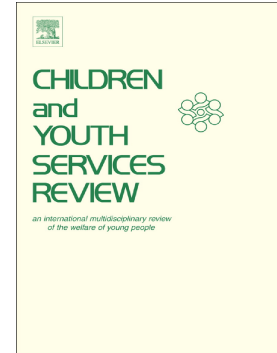


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Single Mothers, the Role of Fathers, and the Risk for Child Maltreatment

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Abstract

Single motherhood has long been linked to the risk for child maltreatment. However, little is known about the role of fathers in buffering mothers' risk for child maltreatment. Using data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, this paper investigates (1) the ways in which non-resident fathers' economic contributions and involvement in parenting may moderate associations between mothers' transitions to being single and the risk for child maltreatment, and (2) whether these processes vary by race/ethnicity. Results indicate that mothers' transitions to being single are not strongly associated with the risk for child abuse. However, mothers' transitions to being single are associated with an increase in the risk for child neglect, and this is moderated by non-resident father involvement. Last, Black but not other mothers' transitions to being single are associated with the risk for child abuse, and are largely not moderated by non-resident father involvement.

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Keywords: child maltreatment; fatherhood; parenting; relationships

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