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Lindsay Jackel provides these research excerpts from Professor David Garrod.

For more studies on this subject, see Research on Fatherhood: Old Discoveries Seem New Again in the Men's Health Network Library at:

http://www.menshealthnetwork.org/library/Library_MHN.htm

Divorce, Parenting Time, and Children's Development

"In summary, 30% of the children in the present study experienced a marked decrease in their academic performance following parental separation, and this was evident three years later. Access to both parents seemed to be the most protective factor, in that it was associated with better academic adjustment... Moreover, data revealed that noncustodial parents (mostly fathers) were very influential in their children's development... These data also support the interpretation that the more time a child spends with the noncustodial parent the better the overall adjustment of the child."

Factors Associated with Academic Achievement in Children Following Parental Separation, L. Bisnaire, PhD; P. Firestone, PhD; D. Rynard, MA Sc American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 60(1), January, 1990

"While in most instances adolescents from recently disrupted household were more negatively affected by their parents' divorce, some findings did identify long-term effects of earlier disruption. Adolescent girls who had experienced parental divorce when they were younger than six or between six and nine years old reported becoming involved with alcohol or drugs in proportions higher than did girls from intact families. Adolescent girls whose experience of divorce occurred before they were six more frequently reported skipping school than did girls from intact families or girls whose parents divorced when they were between the ages of six and nine."

"These findings underscore the vulnerability of adolescents whose parents have divorced within the last five years. The impact of the marital disruption was most pronounced among girls, who skipped school more frequently, reported more depressive behavior, and described social support in more negative terms than did boys from recently disrupted homes."

The Effects of Marital Disruption on Adolescents: Time as a Dynamic A. Frost, PhD; B. Pakiz, EdM, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 60(4), October, 1990

"Among teenage and adult populations of females, parental divorce has been associated with lower self-esteem, precocious sexual activity, greater delinquent-like behavior, and more difficulty establishing gratifying, lasting adult heterosexual relationships. It is especially intriguing to note that, in these studies, the parental divorce typically occurred years before any difficulties were observed..

"At the time of the marital separation, when (as is typical) father leaves [is evicted/forced from] the family home and becomes progressively less involved with his children over the ensuing years, it appears that young girls experience the emotional loss of father egocentrically as a rejection of them. While more common among preschool and early elementary school girls, we have observed this phenomenon clinically in later elementary school and young adolescent children. Here the continued lack of involvement is experienced as an ongoing rejection by him. Many girls attribute this rejection to their not being pretty enough, affectionate enough, athletic enough, or smart enough to please father and engage him in regular, frequent contacts".

"Finally, girls whose parents divorce may grow up without the day-to-day experience of interacting with a man who is attentive, caring and loving. The continuous sense of being valued and loved as a female seems an especially key element in the development of the conviction that one is indeed femininely lovable. Without this regular source of nourishment, a girl's sense of being valued as a female does not seem to thrive."

Long-Term Effects of Divorce on Children: A Developmental Vulnerability Model Neil Kalter, Ph.D., University of Michigan, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 57(4), October, 1987

"Based on our clinical experience with a number of latency aged and adolescent girls whose parents divorced during their oedipal years, we postulate that particular coping patterns emerge in response to the absence of the father, which may complicate the consolidation of positive feminine identification in many female children, and is observable during the latency years. We illustrate both the existence of these phenomena and implications for treatment:

- intensified separation anxiety;
- denial and avoidance of feelings associated with loss of father;
- identification with the lost object; and
- object hunger for males."

"In an earlier study by Kalter and Rembar at [Children's Psychiatric Hospital, University of Michigan], a sample of 144 child and adolescent patients, whose parents had divorced, presented [for evaluation and treatment] with three most commonly occurring problems:

- 63% Subjective psychological problem (defined as anxiety, sadness, pronounced moodiness, phobias, and depression)
- 56% Poor grades or grades substantially below ability and/or recent past performance

- 43% Aggression toward parents

- Important features of the subgroup of 32 latency aged girls were in the same order:

- 69% indicating subjective psychological distress 47% academic problems 41% aggression toward parents.

Clinical Observations on Interferences of Early Father Absence in the Achievement of Femininity by R. Lohr, C. G. A. Mendell and B. Riemer, *Clinical Social Work Journal*, V. 17, #4, Winter, 1989

"...when the non-custodial parent is perceived as "lost," the young adult is more depressed. When a divorce occurs, the perception of the non-custodial father has been shown to change in a negative direction, while the perception of the mother remains relatively stable. "

"Because divorce is a process, not an isolated event, the effects of the divorce may be cumulative and early intervention would therefore be beneficial.

"The continued involvement of the non-custodial parent in the child's life appears crucial in preventing an intense sense of loss in the child... The importance of the relationship with the non-custodial parent may also have implications for the legal issues of custodial arrangements and visitation. The results of this study indicate that arrangements where both parents are equally involved with the child are optimal. When this type of arrangement is not possible, the child's continued relationship with the non-custodial parent remains essential."

Young Adult Children of Divorced Parents: Depression and the Perception of Loss, Rebecca L. Drill, Ph.D., Harvard University. *Journal of Divorce*, V. 10, #1/2, Fall/Winter 1986

"The impact of parental divorce and subsequent father absence in the wake of this event has long been thought to affect children quite negatively. For instance, parental divorce and father loss has been associated with difficulties in school adjustment (e.g. Felner, Ginter, Boike, & Cowen), Social Adjustment (e.g. Fry & Grover) and personal adjustment (e.g. Covell & Turnbull)..."

"The results of the present study suggest that father loss through divorce is associated with diminished self-concepts in children... at least for this sample of children from the midwestern United States."

Children's Self Concepts: Are They Affected by Parental Divorce and Remarriage
Thomas S. Parish, *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, 1987, V 2, #4, 559-562

"It is ironic, and of some interest, that we have subjected joint custody to a level and intensity of scrutiny that was never directed toward the traditional post-divorce arrangement (sole legal and physical custody to the mother and two weekends each month of visiting to the father.) Developmental and relationship theory should have alerted the mental health field to the potential immediate and long range consequences for the child of only seeing a parent four days each month. And yet until recently, there was no particular challenge to this traditional post-divorce parenting arrangement, despite growing evidence that such post-divorce relationships were not sufficiently nurturing or stabilizing for many children and parents."

"There is some evidence that in our well-meaning efforts to save children in the immediate post-separation period from anxiety, confusion, and the normative divorce-engendered conflict, we have set the stage in the longer run for the more ominous symptoms of anger, depression, and a deep sense of loss by depriving the child of the opportunity to maintain a full relationship with each parent."

Examining Resistance to Joint Custody, Monograph by Joan Kelly, Ph.D. (associate of Judith Wallerstein, Ph.D) From the 1991 Book Joint Custody and Shared Parenting, second edition, Guilford Press, 1991.

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