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Annabel Lane
Who does what? Navigating gender
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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores gender role dynamics between couples in early years of parenthood. Forty-nine individuals in heterosexual couple relationships participated in phone interviews where they described their experiences making decisions and resolving conflict with their partners about the division of family labor. The families in this study had participated in the Supporting Father Involvement Project in Alberta, Canada.

Findings of this study confirm existing research that gender roles become more traditional among heterosexual couples after parenthood, with mothers carrying out the majority of household tasks. Participants described a complex and challenging set of internal and external factors that were related to their decisions and feelings about gender roles, including logistical barriers, cultural narratives, and ideology from families of origin. Methods of resolving conflict about the division of labor corresponded with how satisfied participants felt with their relationships and roles. The responses highlighted a process by which parents became both more aware of and empathic towards their partners' perspectives. This process led to greater flexibility within gender roles, and parent descriptions of increased marital satisfaction, closeness, and family well-being overall.

WHO DOES WHAT? NAVIGATING GENDER ROLES IN EARLY PARENTHOOD

A project based upon an independent investigation,
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Social Work.

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2014

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Gender roles in North American society have shifted dramatically in the past 50 years towards greater freedom, flexibility, and equality. However, striking differences in the tasks that men and women carry out re-emerge among couples after the birth of a child, when women tend to fulfill the vast majority of family-related labor (Coltrane, 2010). The power differentials inherent in this dynamic can create perceptions of unfairness and inequality, with consequences including individual depression, stress, and relationship conflict (McBride, Schoppe, & Rane, 2002; Claffey & Mickelson, 2009). Issues of gender roles and the division of labor carry particularly high stakes in light of the fact that children's mental health suffers in response to parental conflict (e.g. Sturge-Apple, Skibo, & Oavies, 2012). Furthermore, research suggests that supportive, healthy involvement by both parents – a factor deeply tied to perceptions about gender roles – connects to improved outcomes for children (e.g. Boyce, Essex, & Alkon, 2006).

The processes by which gender roles manifest within families are complex. Parents' feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction do not correlate simply to amount of time spent completing family-related tasks, but rather to individual, subjective evaluations of fairness (e.g. Lavee & Katz, 2002). Equity theory provides a framework for understanding the importance of fairness within relationships to psychological well-being (Lively, Steelman, & Powell, 2010; Lavee & Katz, 2002). Adding a gender theory lens deepens the picture by acknowledging the influence of cultural discourses in determining how parents feel about role arrangements (Ferree, 1990). While there is substantial quantitative research on families' division of labor, the literature lacks qualitative perspectives on the nuanced factors behind parents' negotiation of gender roles and conflict.

This study seeks to add a new layer to research conducted through the Supporting Father Involvement Project (SFI). SFI aims to improve outcomes for children by strengthening parents' healthy engagement with their children and partners. The current study will explore the unique experiences of parents who participated in the implementation of SFI in Alberta, CAN, with the goal of better understanding the factors that impact their decisions about gender roles and the way they resolve conflicts about who does what in the home. These perspectives will provide insight into the complex dynamics involved in creating and sustaining healthy co-parenting relationships. This study may also benefit programs or clinicians seeking to support family stability, parental involvement, and children's well-being.

CHAPTER II

Literature review

The cultural background of gender roles

The issue of father involvement is inextricably tied to cultural values about what roles are appropriate for men and women, respectively, to embody within the family structure (Lavee & Katz, 2002). Theories of “biological essentialism” and “sex roles” promote the idea that men and women are each biologically suited to performing different tasks (Gaunt, 2006; Ferree, 1990). In North American and other Western settings, this translated to a family vision of one dominant, logical male provider and one submissive, emotional female caregiver (Ferree, 1990). According to this model, women carry primary responsibility for childrearing and for completing household labor (Gaunt, 2006), which Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard (2010) define as “the set of unpaid tasks performed to satisfy the needs of family members or to maintain the home and the family’s possessions” (p. 769). Essentialist gender discourses have had a profound historical influence on family structure in Western societies, and continue to reverberate through contemporary thinking about gender roles (Bem, 1993 as cited in Gaunt, 2006, p. 524).

Feminist theory and gender theory, however, provide a basis for understanding gender roles as socially constructed rather than innate (Ferree, 1990). A large body of literature demonstrates the fact that cultural forces shape men and women from birth to embody particular sets of characteristics. Copeland, Hwang, and Brody (1996), for example, compare gender differences in the expression of emotion across 124 college students of Asian-American, Asian-International, or European-American backgrounds (cited in Brody, 1997, p. 378). The authors find that differences in the way each gender expresses emotion are culturally specific, despite Western assumptions that women are innately more emotive than men (Copeland, Hwang, and

Brody, 1996, cited in Brody, 1997, p. 378). Larger social factors such as race also affect the way gender roles develop. Black men experience different social pressures around gender identity than do white men or black women, for example (Robinson, 2011), and gender roles seem to manifest differently in black families than in white families (Coltrane, 2000).

The experience of same-sex couples demonstrates both the societal pressure to adopt roles consistent with “essentialist” gender norms, as well as the potential for families to intentionally move outside of these roles (Giesler, 2012). In his qualitative interviews with 12 gay fathers, Giesler (2012) observes a “purposeful rejection of traditional sex role expectations” (p. 124). This finding is consistent with literature demonstrating that “gay men carve out new roles of parenting and, in the process, make gender role distinctions of ‘mommy’ and ‘daddy’ obsolete” (Giesler, 2012, p. 124). These dynamics speak further to the cultural origins of gender roles.

Parents are important vehicles and filters for cultural values about gender roles, socializing boys and girls to have different social roles and play patterns (Brody, 1997). As shifts occur in the way parents treat their male and female children, gender differences on a personal and societal level change as well (Brody, 1997). Parental influence can also influence children to be more or less likely to adopt stereotypic gender characteristics endorsed by larger society (Brody, 1997; Carlson & Knoester, 2011). In her quantitative study of 95 children, Brody (1997) finds that children whose fathers spent more time with them expressed “relatively fewer gender stereotypic emotions” compared to children whose fathers were less involved (p. 382).

The persistence of gender role stereotypes among families

Despite the increases in economic, political, and social freedom that women in Western cultures have achieved over the past century, families continue to split tasks along gendered

lines, with women carrying out two thirds of the household chores (Coltrane, 2000; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). This proportion has remained remarkably consistent over the past two decades, as evidenced by literature reviews by Coltrane (2000) and Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard (2010), who find extensive documentation of gender inequality in the division of labor within families (e.g. Artis & Pavalko, 2003; Erickson, 2005; Mannino & Deutsch, 2007; Pinto & Coltrane, 2009; cited in Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010).

Furthermore, research indicates that although strict cultural expectations for male and female behavior have relaxed, when couples have children, they tend to revert to traditional gender roles (e.g. Katz-Wise, Priess, & Hyde, 2010; Gjerdingen & Center, 2005; Kweler et al., 2002, cited in Riina & Fienberg, 2012). Cowan, Cowan, and Heming (1985) studied 47 couples as they transitioned to parenthood, and discovered that men and women's involvement in family tasks shifted significantly along gender lines after the birth of their first child. Women took on greater physical and psychological responsibility for parenting, and men adopted an increased "provider" role (Cowan, et al., 1985, p. 467). These shifts had a profound impact on families, beyond just the division of labor – they translated to changes in parents' sense of self. The authors found that, "Starting from somewhat similar descriptions of themselves in pregnancy, spouses' self-descriptions began to diverge as they had their babies. Women's sense of themselves as "parent" increased more and "partner" decreased more than men's after the birth of their child" (Cowan, et al., 1985, p. 464). These findings are consistent with a study by Katz-Wise, Priess, and Hyde (2010), which took a similar longitudinal approach to examining gender role attitudes among first-time parents. The authors reported that among their 403 participants, "parents became more traditional in their gender-role attitudes and behavior following the birth of a child" (p. 18). Interestingly, both studies observe greater changes among women than men

(Katz-Wise, et al., 2010; Cowan, et al., 1985). Though the lines between women and men's spheres have blurred in terms of employment and other areas outside the home, they remain firm within families, especially among those with children.

Consequences of dividing family labor along traditional gender lines

Gender theory exposes the ways in which the dominant ideals for male and female roles in Western culture have promoted the subordination of women (Ferree, 1990). Traditional female responsibilities of carrying out household chores position women as unpaid laborers; women's supposed personality traits, such as emotional volatility, encourage deference to the more logical male ideal (Ferree, 1990). The way families divide labor within their homes is deeply tied to this legacy of unequal power dynamics and can have serious consequences for individual and family well-being in a range of domains.

Depression is one area where gender roles and family structure may play a part. After the birth of a child, there is a documented risk of depression for mothers (e.g. Mayberry, Horowitz, & Declercq, 2007). Though the reasons for this risk are only partially understood, the process of traditionalizing gender roles seems to be one factor that contributes (Blair & Hardesty, 1994; Coltrane, 2000; McBride, Schoppe, & Rane, 2002). This is particularly true when mothers perceive role arrangements to be unfair, as in a study of 802 recent parents by Blair and Hardesty (1994). Similarly, women's self-esteem appears to suffer when gender roles are more traditional (Cowan, et al., 1985). Interestingly, results from Nomaguchi and Milkie (2013) provide a different perspective – that women can experience both an increase in workload *and* a decrease in depression when they become mothers. However, though the authors used a large sample drawn from national data, they note that attrition between their data collection periods may have left out more highly distressed parents (p. 371).

Dividing family labor along gendered lines is also connected to feelings of stress and overload among mothers (Cowan, et al., 1985; McBride, Schoppe, & Rane, 2002; Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2003), and corresponding declines in relationship satisfaction (e.g. Bower, Jia, Schoppe-Sullivan, Mangelsdorf, & Brown, 2013; Dew & Wilcox, 2011; Grote & Clark, 2001; Claffey & Mickelson, 2009). The new mothers in a study by Claffey and Mickelson (2009), for example, were “well aware of how much effort they [were] putting into household labor compared to their husbands” (p. 828). Their perceptions of unfairness linked to both marital and personal distress.

One manifestation of marital dissatisfaction and distress is conflict. Parental conflict can have a profound impact on children’s well-being (e.g. Sturge-Apple, et al., 2012). Children who are exposed to higher amounts of verbal aggression between parents are at a greater risk for depression, anxiety, trauma symptoms, and peer difficulties (Sturge-Apple, et al., 2012). These risks remain significant across age groups, child gender, economic condition, and religious beliefs (Sturge-Apple, et al., 2012). The style of parental conflict makes a difference to child outcomes; attempting to deal with conflict through avoidance or “withdrawal” seems to have a more negative impact on children than when parents are “engaged,” even if they are also “hostile” (Sturge-Apple, et al., 2012, p. 383). Gender and gender attitudes, individual well-being, and cultural orientations all play a role in the way men and women handle disagreement with their partner (Schudlich, Papp, & Cummings, 2008; Wheeler, Updegraff, & Thayer, 2010). As couples grow apart in their roles and identities after the birth of a first child, Cowan and Cowan (1985) observe that “intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts stimulated by these growing differences between partners begin to have a significant impact on the marriage” (p. 455). The picture that emerges from the literature is a complicated web of cultural, psychological, and

interpersonal influences that all combine in various ways to create challenges for men and women in partnership, and for young families.

The role of SFI

The Supporting Father Involvement Project attempts to help parents engage with their children and partners in positive ways while navigating the difficult gender and conflict dynamics involved in starting a family. Through their participation in SFI, men and women had the opportunity to evaluate the gender roles within their family and consider the influence of their family history and larger societal narratives on their present family structure. One activity asked participants to reflect upon aspects of their families of origin that they would like to continue in their present families, and aspects that they would like to change. In another exercise, parents rated their childrearing involvement and that of their partners, and discussed their ideal distribution of responsibility in this area. Visualizing slices of pie in a third activity helped parents consider how large their various roles feel in their current life (i.e. parent, partner, provider, etc). Each of these activities opened a dialogue about parents' ideal vision for the distribution of labor within the home (M. K. Pruett, personal communication, December 26, 2013). While conversations about these topics might evoke tension, part of the goal of the group facilitators and participants was to create a welcoming environment for respectful, collaborative discussions to take place.

Intentionality, agency, and investment from both parents regarding decisions about gender roles are qualities that seem to support well-being through the transition to parenthood (Giesler, 2012; Bower, 2013). By fostering these qualities among participants, SFI may have helped parents navigate away from some of the negative effects associated with a return to traditional gender roles after childbirth. However, preliminary data from the Alberta study (as

reported in Pruett & Gillette, 2013) speaks to the complexity of this process. Fathers report that their involvement in family-related tasks increased to 42% after participating in SFI. Mothers agree that fathers' involvement is increasing, but also state that they are in fact further from their ideal role distribution. This disconnect suggests a need to better understand the subtle dynamics surrounding gender roles as they change.

Complications in the process of redefining gender roles

Though gender roles seem to have an important impact on family member well-being, the process of negotiating who does what, and who *should* do what, is complex. Equity theory offers insight into this process, emphasizing the negative impact of perceived injustice on psychological well-being (Lively, Steelman, & Powell, 2010; Lavee & Katz, 2002; Greenstein, 1996). Perceptions are key in the equity model, as a study by Lavee and Katz (2002) demonstrates. The authors compared marital satisfaction among three groups of Israeli parents with differing gender ideologies (“traditional,” “transitional,” and “egalitarian”) and found that while perceptions of equity were highly related to marital satisfaction, there was not a direct correlation between these perceptions and the actual division of labor (p. 37). This concept suggests that although fathers may become more involved in completing household tasks, the particular definitions of “equity” within each family help determine whether or not shifts in roles impact the well-being of individual family members.

Several factors may influence couples' perceptions of equity beyond division of labor, and by extension, overall measures of well-being. For example, the type of tasks that fathers take on when they become more involved in household responsibilities matters (Riina & Fineberg, 2012). When it comes to child care, there is evidence that men are more likely to engage in tasks that are related to play (Craig, 2006; Segal, 1990). Craig (2006) explains that these tasks are

“arguably the more fun ones, which implies that paternal time with children is less like work than is maternal time” (p. 275). If this dynamic is present, mothers may feel that labor arrangements remain unfair even if fathers are spending more time or energy in child care activities than they had previously. Indeed, Blair and Hardesty (1994) observe an association between fathers’ participation in child care and maternal depression among 428 mothers who participated in the 1988 National Survey of Families and Households. It seems to be fathers’ participation in the “routine, repetitive chores” that contributes to mothers’ sense of equity, reduced depression, and overall marital satisfaction (Coltrane, 2000). The issue of expectations is also salient. When childcare responsibilities extended beyond mothers’ expectations, mothers are likely to experience greater psychological distress (Goldberg & Perry-Jenkins, 2004).

Another related factor is that of men and women’s relative freedom of choice when determining their household and child care responsibilities. The pervading impact of traditional gender role narratives, as well as structural forces in North American society frame family involvement differently for each parent – as a choice for men and an obligation for women (Coltrane, 2000). Policies related to parental leave and childcare also place pressure on parents to divide family tasks along gender lines and can make it difficult for both to have the time and flexibility required to contribute equally (Fuwa & Cohen, 2007). Parents may therefore experience different degrees of personal agency regarding family involvement, manifesting in unequal power dynamics between men and women, even if men contribute significantly to household work. (It is important to note, though, that these policies differ across countries, and may have a more significant influence in some countries, such as the U.S. than in others, such as Canada).

Women must also navigate a challenging identity balancing act that is unique to their gender (Hodges & Park, 2013). Although cultural gender expectations have loosened substantially to allow women to participate in the workforce as well as being mothers, for example, Hodges and Park (2013) note that, “many of the trait attributes and behaviors stereotypically associated with the ideal mom (e.g., affectionate, considerate, giving) are seemingly in direct opposition to those associated with the ideal professional (competitive, independent, ambitious)” (p. 194). While men must also contend with a restrictive cultural vision of masculinity, the notion of a “good dad” is easier to reconcile with that of a competent professional and thus places less of an identity burden on men (Hodges & Park, 2013). These and other factors may be at play in the decisions men and women make about their roles within the family, and the way that they manage conflict.

It is important to note some limitations in the literature, much of which has involved samples of white, middle-class families (e.g. Katz-Wise, Priess, & Hyde, 2010). For example, Perry-Jenkins and Folk (1994) observe that working-class couples do not respond the same way to perceived inequity as middle-class couples (cited in Goldberg & Perry-Jenkins, 2004, p. 233), suggesting alternate perspectives from different populations. While research from the 1990s onwards focused increased attention to the specific experiences of different racial groups in regards to gender roles (Coltrane, 2000), this is another area that merits further research. It is also interesting to note that studies in which the majority of participants are white do not tend to designate this fact in their titles, whereas studies that focus on other racial groups do make a note of race in their titles (e.g. Wilson, Tolson, Hinton, & Kiernan, 1990; Bermúdez & Stinson, 2011). This trend is problematic because it implies that the white-dominated studies are representative of all families. The literature also tends towards longitudinal, quantitative studies

(e.g. Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2003). There is clearly a need for additional qualitative investigations into the more subtle, subjective dynamics surrounding changing gender roles and their impact on individual and family well-being.

The current study

By exploring the unique experiences of families who participated in SFI Alberta, this study aims to provide insight into the factors that may impact parents' decisions about gender roles, including the way parents resolve conflicts about who does what in the home. It will add personal, nuanced perspectives that may add depth to the results of the quantitative literature. As family structures shift and cultural narratives about gender roles change and diversify, these issues become increasingly salient – particularly due to the key role that the parental relationship has in ensuring children's well-being and healthy development (e.g. Parke, Schulz, Pruett, & Kerig, 2011). The intersection of gender theory and equity theory provides a theoretical framework for this study. Equity theory suggests that the idea of fairness is key to understanding why certain gender role arrangements might have positive or negative effects on the psychological well-being of each partner. Cultural expectations of gender, however, complicate the process of dividing labor within the home so that the question of what is "fair" becomes nuanced, personal, and ever-changing.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

This study explores the way parents negotiate gender roles in the context of shifting personal and cultural dynamics. It is a qualitative investigation that focuses on the following question: *What factors impact parents' decisions about gender roles and how do parents resolve conflict about who does what in the home?* A qualitative, exploratory study is an appropriate way to address this question because it elicits in-depth, personal perspectives that can shed light on a range of factors and processes. The majority of literature on the subject of how parents navigate gender roles tends towards large-scale quantitative, longitudinal studies that provide valuable data on gender role trends but do not offer insight into the potential dynamics behind these trends. This study takes a valuable approach by using semi-structured interviews grounded in the specific experiences of individual families.

Study sample

The sample population for this study included families who had participated in the Supporting Father Involvement Alberta intervention (SFI Alberta). SFI Alberta is a preventative intervention aimed at strengthening fathers' involvement in families and improving couple and child outcomes. Couples participated in a 16-week group with other couples from their community, led by one male and one female co-leader. Families also received case management services. The families involved in this study had completed the SFI Alberta intervention 18-22 months prior to this research.

To participate in this study, participants must have met the criteria for inclusion in the SFI Alberta program:

- 1) Both partners are over 18 years of age, speak English, and agreed to participate in an SFI group and the research involved in the program. Participants participated in the SFI group sessions.
- 2) The parents/co-parents have agreed to raise their youngest child together, regardless of whether they were married, cohabiting, or living separately.
- 3) At the time of their participation in the SFI group, neither co-parent suffered from a mental illness or drug or alcohol abuse problems that interfered with their daily functioning at work or in caring for the child. If either co-parent reported serious problems of this kind, the family was not offered one of the study interventions and was referred for other appropriate services. Since recruitment for the current study is initiated at the sites, families who report any of the above difficulties at the present time to their case managers will again be excluded.
- 4) At the time of recruitment into the SFI program, co-parents were not accepted if there was a current open child or spousal protection case with Child Protective Services or an instance within the past year of spousal violence or child abuse. This last criterion was designed to exclude participants whose increased participation in daily family life might increase the risks for child abuse or neglect. Since recruitment for the current study is initiated at the sites, families who report spousal violence or child welfare involvement at the present time to their case managers will again be excluded.
- 5) Participants must have access to a phone line or Skype and be willing to speak with the researcher for about 45 min. about their experience in SFI as well as their family relationships, roles, and functioning. Participants must also be willing to complete the quantitative questionnaire familiar to them from earlier participation in the SFI program.

Recruitment

Case managers for SFI Alberta contacted families who completed the intervention 18-20 months prior and explained this study to them. If families agreed to learn more about the study, one of the researchers contacted them by phone after receiving their contact information from the case manager. Either or both parents/co-parents could participate in the study. The researchers then called and/or emailed potential participants and explained the content and process of the study. All SFI Alberta participants had completed a signed informed consent form agreeing to participate in the overall SFI research, of which this study is be a part. Still, researchers obtained a new consent form for this study. After explaining the current study, the researcher discussed the consent form and issues of confidentiality with each potential participant. The researcher emailed the consent form to be filled out and it was returned to the case manager at the local site. Once the case manager confirmed that the participant had completed the consent form, the researcher contacted the participant again to begin data collection. Because the case managers and researchers made every effort to recruit all potential participants in the identified timeframe, the validity of this sample is relatively strong. However, the sample is limited to those families whose contact information was still valid and whose life circumstances (ex. work and travel schedules) allowed for their participation.

Measures

This study reports on data gathered through two measures: a quantitative questionnaire and an open-ended, semi-structured interview. The full questionnaire appears in Appendix B. It consists of scales that assess parental depression, father involvement, family role sharing (who does what), communication styles, parent stress, and relationship satisfaction. Participants had previously completed a similar questionnaire at baseline and one year after completing the

program. This study included an additional instrument assessing relationship attachment between partners for those co-parents who described themselves as being in an intimate relationship (the majority of participants).

This study includes demographic data gathered from this questionnaire, but will focus on the data gathered in the qualitative interviews. The full interview appears in Appendix C. The interview gathered data about several domains related to relationships and functioning within the family. Questions covered topics including co-parent relationships, gender roles between parents, conflict negotiation, transmission of values from families of origin, and parenting styles. The interviews also gathered general information about families' experiences in the SFI Alberta intervention. The questions from the interview that are the most relevant to this study are:

In a perfect world, how would you and your partner split up family tasks?

How do you think your partner would answer that question?

How have your feelings about this changed since being in SFI, or in the time since the group ended?

How do you and your partner resolve disagreements about who does what?

How has this changed since being in SFI?

How is this similar or different from the way you resolve other kinds of disagreements?

The goal of the interviews was to obtain in-depth information about the factors that impact parents' decisions about gender roles and the specific ways that these factors are salient for individuals and couples. This method also allowed participants to share their perspectives in their own words, providing nuanced data on the meaning they attribute to their situations.

Data collection

A team of researchers consisting of four graduate students at the Smith College School for Social Work collected data for this study. Participants first completed the quantitative questionnaire either online, over the phone, or on paper, depending on their preference. Each participant then completed the qualitative interview with one of the researchers via phone or Skype. The researchers requested that participants conduct the interviews in a quiet, private location that was away from their child(ren)'s earshot. Each researcher conducted the interview either in his/her home or in a private study room at the library. Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. The researchers recorded and then transcribed these interviews.

All research materials including recordings, transcriptions, analyses and consent/assent documents are stored in a secure location for three years according to federal regulations. In the event that materials are needed beyond this period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed. All electronically stored data is and will be password protected during the storage period.

Data analysis

After the completion of the interviews, the researchers transcribed each recording for data analysis. Researchers transcribed the interviews that they themselves had conducted with participants, in order to maximize consistency, accuracy, and depth from the recorded interview to the typed transcription. Padgett (2008) advocates for this approach, as it allows transcriptions to be informed by the researcher's awareness of conversational nuances and nonverbal cues (p. 135).

After the transcriptions were complete, members of the research team carefully reviewed the data and began a thematic analysis with an inductive approach in order to explore patterns in

individuals' accounts of their experiences and feelings. The research team coded the data according to "concepts or meaning units" identified in specific words and phrases (Padgett, 2008, p. 139, pp. 151-152). The coding focused on the raw data rather than the researchers' existing concepts about potential results or previous literature. Researchers also created codes based on participants' own words (or, "in vivo") in order to represent participants' experiences as accurately as possible according to their own language and perceptions (Padgett, 2008, pp. 153-154).

Thematic domains emerged from the coding process, in an approach based in grounded theory. The researchers identified themes in individual participants' data, and expanded those themes outward as they revealed themselves to be salient for other participants. The researchers then coded the interviews for subthemes. At least two members of the research team read and coded each interview transcript separately, and then rejoined to discuss any divergence or disagreements about coding, aiming to achieve a consensus. The head researcher, Dr. Marsha Pruett, served as a consult to assist with reconciling divergent coding as needed. This process of "parallel coding" can increase the consistency and validity of the analysis (Thomas, 2006, p. 244), and decrease researcher bias (Padgett, 2008, p. 155). Engaging in this collaborative coding process allowed the research team to assess for convergent and divergent perspectives on the data, strengthening the analysis.

Researcher bias

I am conscious of the way my own social identities influence my thinking on the issues that this research addresses. As a woman who hopes to start a family in the future, I have personal hopes and expectations for how gender roles will play out in my own home. Feminist philosophy as well as my own upbringing have provided me with a value system that prioritizes

flexible gender roles, where qualities of the “nurturer” or of the “provider” are not the sole property of one gender or the other. I tend to view rigidly traditional or essentialist arrangements as rooted in an oppressive patriarchal system – though I know that many families function happily and healthily this way. In interviews with participants, I strove to maintain a neutral presentation and follow cues from the individuals in my responses. However, it is possible that my personal stance emerged in subtle or unconscious ways. My questions also presumed that couples would have disagreements about the division of labor in the home. This assumption suggests a bit of flexibility and shared participation in these decisions, and reflects my own belief that disagreements and the process of resolving them are natural (and valuable) parts of marriage. In families where one partner makes the majority of the decisions about a certain arena, the questions that this research poses may not feel intuitive.

I also inhabit a social position of significant class and racial privilege, and my perspectives are very much rooted in my cultural background. It is possible that my analysis of responses may not fully account for the varying histories and differing power dynamics behind gender role arrangements within families of cultural, ethnic, and racial identities other than my own. I chose a qualitative method in part to provide more space for participants to explain their perspectives in their own words, and hopefully mitigate the influence of my projections. However, I am aware of the problematic power differential inherent in the process of a white researcher from an affluent suburb in a dominant country presuming to derive and interpret meaning from others in less privileged positions.

CHAPTER IV

Results

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors related to parents' decisions about their gender roles in the family, and to learn about the ways that parents resolve conflict about who does what in the home. This chapter contains findings that are based on 49 interviews conducted with co-parenting couples who participated in the SFI Alberta intervention. These findings include responses from interviews conducted by all four interviewers on the research team. This chapter also reports on demographic data, which participants provided prior to the interviews by completing an online questionnaire. Using consistent wording, the researchers asked parents how they would divide household tasks in an ideal world, and then how they felt their partner would respond to the same question. The researchers also asked parents how they resolve conflicts about the division of labor in their home. Results are presented using pseudonyms with disguised personal information for individuals and couples.

Demographic data

The 49 individuals who participated in this study were between the ages of 18 to 54. A majority of them (86%) were born in Canada, with over 70% who self-identified as having European heritage background, 11% as Asian Canadian, 11% as First Nations/Inuit, and 8% as "Other." Most (85%) of the couples indicated they were married, while 9% were living separately and raising a child together (separated or divorced), and 6% were single (never-married or never-cohabiting couples). Participants were fairly well-educated: a majority of mothers and fathers finished high school or technical/trade school (88% of fathers; 88% of mothers) and some (31% of mothers; 29% of fathers) completed college or professional school. The average combined family income for the participants ranged between \$50,000 to \$60,000 a

year, with a median income of \$60,000 and modal income over \$90,000 a year. Only 8% of the couples reported being on financial assistance.

Division of labor within families

The vast majority of participants (N=37; 21 men and 16 women) stated that they would prefer to divide household tasks in a “50/50” balance between themselves and their partner. Families described a variety of ways in which they strive to achieve that “50/50” ideal. In Tina and George’s family, both partners preferred an approach where each would “cater to our strengths.” Matt stated that he and his wife alternate tasks and “always try to flip back and forth.” Several others commented that they aim for a flexible system where each partner steps up when and where they can, without specifically defined roles. As Kate explained, “It’s not split up; I think it just depends on where each of us [is]. If one of us has had a bad day then the other one takes everything on, and if the other one has had a bad day then the other person takes everything on.”

Several mothers noted that their “ideal” arrangement would involve greater contributions from their partners around household chores, despite reported increases in how much time their partners are spending with the children. For Maggie, this meant helping her “make sure everything comes together.” “He sees the kids,” she observed, “but you know... I do all the mechanics of everything.” Another mother, Amy, was concerned that she is “the only one in charge of scheduling things for the girls” and “meal planning.” She explained that, “I’m the one who’s home all the time, so all of that kind of naturally falls on me. But I’d like it if during the times when [my husband] *is* at home, he could volunteer to help out in some ways, even just laundry or something. He just doesn’t even think about it.” In Liz’s family, conflict related to gender roles and division of labor had contributed to a separation between her and her husband,

Jim. Now, she said, “I have [our son] at home and I take care of it and I find it difficult because there isn’t anyone there to help me do those things.” It seems that his lack of help or involvement was an issue for this couple both when married and separated.

Some participants added that they feel their families have indeed achieved the goal of a “50/50” division of labor. For others, ambivalence emerged as they began to discuss their role arrangements in greater depth. For example, Theo, one of the few stay-at-home dads in the sample, expressed views that oscillated several times. He stated that the world is “perfect the way we have it right now” and “I don’t think I would actually change anything and I don’t think I really want to.” In other statements he wished that his wife, Marie, would spend more time “at home with the two [children] and concentrate less on her work.” He added, “I think sometimes Marie looks for more things to do... so she doesn’t have to spend too much time with the kids.” Amy similarly qualified her position after her initial comments above, remarking “Well, now that I think back on it, things were a lot worse before. I used to feel a lot of guilt about leaving the house... and Keith would put guilt on me, like I was being a bad mother. But now that Keith and I both know that that’s something that’s really important, I don’t feel that guilt anymore.”

A group of parents (N=8) described a traditional system of dividing labor along gender lines in response to the “perfect world” question. Parents characterized the father’s role as the “money maker” and “bread-maker,” who does “outside work like mowing the lawn.” They described the mother’s role with some of the following phrases: “do all the housework,” “take care of the kids at home,” and “does more laundry.” Some participants were clear that this system is indeed their preference. Luke, Maggie’s husband, remarked, “I’ve always really liked the way families operated in the 50s and 60s, you know? I truly think that it was good for the families because each parent had a specific role.” However, it was sometimes unclear whether

parents were describing their “perfect” arrangement or simply their current reality, as with Laura’s response: “I’m satisfied with it... He doesn’t want me to go to work. He wants me to stay at home with the kids and I cook.”

Barriers to ideal arrangement

Participants highlighted multiple barriers to implementing their ideal divisions of labor. Logistical challenges were a major theme, involving any of the following factors alone or in combination: work schedules that leave little room for balance between both parents (including one or both parents traveling for work), tiredness, health issues, and the potential confusion involved in sharing responsibilities. In one family, the mother Cynthia stated that maintaining a traditional gender structure is “just easier.” “I’m a little bit controlling in that aspect... There’s a certain way that I like things done. I think [my husband, Clark] would change it to more half and half. I do the majority of the household tasks, and I think he would like to have it more even, split between the two of us.”

Conflicting perspectives between men and women also emerged as a barrier to participants’ ideal arrangements. For example, Jim’s view was that, “I would like to be a lot more involved, maybe not with the laundry or cooking kind of things, but with taking [my son] out and teaching him stuff and going out and playing and spending some time together.” Jim’s wife, Liz described him as a “1950’s man.” “That is a bit of a challenge to me” she explained, “because I grew up in a very different kind of family atmosphere... it’s been quite a big issue in our marriage, especially since having [our son]... I think I had some unrealistic expectations of what Jim should be doing or might be doing around the house and with [our child].”

Other families described similar challenges around differing perspectives between parents. “He would say that I make myself into a martyr or something,” Sandra remarked of her

husband. “He would probably answer that he does his share or more. It doesn’t seem to bother him that he has got all this down time and spends his morning at the gym and I can’t squeeze anything in. That’s concerning, but he also attributes that to my inefficiency, which is interesting, but that’s that,” she added, growing tearful. One father, Steve, noticed a shift in his viewpoint towards the division of labor since participating in SFI: “Before, it was like ‘Why should I do everything and you do nothing?’ I just kinda let that go, it’s for my daughter. If I have to be up every day and look after her by myself while [co-parent] sleeps all morning, I let it go, it’s like whatever. It’s my child, my responsibility. If she doesn’t want to take that responsibility, then it’s her choice.” His co-parent, Olivia, explained their roles differently: “When it comes to parenting the child, he would forget about [dividing things 50/50] and say 50/50 only if it’s *his* way... Steve agrees that I should be punishing [our daughter] 50% of the time, but I should be punishing her in the way that *he* sees fit (*laughs*).”

Several parents noted the contrast between an ideal of a “50/50” split and the reality that felt possible for their families. Sandra remarked that she and her husband would split family tasks equally, “In a perfect world... and I think that’s the message that we get you know from the media, though personally I think it’s a crock (*laughter*). All the women I know, especially being a working mother, you still do most of [the family labor] and there’s a lot of it that’s suited towards women. But it’s not realistic and working mothers get a pretty heavy dose.”

Resolving conflict related to gender roles

Researchers asked participants, “How do you and your partner resolve disagreements about who does what?” The responses fall into three categories labeled constructive, avoidant, and conflictual. Several participants described using methods from all of these categories at various times, depending on the circumstance. The vast majority of parents reported constructive

styles of resolving conflict, with 27 individuals citing communication or “talking about it” an approach that they often take, or aim to take. Several noted that since the SFI intervention, they have been able to address issues sooner. One father, Steve, said that he and his wife “talk things out instead of letting things slide.” Jodi, a mother from a different family, commented, “...before the program, the big fights of me crying and that sort of thing were a lot more, and now that we’ve done the program, it’s a lot more talking and getting it off our chest instead of fuming up and getting so angry that you can’t even talk.” Others mentioned giving each other space, being less “overbearing” or “nagging,” using humor, and taking time to think before addressing an issue. Six participants remarked that they work as a “team” and “just do it” without much discussion, trusting that each partner is doing what he or she can.

Thirteen participants described approaches to conflict that fall into the avoidant category. Many of these involved “giving in” to the other partner’s requests or preferences. “I just gave up arguing and do everything he says,” Olivia explained. Similarly, several participants stated that they deliberately avoid discussion in an attempt to minimize conflict. Robert said, “Rather than argue with her, I’ll do [a household task] whenever I want to do it.” Liz stated that her husband Jim “would do something just to kind of shut me up, you know? And [he] was feeling resentful.” Several participants noted that in their relationships, it is most often the woman who raises concerns about the division of labor. Liz explained how this dynamic impacts the way she and Jim address disagreements: “The household stuff is usually me being the initiator in bringing that up, so... [it’s] kind of one-sided. Whereas [in disagreements about] other stuff, I think we would be able to sit down and communicate a bit better.”

Conflictual approaches emerged the least frequently in participants’ responses (N=7). Some described “yelling,” or “arguing,” or characterized disagreements as “he said-she said.”

Brianna described a process where her husband, “will sometimes not tell me something he’s mad about, and then it’ll come out when he gets way too mad and yell at me about something else.” Though several cited improvements in the way they resolve disagreements since participating in SFI, participants depicted their methods of resolving conflict as an ongoing process. “We’re still figuring out... how to actually communicate without feeling really hurt and resentful,” Liz explained.

Redefining gender roles, with help from SFI

The interviews revealed mutual shifts in participants’ thinking about their own role and that of their partner. Many parents mentioned the SFI intervention as an important space that allowed them to reflect and redefine their roles. Different themes came up for mothers and fathers. Several mothers mentioned feeling less pressure, both internally and externally, to be “perfect.” Claire expressed some of these feelings: “Well, when we first started the group, I was like, ‘I’ll do it all, don’t worry about it, I’ll take care of it.’ And I thought I had to be superwoman. By the end of it I was like, ‘Huh, it’s ok, [my husband] can do those things. Not a big deal, you don’t have to do everything in one day.’” Similarly, Liz said that she is now “able to take a little pressure off myself, in respect to what it is to be a mother, and you know, my high expectations.” Sandra described a “more accepting and more realistic” stance – however, in her case, this was in relation to society’s expectation that she and her husband share family work equally. “I think I feel less resentful,” she said, about the division of labor in her home.

Other mothers mentioned relaxing control a bit, and giving husbands space to be more involved:

“Before, I didn’t let him do as much. But after program, I started letting him be more of a parent...and do more of the family tasks... I was able to let him take over something.” – Audrey

“I think it clarified what our strengths and weaknesses are as individuals and how we can really... work together on those... I can encourage him on the things he’s not so confident in, and also I can step back and let him come forward and do the things he’s good at. And vice versa.” – Liz

“[SFI] helped me realize that I don’t have to do everything myself... I’m more able to... [let] him take the lead with his ideas” – Tina

Fathers also described an active process of redefining the gender roles in their families. Many described greater involvement on a practical level with childcare and (to a lesser degree) chores, but also a shift in their feelings about what it means to be a father and husband. Matt described how after his son was born, his wife “ended up doing a lot of the care. She was doing the baths and bedtime, and she was breastfeeding all the time. And my role was more of a supportive role and it wasn’t as active, which caused a bit of stress. With SFI we talked about it and redefined our roles and we were successful.” Fathers noted feeling a greater appreciation for the value of their role. “Father is more important than I figured,” Keith said. Mothers noticed changes in their partners’ emotional stance towards involvement as well. Stephanie explained, “I guess I always had asked him to help before, but now he either just does it without me asking or he’ll do it without getting upset.... And yeah, he just seems happier, more cooperative.” These changes seemed to affect families’ overall well-being and satisfaction as a whole. Tina summarized a new transition that resonated for several families: “I see a difference in how [George] takes charge when I can’t handle [our daughter],” she said. “He steps in ASAP. So that definitely helps me feel more calm, both in my relationship with [George] and with [our daughter].”

Both mothers and fathers described an increased understanding of each other’s perspectives, which contributed to shifts in gender roles. Liz said that she has “tried to look at it a bit differently and be less rigid in my opinions and try to see it from Jim’s point of view.” Drew

stated that he is “trying to understand my wife better.” For Amy and her husband, this involved both partners making “more of an effort to recognize the other person when they’ve done something, like take out the garbage or something, and to say ‘I love you’.” SFI contributed to this process for many families. “It was interesting to learn how [my husband] really felt about some things, where I perceived something very different,” Irene explained. Clark, Cynthia’s husband, stated that although he would still like to help Cynthia out with certain household tasks, “Before [SFI], I didn’t understand as much about why my wife wanted to do all this stuff. After we talked, I have a better understanding. It doesn’t mean I always like it, but I understand why she wants to do that stuff.”

Reflection and communication about the division of labor between men and women was connected to other domains of well-being, including the relationship and closeness between couples. For many families, greater discussion and intentionality about gender roles intersected with an increase in general communication and awareness of each partner’s feelings. “A lot of it is about talking and understanding where the other person is coming from,” Jim explained. “You know, because it’s not so much about the specific tasks that need to be done. It’s more about the why and understanding the other person.” Several participants demonstrated greater attunement to their partners, particularly around helping to lower stress. “I think I realized how important it is for [Theo] to feel calm,” Marie said, “So that’s what he needs, and I’m gonna try to work on that a little more.” Similarly, Robert noticed, “...my partner is not as stressed because of the fact that there’s little bit more help from me.” Phil also described making an effort to “lighten the load” for his wife. Along with improved communication also came an improved sense of family well-being for some couples. Claire described how in her family, “...the communication and the openness and me not having to do everything has made it a lot more enjoyable, because I don’t

feel like I'm the cook and the maid and like some piece of crap most days... But that [my husband has] actually taken on some of it and some of the responsibilities. Life is more enjoyable now and we are happier as a family.”

Summary

This chapter summarizes and presents the findings of 49 interviews with parents who participated in the SFI Alberta intervention. The open-ended questions used throughout this interview, along with a series of pre-determined follow up questions aimed to elicit information about the factors that impact parents' decisions about gender roles and the ways in which parents navigate conflict about who does what. Participants provided valuable information about their specific experiences as parents, and how questions about gender roles connect to individual, couple, and family well-being in other domains. The next chapter will contextualize these findings within the framework of previous research and theory, and discuss the implications of the data.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors related to parents' decisions about their gender roles in the family, and to learn about the ways that parents resolve conflict about who does what in the home. Researchers gathered qualitative data through telephone interviews with members of co-parent pairs who had participated in the SFI Alberta intervention. This section will summarize the results of the interviews and place them in the context of existing literature and theory. Finally, this section will discuss the limitations of this study, and present implications for future research and practice.

Division of labor within families

The results reflect the specific experiences of families in Alberta, Canada, who participated in the SFI Alberta intervention. The families in this study share a unique cultural environment with particular social norms and values, which influence their responses. Nonetheless, the data support previous findings from communities across North America that mothers are carrying out a significantly greater share of household tasks than fathers, and that this gendered distribution of labor begins or becomes more pronounced after the arrival of a new child (Coltrane, 2010; Katz-Wise, Priess, & Hyde, 2010). For many of the families in this study, this arrangement was not intentional or ideal. The majority of participants stated that in a "perfect world" they would divide family labor equally with their partner, as described by Coontz (2005). A minority (N=8/49) expressed a preference for traditional gender roles, with a male "breadwinner" and female "caregiver." Almost all participants expressed some ambivalence about their ideal division of labor, reflecting the complexity of decisions about gender roles.

The interviews revealed complicated feelings accompanying gender role issues, including surprise and sometimes resentment at the challenges surrounding changing responsibilities. Mothers expressed feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or trapped by their increased household responsibilities. These results echo existing findings by Blair and Hardesty (1994), who observed connections between depression and stress among new mothers and perceptions that role arrangements were unfair. A group of fathers in this study (N=9) commented that they felt disconnected from childcare decisions, or locked into a “breadwinner” role that created intense pressure with little space for emotional engagement. The responses were similar to those of Cowan, Cowan, and Heming (1985), showing that men’s and women’s “self-descriptions” begin to diverge after becoming parents, with men adopting a greater “provider” identity (p. 464).

The comments from participants in this study reveal that these changes not only strengthen divergent family identities for men and women, but that these new identities can subsume individuals’ connections to important parts of their selves. Mothers and fathers noted that the role arrangements that developed after the birth of a child left little room for activities that used to form core parts of their identities, such as hobbies, time with friends, and one-on-one time with partners. Though logistical factors were certainly a barrier to maintaining these connections, an equally great challenge seemed to be parents’ sense of overwhelming responsibility to their new roles and a lack of communication with partners about their respective personal needs.

The way new roles for men and women sometimes subsumed their previous individual identities seemed to contribute to dissatisfaction and psychological distress. Parents in this study and others (e.g. Claxton & Perry-Jenkins, 2008) found that their time for leisure and self-care decreased after the birth of their child; Claxton and Perry-Jenkins (2008) demonstrate the

importance of leisure time for both parents in terms of sustaining marital love and minimizing conflict. The results of this study suggest that personal time helps parents sustain a sense of personal identity, which may then also positively impact marital relationships. For women, work seems to be another important connection to a sense of self beyond the role expectations that come with parenthood. Keizer, Dykstra, and Poortman (2010) found that women who quit their jobs or decreased their work hours when they had a child became less satisfied with their relationships and that remaining employed was beneficial for women's well-being. Social support is also an influential factor. Men tend to experience greater loneliness after the arrival of a new child (Keizer, Dykstra, & Poortman, 2010); the men in this study described the benefits of engaging with friends and other parents in terms of both a greater feeling of community and also a renewed valuing of their unique strengths as an individual. These findings speak to the importance of couples maintaining ties to activities and identities held before parenthood, so that new roles do not become all-consuming.

Barriers to ideal arrangements

Several factors emerged as related to participants' decisions about dividing family labor. Families cited logistical, external issues as playing a large role – most often, work schedules and travel that make it more convenient for one parent to assume the majority of household tasks. This was the case even in families where both parents worked. This result fits with existing literature that describes how larger cultural systems include implicit barriers to a balanced distribution of family tasks between parents (e.g., Fuwa & Cohen, 2007; Fried, 1998; Bergmann, 1997; Singley & Hynes, 2005).

As Brody (1997) discussed, families of origin influence gender identity in subtle and overt ways. In this study, cultural beliefs about gender roles passed down from participants'

families of origin also influenced their decisions, and created challenges among families in which parents carried different gender role expectations for their partnerships. Previous literature has found that children are more likely to internalize egalitarian views in terms of gender when their mothers are educated and employed (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004; Fan & Marini, 2000; Harris & Firestone, 1998), and that mothers who themselves hold egalitarian views are more likely to have children who do not embody gender-stereotyped roles (Myers & Booth, 2002). Davis (2007) found that the effects of families of origin on children's gender ideologies weaken as children become adults; nonetheless, Myers and Booth (2002) explain that, "earlier experiences in the family of origin alter the way in which adulthood shapes values." While marriage and parenthood tend to have a traditionalizing effect on individuals' gender ideologies, Myers and Booth (2002) find that women raised by parents with egalitarian views maintain this stance as they become wives and mothers. Men are also influenced by the ideology of their families of origin, but Myers and Booth (2002) suggest that because "Our current sex role allocations afford larger advantages to men (e.g., opportunity, range of choices, mobility, payoffs for accomplishments, cultivation of skills, authority, and prestige) than to women" (p. 34), men have little incentive to adjust their attitudes and behavior.

One of the main themes among the families in this study was that of differing perceptions between partners about the equitability of role arrangements. These disparities hindered families in achieving role arrangements that felt ideal for both partners. There were several families in which one partner felt that family labor was indeed balanced equally and was satisfied with role arrangements, while the other partner expressed unhappiness that he or she did more (or sometimes less) than a fair share of family labor. For some, this disconnect revolved around the fact that while fathers were spending time with the children and contributing to chores

(sometimes more so than in the past), mothers still held primary responsibility for family tasks overall. Equity theory provides a useful perspective on these results, suggesting that perceptions of fairness, rather than objective measures, drive feelings of satisfaction (Lively, Steelman, & Powell, 2010; Lavee & Katz, 2002; Greenstein, 1996). The results fit within previous literature on the negative impact of perceived injustice on psychological well-being (Lively, Steelman, & Powell, 2010; Lavee & Katz, 2002; Greenstein, 1996).

Resolving conflict related to gender roles

The dynamics related to diverging roles between parents contributed to conflict for many of the families in this study. The literature supports this finding, as in Cowan et al. (1985)'s observation that "intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts stimulated by these growing differences between partners begin to have a significant impact on the marriage" (p. 455). Similarly, violations of expectations have been found to relate to depressive symptoms for mothers, decreases in marital love for fathers, and conflict between couples (Holmes, Sasaki, & Hazen, 2013). The cultural landscape of gender inequality combined with psychological struggles on the part of either parent can lead to physical and psychological aggression from men toward female partners over time (Kim, Laurent, Capaldi, & Feingold, 2008). Increased conflict over the transition to parenthood contributes to worsening relationship quality, which in turn creates a distressing cycle of greater conflict (Kluwer & Johnson, 2007).

Gender and gender attitudes, individual well-being, and cultural orientations all play a role in the way men and women handle disagreement with their partner (Schudlich, Papp, & Cummings, 2008; Wheeler, Updegraff, & Thayer, 2010). The SFI intervention aimed to support parents in developing healthy communication and conflict-resolution skills, building on a well-established tradition in family-based clinical programs that has demonstrated positive results for

a range of populations (e.g. Charles, Jones, & Guo, 2014; Shapiro & Gottman, 2005; Cummings & Merrilees, Finkel, Slotter, Luchies, Walton, & Gross, 2013). Many of the participants commented that the SFI intervention had been helpful in encouraging healthier conflict resolution skills.

As participants described the way they approach disagreements with their partners, their responses fell into three categories of resolution style: constructive, avoidant, and conflictual. There was considerable crossover between the categories, as participants described using different styles at different moments. The majority of participants described constructive styles of addressing disagreement, including making an effort to discuss disagreements calmly and away from children. This last point is particularly salient given that “conflicts about the child have been shown to be relatively more distressing for children than other types of conflict” (Cummings, Goeke-Morey, & Papp, 2004, cited in Cummings & Merrilees, 2010). A significant portion of the conflict literature attempts to categorize approaches to conflict based on the children’s perspective (Cummings & Merrilees, 2010). Cummings and Merrilees (2010) find that children “responded with the most positive emotional reactions to problem solving, support, and affection” (33). Communication was an intrinsic component of couple’s constructive styles; participants described an increase in affectionate and respectful communication that helped to diffuse negative emotions. This result supports research that constructive communication skills can reduce conflict between couples, particularly in the context of negotiating work and family obligations (Carroll, Hill, Yorgason, Larson, & Sandberg, 2013).

About a quarter of participants described using avoidant behavior such as ignoring an issue or giving in to a demand from their partner. This result is meaningful in light of research by Sturge-Apple et al. (2012) that when parents deal with conflict through avoidance or

“withdrawal,” it negatively impacts children – more so, even, than when parents are “hostile” towards each other. Another interesting facet of the avoidant style is a gender-based pattern where wives initiate engagement around a conflict and husbands withdraw (Kurdek, 1995). In this study, participants described interactions where women would ask their husbands to contribute to family tasks in a way that was perceived as nagging and men responded with resistance or avoidance – a cycle that built frustration in mothers and resentment in fathers (seven participants mentioned this pattern explicitly, and it was an underlying theme for others). These results support findings by Kurdek (1995) that the “wife-demand husband-withdraw” pattern was associated with lower marital satisfaction.

The fewest number of participants cited conflictual styles such as yelling or putting their partner down as approaches to disagreements. There is a well-documented connection between destructive couple communication styles, conflict, and lower marital satisfaction (e.g. Siffert and Schwarz 2011; Kurdek, 1995; Carroll et al., 2013). Davies and Cummings (1998) and others also document the way conflictual approaches to disagreements between parents impact children: “Children responded with the most negative emotional reactions to physical aggression, threats, and verbal and nonverbal hostility” (depending on whether “nonverbal hostility” includes withdrawal, this finding is at odds with that of Sturge-Apple et al., 2012). Children’s internalizations of conflictual interactions between parents contribute to negative emotional reactivity (Davies & Cummings, 1998).

Redefining gender roles, with help from SFI

The interviews revealed an ongoing process for families of defining and redefining roles in the years after becoming parents. The SFI intervention emerged as a helpful part of this process, providing space and encouragement for participants to develop intentionality towards

their roles. Both mothers and fathers expressed a fundamental shift in their approach to thinking about family labor: a transition to interpersonal perspectives marked by greater attunement to their partners' emotional well-being. Rather than relying on roles based on rigid gender norms, participants described making decisions about who does what in the context of supporting and understanding their partners and children. Comments about greater communication, trust, and closeness between partners were connected to increased feelings of satisfaction as participants negotiated family labor. The results provide particular insight into the experience of fathers, many of whom expressed efforts to move past a narrow conception of their role as a distant provider working all day outside the home. For many, becoming more involved in family labor was tied to greater overall emotional connection with their partners and children, and in turn, a sense of being valued as individuals.

Though almost all participants expressed some ambivalence about the division of labor in their homes, the experiences of couples more matched in their perceptions contrasted with those of couples in which one partner perceived inequity while the other partner did not. In the latter case, participants expressed resentment that seemed to stem in part from the fact that their partners were not aware of their distress, oblivious to their building sense of anger. Research by Sevón (2012) reflects a similar theme of bitterness surrounding both the gendered division of labor and a lack of connection from a male partner; as one of his participants stated, "My life has changed, but his life hasn't."

Viewed through the lens of equity theory, these results suggest that emotional attunement has an important impact on perceptions of fairness within a relationship. Booher and Jacobvitz (1998) define attunement as the way couples respond to, listen to, and connect with one another; the concept is rooted in early mother-infant relationships where a "joining in affective states in

terms of intensity, timing, and shape” creates mutual satisfaction (Stern, 1985). Though new parents may find themselves in roles that differ from their expectations, fostering empathy for their partner’s subjective emotional experiences can help the couple remain connected. Parents need not share identical views, but attunement to each other’s perspectives can diminish resentment and create space for constructive problem-solving about gender roles. Participants also cited the benefit of discussing roles openly and making mutual decisions about family tasks, which supports Giesler (2012)’s finding that intentionality can help parents navigate complicated gender expectations.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is that the sample lacked racial diversity, with over 70 percent of participants identifying as white or of European heritage. Also, the demographics questions did not directly address gender and sexuality. The majority of participants were in heterosexual, married or cohabiting (94%) relationships. In Canada, living together without marriage is often more similar to marriage in terms of commitment than it is in the U.S. (Heuveline & Timberlake, 2004). The sample also represented a financially stable population, with the average combined family income ranging from \$50,000 to \$60,000 per year and only eight percent of families reporting receiving financial assistance. This limits the relevance of the results to families of lower or higher incomes, whose different economic positions would likely create different challenges and dimensions to issues of gender and labor in the transition to parenthood. While the sample size was relatively large for qualitative research (N=49), it is still too small for the results to be generalizable to a broader population.

Another limitation of this research is the fact that four different researchers conducted interviews with participants. Although the researchers used a predetermined set of questions and

probes, different interpersonal styles, genders, and other personal factors may have contributed to inconsistencies in the way participants responded to the questions. Overall, the study's qualitative approach left room for each participant's interview to vary in length and depth of responses. However, this method allowed each participant the opportunity to share as much of their experience as they were comfortable with, using their own words. The interviews elicited a breadth of personal, nuanced information with detail that would not have come through in a quantitative methodology.

Implications for future research

This study explores the specific emotional experiences of parents navigating gender role dynamics after the birth of a child. The results add depth to previous research by elucidating the interplay between cultural expectations, relationship factors such as emotional attunement, and perceptions of equity and inequity in the division of labor. There is a need for further research from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives to better understand issues such as how gender ideology affects attunement between couples, how couples with diverging gender ideologies formulate their roles in the family over time, and ways that family interventions can effectively foster attunement between couples (especially in light of cultural narratives that discourage men from communicating openly about their emotions or paying attention to their emotional needs [e.g. Jansz, 2000]).

There is also a particular need for research that gathers more information about the experiences of individuals of color, low-income populations, and same-sex couples. Families with two fathers, two mothers, or other gender or parenting arrangements could provide especially important insight into ways to subvert traditional gender ideology, and the positive and negative effects of doing so. These populations are often left out of research; furthermore,

due to continuing stigma, LGBTQ families could benefit from support from interventions that are informed by research on this population's experiences. Understanding the complex processes related to gender roles, conflict, and the division of labor within families is key to developing programs and interventions that can support diverse individuals through the transition to parenthood, and ultimately benefit the well-being of children and families.

Implications for clinical practice

This study offers clinicians working with couples and families valuable insight into the dynamics and pressures that new parents may experience around gender roles and the division of labor. The results suggest that fostering empathy and attunement between couples can be an important avenue through which to decrease resentment and open pathways to constructive problem-solving approaches. Supporting families in having open discussions about roles and making intentional, mutual decisions may also help ease the difficult transition to parenthood. The results emphasize the benefit of programs such as SFI that offer parents the time, space, social support, and resources (such as childcare) necessary to grapple with these issues. Connections to communities of other families can also help relieve the intense pressures and sense of isolation that many couples experience and normalize the challenges involved in becoming parents.

It is also important for clinicians to maintain a fluid, nonjudgmental stance around issues of gender roles and the division of labor in work with new parents. This study and previous literature make it clear that equity has different meanings for different families, and that perceptions of equity within families can shift over time. Clinicians and interventions should make space for individuals to express their unique experiences and take agency in shaping roles within their families. Nonetheless, a feminist and social justice framework encourages clinicians

to be alert to power dynamics within families that may be influenced by oppressive societal narratives and structures – and support parents in thinking critically about the impact of these discourses on their lives.

Conclusion

Gender roles in North American society have become more flexible over the past 50 years, creating greater freedom for individuals to shape their employment, political influence, and family structure. Yet a wealth of research demonstrates that when couples have children, they are likely to return to traditional gender roles with a man who is the “breadwinner” and a woman who maintains the household. Though many families choose this structure intentionally, others find themselves unexpectedly enacting these more rigid roles. This trend is a troubling continuation of an oppressive legacy of gender role ideology that harms both parents by subordinating women and distancing men from the family’s emotional life. The responses of the families in this study shed light on the ways that couples experience this process and on the potential to create more equitable role arrangements through intentionality and attunement. The transition to parenthood is a crucial and challenging time for families, with high stakes for couple relationships and children’s well-being. Understanding the forces at play during this period and identifying ways that parents can move beyond rigid gender roles may hold the key to stronger families and greater freedom and self-determination for both men and women.

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Appendix A HSR Application

Smith College School for Social Work

This study protocol has been reviewed and approved by the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB).

Chair, Smith College SSW HSRB

Date

IN THE SECTIONS BELOW WHERE DESCRIPTIONS ARE REQUESTED, BE SURE TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO ENABLE THE COMMITTEE TO EVALUATE YOUR PROCEDURES AND RESPONSES.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH PROJECT INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

Briefly summarize the purpose of the study, the over-arching research question, and the planned use of human participants *with sufficient detail and in clear, concise language (space will expand in all sections as you enter your information)*:

Few programs to enhance fathers' engagement with children have been systematically evaluated, especially those aimed at supporting low-income marginalized populations. In response to this dearth of information, the Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) study was developed to strengthen paternal and maternal relationships, as well as father-child relationships, and to test the efficacy of doing so for family well-being. On the basis of earlier intervention results using a couples' group format (C. P. Cowan & Cowan, 2000; P. A. Cowan, Cowan, & Heming, 2005), we tested fathers and couples group interventions that we expected would positively affect three risk factors for child abuse – the quality of the father's relationship with the child, the quality of the couple relationship, and the children's behavior.

The Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) study has been implemented with over 800 families living in 5 counties of California over a 9-year period. The study followed a sample of predominantly low income families for 18 months in a randomized clinical trial of two variations of a preventive intervention; two thirds of participating families were Mexican American and one third European American and African American. The study compared the impact of a 16-week group for fathers, a 16-week group for couples, and a low-dose comparison condition in which both parents attend one 3-hour group session; all interventions were led by the same trained mental health professionals who focused on the importance of fathers to their children's development and well-being. The one-time meeting and the 16-week curriculum for fathers and couples' groups were based on a family risk model of the central factors that research has shown are associated with fathers' positive involvement with their children. A very extensive quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the program was conducted. Compared with families in the low-dose comparison condition, intervention families showed positive effects on fathers' engagement with their children, couple relationship quality, and children's problem behaviors. Participants in couples' groups showed more consistent, longer term positive effects than those in fathers-only groups. Intervention effects were similar across family structures, income levels, and ethnicities. Three different iterations of the intervention proved equally effective, with inclusion criteria expanded to include – not only biological parents – but any co-parenting dyads (e.g., siblings, Grandparents, stepparents, etc.), children up to 11 years old, and families who had been involved in the child welfare system.

On the basis of these results, several other states and countries began to implement SFI. One of these is Alberta, Canada. The program was implemented on a smaller scale at 4 sites without a control group, and with a scaled back version of the evaluation that included only a small group of quantitative instruments administered pre-intervention and one year later. Results to date are promising, but given the shorter follow-up time frame used and the small sample size available for study, it became clear that adding longer term quantitative data and interviews to capture qualitative impacts of the intervention according to parents' perceptions were warranted to fully appreciate what changes were happening for families in Alberta.

The purpose of the present study is to examine the effectiveness of the Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) program initiated in 2011 in Alberta, Canada. Similar to the California study, SFI Alberta aimed to strengthen fathers' involvement in the family, their relationships with their children and with the mothers of their children, and

to promote healthy child development. The program entailed the same 16 week group intervention (either for fathers only or for couples), case management, and attempts to enhance father friendliness in the social service agencies in which SFI was embedded.

To study the effectiveness of the evidence-based SFI approach for Albertan families, a random subsample of families will be recruited from the original sample and the original questionnaires will be administered at 18-22 months after the intervention to determine if trends emerging in earlier analyses strengthen over time. In addition, interviews will be conducted with both parents/co-parents. These interviews will include questions about individual well-being, parenting, parent-child interactions, and three generation relationships in the family. Additional research questions related to student areas of interest deemed as particularly relevant to SFI will include:

- What parenting beliefs do participants in the study identify as important from their own growing up experience? How did these beliefs impact their own parenting? How did their involvement in SFI impact these beliefs about parenting?
- What factors are involved in how parents determine their roles and negotiate conflict within the family?
- How is the romantic attachment styles of SFI mothers and fathers related to their parenting styles?

A team of four Smith College School for Social Work students will enter and analyze the quantitative data collected via survey monkey or hard copy questionnaires distributed and collected by the program case managers. In addition, the team will conduct qualitative interviews via phone or Skype with participants from each of three Alberta sites.

PARTICIPANTS: if you are only observing public behavior, skip to question d in this section.

a). How many participants will be involved in the study?

 12-15 ≥ 50 X Other (how many do you anticipate)

36 families/72 participants (both co-parents)

b). List specific eligibility requirements for participants (or describe screening procedures), including exclusionary and inclusionary criteria. For example, if including only male participants, *explain why*. If using data from a secondary de-identified source, skip to question e in this section.

To participate in this study, participants must have met the criteria for inclusion in the SFI Alberta program:

1) Both partners are over 18 years of age, speak English, and agreed to participate in an SFI group and the research involved in the program. Participants participated in the SFI group sessions.

2) The parents/co-parents have agreed to raise their youngest child together, regardless of whether they were married, cohabiting, or living separately.

3) At the time of their participation in the SFI group, neither co-parent suffered from a mental illness or drug or alcohol abuse problems that interfered with their daily functioning at work or in caring for the child. If either co-parent reported serious problems of this kind, the family was not offered one of the study interventions and was referred for other appropriate services. Since recruitment for the current study is initiated at the sites, families who report any of the above difficulties at the present time to their case managers will again be excluded.

4) At the time of recruitment into the SFI program, co-parents were not accepted if there was a current open child or spousal protection case with Child Protective Services or an instance within the past year of spousal violence or child abuse. This last criterion was designed to exclude participants whose increased participation in daily family life might increase the risks for child abuse or neglect. Since recruitment for the current study is initiated at the sites, families who report spousal violence or child welfare involvement at the present time to their case managers will again be excluded.

5) Participants must have access to a phone line or Skype and be willing to speak with the researcher for about 45 min. about their experience in SFI as well as their family relationships, roles, and functioning. Participants must also be willing to complete the quantitative questionnaire familiar to them from earlier participation in the SFI program.

c). Describe how participants will be recruited. ***Be specific: give step-by-step description.*** (Attach all flyers, letters, announcement, email messages etc. that will be used to recruit).

The participants will be selected randomly from the families who have already completed the SFI intervention 18 to 22 months prior to this assessment. Case managers at each of the three sites will randomly contact families who completed the intervention 18-22 months ago and will tell them about the study. If families agree to learn more about the study, they will be told that a Smith MSW student will be contacting them by phone. Either or both parents/co-parents may agree to be contacted. From among those who agree to be contacted, the case managers will give each potential participant's contact information to a designated Smith student. The student will then call

the potential participant and will explain what the study is about and how it will be conducted. All SFI participants have completed a signed informed consent form agreeing to participate in the overall SFI research, of which this study will be a part. Still, a new consent form will be obtained for this study. After explaining the current study, the researcher will discuss the consent form and issues of confidentiality with each potential participant. The researcher will email the consent form to be filled out and uploaded back to the researcher or will offer to have the case manager send one by mail. In that call, the researcher also will determine by what method the parent wants to complete the questionnaire. Once the consent is returned, the researcher will either 1) mail the questionnaire to the potential participant, 2) send a link for survey monkey or 3) will offer to conduct the questionnaire over the phone. The researcher will inform each parent that once the survey is filled out, the interview will be conducted. Another possibility is for the case managers to invite participants to a research dinner and invite them to fill out the questionnaires there. Note that the informed consents will not be attached to the questionnaires because those families who choose to do a survey monkey version of the questionnaire will not be anonymous and a wet signature will be required. The procedures detailed above, though not the most efficient, cover each necessary aspect of obtaining informed consent.

A date will then be set for the interview. The researcher will confirm that the questionnaire was completed prior to interviewing the parent. If it has not been completed, an alternate date for the interview will be set OR it will be completed that day by phone. The researcher will set up separate interview times with each parent/co-parent who agrees to participate, and will call or use video Skype to contact each participant at the designated time to complete the interview.

d). Is there any relationship between you as the researcher and the participants (e.g. teacher/student, superintendent/principal/teacher; supervisor/clinician; clinician/client, etc.) that might lead to the appearance of coercion? If so, what steps will you take to avoid this situation. For example: "I will not interview individuals who have been direct clients."

This is not applicable to the members of the research team. However, since the case managers will be making the initial contact with participants and will have worked with the families, they will make it clear that the study is completely voluntary, and the decision not to participate will not prevent the family from seeking or obtaining services in the future.

e). Are participants members of any of the following federally defined vulnerable populations?

Yes No

If 'Yes', check all that apply:

- minors (under 18 years of age)
- prisoners
- pregnant women
- persons with physical disabilities
- persons with mental disabilities
- economically disadvantaged
- educationally disadvantaged
- other, please specify _____ If any of

the above are anticipated participants in this study, state the necessity for doing so. Please indicate the approximate age range of minors to be involved. Participants under age 18 require participant assent AND written consent from the parent/legal guardian. Please use related forms.

RESEARCH METHODS:

(Check which applies)

- Interview and non-anonymous questionnaire
- Anonymous questionnaire/survey
- Observation of public behavior
- Analysis of de-identified data collected elsewhere
- () Where did these data come from originally?

Did this original research get IRB approval? Yes No

(Skip to BENEFITS section)

Other (describe) _____

Describe the nature of the interaction between you and the participants. Additionally, if applicable, include a description of the ways in which different subjects or groups of participants will receive different treatment (e.g., control group vs. comparison group, etc.).

a). Please describe, with sufficient detail, the procedure/plan to be followed in your research (e.g. what participants will do).

To assess the effectiveness of the SFI intervention, the researcher will conduct quantitative questionnaires via Survey Monkey and qualitative interviews via phone or Skype.

As described above, the researcher will contact willing families, explain the study components, and discuss and complete the consent form. The quantitative questionnaire consists of scales that assess parental depression, father involvement, family role sharing (who does what), communication styles, parent stress, and relationship satisfaction. In addition, for this study, an instrument assessing relationship attachment between partners will be assessed whenever the co-parents are in an intimate relationship (the vast majority, if not all, of the anticipated sample).

The researcher will arrange separate times for each member of the co-parenting dyad to complete the qualitative interview. To avoid possible confounds from interview order, the researcher will alternate which parent will be interviewed first in each family. For example, the researcher will interview the mother first for family 1 but reverse that order for family 2.

The researcher will ask participants open-ended questions that relate to individual characteristics of the parents (depression); father involvement; family role sharing; the couple or co-parenting communication styles, relationship quality, and attachment; parenting stress (including the quality of the parent-child relationship); and the intergenerational transmission of parenting styles. The researcher will ask the same questions to each parent in each family dyad.

Participants will receive a gift for their involvement in the study after they have completed both portions of the research. This compensation is in the form of a \$15 gift card to a coffee house or grocery store in their neighborhood.

At the completion of both assessments for all families, the research team will compile the data to analyze any changes from the pre-intervention assessment, to the follow-up assessments, as well as to evaluate themes that emerge from the qualitative data.

b). How many times will you meet/interact with participants? (*If you are only observing public behavior, SKIP to question d in this section.*)

Interaction with the participants will occur over the phone or via Skype. Each researcher expects to contact each participant 1-3 times. Time 1: To assure participants' interest and go over the informed consent; Time 2: to do the interview or encourage completion of the questionnaire; Time 3 to do the interview if needed.

c). How much total time will be required of each participant?

We anticipate most families to fill out the questionnaire via online survey; the quantitative survey will take no longer than 20 minutes to complete online, as field tested by the researchers filling it out themselves to obtain an average time. It may take a bit longer by phone. The total interview time required for each participant will be 45 minutes for the interview and an hour and a quarter total. Because this research involves talking with couples, the total time for each family will be approximately 2 hours combined.

d). Where will the data collection occur (please provide sufficient detail)?

The data collection will occur at the participants' homes or offices over the phone or via Skype. The researcher will request that participants conduct the interviews from a quiet, private location that is away from the child(ren)'s earshot. Each researcher will conduct the interview either in his/her home or in a private study room at the library.

e). If you are conducting surveys, attach a copy of the survey instrument to this application. If you are conducting individual interviews or focus groups, including ethnographies or oral histories, attach a list of the interview questions as an "Attachment". Label attachments alphabetically, with descriptive titles (e.g.: *Attachment A: Interview Questions*).

The Questionnaire and Interview questions are attached to this application.

INFORMED CONSENT: (*If you are only observing public behavior, SKIP to next section*)

a). What categories of consent documentation will you be obtaining from your participants? (Check all that apply)

- written participant consent
- written parent/guardian consent
- Child assent 14-17
- Child assent, assent 6-13

b). Attach original consent documents. *note: be advised that, once the study begins, ALL consents/assents except those collected in connection with anonymous surveys will require [wet] signatures – no faxed or email/electronically signed copies.

Informed consent forms are attached following the instruments. (Please note that this appendix contains three informed consents since each of the three research sites requires slightly different language in terms of their program names and procedures)

COLLECTION /RETENTION OF INFORMATION:

a). With sufficient detail, describe the method(s) of recording participant responses (e.g., audiotape, videotape, written notes, surveys, etc.)

The researcher will use an audio recorder to record the qualitative interview. All interviews will be transcribed by the researchers. Should a transcription service be needed, a certificate of confidentiality will be signed and retained.

Survey Monkey will be used to collect the quantitative questionnaire data. The researcher will also give families the option of doing the quantitative questionnaire by mail or phone. The data will be collated by the researchers or the data manager for the SFI Alberta project, who is conducting the larger evaluation.

b). Include the following statement to describe where and for how long will these materials will be stored and the precautions being taken to ensure the security and safety of the materials.

All research materials including recordings, transcriptions, analyses and consent/assent documents will be stored in a secure location for three years according to federal regulations. In the event that materials are needed beyond this period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed. All electronically stored data will be password protected during the storage period.

c). Will the recordings of participant responses be coded for subsequent analysis? *If you are only observing public behavior, SKIP to next section.*

Yes (as described above)

No

CONFIDENTIALITY:

a). What assurances about maintaining privacy will be given to participants about the information collected?

1. Anonymity is assured (data cannot be linked to participant identities)

2. Confidentiality is assured (names and identifying information are protected, i.e., stored separately from data).

3. Neither anonymity nor confidentiality is assured

b). If you checked (2) above, describe methods to protect confidentiality with sufficient detail. Describe how you will maintain privacy of the participant as well as the data

Researchers will conduct interviews in private places where others will not hear them. Researchers will encourage participants not to have their children present during the interview process. Researchers will not share data collected with anyone outside of the research group and the program Case Manager unless you provide information that you are at risk of harming yourself, your children, or someone else; such information will be brought to the attention of the program staff and may need to be reported to child protective services or law enforcement. Before choosing to report such information, the researcher will discuss with you what he/she needs to report before doing so. Researchers will de-identify any personal information in all writing materials and disguise quotes before including them in any reports or publication.

All of the consent forms will be stored in a locked location away from the rest of the data at each researcher's location. The de-identified data will be available by DROPBOX for each of the researchers to acquire as needed. The transcriptions will be aggregated once they are fully de-identified so that the researchers will all have access to them.

When each researcher visits or returns to Smith, all data will be delivered in person to Dr. Pruett, who will keep it in a locked file in her office.

c). If you checked (3) above, explain, with sufficient detail, why confidentiality is not assured.

d). If you checked (3) above, provide sufficient detail that describes measures you will take to assure participants understand how their information will be used. Describe and attach any permissions/releases that will be requested from participants.

RISKS:

a). Could participation in this study cause participants to feel uncomfortable or distressed?

Yes

No

If yes, provide a detailed description of *what steps* you will take to protect them.

Participants may feel some distress talking about personal topics pertaining to themselves, their children and their partner relationship. The researcher will conduct a separate interview for each of the parents to avoid possible discomfort or arguments between them. Before beginning the interview, the researcher will ensure that participants understand that they may pause the interview at any time if they are feeling upset, or stop the interview all together. The researcher will also explain that participants may skip any question that they do not feel comfortable answering. During the interview, the researcher will remain alert to possible signs of distress and will check in with participants about their comfort level if they may be upset. The researcher will attempt to reframe and restructure the conversation by using his/her clinical skills, and will assist participants with connecting to their SFI case manager if they express a need for further support or resources. Since these couples have already been engaged with the SFI program and are familiar with the topics and questionnaires being addressed, risk of discomfort or distress with the questions themselves will be relatively low.

b). Are there any other risks associated with participation (e.g. financial, social, legal, etc.)?

Yes

No

If yes, provide a detailed description of the measures you will take to mitigate these additional risks.

COMPENSATION: (If you are only observing public behavior, SKIP to the next section)

Describe any cash or ‘gifts’ (e.g.: coffee shop gift card) that participants will receive for participating in this research (see guidance about payment/gift compensation in the Smith School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Guideline, at the HSR site in the SSW website).

Each participant will receive a 15 dollar gift certificate after completing the Survey Monkey questionnaire and qualitative interview.

BENEFITS:

a). Describe the potential benefits for the researcher (you).

This research will enable the research team to learn how to conduct a program evaluation, practice clinical skills in working with families and couples, and gain insight into issues of clinical relevance for work with families and children. In addition, each researcher will gain experience in working as part of a research team under a senior faculty researcher. This study will also include a stipend and partially fulfill the requirement necessary to obtain the researchers’ MSW degrees.

b). Describe the potential or guaranteed benefits for participants, EXCLUDING payment/gift compensations.

The post-assessment interview and questionnaire may help participants to reinforce what they have learned during the initial intervention process. Participants will have the chance to process their experience in and the intervention groups, and to re-evaluate their goals related to parenting, their relationship with their partner, and their personal well-being. They will also have the opportunity to reconnect with their case manager for further resources or support.

c). What are the potential benefits to social work/society from this research?

This research may contribute to a better understanding of how to enhance children’s healthy development and well-being through inclusion of fathers in the family and a focus on the couple (co-parenting) relationship. The research may also contribute to the development of an evidence-based intervention model that can be replicated in a different set of communities or another country in reducing known risk factors and increasing known buffers for domestic violence, child abuse and neglect.

FINAL APPLICATION ELEMENTS:

a. Include the following statement to describe the intended uses of the data:

The data collected from this study will be used to complete researchers’ Master’s in Social Work (MSW) Thesis. The results of the study may also be used in publications and presentations.

b. If there are Co- Researchers, cooperating departments, and/or cooperating institutions, follow the following instructions:

If you are working with/conducting your research with a researcher working at another institution or organization, include a letter of approval from that institution’s IRB or agency administrator. If there are multiple researchers, indicate only one person on the Documentation of Review and Approval as the researcher; others should be designated as “Co-Researcher(s)” here.

The Principle Investigator and Researcher for this study is Dr. Marsha Pruett. The co-researchers are Todd Chen, Rachel Honig, Annabel Lane, and Sarah Robins.

c. TRAINING: Include the following statement to describe training:

All researchers have completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) on line training course prior to HSR approval. The certificate of completion is on file at the SSW.

Appendix B Quantitative Survey

1. Supporting Father Involvement

1. Family ID Number

2. Date of this evaluation

MM DD YYYY
1. / /

3. Are you the dad or father figure?

What is your relation to the child involved in the project?

- Dad
 Father Figure

Relation:

4. Are you the mom or mother figure?

What is your relation to the child involved in the project?

- Mother
 Mother-Figure

Relation:

5. Site

- Edmonton
 Cochrane
 Lethbridge

2. Demographics

6. How old are you? (Please check one)

- Under 18 years
- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55-64 years
- 65+ years

7. What is your current marital status? (Please check one)

- Single
- Married
- Living together as a couple
- Divorced or separated
- Widowed

8. Were you born in Canada?

- Yes
- No

3. Demographics Continued

9. If you were not born in Canada please answer the following:

What is your current immigration status? (Check one)

- Landed immigrant
- Refugee claimant
- Canadian citizen naturalization
- Don't know
- Not applicable (Canadian citizen by birth)

10. If you were not born in Canada, please answer the following:

How long have you lived in Canada (Check one)

- Less than one year
- 1-3 years
- 4-10 years
- more than 10 years

11. Which of these categories best describes your ethnicity or race? (Select all that apply)

- First Nation
- Metis
- Inuit
- European / White
- Black / African Canadian
- Asian / Pacific Islander / Asian-Canadian
- Latino/Hispanic/Chicano
- Other (please describe)

12. If First Nations, what band are you a member of?

4. Demographics Continued

13. What is the highest grade or year of school that you have completed? (Check one)

- No formal schooling
- Grade 8 or less
- Some high school (grades 9,10,11 and 12)
- High school diploma (completed grade 12)
- G.E.D. (high school equivalent)
- Some college or 2 year certificate
- Technical or trade school
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional school

14. What is your combined household income? (Check one)

- \$20,000 or less
- \$20,001 to \$30,000
- \$30,001 to \$40,000
- \$40,001 to \$50,000
- \$50,001 to \$60,000
- \$60,001 to \$70,000
- \$70,001 to \$80,000
- \$80,001 to \$90,000
- more than \$90,000

15. Are you on financial assistance?

- Yes
- No

5. Child Adaptive Behavior Inventory

Below are statements describing a child's behavior. Please indicate how well each statement describes your youngest child: not at all like, very little like, somewhat like, or very much like the child. Please read all choices for each question and choose one option for each statement.

Your child . . .

16. Is shy or bashful with adults

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

17. Tends to disobey or break rules

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

18. Is restless; can't sit still

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

19. Has a difficult time initiating play with a group of peers and gaining entry into their group

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

20. Has trouble concentrating on what he/she's doing

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

21. Is uncooperative in group situations with adults

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

22. Is shy or bashful with other children

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

23. Acts as a leader

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

24. In unable to work independently; needs constant attention

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

25. Takes a while to get comfortable with others

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

26. Sometimes breaks or ruins things

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

27. Has a hot temper

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

28. Seeks attention; "shows off."

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

29. Isolates himself/herself from the peer group

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

30. Is self-conscious; easily embarrassed

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

31. Punishment doesn't affect his/her behavior

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

32. Is uncooperative in group situations with children

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

33. Is easily distracted from what he/she's doing

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

34. Has an outgoing personality

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

35. Usually plays or works alone

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

36. Argues; quarrels

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

37. Is deliberately cruel to others

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

38. Like to meet new people

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

39. Gets into fights with other children

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

40. Is always getting into things

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

41. Usually plays or works with only one other child

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

42. Is stubborn or irritable

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

43. Doesn't always tell the truth

- Not At All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

44. Makes friends quickly and easily

- Not at All Like Very Little Like Somewhat Like Very Much Like

6. How I've Been Feeling Lately

Here is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved. Please choose the number that represents how often you have felt each of these ways during the past week. (Please read all choices)

- 0 = Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 = Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 = Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 = Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

During the Past Week:

45. I was bothered by things that don't usually bother me.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

46. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

47. I felt that I could not shake off the blues, even with help from my family or friends.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

48. I felt that I was just as good as other people.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

49. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

50. I felt depressed.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

51. I felt that everything I did was an effort.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

52. I felt hopeful about the future.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

53. I thought my life had been a failure.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

54. I felt fearful.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

55. My sleep was restless.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

56. I was happy.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

57. I talked less than usual.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

58. I felt lonely.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

59. People were unfriendly.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

60. I enjoyed life.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

61. I had crying spells.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

62. I felt sad.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

63. I felt that people dislike me.

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

64. I could not get "going."

- 0 Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
- 1 Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
- 2 Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
- 3 Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

7. Couple Communication

These questions ask about your relationship with your partner, how the two of you handle disagreements, and how you try to solve your day-to-day problems.

65. When you and your partner attempt to solve a marital or family problem, which of the following strategies do you tend to use?

Please select all that apply

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. We delay action | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. We talk about it and accept our differences | <input type="checkbox"/> 13B. My partner throws something at me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. We talk about it to clarify the problem | <input type="checkbox"/> 10A. I stomp out of the room | <input type="checkbox"/> 14A. I push, grab, or shove my partner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. We discuss both of our points of view | <input type="checkbox"/> 10B. My partner stomps out of the room | <input type="checkbox"/> 14B. My partner pushes, grabs, or shoves me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. We compromise | <input type="checkbox"/> 11A. I yell or insult my partner | <input type="checkbox"/> 15A. I slap or try to hit my partner, but not with anything |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. We work until we have a solution | <input type="checkbox"/> 11B. My partner yell or insults me | <input type="checkbox"/> 15B. My partner slaps or tries to hit me, but not with anything |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. We ignore the problem | <input type="checkbox"/> 12A. I throw something | <input type="checkbox"/> 16A. I slap or try to hit my partner with something hard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. We avoid talking about it, but continue to feel uneasy | <input type="checkbox"/> 12B. My partner throws something | <input type="checkbox"/> 16B. My partner slaps or tries to hit me with something hard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. We avoid talking about it, just accept our differences | <input type="checkbox"/> 13A. I throw something at my partner | |

Using the following scale, please indicate how much conflict or disagreement you and your partner have had on each of the following issues, during the past month.

How much conflict regarding.... 0 (none) – 6 (a lot)

66. The division of workload in the family

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

67. The amount of time we spend together as a couple

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

68. Our sexual relationship

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

69. Who earns money

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

70. How we spend money

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

71. The quality of time we spend together as a couple

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

72. Our relationship with our in-laws

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

73. Ideas about how to raise children

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

74. Willingness to work for improvement in our relationship

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

75. The way we communicate with one another

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

76. Our work outside the home

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

77. Our child(ren)'s schooling

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

78. How to discipline our child(ren)

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

79. Any other issue? Please explain

80. Rating of other issue

- 0 None
- 1
- 2 A Little
- 3
- 4 A Moderate Amount
- 5
- 6 A Lot

8. Parenting Stress Index

The statements below ask you about your feelings of being a parent to your youngest child. Using the following scale, please choose the answer that best matches how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. YOUR FIRST REACTION SHOULD BE YOUR ANSWER.

81. I feel trapped by my responsibilities as a parent.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

82. Having a child has caused more problems than I expected in my relationship with my spouse (male/female friend).

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

83. My child rarely does things for me that make me feel good.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

84. When I do things for my child I get the feeling that my efforts are not appreciated very much.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

85. When playing, my child doesn't often giggle or laugh.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

86. My child doesn't seem to learn as quickly as most children.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

87. It takes a long time and it is very hard for my child to get use to new things.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

88. I expected to have closer and warmer feelings for my child than I do and this bothers me.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

89. My child seems to cry, fuss, or get upset more often than most children.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

90. My child reacts very strongly when something happens that my child doesn't like.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

91. There are some things my child does that really bother me a lot.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

92. My child rarely does things for me that make me feel good.

- Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Strongly Disagree

93. I feel that I am: (READ ALL CHOICES)

- not very good at being a parent,
 a person who has some trouble being a parent,
 an average parent,
 a better than average parent,
 a very good parent.

**94. I have found that getting my child to do something or to stop doing something is:
(READ ALL CHOICES)**

- much harder than I expected,
 somewhat harder than I expected,
 about as hard as I expected,
 somewhat easier than I expected,
 much easier than I expected.

95. Overall, how do you rate your child's health?

- Excellent Good Fair Poor

96. Overall, how would you rate your own health?

- Excellent Good Fair Poor

9. Who Does What - Introduction

All parents develop ways of dividing family household tasks and the caring and rearing of children. And, parents of babies tend to do different sorts of tasks than do parents of older children.

Please think about the different things you do for (and with) your YOUNGEST child.

PARENTS WITH BABIES: If your youngest child is a baby aged 1-1/2 years or less, please respond to the questions regarding parents with babies ONLY.

PARENTS WITH CHILDREN OLDER THAN 1-1/2 YEARS: If your youngest child is older than 1-1/2 years, please respond to the questions regarding parents with children older than 1-1/2 years ONLY.

Choose (and respond to) only one page of questions.

97. Please choose one of the following:

- I am a parent with a baby. My youngest child is a baby aged 1-1/2 years or less.
- I am a parent with child(ren) older than 1-1/2 years.

10. Who Does What - Parents with Babies

FOR PARENTS WITH BABIES:

Please show how you and your partner divide the family tasks listed here. Using the numbers on the scale below, show HOW IT IS NOW and HOW YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO BE.

98. Feeding the baby: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

99. Feeding the baby: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

100. Bathing the baby: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

101. Bathing the baby: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

102. Changing the baby's diapers; dressing the baby: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

103. Changing the baby's diapers; dressing the baby: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

104. Doing the baby's laundry: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

105. Doing the baby's laundry: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

106. Responding to the baby's crying in the middle of the night: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

107. Responding to the baby's crying in the middle of the night: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

108. Taking the baby out: walking, driving, visiting, etc.: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

109. Taking the baby out: walking, driving, visiting, etc.: How you would like it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

110. Arranging childcare/babysitter: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

111. Arranging childcare/babysitter: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

112. Choosing toys for the baby: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

113. Choosing toys for the baby: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

114. Playing with the baby: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

115. Playing with the baby: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

116. Deciding how to respond to the baby: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

117. Deciding how to respond to the baby: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

118. Dealing with the doctor regarding the baby's health: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

119. Dealing with the doctor regarding the baby's health: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

SATISFACTION WITH OVERALL DIVISION BETWEEN PARENTS

120. Overall, how do you feel about YOUR level of involvement with your child?

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2
- 3 Neutral
- 4
- 5 Very dissatisfied

121. Overall, how do you feel about the other parent's level of involvement with your child?

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2
- 3 Neutral
- 4
- 5 Very dissatisfied

122. Overall, how do you think the other parent feels about your level of involvement with your child?

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2
- 3 Neutral
- 4
- 5 Very dissatisfied

11. Who Does What - Parents with Children over 1 1/2

FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN OLDER THAN 1-1/2 YEARS:

Please show how you and your partner divide the family tasks listed here. Using the numbers on the scale below, show HOW IT IS NOW and HOW YOU WOULD LIKE IT TO BE.

**NOTE: If you already completed this questionnaire for "parents with babies," please skip this questionnaire.

123. Making meals for the child (even if occasionally): How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

124. Making meals for the child (even if occasionally): How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

125. Reading to/with the child: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

126. Reading to/with the child: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

127. Choosing clothes for the child: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

128. Choosing clothes for the child: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

129. Doing the child's laundry: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

130. Doing the child's laundry: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

131. Deciding whether or how to respond to the child when upset: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

132. Deciding whether or how to respond to the child when upset: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

133. Taking the child out: walking, driving, visiting, etc.: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

134. Taking the child out: walking, driving, visiting, etc.: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

135. Getting the child to and from school (N/A if not in school): How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

136. Getting the child to and from school (N/A if not in school): How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

137. Choosing or being involved with child choosing own toys: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

138. Choosing or being involved with child choosing own toys: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

139. Playing with the child: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

140. Playing with the child: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

141. Disciplining the child: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

142. Disciplining the child: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

143. Dealing with the doctor regarding the child's health: How it is NOW...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

144. Dealing with the doctor regarding the child's health: How you would LIKE it to be...

- 1 SHE DOES IT ALL
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 WE BOTH DO THIS ABOUT EQUALLY
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 HE DOES IT ALL

SATISFACTION WITH OVERALL DIVISION BETWEEN PARENTS

145. Overall, how do you feel about YOUR level of involvement with your child?

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2
- 3 Neutral
- 4
- 5 Very dissatisfied

146. Overall, how do you feel about the other parent's level of involvement with your child?

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2
- 3 Neutral
- 4
- 5 Very dissatisfied

147. Overall, how do you think the other parent feels about your level of involvement with your child?

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2
- 3 Neutral
- 4
- 5 Very dissatisfied

12. Quality of Marriage Index

Our Relationship (between the parents)

Please choose the number that best describes the degree of satisfaction you feel in each of these areas of your relationship.

148. We have a good relationship.

- 1 Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 Strongly Disagree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree
- 7 Very Strongly Agree

149. My relationship with my child's other parent is very stable.

- 1 Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 Strongly Disagree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree
- 7 Very Strongly Agree

150. My relationship with my child's other parent is strong.

- 1 Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 Strongly Disagree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree
- 7 Very Strongly Agree

151. My relationship with my child's other parents makes me happy.

- 1 Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 Strongly Disagree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree
- 7 Very Strongly Agree

152. I really feel like part of a team with my child's other parent.

- 1 Very Strongly Disagree
- 2 Strongly Disagree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly Agree
- 7 Very Strongly Agree

153. On a scale from one to ten, one being unhappy, five being happy, and ten being perfectly happy, all things considered, what degree of happiness best describes your relationship with your partner? Please choose a number.

- 1 Unhappy
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Happy
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 Perfectly happy

154. How long have you two known each other?

(Please specify ___ months and ___ years)

155. PLEASE ANSWER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

**(If you are romantically involved with your partner):
How long have you two been a couple?**

(Please specify ___ months and ___ years)

**156. (If you two co-parent the child but are not romantically involved with each other):
How long have you been co-parenting the child who was involved in the SFI project?**

(Please specify ___ months and ___ years)

13. Experiences in Close Relationships - Revised

The statements below concern how you feel in emotionally intimate relationships. Please think about how you generally experience relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by choosing a number to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

1 = Strongly Disagree.....7= Strong Agree

157. I'm afraid that I will lose my partner's love.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

158. I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

159. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

160. I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

161. I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

162. I worry a lot about my relationships.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

163. When my partner is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

164. When I show my feelings for romantic partners, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

165. I rarely worry about my partner leaving me.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

166. My romantic partner makes me doubt myself.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

167. I do not often worry about being abandoned.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

168. I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

169. Sometimes romantic partners change their feelings about me for no apparent reason.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

170. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

171. I'm afraid that once a romantic partner gets to know me, he or she won't like who I really am.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

172. It makes me mad that I don't get the affection and support I need from my partner.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

173. I worry that I won't measure up to other people.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

174. My partner only seems to notice me when I'm angry.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

175. I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

176. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

177. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

178. I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

179. I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

180. I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

181. I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

182. I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

183. It's not difficult for me to get close to my partner.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

184. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

185. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

186. I tell my partner just about everything.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

187. I talk things over with my partner.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

188. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

189. I feel comfortable depending on romantic partners.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

190. I find it easy to depend on romantic partners.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

191. It's easy for me to be affectionate with my partner.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

192. My partner really understands me and my needs.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Strongly Agree

Appendix C Qualitative Interview

Introduction:

Hello, my name is _____. I am one of the research assistants in the SFI program. We want to thank you for taking the time and effort today to be a part of this interview and for your participation in the SFI program.

As you know, it has been over ___ months since you began participating in the SFI program and we realize that a lot may have happened in your family since the group ended. So we wanted to take this opportunity to ask you have some questions about how everything is going with you and your family. We are interested in how you are thinking now about your SFI experience and how your thinking has evolved over the past year. Before we get started, do you have any questions for me?

Throughout the interview, use clinical interventions such as basic attending, listening and action skills. Examples include paraphrasing, clarification and reflection of feeling. Always try to focus the questions on the domains.

Questions:

Individual Domain:

If you were to think back to what you have learned in SFI, what kind of changes have you noticed in yourself as a result of being part of the group?

What kind of changes have you noticed in your partner?

Some people in your group reported being pretty depressed at the beginning of the group. How did you feel? How do you feel now? What changed?

Parenting:

How has your involvement with your child changed since being in SFI? What do you attribute the changes to?

How has your partner's involvement with your child changed? What do you attribute the changes to?

Have you noticed any other differences in your relationship with your child?

Probe: What's different?

How have these changes affected your relationship with your partner?

As you looked back on what you learned at SFI about parenting, what do you remember most?

What kind of parenting beliefs do you hold most dear that come from your own growing up experience?

Probe: How did these beliefs influence your own parenting?

How has participating in SFI strengthened or changed these beliefs?

Partner:

In a perfect world, how would you and your partner split up family tasks? How do you think your partner would answer that question?

Probe: How have your feelings about this changed since being in SFI, or in the time since the group ended?

How do you and your partner resolve disagreements about who does what?

Probe: How has this changed since being in SFI?

Probe: How is this similar or different from the way you resolve other kinds of disagreements?

How has your participation in SFI affected your relationship with your partner today? How has it affected your co-parenting?

Probe: Has it changed your degree of closeness with your partner? If so, how?

Probe: Has it changed your degree of trusting your partner? If so, how?

Probe: Has it changed your degree of intimacy with your partner? If so, how?

How would you say that SFI has made a difference in how you see yourself as a spouse/partner? If I were to ask your partner this question, what do you think he/she would say?

Please use 5 adjectives to describe your partner.

Overall Program:

In what ways has SFI contributed to your family's overall well-being that you haven't yet mentioned?

What do you think was most important to you and your family about the SFI program?

What changes in the program would you recommend?

What was helpful about your connection with your Case Manager/Family Worker? With your Group Leaders?

Appendix D
Informed Consent Form: Norwood



Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Smith College School for Social Work • Northampton, MA

.....

Title of Study: Supporting Father Involvement (SFI), Norwood site
Lead Researcher: Dr. Marsha Pruett, Smith College School of Social Work, 413-585-7997
Co-Researchers: Todd Chen, Rachel Honig, Annabel Lane, and Sarah Robins
(Smith College School for Social Work)

.....

Introduction

- You are being asked to help us understand what you learned in the Parenting in Partnership program at the Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre by participating in follow-up research on the program's effectiveness.
- You were selected as a possible participant because of your previous participation in the program.
- Please read this form and ask any questions that you have before agreeing to be in the study.

Purpose of Study

- The purpose of the study is to better understand the experiences of families who participated in the Parenting in Partnership program. We would like to learn more about how your family may or may not have changed in the time since you participated in the program. In this program evaluation, we will ask for information about your well-being as an individual, partner/co-parent, and parent, as well as your children's well-being, and relationships within your family.
- This study is being conducted to assist the program funders in attracting interest for additional funding for the program. This study also fulfills a requirement for the researchers' Master's in Social Work (MSW) degrees.
- Ultimately, this research may be published or presented at professional conferences.

Description of the Study Procedures

- If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:
 - 1) Participate in a brief, introductory conversation with a Smith graduate student researcher over the phone. The purpose of this conversation is to explain what the study is about and how it will be conducted, and to answer any questions you might have. The researcher will also explain the consent form and issues of confidentiality.
 - 2) Complete a questionnaire that can be filled out online, mailed, or delivered to you by your family support worker. This questionnaire should take about 20 minutes to complete. The survey is just like the ones you have filled out in the past, with a few additional questions.
 - 3) Participate in an interview by phone or Skype that will last about 45 minutes. Each parent will

have a separate interview, which will consist of answering questions about how you are thinking about your Parenting in Partnership experiences and how your thinking has evolved over the past year. Although this interview will be conducted separately for each parent, participation from both parents is strongly encouraged. An audio recorder will be used for this interview, so the interview can be transcribed and themes from all of the interviews compiled.

Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study

- The study has minimal risks. Some of the questions in the interview and the questionnaire are of a personal nature and may cause you some discomfort or distress. You may skip any question that you do not feel comfortable answering and can pause or end the interview at any time. Your family support worker will be available if you want to discuss some of the issues after the interview and/or seek support for yourself or your family; the researcher can put you in touch with him or her.

Benefits of Being in the Study

- The study will give you the opportunity to think more about your relationships with your children and your partner/co-parent. In addition, you will have an opportunity to talk about family issues that are important to you, revisit what you have learned during the Parenting in Partnership program, and reflect on your goals for the future.
- Your participation in this study may also benefit other families by providing a better understanding of how to improve children's healthy development and well-being. It will also help researchers learn how the Parenting in Partnership program was helpful to families, and may contribute to the longevity of Parenting in Partnership program, as well as the development of future programs based on the Supporting Fatherhood Involvement model.

Confidentiality

- Your participation will be kept confidential. The questionnaires and the interviews will be conducted in the privacy of your home or preferred location. Your decision to participate will be shared only among the research team at Smith College and the Parenting in Partnership staff at Norwood. The information you provide will not be shared outside of the Smith College research team and the Data Manager for the Parenting in Partnership program unless you provide information that you are at risk for harming yourself or someone else; such information will be brought to the attention of the Parenting in Partnership staff and may need to be reported to child protective services or law enforcement. Before choosing to report such information, the researcher will discuss with you what he/she needs to report before doing so. Information will be compiled in a final report for the funders of the program, but all information will be reported in aggregate, and any quotes or examples will be carefully disguised.
- All research materials including recordings, transcriptions, analyses and consent documents will be stored in a secure location for three years according to U.S. federal regulations. In the event that materials are needed beyond this period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed. All electronically stored data will be password protected during the storage period. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would make it possible to identify you.

Payments/gift

- You will receive the following gift after completing both the questionnaire and interview: a 15 dollars gift certificate to a local coffee shop or grocery store. The gift certificate will be delivered to you by your family support worker.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may decide not to take part in the study without affecting your relationship with the researchers of this study, Smith College, or the Centre. Your decision to decline will not prevent you from receiving any services now or in the future at Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre. You have the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely up to the date noted below. If you choose to withdraw, I will not use any of your information collected for this study. You must notify me of your decision to withdraw by email or phone by March 1, 2014. After that date, your information will be part of the thesis and final report.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

- You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact researchers Todd Chen at xxxxxx@xxxx, (xxx)xxx-xxxx or Sarah Robins at xxxxxx@xxxx, (xxx)xxx-xxxx. If you would like a summary of the study results, please let one of us or your family service worker know and we will send you one once the study is completed. If you have any other concerns about your rights as a research participant, or if you have any problems as a result of your participation, you may contact the Chair of the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Committee at (413) 585-7974.

Consent

- Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a participant in this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep.

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher(s): _____ Date: _____

.....

Appendix E
Informed consent form: Lethbridge



SMITH COLLEGE

Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Smith College School for Social Work • Northampton, MA

.....

Title of Study: Supporting Father Involvement (SFI), Lethbridge Site
Lead Researcher: Dr. Marsha Pruett, Smith College School of Social Work, 413-585-7997
Co-Researchers: Todd Chen, Rachel Honig, Annabel Lane, and Sarah Robins
(Smith College School for Social Work)

.....

Introduction

- You are being asked to help us understand what you learned in the Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) program at Family Centre by participating in follow-up research on the program’s effectiveness.
- You were selected as a possible participant because of your previous participation in the program.
- Please read this form and ask any questions that you have before agreeing to be in the study.

Purpose of Study

- The purpose of the study is to better understand the experiences of the families who participated in the SFI program. We would like to learn more about how your family may or may not have changed in the time since you participated in the program. In this program evaluation, we will ask for information about your well-being as an individual, partner/co-parent, and parent, as well as your children’s well-being, and relationships within your family.
- This study is being conducted to assist the program funders in attracting interest for additional funding for the program. This study also fulfills a requirement for the researchers’ Master’s in Social Work (MSW) degrees.
- Ultimately, this research may be published or presented at professional conferences.

Description of the Study Procedures

- If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:
 - 4) Participate in a brief, introductory conversation with a Smith graduate student researcher over the phone. The purpose of this conversation is to explain what the study is about and how it will be conducted, and to answer any questions you might have. The researcher will also explain the consent form and issues of confidentiality.
 - 5) Complete a questionnaire that can be filled out online, mailed, or delivered to you by your case manager. This questionnaire should take about 20 minutes to complete. The survey is just like the ones you have filled out in the past, with a few additional questions.
 - 6) Participate in an interview by phone or Skype that will last about 45 minutes. Each parent will have a separate interview, which will consist of answering questions about how you are thinking

about your SFI experiences and how your thinking has evolved over the past year. Although this interview will be conducted separately for each parent, participation from both parents is strongly encouraged. An audio recorder will be used for this interview, so the interview can be transcribed and themes from all of the interviews compiled.

Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study

- The study has minimal risks. Some of the questions in the interview and the questionnaire are of a personal nature and may cause you some discomfort or distress. You may skip any question that you do not feel comfortable answering and can pause or end the interview at any time. Please contact your SFI case manager if you want to discuss some of the issues after the interview and/or seek support for yourself or your family.

Benefits of Being in the Study

- The study will give you the opportunity to think more about your relationships with your children and your partner/co-parent. In addition, you will have an opportunity to talk about family issues that are important to you, revisit what you have learned during the SFI program, and reflect on your goals for the future.
- Your participation in this study may also benefit other families by providing a better understanding of how to improve children's healthy development and well-being. It will also help researchers learn how the SFI program was helpful to families, and may contribute to the longevity of the local SFI program, as well as the development of future programs based on the SFI model.

Confidentiality

- Your participation will be kept confidential. The questionnaires and the interviews will be conducted in the privacy of your home or preferred location. Your decision to participate will be shared only among the research team at Smith College and the SFI staff at Family Centre. The information you provide will not be shared outside of the Smith College research team or the SFI Data Manager unless you provide information that you are at risk for harming yourself or someone else; such information will be brought to the attention of the SFI staff at Family Centre and may need to be reported to child protective services or law enforcement. Before choosing to report such information, the researcher will discuss with you what he/she needs to report before doing so. Information will be compiled in a final report for the funders of the program, but all information will be reported in aggregate, and any quotes or examples will be carefully disguised. In no ways will we disclose information that would identify your personal details when presenting our research for any of the purposes outlined above.
- All research materials including recordings, transcriptions, analyses and consent documents will be stored in a secure location at Smith College for three years according to U.S. federal regulations. In the event that materials are needed beyond this period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed. All electronically stored data will be password protected during the storage period. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would make it possible to identify you.

Payments/gift

- You will receive the following gift after completing both the questionnaire and interview: a \$15 dollar gift certificate to a local coffee shop (Tim Hortons).

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may decide not to take part in the

study without affecting your relationship with the researchers of this study, Smith College, or Family Centre. Your decision to decline will not prevent you from receiving any services now or in the future. You have the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely up to the date noted below. If you choose to withdraw, I will not use any of your information collected for this study. You must notify me of your decision to withdraw by email or phone by March 1, 2014. After that date, your information will be part of the thesis and final report.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

- You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact researchers Rachel Honig at xxxxxx@xxxx, (xxx)xxx-xxxx or Sarah Robins at xxxxxx@xxxx, (xxx)xxx-xxxx. If you would like a summary of the study results, please let one of us or your family service worker know and we will send you one once the study is completed. If you have any other concerns about your rights as a research participant, or if you have any problems as a result of your participation, you may contact the Chair of the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Committee at (413) 585-7974.

Consent

- Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a participant in this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep.

.....

Name of Participant (print): _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Researcher(s): _____ Date: _____

.....

Appendix F
Informed consent form: Cochrane



Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Smith College School for Social Work • Northampton, MA

.....

Title of Study: Supporting Father Involvement (SFI), Cochrane Site
Lead Researcher: Dr. Marsha Pruett, Smith College School of Social Work, 413-585-7997
Co-Researchers: Todd Chen, Rachel Honig, Annabel Lane, and Sarah Robins
(Smith College School for Social Work)

.....

Introduction

- You are being asked to help us understand what you learned in the Fathers Matter program at the Western Rocky View Parent Link Centre by participating in follow-up research on the program’s effectiveness.
- You were selected as a possible participant because of your previous participation in the program.
- Please read this form and ask any questions that you have before agreeing to be in the study.

Purpose of Study

- The purpose of the study is to better understand the experiences of the families who participated in the Fathers Matter program. We would like to learn more about how your family may or may not have changed in the time since you participated in the program. In this program evaluation, we will ask for information about your well-being as an individual, partner/co-parent, and parent, as well as your children’s well-being, and relationships within your family.
- This study is being conducted to assist the program funders in attracting interest for additional funding for the program. This study also fulfills a requirement for the researchers’ Master’s in Social Work (MSW) degrees.
- Ultimately, this research may be published or presented at professional conferences.

Description of the Study Procedures

- If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:
 - 7) Participate in a brief, introductory conversation with a Smith graduate student researcher over the phone. The purpose of this conversation is to explain what the study is about and how it will be conducted, and to answer any questions you might have. The researcher will also explain the consent form and issues of confidentiality.
 - 8) Complete a questionnaire that can be filled out online, mailed, or delivered to you by your case manager. This questionnaire should take about 20 minutes to complete. The survey is just like the ones you have filled out in the past, with a few additional questions.
 - 9) Participate in an interview by phone or Skype that will last about 45 minutes. Each parent will have a separate interview, which will consist of answering questions about how you are thinking

about your SFI experiences and how your thinking has evolved over the past year. Although this interview will be conducted separately for each parent, participation from both parents is strongly encouraged. An audio recorder will be used for this interview, so the interview can be transcribed and themes from all of the interviews compiled.

Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study

- The study has minimal risks. Some of the questions in the interview and the questionnaire are of a personal nature and may cause you some discomfort or distress. You may skip any question that you do not feel comfortable answering and can pause or end the interview at any time. Your case manager will be available if you want to discuss some of the issues after the interview and/or seek support for yourself or your family; the researcher can put you in touch with him or her.

Benefits of Being in the Study

- The study will give you the opportunity to think more about your relationships with your children and your partner/co-parent. In addition, you will have an opportunity to talk about family issues that are important to you, revisit what you have learned during the Fathers Matter program, and reflect on your goals for the future.
- Your participation in this study may also benefit other families by providing a better understanding of how to improve children's healthy development and well-being. It will also help researchers learn how the SFI program was helpful to families, and may contribute to the longevity of the Fathers Matter program, as well as the development of future programs based on the SFI model.

Confidentiality

- Your participation will be kept confidential. The questionnaires and the interviews will be conducted in the privacy of your home or preferred location. Your decision to participate will be shared only among the research team at Smith College and the Fathers Matter staff. The information you provide will not be shared outside of the Smith College research team or the SFI Data Manager for the Families Matter program unless you provide information that you are at risk for harming yourself or someone else; such information will be brought to the attention of the Families Matter staff and may need to be reported to child protective services or law enforcement. Before choosing to report such information, the researcher will discuss with you what he/she needs to report before doing so.
- All research materials including recordings, transcriptions, analyses and consent documents will be stored in a secure location for three years according to U.S. federal regulations. In the event that materials are needed beyond this period, they will be kept secured until no longer needed, and then destroyed. All electronically stored data will be password protected during the storage period. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would make it possible to identify you.

Payments/gift

- You will receive the following gift after completing both the questionnaire and interview: a 15 dollar gift certificate to a local coffee shop. The gift certificate will be delivered to you by your case manager.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

- The decision to participate in this study is entirely up to you. You may decide not to take part in the study without affecting your relationship with the researchers of this study, Smith College, or the Parent Link Centre. Your decision to decline will not prevent you from receiving any services now or in the future at the Centre. You have the right not to answer any single question, as well as to withdraw completely up to the date noted below. If you choose to withdraw, I will not use any of your

information collected for this study. You must notify me of your decision to withdraw by email or phone by March 1, 2014. After that date, your information will be part of the thesis and final report.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

- You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact researchers Annabel Lane at xxxxxx@xxxx, (xxx) xxx-xxxx or Sarah Robins at xxxxxx@xxxx, (xxx) xxx-xxxx. If you would like a summary of the study results, please let one of us or your case manager know and we will send you one once the study is completed. If you have any other concerns about your rights as a research participant, or if you have any problems as a result of your participation, you may contact the Chair of the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Committee at (413) 585-7974.

Consent

- Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a participant in this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep.

.....

Name of Participant (print): _____
Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____
Signature of Researcher(s): _____ Date: _____

.....

Appendix G
HSR Approval Letter



School for Social Work
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063
T (413) 585-7950 F (413) 585-7994

January 4, 2014

Todd Chen, Rachel Honig, Annabel Lane, and Sarah Robins

Dear Todd, Rachel, Annabel and Sarah,

You did a very nice job on your revisions. Your project is now approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee.

Please note the following requirements:

Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

Maintaining Data: You must retain all data and other documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

Renewal: You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

Completion: You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Congratulations and our best wishes on your interesting study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Kersten'.

Elaine Kersten, Ed.D.
Co-Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Marsha Pruett, Research Advisor