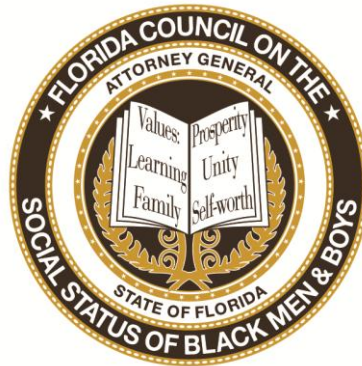


THE IMPACT OF FATHER INVOLVEMENT ON IMPROVING THE GRADUATION RATES OF BLACK MALE STUDENTS IN FLORIDA



ABSTRACT

Father absenteeism can have debilitating implications on the future of children, particularly black males, many of whom begin their lives in disadvantage conditions. Research confirms father involvement is at the nexus of black boys' self-identity, psychological wellbeing, emotional health and academic achievement. While academic progress can be affected by many factors, this study examines the effect a father's presence has on the growth and development of children, with a specific emphasis on black boys. Research for this report was conducted to assist the **Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys** with determining how increased father engagement can be used as an effective measure to help offset the achievement gap between black boys in Florida and their educational peers. To facilitate this goal, this study examines two comprehensive programs: the "**Everyone Graduates Center**," and the "**National Fatherhood Initiative**," whose services address increasing graduation rates, decreasing dropout rates, and improving father involvement.