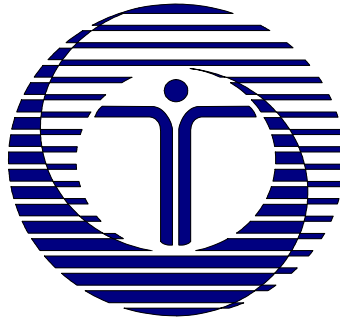


*FINAL REPORT*  
*submitted to*  
*Ford Foundation Southern Africa*



**THE  
FATHERHOOD  
PROJECT**

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Support by the Ford Foundation for the Fatherhood Project ran from June 2003 to July 2004

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## 1. Introduction

The Fatherhood Project was launched by the Child, Youth and Family Development programme at the Human Sciences Research Council early in 2003, in collaboration with the South African Men's Forum. With a small amount of baseline HSRC parliamentary funding, and a start-up grant from the Ford Foundation Southern Africa Office, the project took shape in July 2003.



Conceived as a form of action research, a set of *a priori* principles were used to devise an advocacy platform, and strategies were put in place to assemble available information and generate new knowledge about men as fathers, with the intention of trying to increase men's care and protection of children<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.hsrc.ac.za/fatherhood>

The project was prompted by three converging issues related to men and children in South Africa:

*1. The very high rates of child sexual abuse, most of which is perpetrated by men.*

More than 25 000 children are sexually abused each year in South Africa. Few, if any, available programmes to reduce child sexual abuse in South Africa target men, either as individuals or to change norms, including those which inhibit men from preventing other men from sexually abusing children (Richter, Dawes & Higson-Smith, 2004).

*2. The absence of men from households and low levels of father support for children's care.*

According to South Africa's Central Statistics Services (Budlender, 1998), about 42% of children in 1998 lived only with their mother, in comparison to 1% of children who lived only with their father. Findings from a longitudinal birth cohort study in Soweto-Johannesburg show that father support for children, if a couple is not married, is tenuous and grows weaker over time. Only 20% of fathers, who were not married to the child's mother at the time of their birth, were in contact with their children by the time their children reached the age of 11 years (Richter, 2004). Studies in several countries indicate that fewer than half of all maintenance orders are complied with, and indications are that the situation in South Africa is considerably worse (Burman & Berger, 1987). Children living only with their mothers may experience a number of disadvantages, including reaching lower levels of education largely because they spend less time enrolled in school (Anderson, 1990). Increasing men's contact and support for children could considerably improve children's socio-economic circumstances.

*3. The increased care needs of children as a result of deaths and family disruption from the AIDS epidemic.*

The AIDS epidemic is significantly unsettling the care of children as breadwinners and caregivers lose their jobs or are unable to work at home, as they become over-burdened with the care of others, and as they become ill and die (Richter, Manegold & Pather, 2004). Much of the burden of care for children displaced by the impact of AIDS falls to women, including older women. Potentially more South African fathers could step into the breach and care for children. Demographic and Health surveys indicate that South Africa has the lowest rate, in the African countries examined, of maternal orphans living with their surviving parent – 41% as compared to 65% in Zambia, for example (Ainsworth & Filmer, 2001).



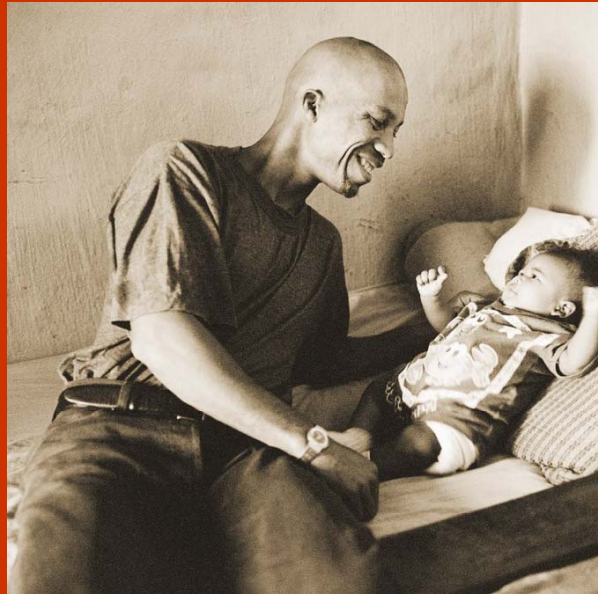
Val Adamson

## **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the Fatherhood Project were formulated in both general and specific terms. In general, the project aimed to:

- Provide information about men, fathers, family life and child development;
- Influence social expectations and perceptions about men and their care for children;
- Rally peer and professional support to enable men to be more involved in children's lives;
- Create a sense of shared responsibility for children's development among men and women;
- Engender broad-based and long-term commitment to men's involvement with children; and
- Identify and address barriers to men's engagement with and protection of young children.

Making men into fathers



theFatherhoodproject

The project, as originally conceived in nature and scope, could not expect to effect widespread public awareness, attitude or behaviour change. However, it could attempt to trigger changes in intermediary processes that have the potential to result in widespread public awareness, attitude or behaviour change. This can be done through mechanisms which change the discourse relating to men and children currently adopted in the mass media, by changing the agendas of agencies which fund social research and programme activities, and by affecting the scope and focus of programmes implemented by community-based organizations, among others. At this level, the aims of the project were to stimulate and increase:

- Public discourse about men and their relationships with children;
- The priority given by funders to male involvement in community programmes and the promotion of fatherhood;
- The inclusion of men and support for fatherhood in programmes targeted at children, women and family life;
- Research on fatherhood and the effects of father involvement on children and men.

Further, the project was also designed to take advantage of the International Year of the Family in 2004, and to focus on men in families.



Conceived in this way, potential measurable outcomes of the project are:

- Increased HSRC-initiated and independent media coverage and debate on the issue of fatherhood, and men's role in the care and protection of children in national and local press, radio, television;
- Change in the nature of the discourse regarding men and their responsibilities of care and protection towards children and a greater recognition of men's emotional needs, and the constraints which affect their capacity to offer care and protection for children;
- Increased participation by men in public debate about fatherhood and the role of men in the care and protection of children;
- Increased awareness and willingness of men to take responsibility for the care and protection of children;
- Increased focus and funding by national and international donors in government, non-government and private sector organizations on fatherhood and men's role in the care and protection of children, as reflected in organization and programme plans, calls for proposals, awards made, meetings convened, etc;
- Increased incorporation by government, non-government and private sector organizations and initiatives of activities to promote fatherhood, or men's role in the care and protection of children;
- Signs of alignment of the Fatherhood Project with activities in the country that are part of the International Year of the Family in 2004; and
- Research activities which are generated by the project and which extend the aims of the project.



### **3. Methods**

Action research, according to Kurt Lewin (1948) involves planning on the basis of reconnaissance, taking action, and learning from the results of the action taken. This process, which Lewin saw as fundamental for research to initiate and support social change, is similar to Dewey's conception of learning from experience (1938). The Fatherhood Project aims to promote men's care and protection of children.

Several *a priori* intervention principles were adopted to achieve the goals of the Fatherhood Project including the following (Wollman, Lobenstine, Foderaro & Stose, 1998):

- Featuring positive aspects of fatherhood and encouraging men to enter the domain of care for children, in contrast to focusing on highly visible cases of abuse and neglect by, what remains, a small minority of men;
- Highlighting the benefits of father involvement with children for men themselves, particularly in reducing harmful behaviour towards the self and others, as a result of a longer-term perspective created by commitment to one or more children;

- Stressing an expanded definition of social fatherhood<sup>2</sup> to affect norms governing men's behaviour towards children in general;
- Using visual images as a powerful medium of communication for effecting emotional reactions and promoting identification through nostalgia (Sontag, 1971).

To achieve the aims and objectives of the project, and incorporating the methodological approach described, the Fatherhood Project has three broad phases:

1. Awareness raising and advocacy
2. Information dissemination
3. Research and publication

Each of these broad phases is described in more detail in the following sections of the report.

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<sup>2</sup> Men who have a significant relationship with a child.

## 4. Awareness Raising and Advocacy

### 4.1. Introduction

The aims of the advocacy platform created for the project were, in broad terms, to:

- Generate public discourse about men and fatherhood;
- Prompt increased funding by national and international donors for the inclusion of men in programmes to support children; and
- Encourage organizations to include men in programme activities.

*The Informer* Vol 1  
Edition 10

## Children keep Men Safe

**Professor Linda Richter**  
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**M**EN, especially young men, who are connected to and spend time with their children are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviour, including sexual behaviour that makes them vulnerable to HIV infection. This is one of the research findings that has prompted a new undertaking by the Human Sciences Research Council, called the Fatherhood Project. The project aims to promote caring relationships between men and children for their mutual benefit.

Children gain a great deal from relationships with men. Men play, guide, model, and teach children differently to women. It's not better or worse than what women do, but different in ways that expand children's experiences. Research findings show that children who enjoy loving relationships with father figures are more confident and achieving than children who don't have men to support and encourage them.

A lesser-known finding is that children are also good for men! Young men in many parts of the world, especially if they are living in conditions with few economic prospects, are at high risk for behaviour that is dangerous to themselves and others. This includes fast driving, carrying a weapon, drinking too much, taking drugs, being part of a gang, getting on the wrong side of the law, and having multiple partners, including sex workers. Pilot interventions in the United States have shown that young men living in these conditions who maintain regular contact with their children are less likely to engage in these dangerous behaviours. They are also more likely to conduct themselves in pro-social ways – to persevere in looking for a job, keep the jobs they have, contribute financially to their children's support, and so on.

One of the things that puts South African men at risk for HIV infection is sex with multiple partners. Many young men in this high-risk age group are also fathers. For many

or support their children for longer than a few months after the child's birth. It is a sad truth that many of these young men themselves grew up without knowing their fathers. When asked about this, most young men speak with longing, anger and frustration at not having known their own fathers. The Fatherhood Project aims to encourage men, especially young men, to reconnect and stay in contact with their children.

Fatherhood is a mental concept; it consists of the ideas and images we have of men who protect, encourage and guide us. In a country where so many fathers are absent from homes and from the lives of their children, fathers nonetheless feature strongly in the minds and yearnings of young people, including young men at high risk for HIV/Aids infection.

The Fatherhood Project at the HSRC aims to recognise, encourage and support men's care and protection of children, both their own and children in the households and neighbourhoods in which they live. This is being done through the collection of photographic images of men with children, by professional and non-professional photographers, and by children. These men are not necessarily the biological fathers of the children they are with. And children are people of any age. A 63-year-old man may still have a living father.

The photographs have been selected to bring out the protection and pleasure that children enjoy when they are with caring men. At the same time, the photos also show how men enjoy the fun, innocence and trust of children. The exhibition aims to demonstrate what some men are, and all men can be – guardians, companions, teachers, playmates, supporters, friends, and guides to children. The exhibition of photographs will travel to a number of towns and cities as well as be published in a book.

The Fatherhood Project is led by the Child, Youth and Family Development research programme at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), and works with interested groups and programmes to bring men home.



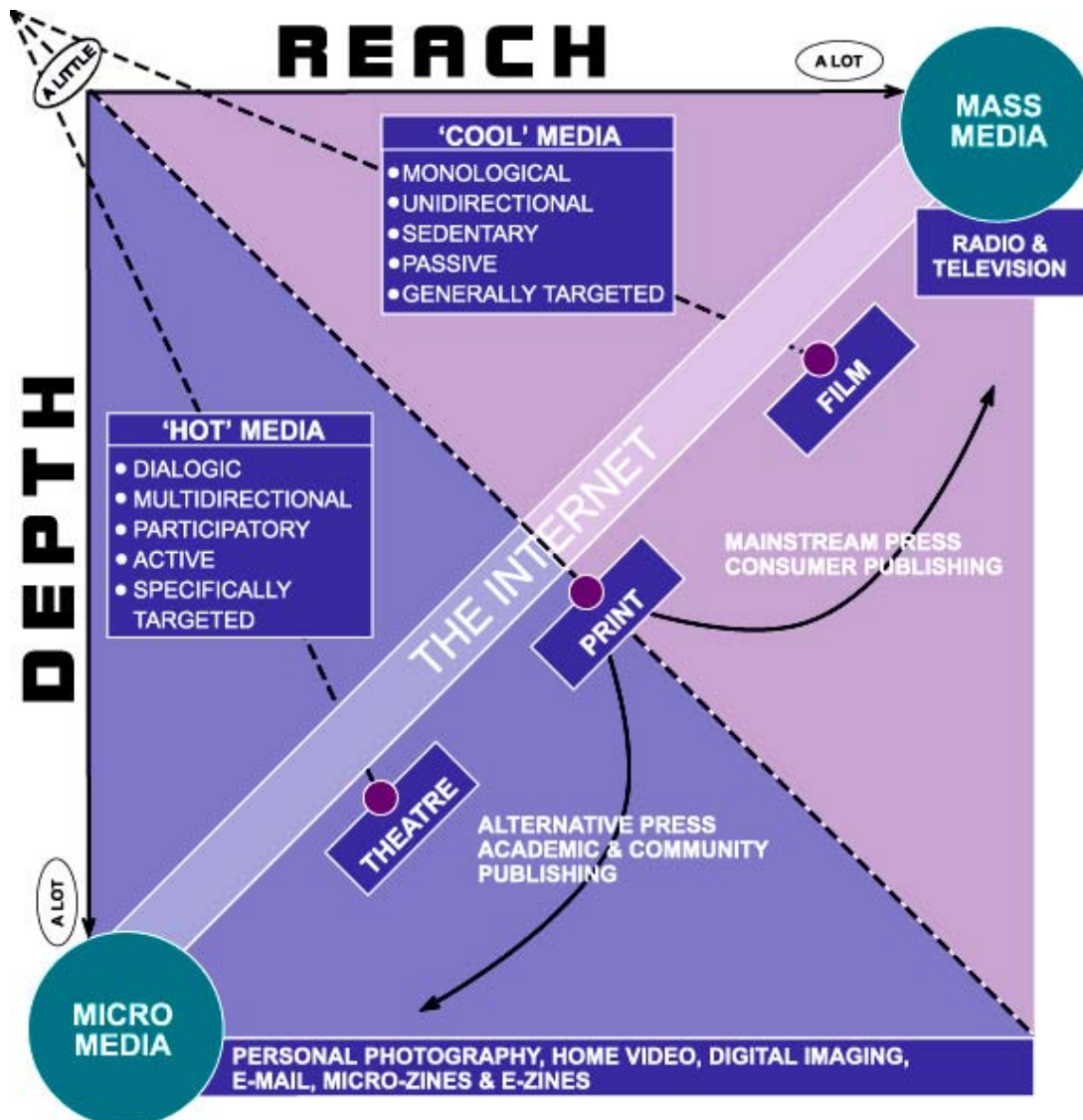
**Fathers enjoying special moments with their children. Pictures by Precious Ngcobo courtesy of Vacks Phupeli of Human Sciences Research Council.**

reasons, few of these young men live with their partners, or even continue to see the women who are the mothers of their children. Similarly, only a minority of these men see

The Informer, 2003, Vol 1, Edition 10

In the first instance, the project aimed to achieve these objectives through a travelling exhibition of about 150 photographs, with media coverage and associated events arranged in collaborations with local organizations.

The intention was to use photographs in a variety of ways to traverse and exploit a continuum of communicative settings in order to try and maximise the impact of messages promoting men's care and protection of children (Bhana et al, 2004), as well as to construct a positive image of fatherhood through the provision of opportunities to identify with archetypal images of love, protection and emotional engagement with children.



Andy Mason (personal communication)



It is now generally accepted that mass media can create awareness and communicate basic information, but they are not able, on their own, to effect behaviour change at scale (Naidoo & Wills, 2000). Mass media become more effective when individuals are able to draw support from surrounding interpersonal systems in the context of favourable public opinion. The central idea of the MM/MMM model is that mass media messages generally lack depth, are non-dialogical and non-participatory, whereas micro-media interventions lack reach but are dialogical and participatory. Micro-media activities require in-depth personal involvement, and are potentially life-changing for the few people who participate in them. Mass media messages reach millions of people but are ephemeral and impersonal, do not have the benefit of repetition that advertisers have, and are likely to get lost in the plethora of competing messages to which consumers are subjected. The MM/MMM mode thus proposes that an integrated media intervention should involve participatory, community-based, dialogical projects in which ordinary people can be involved at community level as well as mass media exposure. The matrix of interventions can be plotted on the continuum to ensure an integrated strategy.

While the photographic exhibitions and the media prompted by them would create a mass media message, the project depended on collaborations with partners in the cities where the exhibitions were held, to create a participatory communication approach (Dragon, 2001). By this means the ideas behind the project would cover the continuum from mass media with reach but limited depth to micro media with depth and limited reach. The exhibitions were organised with local partners who were requested to arrange lectures, seminars, workshops and performance events focusing on fatherhood to coincide with the exhibition. The outcome was envisaged to be a matrix of interventions, some community-based, others at the level of the mass media, which would combine to constitute an integrated multilevel communications programme. A good example of this occurred with the involvement of the South African Navy in Simonstown. They have incorporated the Fatherhood Project image and messages into a branded Navy set of materials and activities to promote fatherhood in the context of a work environment that requires men to be away from home for long periods of time.



A Navy father, on return from duty, meeting his new baby

Macro and micro media work are not unrelated. We assumed that activity and participation at the community level would generate ‘news’ that would assist in propelling the topic of fatherhood into the mainstream media. Where there was community-level participation in the development of exhibition material—as in the community-based photography project that involved schoolchildren taking their own photographs of their fathers—this generated a great deal of mainstream media coverage

#### 4.2. The Photographs

Susan Sontag (1978, 2003) writes compellingly about the role and function of the photographic image. For Sontag, photographs are more than simply representations of reality - they add to, extend or “usurp” reality, because a photograph is not just an image of or interpretation of the real world, it is also a trace, something directly stencilled off the real, like a footprint or a death mask”. As such, photographs have veracity, they do not require any special literacy; and they can generally be read instantly (though not always understood instantly) because they are in a visual language that everybody can apprehend.

Sontag repeatedly refers to the photograph as a ‘trace’, an object that has “an immediacy and authority greater than any verbal account” (2003, p. 21). This provides the documentary photograph with the “moral authority” required to act as a piece of social, political or historical evidence. But the photographic image, despite this evidentiary quality,

is not 'simple'. It embodies the contradiction of being, simultaneously, "both objective record and personal testimony" (2003, p. 23). It is both the transcription of a moment, and an interpretation of the moment that it transcribes. Furthermore, its meaning is often open-ended - the photographer's intentions do not necessarily determine the meaning of the photograph, nor can the photographer do more than direct the reader towards a preferred reading. Besides being evidentiary, photographs also have a totemic power that makes documentary photography an ideal medium for the propagation of ideas through information, education and communication (IEC) interventions.

The Fatherhood Project Photographic Exhibition eschews images of violence and degradation (except for a contextualising banner "Men in Crisis"). Instead, the exhibition shows only positive, affirming, pro-social images that speak lovingly about the benefits of men's engagement with children. No contrasting or conflicting images interfere with the presentation of an ideal reality in which men cradle, cuddle, play with or look deeply into the eyes of the children in their care. Because of the incontrovertible authority of the photographic image, these images take on an evidentiary veracity - *it must be true then that all men are not monsters; that the stereotype of men as dangerous, shallow, self-centered abusers is just that, a stereotype.*

Photographs were solicited from the images submitted by a wide array of professional photographers to a call by *South Photographs*, as well as by word of mouth. The call for photographs was stated in the following way:

The Child, Youth and Family Development (CYFD) research program at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), under the leadership of Professor Linda Richter, is undertaking a media intervention project to promote responsive fatherhood. Using the methods of entertainment-education and the powerful sensitizing effects of images, the intervention will consist of an assembly of photographs of men in intimate relation to children. The effect being sought is similar to that of photographic compilations like *The Family of Man*.

We are looking for photographs of men with children, images of fatherhood - images that speak to the themes of fathers, grandfathers, step-fathers, other people's fathers, men who are not fathers, good fathers, bad fathers, stories about fathers, what fathers think and feel, fathers compared to mothers, fathers we love, and so on. We're looking to create an emotional response of empathy towards men, by men and women, by children and older persons, that will enable men to assume and to live up to expectations of their involvement with and protection of children. We are looking for the light in contrast to the dark representation we already have. We are also looking for the expression of longing in men for intimacy, and in all of us the longing for a kind and protective father. In a country with so many fathers absent from homes, and from the lives of their children, fathers are nonetheless strong in the minds and yearnings of young people. The photographs will be used in an exhibition, a book, and possibly in a calendar, poster and postcards.



In addition, photographic essays on fatherhood were commissioned from three top South African photographers – Ruth Motau, Paul Weinberg and George Hallett<sup>3</sup>. With the help of renowned photographer, Angie Buckland, a small number of students in photography at a tertiary educational institution were requested to take pictures of men caring for children in public places. Lastly, two groups of children 10-12 years of age, about 60 from the urban area of Soweto-Johannesburg, and about 60 children from a rural area just outside Durban, were provided with disposable cameras and sufficient training to use them, and asked to take pictures of the men in their lives they thought of as fathers. Alex Fattar, a human rights activist and photographer working at the Children’s Rights Centre in Durban, provided the children with a morning workshop on photography, use of the cameras, and ethical guidance on photographing people.



Children at a photographic workshop at Saphumulela School

The children were also asked to write “essays”, short pieces of no more than a page in length, on “their father, or the person they consider to be their father or father figure”. These essays form part of a research project on children’s views of men and fathers, which is described in more detail later in the report. However, the essays are powerful testimony to the importance of men in the lives of children, and a strong challenge to stereotypes of, for example, cruel and neglectful step-fathers. An application for funding is being prepared to support the publication of the children’s photographs and essays as an advocacy document for use in programmes to encourage men to become more involved in the care and protection of children.

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<sup>3</sup> Contracts were signed with professional photographers for the use of their images in the Fatherhood Project

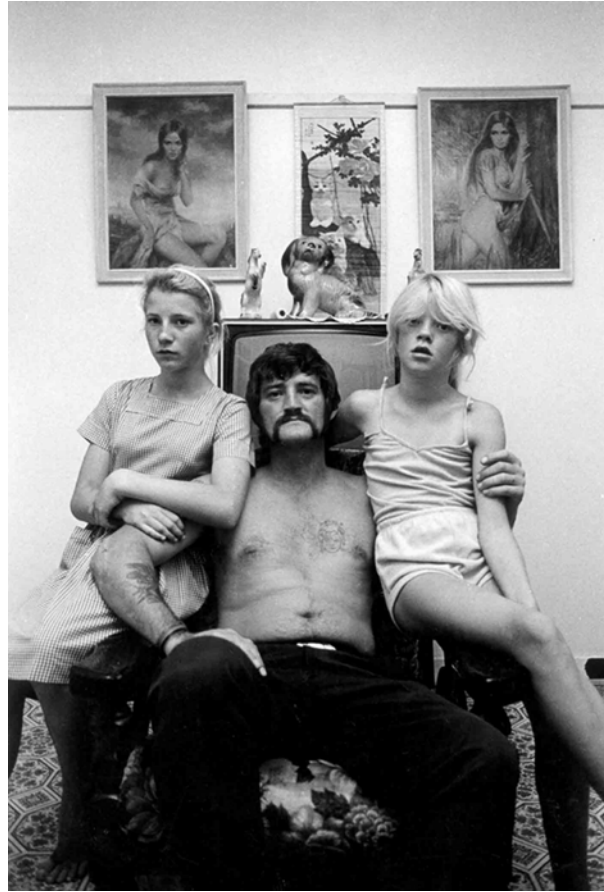
I call him uncle because he is not married to my mother, yet he is a father to me in all respect. He is a nice person to my family. Though he lives in town he supports our family in every possible way. He buys food for us and also gives mu mother our transport money. He buys us proper school unifom. He plays a very important role in my family. When my mother is not okay we just wish father could come. When he comes we can see my mother smiling face. He is a loving person. When he comes home he hugs and kisses us but not the way he kisses mom, he holds her for a long time. I can see that they are in love. He is a responsible man. He cleans the yard when he is at home he makes sure that I am there to see how it is done. He teaches me how to say a prayer every night. He helps me with my homework he is my bestfriend I talk I play I laugh with him. I will be happy if he marries my mother then build the house to accommodate the whole family. He is my hero.

11-year-old girl in KwaZulu-Natal

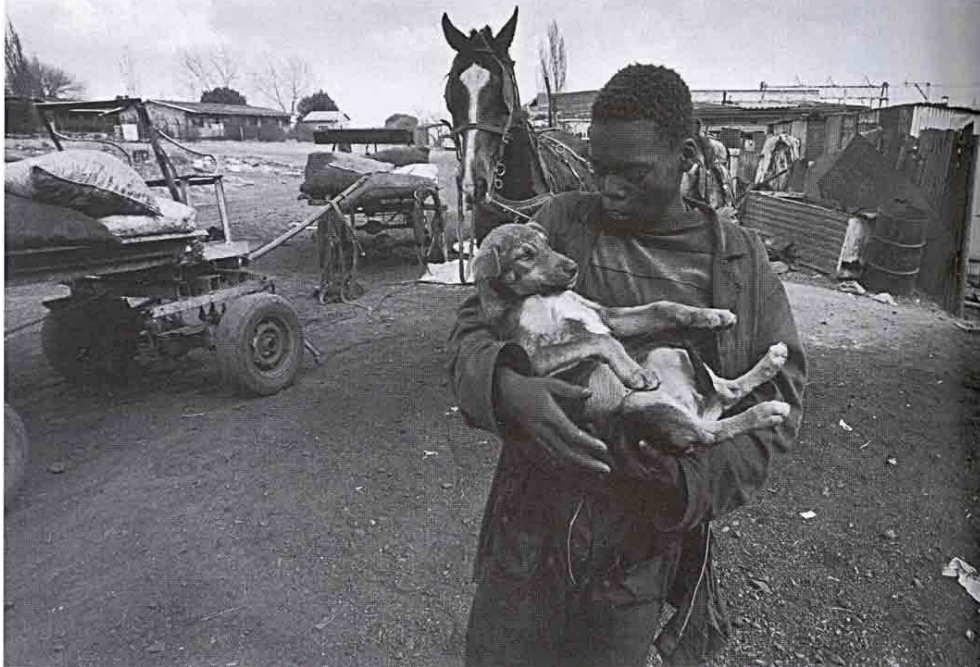
From amongst the more than 2 500 images received, fewer than 150 were selected for inclusion in the project, and a small number of additional images were solicited outside of this process. Selection was a complex process. The first round involved choosing images that conveyed an emotional tone of positive engagement between men and children; the second round of selection was based on aesthetics and a photographic expert was asked to select well-composed and technically good images; the third round involved removing any potentially offensive photographs such as pictures of a naked adult man being ritually bathed by his father as part of a traditional ceremony; and the fourth round involved soliciting the views of child advocates from Unicef and other agencies to ensure that a full range of images of men with children were included – such as men and/or children with disabilities.

The process of selection of images to display is itself open to analysis and critique (Sontag, 1971). There is a challenge, some might say a contradiction, in trying to shift perceptions of fatherhood AND trying to respect existing sensitivities about maleness and fatherhood. In walking this difficult path, the process of selection itself limits what we make visible about men.

Through selection, some interesting images were excluded. For example, a photograph by Paul Weinberg of “a hard-working man whose daughters mean everything to him” was thought to be too ambiguous, its multiple meanings too close to a line where caring borders on sexuality, whether intended by the photographer or not. However, the project is bound to spark this kind of debate, and this is its purpose, and its power.



On the other hand, it seemed inconceivable not to have in the collection of professionals' work, some photographs taken by Peter Magubane, whose work includes *Black Child* (1982, now out of print), especially because one of his photographs seem to capture the essence of the Fatherhood Project. The young, dehumanised boy who delivers coal in the early hours in Soweto, becomes undeniably a person, with emotions, hopes and pain, because we "see" him cradling his dog with affection and care. This picture illustrates how caring for someone else, a weaker and innocent child, can humanise a man, and can humanise our view of him. Special permission was obtained from Peter Magubane to include this and other of his pictures in the Fatherhood collection.



Peter Magubane's Coal Worker

The exhibition was curated by Julie Manegold, and the final selection of photographs, with brief illustrative text from the children's essays and famous quotations, were arranged in six themes: Moments of Tenderness, The Art of Caring, Quality Time, Extending Horizons, The Family Man, and Generations.

#### 4.3. Key Concepts and Messages

A number of key ideas were used to advance the awareness raising and advocacy platform of the project, including the following:

- In order to make the project maximally effective, the Fatherhood Project should link to other initiatives involving men. These include efforts, among others, to:
  - address the high levels of men's mortality and morbidity as a result of violence and non-accidental injury (for example, the *South African Men's Forum*);
  - men's violence and abuse of women and children (for example, *Men for Change*);
  - reduce HIV risk (for example, *Men as Partners*);
  - improve the care of children, including those affected by AIDS (for example, *Children in Legal Disputes* and *Children First*);
  - strengthen families (for example, the *Department of Social Development*)
  - improve the social fabric (for example, the *Moral Regeneration Movement*); and
  - reintegrate offenders (for example, the *National Institute for Crime and Reintegration of Offenders*).

- It is necessary to build the case, with evidence from available literature, as well as from South African empirical research and analyses, of the benefits of men's involvement with children. This includes benefits to children in terms of social and psychological development; benefits for men's adjustment and reduced risk behaviour; benefits for women and families in terms of decreased interpersonal violence and improved economic and social security; generational benefits for families and children as modelled effects of good male parenting filter down; and reduced social and economic costs of fatherless children and childless men.
- It is important to understand and elaborate the social and history and context by which men have come to be separated from families. The migrant labour system, *Apartheid* restrictions on families living together in urban areas, men's loss of power and their marginalisation and, more recently, massive unemployment, have all disempowered men and disabled their capacity to live with and support their families. In response to this, social adaptations have emerged amongst men which further alienate men from children, such as *machismo* related to the conquest of women.

Desertion by fathers is often prompted by their inability to bear the burden of being primary providers. The burden of failure becomes intolerable for those who lack the capacity to generate enough income as uneducated and unskilled labourers. Desertion is not always physical, it can also be emotional. Many men 'die' as parents and husbands by indulging in alcohol, drugs or becoming unresponsive to their families

Mamphela Ramphele *Steering by the Stars* (2002)

- The Fatherhood Project needs to take care to acknowledge differences between men and the different ways in which men engage with and support children. There is no ideal single form of fatherhood, and efforts to include men in programmes to care for and protect children need to avoid normative prescriptions which limit men's roles as fathers to provision ("ATMs") and protection ("security guards"). For this reason the Fatherhood Project needs to include and profile non-traditional fathers, including adolescent fathers, step- and foster-fathers, gay fathers, fathers with disabilities, absent fathers, and imprisoned fathers, amongst others.
- The Fatherhood Project should challenge destructive myths and stereotypes about gender roles, including the idea that evolutionarily, or through instantiation by culture, men cannot or should not care for children. Ideas about men being less emotionally competent, proposed in popular literature such as *Men are from Mars* and *Women are from Venus*, work against efforts to emancipate both men and

women to take on the flexible and adaptable roles required for the care of children in contemporary society.

- There is a zeitgeist around gender and gender transformation, including men's masculine identity, and roles as fathers and carers of children. The Fatherhood Project needs to draw from this pulse of change and contribute to it.

In order to further its aims, the Fatherhood Project, together with Unicef South Africa, developed and disseminates a small number of key messages regarding the promotion of men's care and protection of children. These messages have been very widely distributed to government, non-governmental agencies, and civic, private sector and faith organizations.

### **The Fatherhood Project: Key Messages**

- **There is no such thing as a fatherless child. Every child had a father or has a father somewhere, even if they don't live with their father or see their father very often. Many men can play the role of father to a child, including grandfathers, uncles, step-fathers, foster-fathers, older brothers, cousins, family friends, and men who have responsibility to care for children.**
- **Children need and want the care of men. Children in all cultures value the idea of a father or a father-figure. They are taught to respect men, and children want to spend time with men and learn from them. Children also have great fun with men through adventurous and boisterous play.**
- **If you don't live with your children, don't lose contact with them. They appreciate hearing from you and knowing that you care about them.**
- **If you can't support your child or provide materially for their needs, you can still give them love, affection and support, and you can still offer them guidance and help.**
- **If you live with your children, be kind to them and don't hurt them. You are so much stronger than they are, and your strength is given to you to protect them from harm.**
- **Children need the care and protection of all men. A man can make all the difference to a child's life by preventing or stopping abuse perpetrated by other people. Men need to protect children in the neighbourhood, at school, on public transport systems, and in the home.**
- **Young men benefit from staying in contact with their children and they may do more to protect themselves from harm and to be economically active as a result of knowing that the child they love depends on them.**




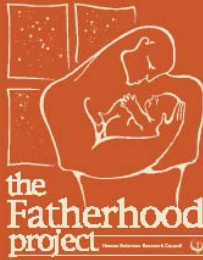
An 11-year-old child's photograph from KwaZulu-Natal

#### 4.4. Advocacy Materials



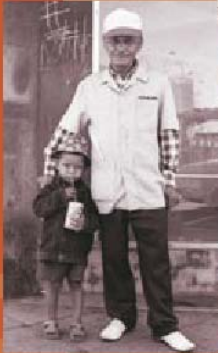
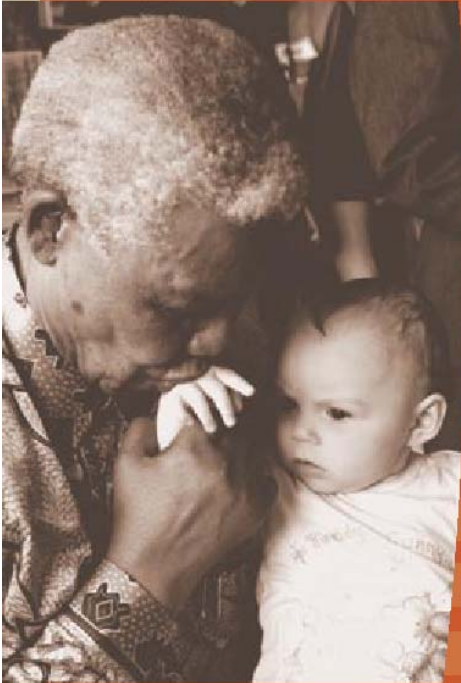
In order to create, very rapidly, an awareness of the Fatherhood Project, a calendar was designed, which was subsequently changed into a poster once the project ran into the new year. More than 10 000 posters were printed and distributed, both directly and indirectly through project partners. It is an achievement of the project that the Fatherhood Project posters are to be found in places as far afield as a Soweto Primary Health Clinic and in the Unicef Headquarters in New York.

A project pamphlet (see appendix 9.1) was also produced in large quantity and is widely distributed. Pens bearing the Fatherhood Project name and logo, as well as specially designed folders, were also used to disseminate awareness of and information about the Fatherhood Project.





**PROMOTING MEN'S CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**



**RESTORING THE SOUL OF THE NATION**  
**SAMF**  
SOUTH AFRICAN MEN'S FORUM

**Human Sciences Research Council**

Child, Youth and Family Development  
Institute, Arcadia, Cape Town  
790 Francie Road  
Cape Town, 8001

Tel: 27-21-275-1415  
Fax: 27-21-275-1416  
e-mail: hrc@hsrc.ac.za  
www.hsrc.ac.za

**January**  
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26 27 28 29 30 31

**February**  
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**October**  
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18 19 20 21 22 23 24  
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**November**  
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**December**  
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#### 4.5. Partnerships

As indicated earlier, a key concept and strategy of the Fatherhood Project is to link with other initiatives in order to create a synergy of effects to increase men's care and protection of children.

Partnerships, collaboration and networking has been established with a large number of organizations. However, the Fatherhood Project has partnered with the South African Men's Forum (SAMF) as its key implementing agency, particularly through the SAMF's community work with young men in schools and men in shebeens and other public places.



Networking meeting held in Durban on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2003 to introduce the Fatherhood Project

Strategic partners, collaborators, and networks established to date include the following:

##### *1. International Agencies*

Father's Direct UK  
Ford Foundation Southern Africa  
Promundo Brazil  
Unicef South Africa  
Unicef New York  
Volunteer Service Organization (VSO)

*2. Government*

Commission on Gender Equality  
Department of Social Development  
Moral Regeneration Movement  
South African Navy

*3. Civil Society Organizations*

Human Rights Commission  
National Institute for Crime and Reintegration of Offenders

*4. University and Research Organizations*

Birth to Twenty, University of the Witwatersrand  
Centre for Child Law, University of Pretoria

*5. Media*

Media Monitoring Project  
SABC Public Broadcasting Services  
Soul Buddyz

*6. Private Sector*

HR Future

*7. Non-governmental and Community Agencies*

Art for Humanity  
Children in Distress Network (CINDI)  
Children in Legal Disputes (CHILD)  
Children First  
Engender Health  
Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA)  
Gender Education and Training Network (GETNET)  
Kgotla  
Men's Kindness Programme (*Ikamva La Bantu*)  
Men as Partners  
Menstrust  
Parent Centre  
Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness (PACSA)  
South African Men's Forum  
Targeted AIDS Intervention (TAI)  
Volunteer Child Network

Further details about partners are given on the Fatherhood project website at  
<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/fatherhood>



Example of a partner entry on the Fatherhood web page

Partner activities are very important for the insertion of the project into other existing networks and for the dissemination of the key concepts and messages. In addition to the example given earlier of the South African Navy, several other successful partnership initiatives can be cited as evidence of the networking activities of the project:

- Mbuyiselo Botha, Secretary-General of the South African Men's Forum, represented the Fatherhood Project at a number of meetings coordinated by Status of Women, in the Presidency (OSW). Firstly, a meeting was held in Pretoria with a number of organisations working in the gender based violence sector. Secondly, he attended the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York from the 1<sup>st</sup> till 14<sup>th</sup> of March, 2004, sponsored by both the Department of Social Development and the Fatherhood Project.

Fatherhood Project representatives participated in two additional policy meetings in government. The first was a meeting called by the Office on the Status of Women in the Presidency in February 2004 to form a National Task Team on Constructive Male Involvement in Advancing Gender Equality. The second was a meeting hosted by the Department of Social Development in June 2004 on promoting constructive male involvement in achieving gender equality and eliminating gender stereotyping.

- As a result of the enormously positive response from the community, Kgotla and Menstrust have entered into an agreement with the Manenburg People's Centre to engage in ongoing work relating to fatherhood issues with men in the community.
- The Fatherhood Project is working with the Men as Partners programme of Hope World Wide to develop a curriculum and materials to use fatherhood as a means to engage men in behaviour which protects them and their partners from sexually transmitted infections.
- Several organizations have taken the initiative to include information and materials from the Fatherhood Project into their announcements and newsletters. For example, the Adult Learning Network Newsletter which has a national distribution of 6 000.
- We receive a large number of personal appeals, telephone calls, letters and emails from men requesting help and advice. We refer these onto our partner organizations, especially the South African Men's Forum and CHILDS.

I am very excited about the Fatherhood Project. I wish that all men out there could embrace it and take care of their children under whatever circumstances. On that, I am facing a big problem myself. I am a proud father of a charming seven year old son, *Sipho*. I am worried because her mother is trying to deny me access to him. She has recently divorced me for the reasons known only to her. I have tried all I could to convince her otherwise, talk her out, opted for counselling, but she flatly refused and ignored all my pleas. She knows how much I love my son. I do not wish to fight her for his custody, but her anger is very unbecoming for a professional like her. I need to communicate and see my son reasonably, and not when it pleases or suits her, like she is doing now. He has four holidays per year. I do not know if I will see him this Easter holiday or not, as she is not answering my calls. Please help me. What must I do to have reasonable access to him, without the legal route? I do not wish to turn my back and forget about him. I also do not wish to go and talk to as she might turn that into something else, and charge me with domestic violence or abuse. I have never pointed a finger on her or lifted a hand to beat her. I am trying to forget all the lies and suffering she has caused me, yet she knows my weakness, that I have this son that I love so much.  
Thanks

Example of a request for assistance and advice from a member of the public

#### 4.6. Exhibitions

Five major photographic exhibitions have been held in several cities, in collaboration with partnering agencies and the media. In addition to these major exhibitions, a number of smaller exhibitions have been hosted at other venues – these include the TREE (Training and Resources in Early Education) Open Day 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2004 at their Head Office in Durban. In addition, images from the Fatherhood collection were included in the *Ties that Bind* exhibition at the Durban Art Gallery in April, May and June of 2004. The exhibition, which coincided with the South African Marital and Family Therapy conference, was a collection of works about relationships, especially those within families. Delegates and organisers of the conference, as well as other interested parties attended the launch event on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2004.

The launch of each exhibition was an high profile event attended by key stakeholders and representatives of community organisations in the area. Community leaders with a special interest in, or knowledge of, men or family issues were asked to speak. In addition to each exhibition, associated events were facilitated to tie in with the fatherhood project, and slam poetry, seminars, walkabouts and workshops. The nature of each exhibition is described briefly below:



Radio personality, Tim Modise, guest speaker at the opening of the Fatherhood Project Photographic Exhibition in Johannesburg

**Pietermaritzburg** (23 February to 5<sup>th</sup> March 2003)

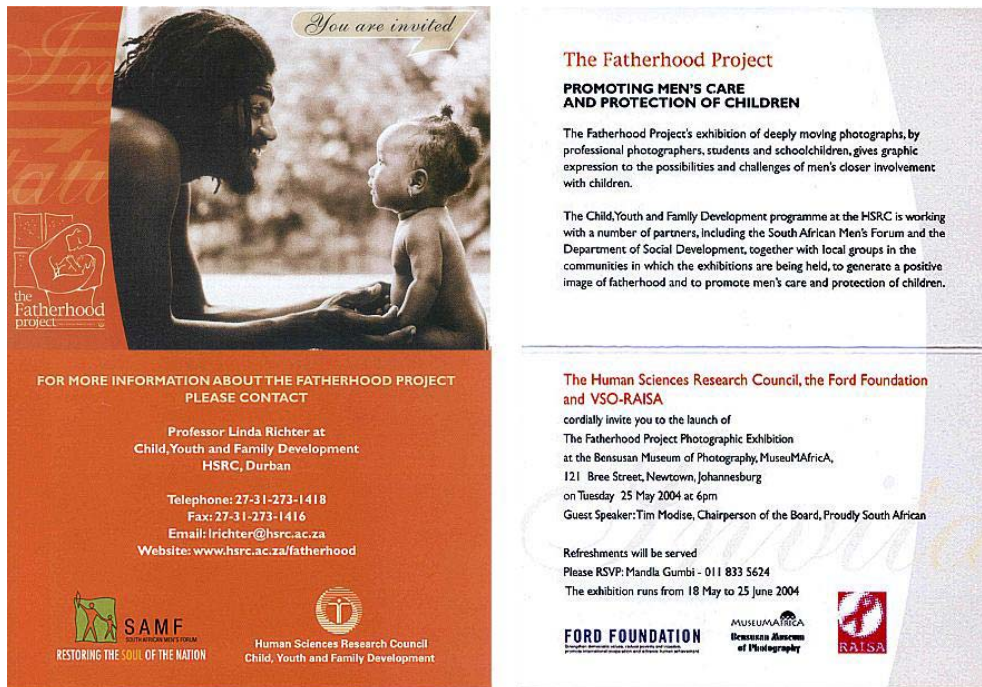
The Fatherhood Project Photographic Exhibition was officially launched on Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup> February, in collaboration with the Children in Distress Network (CINDI), Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness (PACSA), the Natal Museum and the Natal Witness. The exhibition was opened by guest speaker, Dr Zweli Mkhize, the KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Health. His address focused on his experiences as a son and a father. As occurred at all the exhibitions, a child read an essay they had written about their father. In Pietermaritzburg, this was done by Thabani Luthuli who wrote about his brother, who fulfills a father role in his life since the death of both of his parents.

My brother's name is Mboneni Luthuli. He is eighteen years old, he is like a father to me. My father died long time ago. He plays a major role in our lives. though he is a very young boy doing grade 11 at Adams high school. He is responsible. He takes good care of us he cooks food and clean the house. He looks after baby because my mother passed away few months ago. Every afternoon he close the gate so that we are safe inside. He support us in every way. We don't feel that our mother is no longer there for us. He always give us that love we used to get our parents. Every Saturday he bake cakes do, shopping as mother used to. My brother is like a father to us we trust him, we love him.

*Learn with Echo*, a weekly community newspaper insert to the *Natal Witness*, carried material about the Fatherhood Project for two weeks, and the Natal Witness provided an overrun of 5 000 copies of Learn with Echo for distribution during the exhibition.

The programme of activities during the run of the exhibition included daily visits by about 60 learners as part of the Natal Museum's school programme, a walkabout by Paul Weinberg, well-know South African photographer, and a seminar by Dr Nhlanhla Mkhize from the School of Psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal on *Men and Moral Identity*.





Invitation to the Fatherhood Project Photographic Exhibition (Johannesburg)

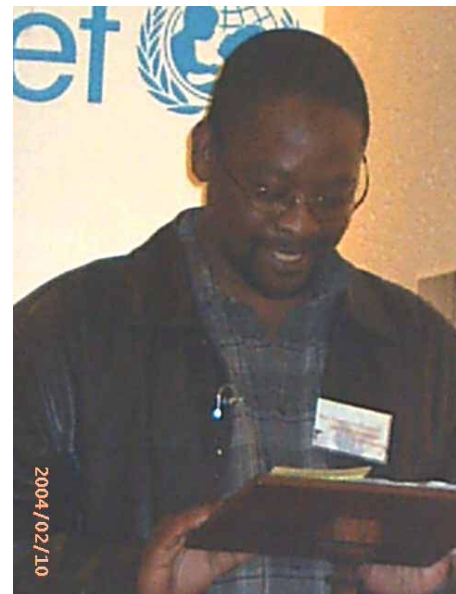
### **Pretoria (24<sup>th</sup> March to 8<sup>th</sup> April 2004)**

The Pretoria exhibition was held at the Association of Arts Gallery and partners for this event were Unicef South Africa and the national Department of Social Development. The guest speaker was Dr Coceko Pakade, who deputised for Dr Zola Skweyiya, Minister of Social Development. Other speakers at the launch were Dr Bongani Khumalo, President of the South African Men's Forum, and Dr Desmond Lesejane, head of the Moral Regeneration Movement.

The programme of events during the run of the Pretoria exhibition included an HSRC seminar presented by Dr Nhlanhla Mkhize from the University of KwaZulu Natal *Men, Fathers and Moral Identity*, and a press conference coordinated by the HSRC Corporate Communications.



Dr Rina Gill, Deputy Unicef Representative, with Dr Coceko Pakade, Dr Maria Mabetoa, and Ms Suzette Moss from the Department of Social Development



Dr Bongani Khumalo, President of the South African Men's Forum, and Dr Desmond Lesejane, head of the Moral Regeneration Movement, speakers at the launch of the Pretoria exhibition



### **Johannesburg** (18<sup>th</sup> May to 25<sup>th</sup> June 2004)

The Johannesburg exhibition was held at the Bensusan Museum of Photography, MuseuMAfricaA. It was opened to delegates at the VSO-RAISA conference on the 18<sup>th</sup> May as part of their regional meeting in Pretoria on *Tomorrow's Future, Today's choices: Orphans and Vulnerable Children, taking Action, building Support*. Dr Gerry Salole, Representative of the Ford Foundation Southern Africa Office, co-hosted the official opening on the 25<sup>th</sup> May. Tim Modise, Chairperson of Proudly South Africa, gave the opening address, followed by commentary on the photographs by renowned South African photographer, Cedric Nunn.

Partners in the Johannesburg exhibition included the South African Human Rights Commission, the Public Broadcasting Services, and Birth to Twenty. Some of the events held during the Johannesburg exhibition were:

- An HSRC seminar on Fatherhood as depicted in Media and Advertising hosted by radio talk-show personality, John Perlman. Presenters were William Bird (Media Monitoring Forum), Dr David Harrison (CEO of loveLife), and Jeanne Prinsloo (Media Studies, Rhodes University).
- Men as Partners organised a special Fathers day event on the 19<sup>th</sup> June at the Diepkloof Community Centre. Special very large (A0) posters of 20 of the Fatherhood photos were printed by Orange Juice Design and used as visual aids for the event. Just over 1 000 people representing 16 organisations attended the event.
- Dr Shane Norris, the Birth to Twenty Project Manager arranged a visit to the exhibition of parents and families of the Bt20 children who participated in the essay writing and photography section of the project.
- Mpho Moropene of the South African Human Rights Commission organised a seminar focusing on men's rights in custody following divorce. Unfortunately, the event had to be cancelled at short notice.

### **Cape Town** (1<sup>st</sup> July to 12<sup>th</sup> August 2004)

The Western Cape leg of the Fatherhood project took place in three venues - the Mannenburg Peoples Centre, Guga S'Thebe Cultural Arts Centre in Langa, and the Gallery of the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town. The Fatherhood Project worked with a number of partners in Cape Town, including the Parent Centre, the Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA), the Men's Kindness Programme, Kgotla, the South African Navy in Simonstown, Guga Stebe Arts Centre and the Mentrust. In addition, the project had the support of the Office of the Cultural Commission for the Western Cape.

The official opening of the exhibition took place at Guga S'Thebe Cultural Arts Centre in Langa. Mr Ebrahim Rasool, Premier of the Western Cape, was the guest speaker but, being

unable to make it, he sent Mr Lionel Louw, Chief of Staff, to deputise for him. Admiral Louw from the South African Navy spoke about the Isivunguvungu project, which teaches street children to sail, and is part of the Navy's investment in the young lives of vulnerable boys.

Events held in Cape Town as part of the Fatherhood Photographic Exhibition include:

- A Father to Father Makgotla between young fathers and mature fathers;
- A FAMSA-run workshop on male identity;
- A Menstrust workshop which creates a safe space for men share and explore their own maleness with other men.
- A Parent Centre workshop on Teen Parenting and Encouraging Play with Children

#### **Port Elizabeth (2<sup>nd</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> September 2004)**

An exhibition of the Fatherhood Project Posters was launched at the New Brighton Library in Port Elizabeth. The Port Elizabeth exhibition was jointly hosted by the Moral Regeneration Movement and the Office of the Speaker in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality. The exhibition was opened by guest speaker, Bishop Siwa of the Methodist Church in South Africa. The Moral Regeneration Movement expressed an interest in adopting the ideas of the project and to integrate it into the work that they are undertaking amongst inmates in the St Alban's Prison in Port Elizabeth. The Moral Regeneration Movement in the Eastern Cape launched a project in this prison, on Friday 10th September, and plan to include fatherhood as one of the main aspects of their work. The many thousands of South African fathers who are incarcerated are a captive audience for the project.

#### 4.7 Media Coverage

Many newspaper and magazine articles about the exhibitions and the project, including in the international press, have appeared. In addition, we have also been appreciative of the coverage the project has received in local newspapers and newsletters. For example, accompanying the Pietermaritzburg exhibition, articles appeared in *Learn with Echo*, *The Mirror*, *The Howick Post*, *The Escourt*, *The Public Eye*, *Midlands News* and *Isolezwe*. The majority of these have been scanned and can be read on the Fatherhood Project website. Most of them are also included in the folder of articles which is part of the materials accompanying the report.

In addition, the project has been very prominently featured on radio, especially through the exposure given to the project and to the topic of men and fathers by the 14 SABC Public Broadcasting Services. Radio programmes, interviews and comment have appeared on SAfm, Radio 702/Caoe Talk, KZN P4 Radio, and others.

The project also featured on Fokus (SABC2) on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2004, on 3Talk (SABC3), and Asikhulume (SABC1) on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2004.

We are working with the Public Broadcasting Services to outline and develop key concepts and messages for broadcasting on radio, as well as with SABC2 on a possible 12 or 24-part television series that would be put out to tender for creative design and production.

In conclusion, the awareness raising and advocacy arm of the project is well developed. Partnerships, networking and media coverage have resulted in exposure of the topic of fatherhood at national mass media level. This public profile has, in turn, facilitated the promotion of the topic to the project's partners and the agencies with which it interfaces, propelling the concepts behind the project to the forefront of their thinking. Hopefully, this will be expressed in changes in policy direction and at the funding and programmatic level.

The community-based aspects of the project are becoming evident, and there are indications that, if this can be reinforced, depth interventions will begin to take their place in the Fatherhood Project's communication matrix.



A 12-year-old Soweto child's photograph of her father at home

## 5. Information Dissemination

The Fatherhood Project assembles and disseminates available knowledge and information about men and fatherhood through its website (<http://www.hsrc.ac.za>), as well as through the monthly Fatherhood Project Newsletter, and in response to requests for information. The Ford Foundation has also funded a special initiative to disseminate information about fathers and families through Children First, in support of the Fatherhood Project and in response to the International Year of the Family.

New information about fathers, as well as interpretation of available statistics and literature is considered to be research and is described under section 5 (Research) of this report.

### 5.1. Website

The Fatherhood website (<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/fatherhood>) was designed and is maintained by Sue Munro from the Information Technology department at the HSRC. A link to the Fatherhood Project appears on the opening page of the HSRC website, providing an immediate link to the project.



Opening page of the Fatherhood Project website

The website has several pages including:

- An introduction
- Background materials – a few key papers which are regularly updated as new materials become available, as well as an annotated bibliography which is regularly updated and contains more than 400 published and unpublished references.
- Publications and media – papers emanating from the project, media coverage including scanned pages from newspapers and magazines, information about the forthcoming book edited by Linda Richter and Robert Morrell entitled *Baba? Men and fatherhood in South Africa*, and the original Fatherhood calendar which can be printed by anyone wishing to have a copy.
- Newsletter – past and current issues of the monthly Fatherhood Project newsletter
- Gallery – selected pictures from the project, together with photographer details
- Project partners – links to project partners
- News – information appearing in the media about fatherhood, and men and children
- Links – hyperlinks to fatherhood websites in other parts of the world.

#### Introduction to the Fatherhood Project on the web page

The Fatherhood Project presents images of fatherhood seen through the lenses of professional photographers, students and children. Alongside these images are the words of children talking about fathers, and men talking about the way they see themselves.

These words and images speak of men who have broken away from the limiting stereotypes of male dominance and found fulfillment in caring roles - as guardians, companions, teachers, supporters, friends and guides.

The Fatherhood Project aims to recognise, encourage and support men's care and protection of children. Many people grow up without their biological father, but we all have an idea of what a father should be. In the absence of a biological father, the father's role is often performed by older brothers, grandfathers, uncles and cousins, friends, teachers, preachers and health care workers. And, of course, by mothers too.

The Fatherhood Project acknowledges that men are often absent, neglectful, abusive and sometimes brutal. They may be self-absorbed and taken up with their own interests and careers. We know that some South African men commit acts of extreme violence against women and children. This is the dark side of fatherhood in our country.

It is also true that millions of children don't know their fathers and that many don't enjoy the protection and care of a substitute father.

And yet, in a country where the image of men has taken a beating, where the absent father is the rule rather than the exception, positive images of fatherhood nevertheless remain alive in the minds and yearnings of people, young and old.

The Fatherhood Project is about the love that children need. But it is also about the need that fathers

have to love.

The Fatherhood Project aims to stimulate discussion and action to support the involvement of men in caring for children.

Through a travelling photographic exhibition, a book, media and activities organised by participating organisations, the Fatherhood Project reaches out to men, women and children everywhere. We are targeting organisations, programmes and groups working with families, men and children. We also aim to influence donors, corporates and the government. We want them all to put fatherhood onto their agendas.

The Fatherhood Project is led by the Child, Youth and Family Development research programme at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)

The number of "hits" on the website has gone up from 16 53 when it was started in January 2004 to 15 503 hits a month in July 2004. This indicates that the website is well used to source information about fatherhood.

### Web statistics. Fatherhood project Number of page requests: Summary

Directory	Jan-04	Feb-04	Mar-04	Apr-04	May-04	Jun-04	Jul-04	Total
/fatherhood/	1653	2032	2104	1750	1972	2988	3004	15503
/fatherhood/gallery/	945	1096	1051	921	915	1345	1261	7534
/fatherhood/gallery/prof/	575	564	522	473	492	696	641	3963
/fatherhood/gallery/essay/	171	140	149	145	124	213	200	1142
/fatherhood/gallery/child/	115	197	159	151	142	195	201	1160
/fatherhood/gallery/ourFathers/		84	106	81	76	115	106	568
/fatherhood/media/	164	178	214	184	247	356	355	1698
/fatherhood/media/articles/	2	8	45	45	79	62	32	273
/fatherhood/media/papers/	2	1						3
/fatherhood/background/	89	96	98	71	95	129	136	714
/fatherhood/background/reference_docs/	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	5
/fatherhood/introduction/	52	90	112	69	62	114	120	619
/fatherhood/partners/	49	84	87	76	97	139	148	680
/fatherhood/partners/southnews/			1	11	20	52	51	135
/fatherhood/newsletter/	41	53	54	41	39	72	93	393
/fatherhood/news/		44	82	65	130	318	389	1028
/fatherhood/links/	39	40	49	33	38	71	67	337



## 5.2. Newsletter

The Fatherhood Project has produced seven monthly newsletters to date, starting with Number 1 in December 2003, following the networking meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2003.

The Newsletter has a very wide electronic distribution and, apart from being posted on the web page, it is sent to close to 400 individuals and organizations locally and internationally. The Newsletter carries information about Fatherhood Project staff, events, partner activities, and news.



June was a very busy month for the Fatherhood Project with the Exhibition on in Johannesburg, accompanied by a number of events, including celebrations around Father's Day.

### Father's Day

On the 20<sup>th</sup> June, the Fatherhood Project was celebrated through a wonderful spread of articles in newspapers throughout the country. Please consult our website to read these media releases (<http://www.hsra.co.za/fatherhood>)

We commissioned Orange Juice Designs to convert 20 of the most representative images in the Fatherhood photographic collection into two sets of large laminated posters. These were used, with great success, by Men as Partners/Engender Health, on 19<sup>th</sup> June, at a 'Father's Day' event in the Diepkloof Community Centre. The get-together was attended by over 1 000 people, and 16 other organisations were represented as well. Our thanks to Men as Partners for their continued support of the Fatherhood Project.



### Lawrence Fishburne in South Africa

On the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2004 Linda Richter was invited by Unicef South Africa to brief Lawrence Fishburne, well-known actor and Unicef Goodwill Ambassador, and Chip Lyons, President of the US Fund, on the Fatherhood Project and its implications for increasing men's care and protection of children and reducing child sexual abuse. It was a small meeting at which Linda had the opportunity to share ideas with the Unicef delegation, which also included Ronald Gibbs, Unicef Senior Vice President for Marketing and Communication. Ronald undertook to see how he could help to bring the Fatherhood Exhibition to Unicef in New York towards the end of the year.

### The Cape Town Exhibition / S

July promises to be equally busy as the exhibition moves to the Western Cape. The photographs will be exhibited at the Guga SThebe Arts and Culture Centre in Langa from 19<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> July. The official launch will take place on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July, and the guest speaker will probably be Ebrahim Rasool, Premier of the Western Cape. The show will then move to the UCT Dept of African Studies Gallery, where it will be open to the public from 29<sup>th</sup> July until 13 August.

The poster collection is on display at the Manenberg People's Centre from the 2<sup>nd</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> July, and a number of workshop and seminar events are being held at the Centre during this time.

Please contact the following for information regarding workshops and seminars during July and August:

Men's Kindness Programme (Elizabeth Jennings - 021-461-8338), Kgofa (Wessel van den Berg - 021-797-2738), the Parent Centre (Celeste van der Merwe and Tamzyn Ratcliffe - 021-762-0116), the SA Navy (Delle Jacobson - 021-787-4807), FAMSA (Noelene Blekkenhorst - 021-447-7951), Men's Trust (Bryan Hansen), the HSRC (Karen Bruns and Leslie Swartz - 021-467-4490), and RAIPCAN (Carol Bower - 7122330).

### Support and insight

We continually hear and receive words of wisdom from many people. One of the support staff members at Museum Africa said, "When men have asked me what this project is about I have told them - it is about making the life of children better. Reflect on what you do to children and ask yourself if it is making the child's life better. Even a rapist must know that he is not making a child's life better"

### Infant Massage

The benefits of infant massage are now widely recognised, especially for people facing parenthood for the first time, for infants born prematurely or with congenital or birth problems, and for irritable infants. It promotes a close attachment

### 5.3. ChildrenFIRST

Children First is a strategic partner in the Fatherhood Project and a special issue of Children First is being funded by the Ford Foundation. This issue, jointly edited by Cos Desmond, Deborah Ewing and Linda Richter, will be made available to participants at the one-day Fatherhood Project Conference to be held in Durban on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004. Since Number 54 of Volume 8, which appeared in March/April 2004, Children First has carried at least one article in each issue on fatherhood.

The articles which have appeared are:

March/April

Richter, L., Manegold, J., Pather, R. & Mason, A. (2004). Harnessing our manpower, ChildrenFIRST, 8, 54. 16-20.

May/June

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The Special Issue, which will appear in the second half of November will strive for a balance between academic and popular pieces, including testimonies from men's programmes, drawings, poems and children's essays. There will be sections on marriage, families and the law, family violence, children and families, reports and experiences of fatherhood, forces that prevent men's integration into families and households, fathers' rights and fathers' needs, and the challenge and potential for raising a new generation of fathers.

### 5.4. Fatherhood Conference

A follow-up Fatherhood Conference is planned for the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004 in Durban. The Special Issue of ChildrenFIRST will be launched at this event, and Tom Beardslee from Father's Direct in the UK has accepted our invitation to be the Guest Speaker at the meeting. The one-day conference will be accompanied by a showing of photographs and posters at the Diakonia Centre in Durban.

The meeting will serve to reflect on and evaluate the activities of the previous year. The preliminary programme will have report back sessions on Advocacy and Partnerships, Programme Activities, Media Developments, Policy Issues and Research. The meeting will close with a focus on new directions for the forthcoming year.



## **6. Research**

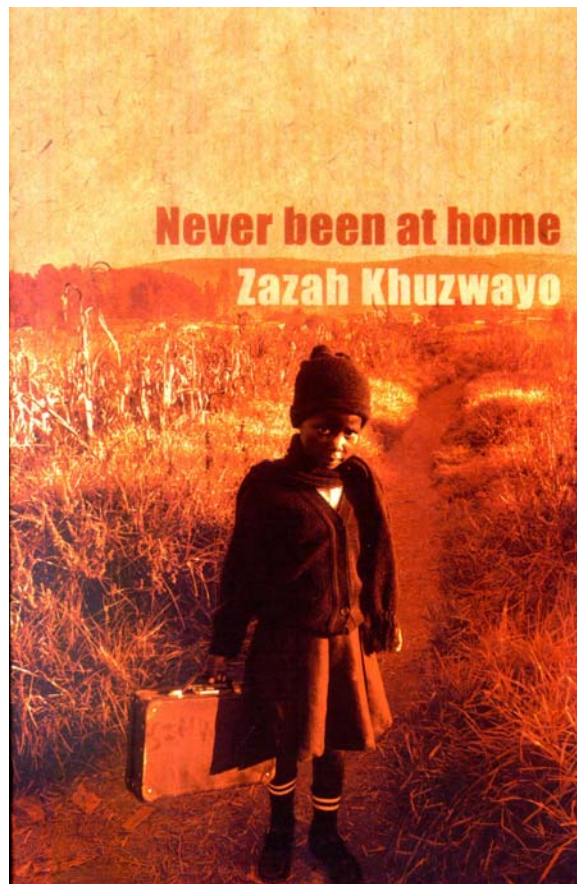
A fundamental aim of the Fatherhood Project is to conduct, collaborate on, and stimulate new knowledge about fatherhood and men and children through research and publication. Two aspects of these activities can be reported here. The first is on research to look at children's views of fathers and father-figures, and the second is the forthcoming book on men and fathers in South Africa.

### **6.1 Children's views of fathers and father-figures**

Fatherhood is defined in relation to two other social roles, motherhood and children. For this reason, children's views of fathers are critical to an empowering set of policy and programme activities to promote fatherhood.

The Fatherhood project research team has started to explore children's views through three related sets of activities:

- Explorations of childhood and children's experiences of fathers and father-figures expressed in autobiographical writing. For example, Zazah Khuzwayo's tragic and poignant account of her lifelong struggle to overcome the effects of her father's abusive behaviour.



- As previously described, 120 child photographers, 11-12 years) provided essays about “their fathers”. About 60 of these children were from Soweto –Johannesburg, recruited through the Birth to twenty study, and about 60 were recruited through a rural school, Saphumulela Primary School, outside of Durban. These essays were scanned and, on the basis of issues, raised, a further open-ended questionnaire study of children’s views was designed.
- More than 400 children aged between 11 and 13 years of age, equally balanced between boys and girls, in three social strata in Durban, based on the school at which they were enrolled, were requested to respond to open-ended questions about fathers, their desirable and undesirable qualities, and their role at home and in relation to child care. These responses have been analysed in NVivo, software for qualitative analysis, and a book chapter and a journal article based on the findings, are in preparation,

In summary, the data indicate that:

1. Children experience and express “father need”, a longing for a secure, available and kind father-figure (Pruett, 2001).

“My father works too much and goes to too much meetings and hardly spends time with us he is never available. I would like him to stop putting work before us and start spending time together”

Father need is also expressed in the idealisation of fathers and father-figures.

2. A wide range of people fulfil the father role in the lives of children, including biological fathers, step- and foster-fathers, grandfathers, uncles, older brothers, neighbours, teachers, religious leaders, and so on. This reinforces the importance of stressing social fatherhood.

3. Co-residence is not a critical criterion of good fathering in the eyes of children.

“I don’t mind if I don’t live with him. He is still my father”.

4. Children observe and appreciate the new roles that men have in families and households, including the fact that men may not be the sole breadwinner or even a breadwinner, as well as the fact that men do domestic work, and assist with child care.

“Yes I live with my father he is a good father. Sometimes he cooking food from at home and say sit down me going cooking today. He take care of the garden, everybody love father at my family, he watering the garden with us. When we have homework he helps us when we have project he helps us as till we finish the project. No one is good like my father, I wish when died time arrives he never died. He is not working anymore because they fired he at his work and he help my mother when my mother going to buy food for us.....”



A child's photograph of home

5. Nonetheless, these new roles coexist in the minds of children, with traditional expectations of men in relation to children – what we have called the Three Ps of Paternity – Provision, Paternity and Play.

6. Children manage the complex contradictions between the idealization of fathers and the imperfections of men and fathers' behaviour towards children, that is, they are accepting of men's shortcomings.

"He is kind but he loses his cool very quickly. When he has lost his cool he is impossible to talk to without him getting angry and me getting frustrated. When he is in a good mood he is quite nice but he is snapped out of it very quickly. If he is in a good mood he spoils me rotten. My father is a nice man at most times. Sometimes a little hard to deal with".

'He like to drink a lot, sometimes he says unnecessary word to word and he changes into another person... and I would like for him to stop drink and be the person we knew for a long time and the person who my mom married for 27 years. And my father would be a good person who is loving and caring and the family would be very much happy if my father stopped drinking. My father always gives me lunch money...he does not like people who abuse people children. He is very much supportive of us, he even washes dishes for me when it is cold.... When a person do something wrong my father (tells) us we must forgive and forget about the whole thing...' .

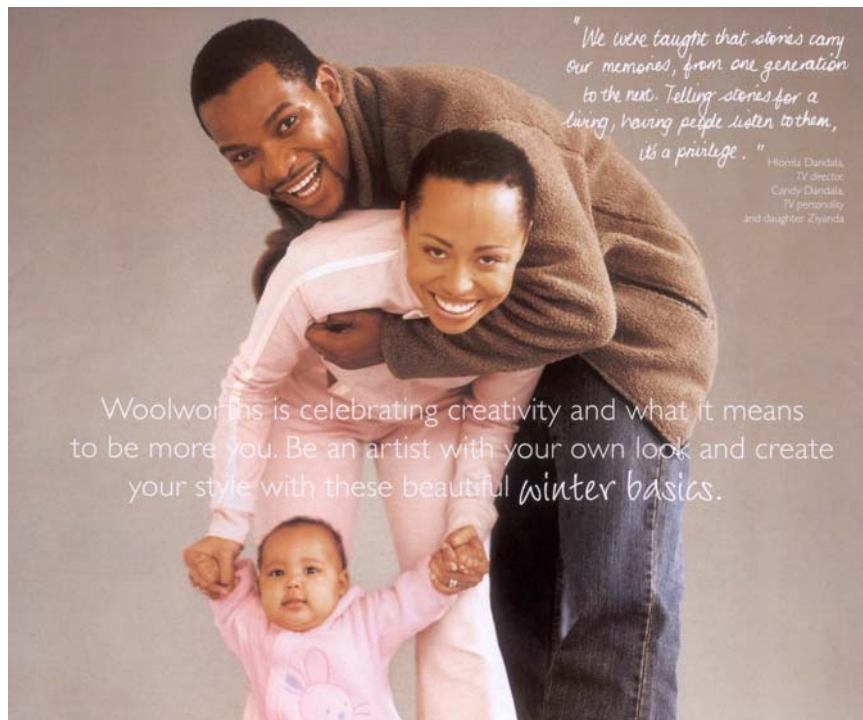
7. Children face, but are very saddened by, father absence, inadequacy and cruelty.

"My father hurt me in the back and I feel UNHAPPY and he eat meat but we don't eat meat every day....I very very very worried of him and he do not want us to vist other place and I don't want to do wrong thing and my father hurt us and we feel unhappy and we started to stay away from him, and I

feel so very very sad and I started to cry and I play quietly every day and I go to sleep. And he do not buy me toys”.

“My father has many children, he don’t know what is his children or where. My father have 17 children, he not give that children money..... He sleep with all moms that’s why I say he is not a true father to the children. I live with my mother, he don’t know where I am now. I don’t like to be that father”.

8. Most importantly for advocacy and programmatic activities, children challenge common stereotypes of men and fatherhood, particularly the presumed importance of material provision to children in comparison, for example, to time spent together, interest shown in a child’s activities, and guidance on moral and social issues. The fact that children envisage an open-ended role for men in their lives, beyond material provision, creates a space for unemployed men, and men who are not living with their children, to play important and valued fatherly roles in relation to children’s needs. Children do not require the “perfect” fathers portrayed in advertising. However, they do want an older male figure to be engaged with them and involved in their lives. In the views of children, there are many ways to be a “good” father.



An advertisement for Woolworths

## 6.2 Baba? Men and fatherhood in South Africa

A book edited by Linda Richter and Robert Morrell is in an advanced state of preparation, and will be published early in 2005. *Baba? Men and fatherhood in South Africa*, includes a range of chapters on theoretical, ideological, policy and programmatic issues. This is a groundbreaking text on aspects of social life, gender, families, children and men, assembling innovative research and analysis, both empirical and interpretive.

The chapters, note in their final order or grouping are:

**Introduction** - Linda Richter (Human Sciences Research Council and the University of KwaZulu-Natal) and Robert Morrell (University of KwaZulu-Natal and Human Sciences research Council)

**The demographics of fatherhood in South Africa** - Dori Posel (University of KwaZulu-Natal) and Richard Devey (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

**Steering by the stars: Migrancy, family dissolution and fatherhood** - Mamphela Ramphele (World Bank)

**On being a father and poor in Southern Africa to-day** – Francis Wilson (University of Cape Town)

**Where have all the fathers gone? Media(ted) representations of fatherhood** - Jeanne Prinsloo (Rhodes University)

**Men and children: Changing constructions of fatherhood in Drum magazine 1951-1965** – Lindsay Clowes (University of the Western Cape)

**Fathers, fatherhood and masculinity in South Africa** - Robert Morrell (University of KwaZulu-Natal and Human Sciences Research Council)

**Fathers in Africa** – Desmond Lesejane (Moral Regeneration Movement)

**Fathers without *amandla*: Zulu-speaking men and fatherhood** – Mark Hunter (University of California at Berkeley)

**Fatherhood as a socio-moral process** – Nhlanhla Mkhize (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

**Masculinity and the essentialization of the father** - Solani Ngobeni (Juta Publishers)

**The father in the mind** - Graham Lindegger (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

**Fathers and children** - Linda Richter (Human Sciences Research Council and the University of KwaZulu-Natal)

**Men, work and parenting** - Alan Hosking (Osgard Media)

**Children's views of fathers** - Linda Richter (Human Sciences Research Council and the University of KwaZulu-Natal) and Wendy Smith (Human Sciences Research Council)

**Brokered boundaries of fatherhood and care in a South African state institution: Learning to serve** - Azeem Badroodien (Human Sciences Research Council)

**Being a father in a man's world: The experience of goldmine workers** – Marelize Rabe (University of South Africa)

**Fathers' and children's rights** - Shirin Motala (Children's Rights Centre),

**Legal aspects of fatherhood** - Jacqui Gallinetti (University of the Western Cape)

**AIDS and the new crisis of care for children** - Chris Desmond (Human Sciences research Council) and Cos Desmond (ChildrenFIRST)

**The absent fathers: Why do men not feature in stories of families affected by HIV/AIDS?** – Phillippe Denis (University of KwaZulu-Natal) and Radikobo Ntsimane (University of KwaZulu-Natal)

**The new gender platforms and fatherhood** -Dean Peacock (Men as Partners), Mbuyisela Botha (South African Men's Forum)

**The child's right to shared parenting** - Pat Engle (Unicef, New York), Tom Beardshaw (Fathers Direct, Wales) & Craig Loftin (Unicef, New York)

**Conclusion** - Robert Morrell (University of KwaZulu-Natal and Human Sciences research Council) and Linda Richter (Human Sciences Research Council and the University of KwaZulu-Natal) and





A child's photograph at home

## **6. Next Steps**

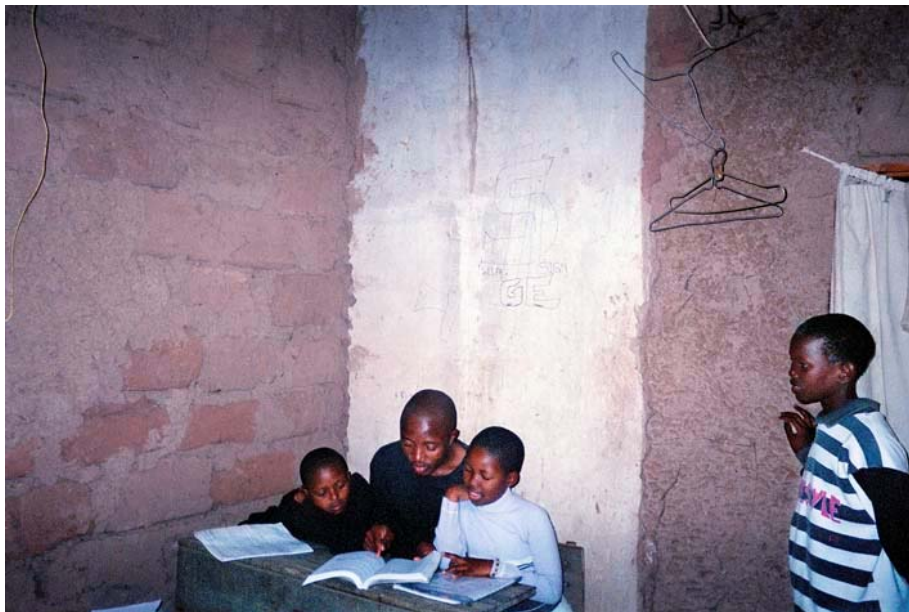
The Fatherhood Project has, in a short time, achieved an enormous amount. However, much remains to be done and only the seeds for policy, programmatic, advocacy and research work on men and fathers have been planted. There is no general conclusion to a project which is in mid-stream. However, there are specific next steps, including further work for which funding is being sought, both from the Ford Foundation and from other local and international funders. These initiatives are briefly described below:

1. The length and depth of this progress report needs to be extended and published as a monograph. The HSRC Publications Department is prepared to undertake this work, and support is needed for time to extend the writing and for the preparation and publication of an attractively typeset monograph.
2. We are negotiating with an international agency for funds for two posts to be established in a children's rights and advocacy centre to continue the awareness raising and information dissemination work initiated in the project. One post will be for a Fatherhood Project coordinator and the other for an assistant and administrator, including a web master.
3. An application for funding is being prepared to support the publication of the children's photographs and essays as an advocacy document for use in programmes to encourage men to become more involved in the care and protection of children.

4. Programme material for radio and television is in the planning stage. Support is needed to employ a communications expert to assist with the selection and development of concepts and messages. In addition, seed funding is required to initiate activities for a 12- or 24-part series on Fathers for SABC2.

5. Negotiations have already taken place with the National Institute for Crime and Rehabilitation of Offenders, as well as other organizations with experience of working in prisons, to take the Fatherhood Project into a prison and to make a documentary film based on the exhibition, small group work with prisoners, and interviews with their children and families.

6. A pilot programme has been conceived to include men in the care and protection of children affected by HIV/AIDS. Support is needed to build collaboration with existing programmes which aim to assist affected children, and to jointly design, implement and evaluate efforts to include men in the care and protection of children.



A child's photograph

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A child's photograph