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# Specific interest areas that I would like to follow-up with other people

## - feedback from group discussion

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Participants were asked to suggest specific areas of interest that they would like to explore further in the future. Two and a half typed pages of ideas were offered. The main themes are summarised below. The list given is not ranked in any order of priority ...

- **Fathers and Ante-Natal Provision:** Getting dads-to-be engaged with their role as a father from the moment of conception onwards. Strategies to get them involved. How to encourage them to be supportive of the mother breast-feeding their baby.
- **Practical Steps to Engaging Fathers in Programmes:** What has worked elsewhere and what could be applied locally.
- **Parenting Skills for Fathers:** Do these need to be different from mothers? What is the importance of a father's role in children's development? How can these skills be taught to men in appropriate ways? Is current Parentcraft provision appropriate to men? What skills are needed at different times in a child's life?
- **Fathers of 'Early Years' Children:** How can they be engaged and supported?
- **Schools:** How to set-up parenting classes for fathers of pupils, as well as older pupils.
- **Young Fathers:** Building the confidence and parenting skills of young fathers, while examining their mind-set, and looking at ways to encourage them to take their sexual activity seriously. Exploration of the legal issues surrounding under-age fathers.
- **Work with Young Men Leaving Care (16-25 years):** Look at their special needs.
- **Male Lone Parents:** Exploring the specific needs of this group, and how they are viewed within our culture. Also, look at how they can be better supported in the future.
- **Step-Fathers:** In our society when families split, the children 'normally' reside with their mother while the father leaves the family home. This means, therefore, that if the mother enters another relationship - or if the father forms another relationship with a woman who has children - it will be a male who becomes the newly resident step-parent. This role gives rise to specific needs.
- **Separated/Divorced Fathers:** How to provide information, advice, support and encouragement to fathers who are struggling to have contact with their children following separation from their partners.
- **Absent Fathers:** Realistic and appropriate ways to encourage their re-involvement in family life, and an exploration of the benefits to their children.
- **Unmarried Fathers:** Legal status issues.
- **Role of Grandparents:** Importance of their involvement in a child's upbringing and the consequences of separation when they may not be allowed access to their grandchildren.
- **Anger Management:** The potential for providing 'opt-in' programmes for fathers who recognise their need for anger management courses before things get out of hand.
- **Storytelling:** Encouraging dads to tell stories to their children. Also, helping dads to express their own stories/experiences of being fathers.
- **Challenging the Legal System:** Exerting influence at various levels to raise awareness of fathers' rights and responsibilities and to bring about change in government and legal circles.
- **Internet:** Exploring the use of the Internet as a means of engaging with fathers.
- **Local Fathers Research Project:** Setting-up an initiative to identify needs and issues, and make recommendations for future action.