

Black women 'also cause splits'

Black women are "hugely responsible" for the family breakdown which fuels crime, MPs have been told.

Camila Batmanghelidjh
advises Tory leader David
Cameron

Camila Batmanghelidjh, of the charity Kid's Company, said men were usually seen as the "irresponsible" ones who got girls pregnant and "walked off".

But black women were also to blame as they had a culture of rejecting men and being "cruel" towards them, she said.

Ms Batmanghelidjh, who advises Tory leader David Cameron, was speaking to the influential home affairs committee.

The Commons committee, which is investigating young black people and the criminal justice system, was told 57% of black Caribbean children grew up in lone parent households, compared with 25% of white children.

Shaun Bailey, of youth organisation My Generation, said all the evidence showed children who grew up in married or two parent families did better at school and were less likely to end up in prison.

Marriage

He said the lack of positive role models for young black men and the "promotion" of irresponsible sex they were exposed to was having a negative impact.

He called on the authorities to do more to promote marriage.

"The biggest social issue is violence in the home, because men don't understand relationships with women," said Mr Bailey, who advises the Tories' Social Justice Policy Group, under former leader Iain Duncan Smith.

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Uanu Seshmi, from Boyhood to Manhood Foundation

Ms Batmanghelidjh told the MPs: "I actually think the mothers are hugely responsible because they have created a culture where they can get rid of the adolescent boy.

"They can get rid of the male partner, they can survive on their own.

"Often people think it's the males who are the culprits, the irresponsible people who actually come along and make these girls pregnant and walk off.

"And they underestimate the level of rejection and cruelty from the females towards the males.

"I actually think the males are really vulnerable and it starts in adolescence.

"The minute the adolescent boy begins to look slightly like a male and behave like a male, often the mother wants that young male banished from the house. A hate relationship often develops.

"I really think we underestimate the vulnerabilities of young black men."

'Responsible' parenting

Decima Francis, from Boyhood to Manhood Foundation, also stressed the importance of black men being involved in family life.

"Men have a place. At the moment our men are like bees. Once they reproduce they are of no use - and they are

dying," she said.

She called for a return to "responsible" parenting - but stressed the first step was to make sure black men had jobs.

"They do not have enough work. There are too many of them on the streets," she told the committee.

She also called for a ban on violent rap music - echoing a call made by the three other witnesses giving evidence to the committee.

"It's not the music that you are trying to ban, it's the language they use and it can be done," she said.

"We don't want it - it is killing our people across the world. It is killing young black men".

She suggested the preaching of violence should be against the law in the same way that racist abuse is.

"I feel as a black women very offended and very under attack and I can show evidence of where this kind of music has actually led to people behaving in particular kinds of ways," she said.