

24/7 Dad™ A.M. Preliminary Evaluation *Baldwin County Fatherhood Initiative*

The following summary is a preliminary report of survey results from a community-based program implementing the National Fatherhood Initiative’s 24/7 Dad™ A.M. program. Survey data include information gathered by the **24/7 Dad™ Fathering Inventory** and the **24/7 Dad™ A.M. Fathering Skills Survey**, both integral assessment tools for the 24/7 Dad™ program. Data analyzed for this report were collected from fathers attending the Baldwin County (Alabama) Fatherhood Initiative’s 24/7 Dad™ A.M. program between January 2005 and November 2005.

Introduction

The Baldwin County Fatherhood Initiative implemented the 24/7 Dad™ A.M. program at two locations. One location was in Bay Minette, AL and the other location was in Robertsdale, AL. Below is an overview of the total number of matching pre/post surveys submitted by each group.

Group Name	Fathering Inventory	A.M. Fathering Skills Survey
Bay Minette	N=13 (1/11/05-2/22/05)	N=11 (1/11/05-2/22/05)
Robertsdale	N=14 (9/06/05-10/13/05)	N=15 (9/06/05-10/13/05)
Total Surveys	N=27	N=26

For the purpose of this report, survey data from Bay Minette and Robertsdale are combined.

24/7 Dad™ Participants (A.M.)

Fathers completing the **Fathering Inventory (N=27)** varied in age and race.¹ The majority of fathers (37 percent) were between the ages of 30 and 39; 21 percent of the fathers were between the ages of 20 and 29; 22 percent of the fathers were between 40 and 49; 14 percent were between the ages of 50 and 59; and 1 father was over the age of 60. Race also varied, although not as significantly. The majority of fathers were Black (65 percent), and the remaining fathers were White (35 percent).

Of the fathers completing the **Fathering Skills A.M Survey (N=26)**, 8 percent of the fathers were married, 44 percent were single, 16 percent were divorced, 12 percent were separated, and 8 percent either didn’t respond, or selected ‘Other’². When asked about income, 35 percent of the fathers had an annual income of less than \$15,000, 50 percent had an annual income of \$15,000 to \$25,000, and 15 percent of the fathers were not sure what their annual income was. At the time of the post survey, 85 percent of the fathers were employed and 15 percent of the fathers were unemployed.

¹ Age and race are taken from post survey responses only.

² Marital status, income, and employment are collected on the Fathering Skills Survey only. These results are taken from post-survey responses.

To summarize, the typical 24/7 Dad™ A.M. participant was a single, Black male between the ages of 30 and 39, employed, with an annual income between \$15,000 and \$25,000.

Outcomes

Fathering Inventory³

Findings from the *Fathering Inventory* offer valuable insight into the Baldwin County Fatherhood Initiative's 24/7 Dad™ A.M. program. Fathers showed marked improvement on 21 of the 50 items assessed by the Inventory! Moreover, fathers' improvement was statistically significant on three of the items⁴.

Below are the 21 items that showed improvement in the direction that the program is designed to move fathers. It is encouraging to note that fathers participating in the 24/7 Dad™ A.M. program benefited greatly from their participation. The ideal response to each item is noted in parentheses.

- ❖ Q1 (Agree): "The self aware man is one who takes responsibility for his own behaviors."
- ❖ Q2 (Disagree): "Children need to learn to know that Dad's don't mess around when it comes to discipline."
- ❖ Q3 (Disagree): "Boys should be taught to 'take it like a man.'"
- ❖ Q8 (Disagree): "Boys need to learn to keep their feelings to themselves."
- ❖ Q9 (Disagree): "Girls raised by their fathers turn out to be 'tomboys.'"
- ❖ Q10 (Disagree): "The Dad's major role in the family is as the provider."
- ❖ Q14 (Disagree): "Being a man means following traditional gender roles."
- ❖ Q18 (Agree): "Men are better off being married."
- ❖ Q22 (Disagree): "It's wrong for men to express their feelings in public."
- ❖ Q23 (Disagree): "Dads need to push their children to do more."
- ❖ Q24 (Agree): "A spiritual family is one that feels membership for all of its members."
- ❖ Q28 (Agree): "Feelings tell us something about an experience."
- ❖ Q30 (Disagree): "Talking to someone about your anger is a waste of time."
- ❖ Q32 (Disagree): "A son is better off being raised by his father than his mother."
- ❖ Q35 (Disagree): "Real men don't cry."
- ❖ Q39 (Agree): "There are clear differences between the roles of a mother and a father."
- ❖ Q44 (Disagree): "Balancing work and family is more important for women than for men."
- ❖ Q47 (Agree): "Children should participate in making family rules."
- ❖ Q48 (Disagree): "Dads are more important role models for children than are moms."
- ❖ Q49 (Disagree): "Being a man has nothing to do with being spiritual."
- ❖ Q50 (Disagree): "The way parents raise their children has more to do with how their children turn out than does their children's nature (style or temperament)."

³ Findings are significant at a 90% confidence level.

⁴ Statistically significant items are explored below. Because it is improbable that any practical significance would be observed with such a small sample size, these findings are promising!

The above findings clearly demonstrate that the 24/7 Dad™ A.M. participants gained valuable insight and shifted their attitudes on almost half of the 50-item assessment, which is a huge success. Below we will explore the items that demonstrate statistical significance, which presents an even broader understanding of where fathers gained the most improvement and some speculation as to why they gained this improvement.

Statistically Significant Findings from the *Fathering Inventory*

- ❖ Q4 increase/positive- “The best thing a dad can do for his children is love their mother.” (Agree) This finding is promising in that fathers demonstrated a change in their attitude regarding how their relationships affect their children, specifically as it relates to the mother of their child.
- ❖ Q26 increase/positive- “What parents expect from their children plays a big role in developing a child’s self-worth.” (Agree) This finding is also promising in that fathers gained a new understanding that they have a responsibility to help their child value him or her self, and that parents can encourage or discourage feelings of self worth in their children.
- ❖ Q45 increase/positive- “Certain feelings are good, certain feelings are bad.” (Disagree) This is another promising outcome as the fathers clearly changed the way they felt about feelings and the value of understanding and working through negative feelings.

A.M. Fathering Skills Survey⁵

Fathers completing the 24/7 Dad™ A.M. *Fathering Skills Survey* showed statistically significant gain on five of the 24 items used to measure knowledge. Items on the *Fathering Skills Survey* were either True/False statements or multiple-choice statements, so unlike the *Fathering Inventory*, we can only look at those items that showed statistically significant gains.

Below are highlights from the statistically significant findings taken from the *A.M. Fathering Skills Survey*.

Statistically Significant findings from the *A.M. Fathering Skills Survey*

- ❖ Q2 increase- “Behaviors need to be followed by consequences if children are going to learn.” (Both A and B are True) This statement addresses an important aspect of parenting, positive discipline, and how to help children learn appropriate behavior. The increase clearly shows that fathers gained new knowledge regarding reward and punishment and the different ways to effectively teach children.
- ❖ Q3 increase- “Men who don’t regularly go for health checkups generally ignore early warning signs.” (True) This result was a very encouraging finding, in that fathers gained a new understanding of why men don’t regularly see the doctor and the negative impact this can have on their health.

⁵ Findings are significant at a 90% confidence level.

- ❖ Q11 increase- “Generally, research shows that men who are married live fuller, happier lives than men who are unmarried.” (True) Again, the 24/7 Dad™ A.M. program puts an emphasis on the value of marriage and shared parenting and, therefore, fathers gained a new understanding of the benefits of marriage to men.
- ❖ Q13 increase – “Discipline means ‘to teach.’” (True) Fathers learned the true definition of discipline, which is a very positive finding. Once a father understands the true meaning of discipline, he is better prepared to help his child become a happy, healthy, and productive adult.
- ❖ Q14 increase- “Grieving means... (All of the Above) Fathers learned that grieving is coming to terms with loss and that this takes time, sometimes even years. This is an important lesson for fathers who might have experienced pain or loss. By working through feelings of loss and/or pain, fathers are better equipped to be the strong, confident fathers their children need them to be.

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