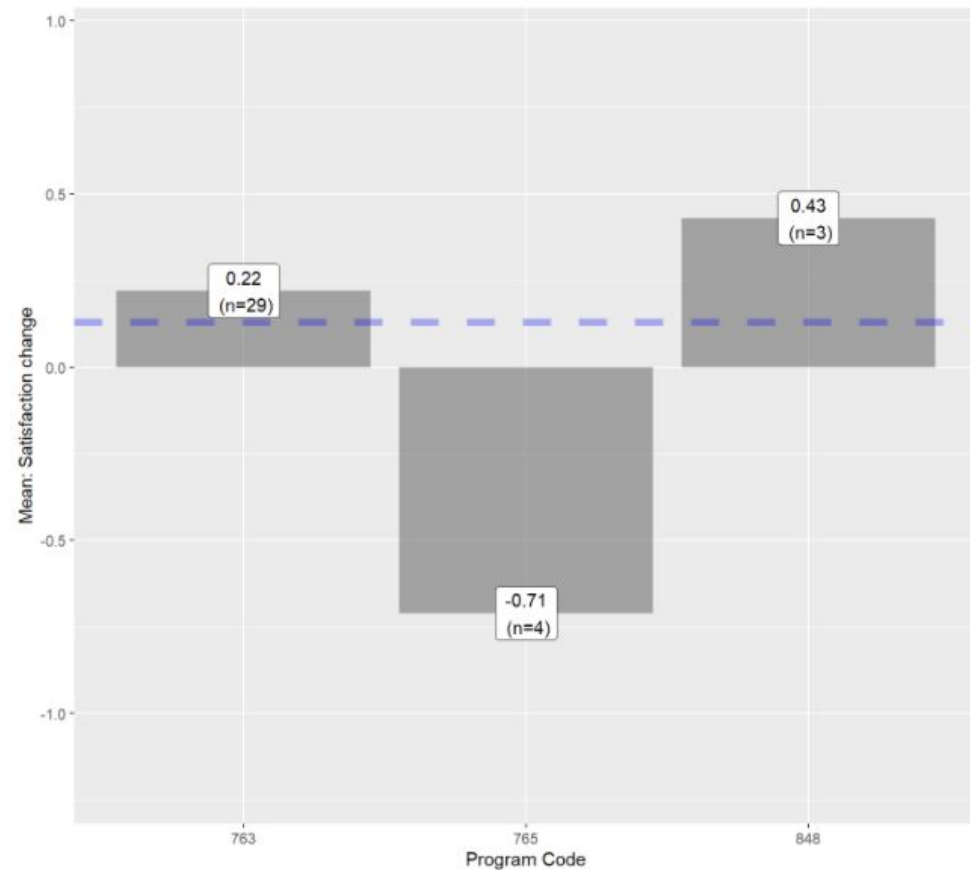
Change in Satisfaction Score : Two Months after first Score

Mean: Average of Satisfaction Scores at 2 Months minus Average of First Satisfaction Scores  
(n = number of cases with engagement measurements at desired intervals).  
Blue line represents model-wide average of 0.23



Change in Satisfaction Score : Four Months after first Score

Mean: Average of Satisfaction Scores at 4 Months minus Average of First Satisfaction Scores  
(n = number of cases with engagement measurements at desired intervals).  
Blue line represents model-wide average (0.13)





# Collaborative wide results

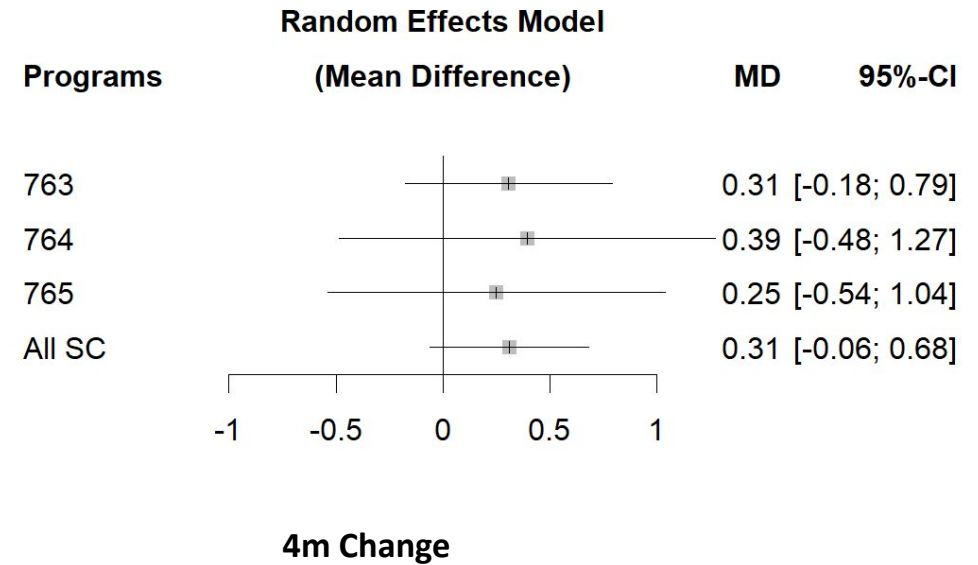
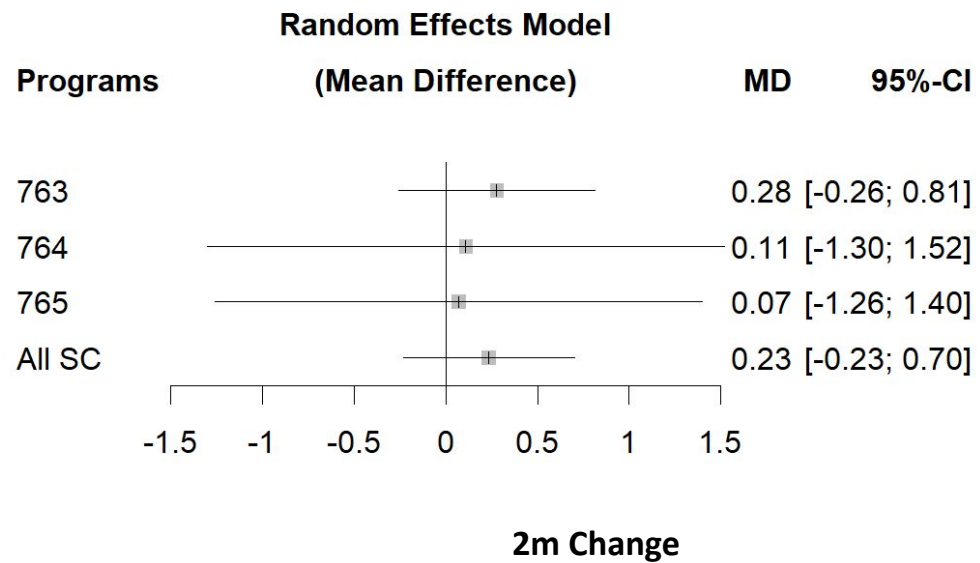
19 of 30 (63%) of PDSAs met or exceeded SMART Aim

Small sample sizes & high levels of father involvement made detecting change difficult

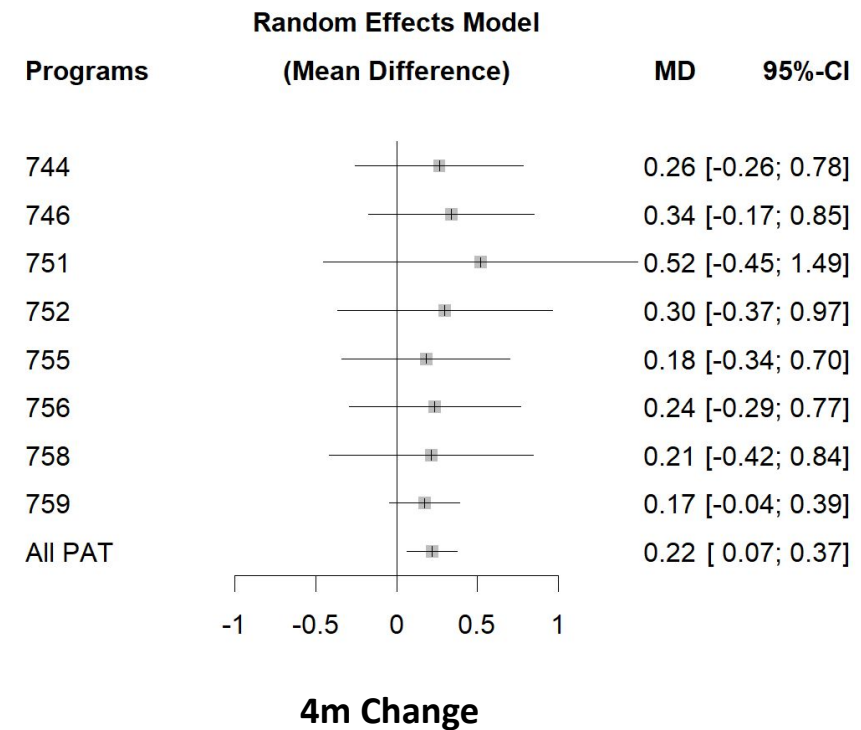
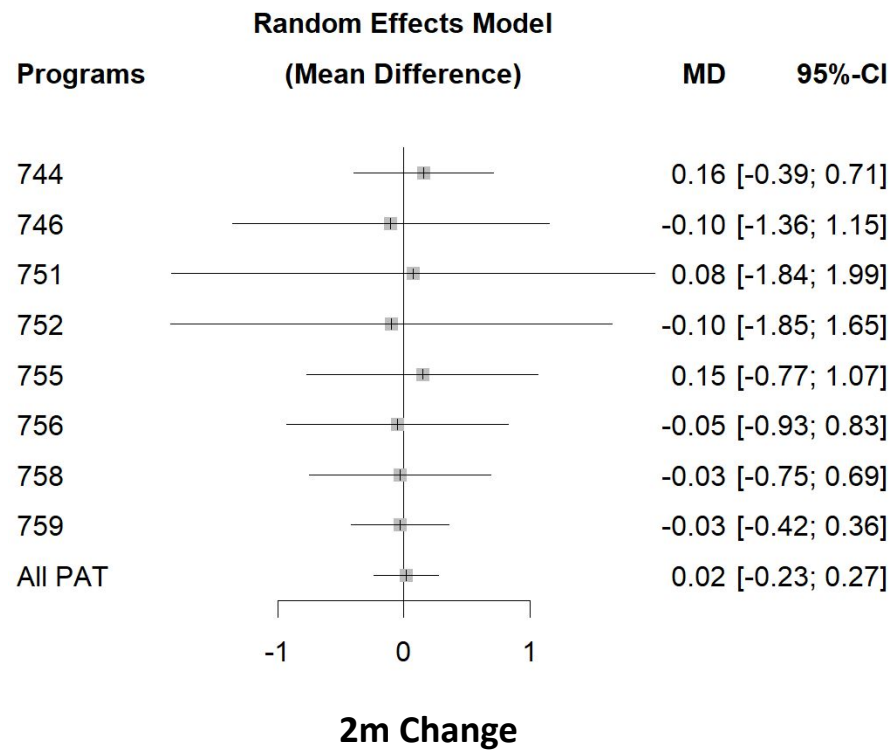


Core Measures: Across time, father involvement in parenting increased with *19.8% of mothers reporting an increase in scores from their first to second assessment*

# 2m and 4m Parenting Involvement Score Changes: SC



# 2m and 4m Parenting Involvement Score Changes: PAT



# Innovations Worth Repeating

- Fact sheets and handouts help inform fathers on the importance of daily routines and increase father involvement
- Welcome letters mailed directly to father figures were well received
- After working with PAT “activities” some fathers established learning activities and reading routines with their children
- Fathers were receptive to participating in Group Connections, especially when directly invited





# Lessons Learned

- FF availability may be out of our control due to schedules however we can encourage FF to read to their child regardless of location (online books, reading apps).
  - Mothers reported relatively high levels of father involvement in parenting routines (“ceiling effect”), less direct engagement in HV
  - Offer more visits/GC in the evenings and on weekends
- 1) Be intentional in inviting fathers to HV and Group Connections
  - 2) Include activities and topics that are attractive and meaningful to fathers
  - 3) Confirm that fathers receive invitations and father-related materials
  - 4) Present facts on the importance of father’s role in their children’s life, but let these conversations develop naturally rather than requiring them at every home visit
  - 5) Ensure that father-related materials are translated for Spanish-speaking families
  - 6) When possible, tailor father-related material and discussions to the family dynamics (e.g., age of the child) to make topics more relevant and impactful

Questions

