

Supporting Texas Fathers

Four Predictors of Father Involvement



A photograph of a man and a young child in a living room. The man is crouching on the floor, smiling at the child, who is standing and looking towards the camera. The room has a light blue sofa, a patterned rug, and framed pictures on the wall.

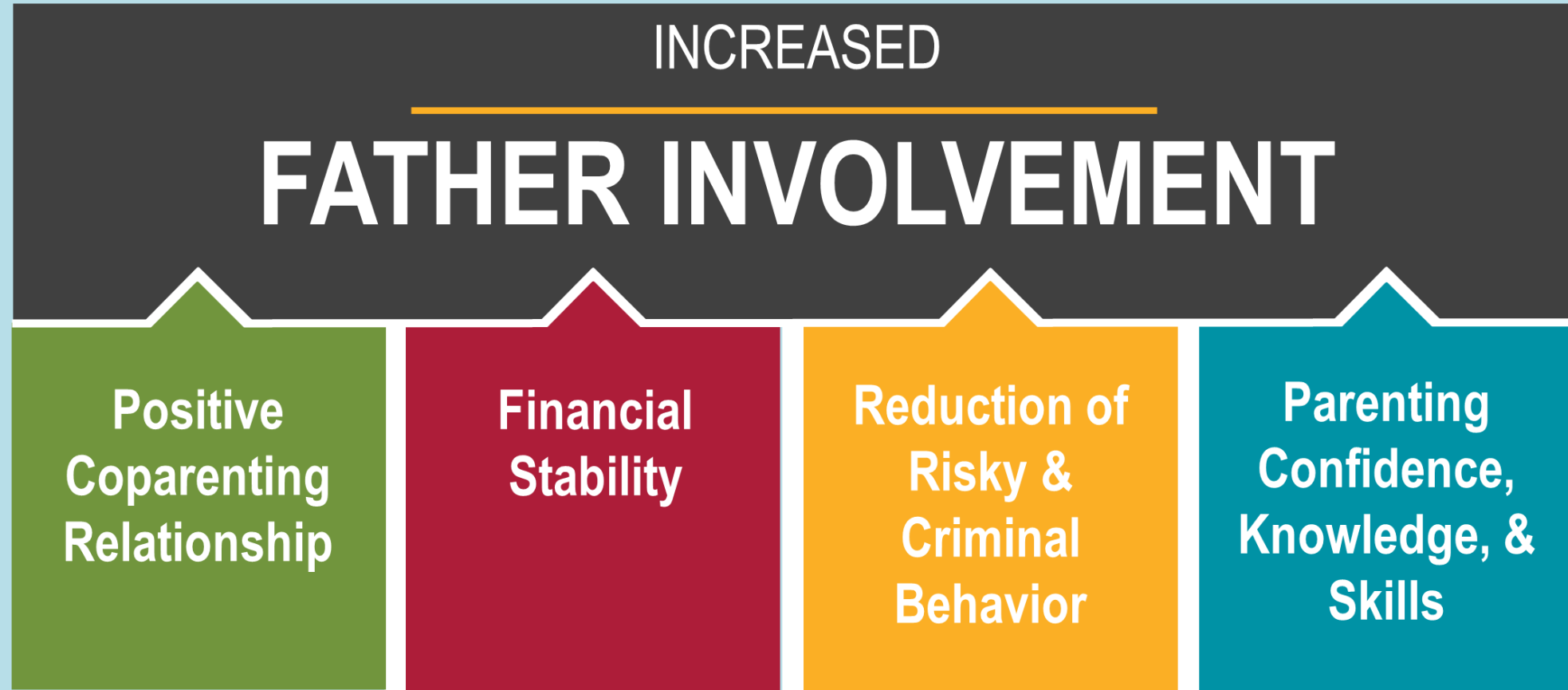
Overview

Positive father involvement is good for children and families

Organizations can support families by targeting one or more of four key areas that predict father involvement:

- Positive coparenting relationships
- Financial stability
- Reduction of risky & criminal behaviors
- Parenting confidence, knowledge, & skills

The four predictors of father involvement



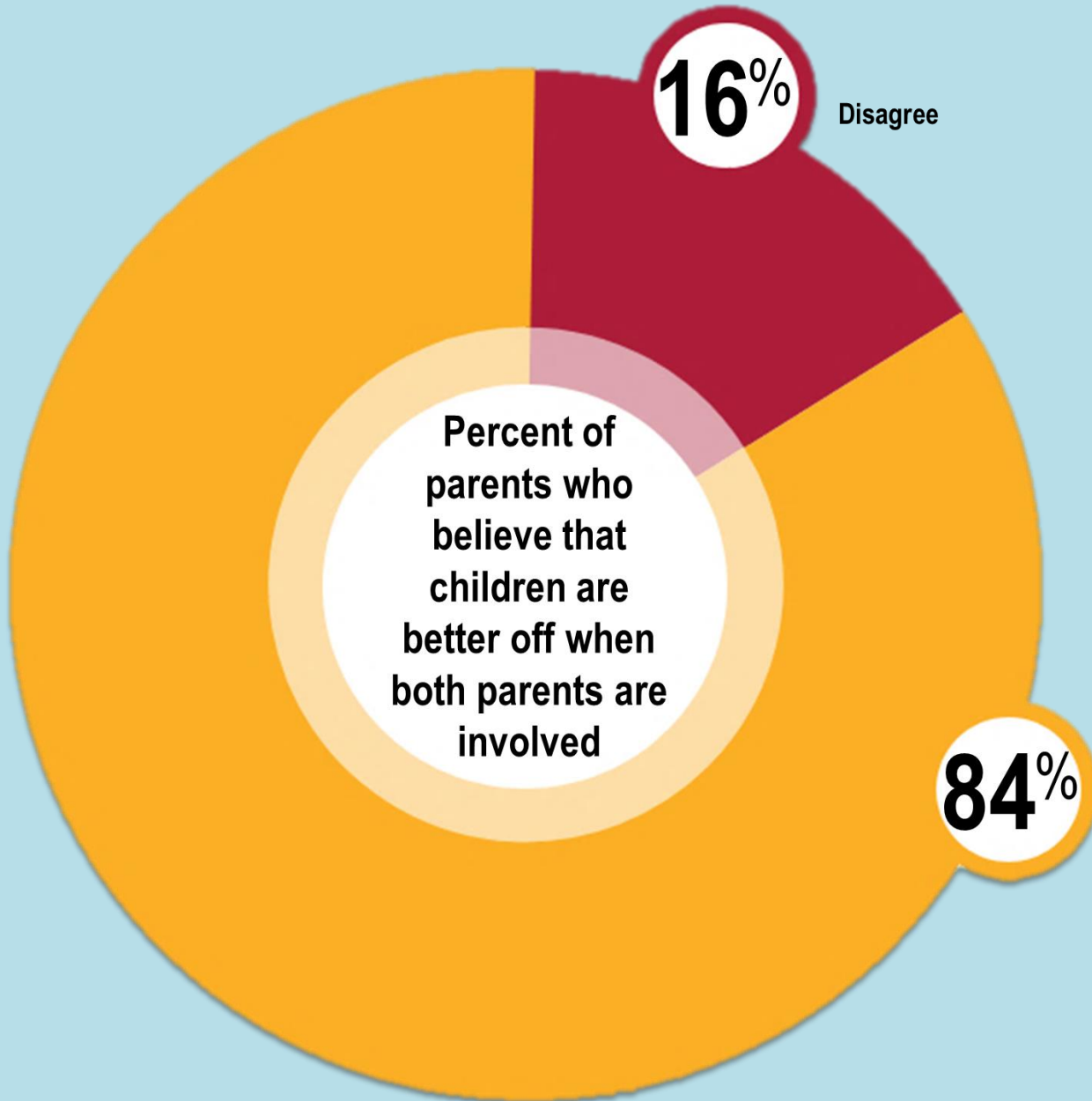
Positive coparenting relationship

Relationship quality is a consistent predictor of father involvement.^{a,b}

- Regardless of parents' relationship status, when mothers support fathers' relationships with their children and parents support one another in raising their child, fathers **see their children more, engage in more activities with their children, and have more positive relationships with their children.**^{c,d,e}
- The **quality** of the parent's relationship matters.^f
- Efforts to improve father involvement should focus on **improving parents' approach to conflict management and collaboration.**^b



Did you know?



Moms and dads **agree** that children are better off when both parents are involved.

Zero to Three National Parent Survey, 2016.

Financial stability

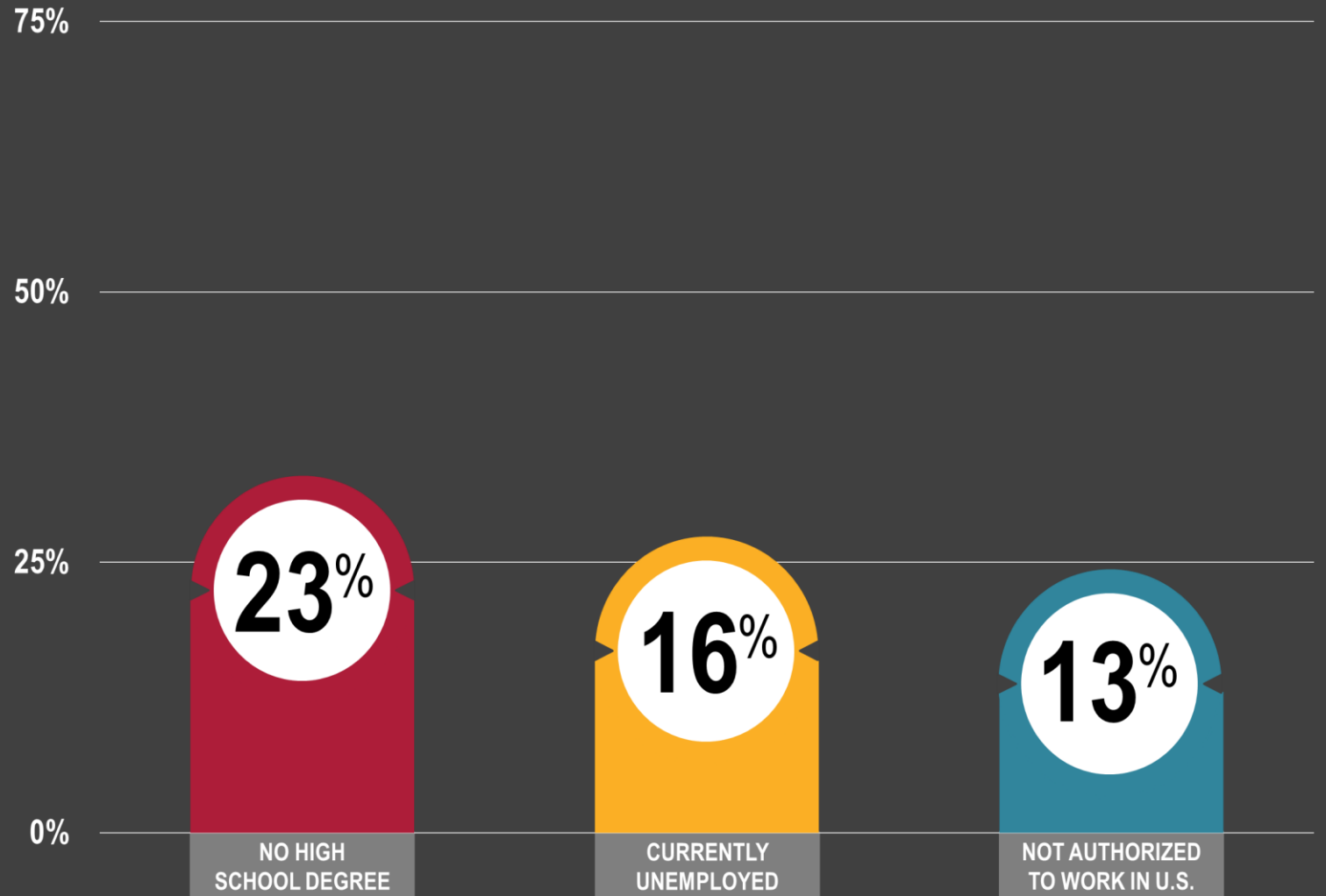
Fathers who are unemployed or feel they are inadequate providers are less involved with their children and use fewer positive parenting behaviors.^a

- Nonresident fathers who provide either formal child support, informal financial, or in-kind support to their children tend to have **more contact with their child.**^b
- Nonresident fathers who have more contact with their children tend to provide **more informal support.**^b
- Child support arrears can **reduce fathers' willingness or ability to engage with their children.**^c



Barriers prevent fathers from supporting their families

Percentage of new, unmarried fathers experiencing financial barriers



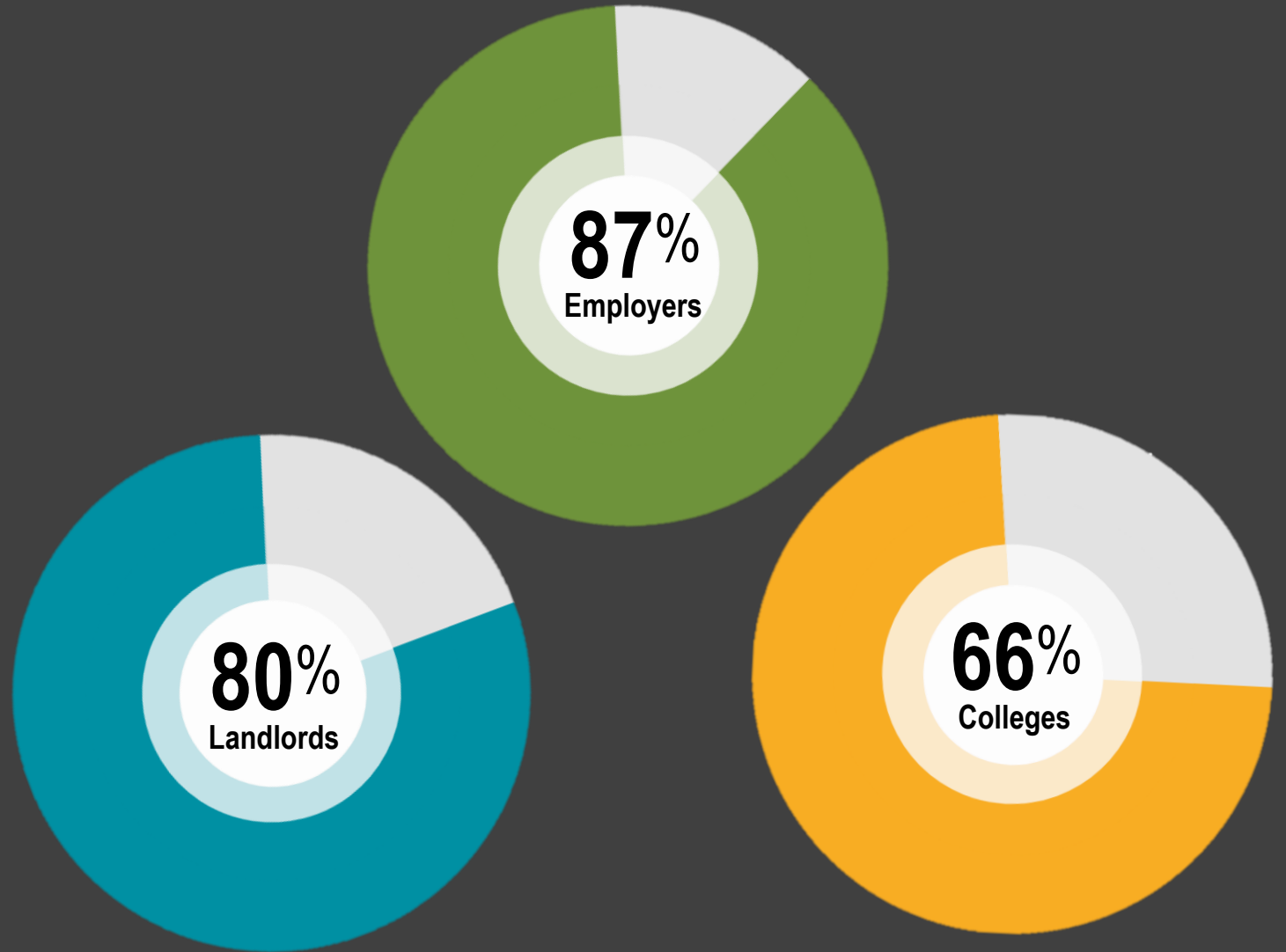
Reduction of risky & criminal behavior

- Fathers with a history of incarceration,^{a,b} abusive behavior,^c or drug and alcohol problems^d are **less likely to have positive interactions or maintain contact with their children over time.**
- Other **risk factors for low father involvement** include:
 - multipartner fertility,^e
 - depressive symptoms,^f
 - stress,^g
 - unintended pregnancy or low prenatal involvement,^h and
 - young age at the birth of the child.ⁱ
- Employment, completion of education, and family and social supports all build resilience and **promote father involvement with their children.^j**



Incarceration records make it difficult for many fathers to get a job, a home, and a higher education

Criminal background checks are used by:



Parenting confidence, knowledge, & skills

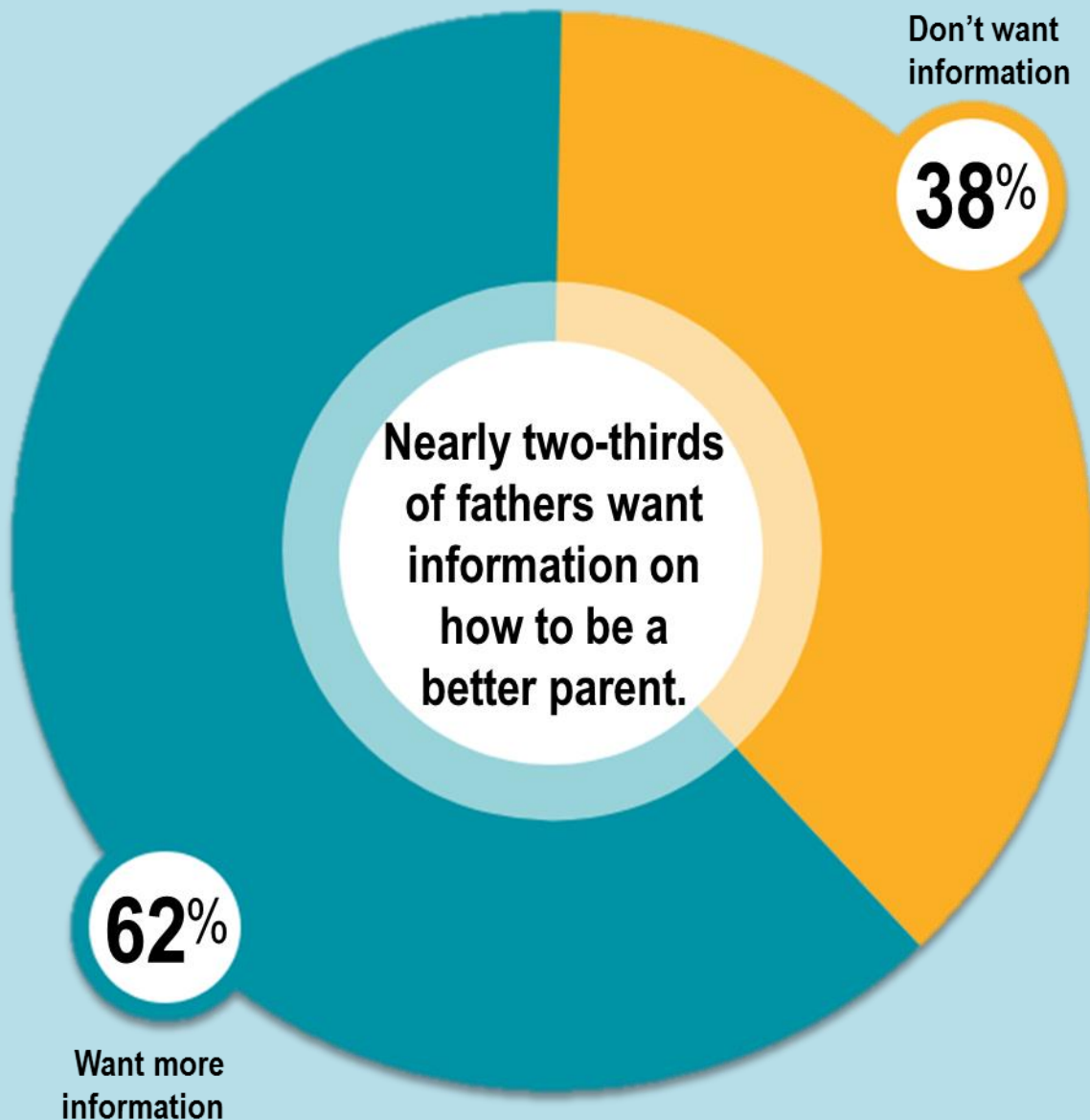
When fathers feel competent^a and believe that they can parent well,^b they spend more time with their children, take on more caretaking responsibilities, and engage more positively with their children.^{c,d}



Parenting confidence, knowledge, & skills

- Increasing the amount of time they spend with their children allows fathers to **build more parenting skills and efficacy**.^{a,b,g}
- Having parenting skills and efficacy is **linked to increased involvement**.^c
- Fathers who understand and value their identity as fathers are **more involved with their children and have higher-quality relationships with them**.^{d,e}
- Fathers who have positive beliefs about fatherhood and the importance of father involvement are **more engaged with their children**.^f





Did you know?

Fathers **want** help to be a better dad.

Zero to Three National Parent Survey, 2016.