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IN TERROR OF CHILD GANGS

The teenagers who prey on drivers
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TEST TO BABIE OUR M

How des... turned to
Review: Pa

5: Would you let a school test your child fo

Charles: Let's

Valerie Elliott
e Affairs Editor

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at recent television
es had been in conflict
Panorama, he in his
with Jonathan Dimb
l the Princess believ
it and agreed appear
l end the impression of
rabbling which those
ogrammes had gener

ated. The Princess, a trained mar
riage counsellor for Relate, who
has attended counselling ses
sions for couples with marital
problems, believed that a united
appearance to draw the line
under their marriage could help
the nation as much as them
elves.

It is understood that she was
anxious to use the opportunity to
let the public know that she
would always love the father of
her children.

But the Prince was adamantly
opposed to the idea and would be Diana

immediately refused
in any such endeavour
Meanwhile, div
appear to be headi
mate. Last night
was unlikely that
talks would take plac
There are significan
cies in the couple's
their conversation
The Princess has
agreed to a divorce
Prince agreed that
would be Diana

Why father does know better than mother

by Rachel Sylvester

FATHERS make better single parents than mothers, according to new research, although women are given custody of children in more than 90 per cent of divorce cases in this country.

Studies in America suggest that children brought up by only their mother are four times more likely to drop out of school, become delinquent or commit suicide as children brought up by their father.

Research indicates that this is a "more important factor than poverty" in determining a child's outcome.

One study found that 80 per cent of pre-school children, who were admitted to psychiatric hospitals, came from single mother homes. Only three per cent were from single father homes — although about 15 per cent of children live with only their father in the United States.

Henry Biller, Professor of Psychology at Rhode Island University and author of *The Father Factor* said delinquency was "three to four times as frequent" in children in the care of only their

mother. "We are talking about drug use, criminal behaviour, school drop out, unmarried pregnancy," he said. "Paternal deprivation is much more of a problem than maternal deprivation."

According to Richard Warshak, Professor of Psychology at the University of Texas South Western Medical Centre, boys suffer "harmful effects" of being brought up without a father. "Children are more likely to avoid harmful effects of divorce if they live with the parent of the same sex."

Dr Warshak said: "There is no reason to believe that mothers have the monopoly on competence at bringing up children. Fathers can do just as well, and in some cases better."

Sheila Rossan, of the Department of Human Sciences at Brunel University, London, said British families follow similar patterns. "One of the problems is that women who maintain

children after the husband has left are often in poor economic circumstances. They tend to raise the children on their own, but single fathers bring in female help."

The author Warren Farrell — the only man to have been elected three times to the National Organisation of Women in New York, but now a critic of feminism — describes the idea that women make better parents as a "myth." He is studying single-parent families for a book, *The Seven Greatest Myths About Men*. "Fathers seem to have a real ability to set boundaries — but mothers concentrate on nurturing. Fear of conflict with the child becomes their downfall."

Several successful people including Michael Grade, head of Channel 4, and Mick Hucknall, lead singer with Simply Red, were brought up by their fathers. Mr Grade says his childhood was "very happy" and Hucknall, whose mother walked out when he was two, has described his father as "a saint". "My loyalty is to him," he said.