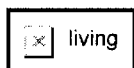


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# **Raising the Bar for Single Parents**

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Seventy percent of African American children are raised by a single mother. That's an alarming statistic; however, there's a powerful movement that's empowering single parents like never before to help make a dent in those numbers.

David Miller is the founder of *Raising Him Alone*. The activist and author has launched a national campaign that is dedicated to supporting the social well-being of single mothers who are raising boys. With an unprecedented number of black males flooding the penal system (specifically, a black male has a 1 in 3 chance of going to prison in his lifetime compared to 1 in 17 for his white male counterpart), Miller believes that there is an urgent need to create greater support and advocacy for single mothers. And few would argue that something needs to be done *now*.

I spoke to some single mothers whose sons are currently incarcerated, and they say that as much as they tried to "do it on their own" and "be a mother and father," it was an uphill battle every step of the way. They reluctantly admit that they were embarrassed to ask for help. The tearful mothers (who want to remain anonymous) also say they lacked the support and resources needed to prevent their boys from jumping headfirst into a life of crime. All the mothers I interviewed feel that society blames them for not doing a better job while dads are let off the hook.

*Raising Him Alone* is thankfully not shutting dads out. An additional component of this campaign is called *Changing Fatherhood*. It's focused on redefining the role of fathers and placing families at the forefront of community development.

*Changing Fatherhood* defines fatherhood as responsible men who are courageous enough to support their children and family unconditionally. In other words, they want to make it cool to be a committed dad again, as opposed to a dad who is committed to a correctional facility.

David Miller says he is hoping to spark a revolution among black parents. He has been conducting workshops and resource fairs to teach single parents that there is help available and they don't have to feel helpless or hopeless while raising their children. But he darkly warns that if African Americans don't raise the bar for their children, then the government has its own set of bars waiting for them.

<http://www.raisinghimalone.com>

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