

A GUIDE TO

# STRENGTHENING FATHERHOOD

IN YOUR  
COMMUNITY



*Moving  
from Inspiration  
to Implementation*



**National  
Fatherhood  
Initiative®**

[www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

# A GUIDE TO STRENGTHENING FATHERHOOD IN YOUR COMMUNITY

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# A LETTER FROM NFI'S PRESIDENT

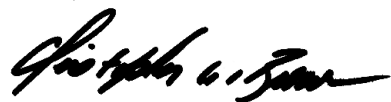
Welcome to *A Guide to Strengthening Fatherhood in Your Community: Moving from Inspiration to Implementation*.

Whether you are just getting started or building on years of experience, I hope and trust that you will find valuable information in this kit. We developed this guide to assist you with your planning and to help you better understand how National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) resources can help you achieve your goals and support fathers, their children and their families in your community.

As you move forward with your mission to strengthen involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood in your community, I hope that you will choose to use NFI's other great resources to augment your program. NFI's brochures, curricula, interactive programs, and marketing materials allow you to launch a program or initiative in your community without having to spend the time and money creating resources from scratch. Plus, when you use NFI's curricula, we offer training and technical assistance options to make sure that you are fully equipped to make your program a success.

At NFI, we believe that every child deserves an involved, committed, and responsible father. We are dedicated to helping all fathers be the best dads they can possibly be. Our nations' children are depending on leaders such as you to help us carry out this mission. If you are just starting a program or initiative, you are about to embark on a challenging, yet rewarding journey. As your work continues, please drop us a note or e-mail and let us know how you are progressing.

With my very best wishes for your success,



Christopher A. Brown  
President  
National Fatherhood Initiative



**At NFI, we believe that every child deserves an involved, committed and responsible father.**

**We are dedicated to helping all fathers be the best dads they can possibly be.**

# NFI AND YOU

**If you were to walk the halls at National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) and ask staff why they want to work to change the world by strengthening fatherhood, most everyone would begin with a unique and compelling personal story.**

We all hold deeply personal stories about having a father; not having a father; being a father; or hoping to become a father. These stories have led us to the shared conclusion that a father plays a unique and irreplaceable role in the life of his children. Whether we were raised in a two-parent family, a single-parent home, a divorced home, a widowed home, or in another family arrangement, we all recognize that fathers are vital to the well-being of children, families, and our society. We believe that a father's presence, absence, health, and struggles affect us in profound ways as children and as adults.

We assume that if you want to strengthen fatherhood, regardless of the particulars of your own personal story, that you share our conviction. Fathers matter. Every child deserves and needs an involved, responsible, and committed father.

We live in a time when fathers are increasingly estranged from their children. Out-of-wedlock childbearing, divorce, and incarceration are at historically high rates. And, unfortunately, as of this writing, they show few convincing signs of turning around.

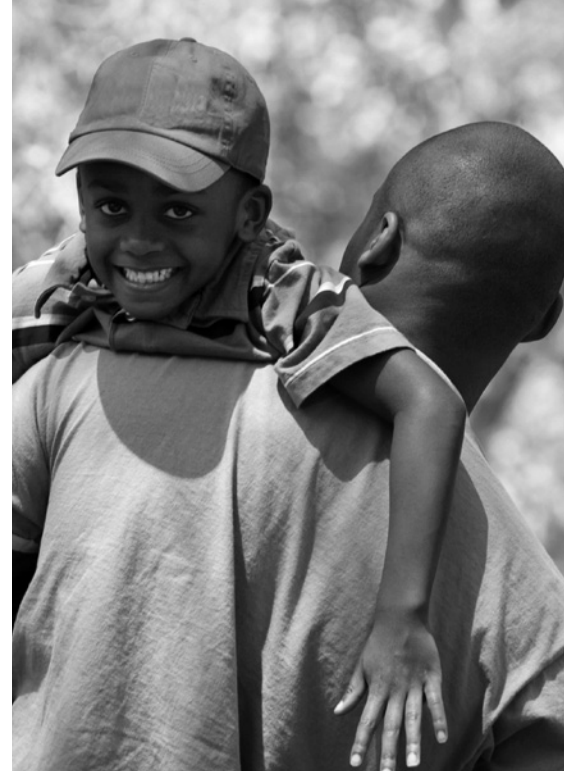
But, we know which way NFI is headed. We are clear in our mission to improve the well-being of children by increasing the proportion of children growing up with involved, responsible, and committed fathers in their lives.

Connecting fathers to their children is our life's work. Whether strengthening fatherhood is something you plan to work on in your spare time or as a full-time vocation, we are here to help and support you. We hope that this kit energizes, motivates, and equips you to be more effective.

This kit was designed to assist you in your efforts to strengthen fatherhood in three main ways. Within this kit you will find information that will help you educate, equip, and engage your community to strengthen fatherhood. We look forward to hearing from you soon about your plans and to working with you to accomplish our shared goals.

**Fathers matter. Every child deserves and needs an involved, responsible and committed father.**

**We are clear in our mission to improve the well-being of children by increasing the proportion of children growing up with involved, responsible, and committed fathers in their lives.**



# About NFI

National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) was founded in 1994 to lead a society-wide movement to confront the problem of father absence. NFI's mission is to improve the well-being of children by increasing the proportion of children growing up with involved, responsible, and committed fathers in their lives.

NFI works to accomplish our mission through our “3E” strategy:

**Educating and inspiring all people, especially fathers, through public awareness campaigns, research and other resources.**

NFI educates Americans on the consequences of father absence, the positive impact of involved fathers on children and the importance of promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. NFI has generated more than \$500

million across the country in donated television and radio airtime and via print and the Internet. This campaign focuses on the unique and irreplaceable contributions that fathers make in the lives of their children, and that as a nation, we must do more to encourage and support men to be good and responsible fathers.

**Equipping fathers and developing leaders of national, state, and community fatherhood initiatives through curricula, training, and technical assistance.**

NFI provides workshops, training institutes, and technical assistance on fatherhood issues and programs to national, state, and community-based organizations and networks that

operate in all sectors, including state and local government, civic organizations, faith-based groups, businesses, education, healthcare, and law enforcement. NFI staff

provide technical assistance and train organizations on how to become father friendly, best practices in fatherhood programs, social marketing for fatherhood programs, evaluating fatherhood programs, how to create systems that support marriage, and on fundraising. NFI's **FatherSource™** provides NFI's cutting-edge resources—including several leading fathering curricula, CD-ROMS, videos, brochures, and posters—that individuals and organizations can use to work with all kinds of fathers in all kinds of settings.

**Engaging every sector of society through strategic alliances and partnerships.**

NFI organizes coalitions of national, state, and local leaders from all sectors of society (e.g., social services, business, healthcare, civic, philanthropic, media, government, education, and faith) that seek to create a culture that values and supports responsible fatherhood. At the national level, NFI works with bipartisan task forces on responsible fatherhood in the U.S. House and Senate. NFI has also collaborated with nationally renowned community-service organizations and businesses—such as YMCAs and Boys and Girls Clubs around the country, the Salvation Army, the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, Warner Brothers Records, Auntie Anne's Pretzels, and the Walt Disney Company to name a few—to create unique initiatives that engage fathers and families.



# History

In 1993, Don E. Eberly, a civil society scholar and former presidential advisor, proposed to a group of prominent thinkers and philanthropists the need for a national organization to confront the growing problem of father absence in America. Mindful of the limitations of government social policy, Eberly also wanted to focus on the importance of community-based approaches and restoring cultural mores as a means of strengthening involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood.

After a year of planning and fundraising, Eberly tapped Wade F. Horn, a child psychologist to become NFI's first Director. "We realized," said Horn, "that the growing absence of fathers was the most consequential social trend in our culture—for families and for civil society. But public policy is a weak instrument for reversing the trend; the answer is in the broader culture."

NFI was introduced in March, 1994, with the stated purpose of stimulating a broad-based social movement to combat father absence and promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. NFI's programming would be grounded in the following principles:

- ▶ **Fathers make unique and irreplaceable contributions to the lives of their children.**
- ▶ **Father absence produces negative outcomes for children.**
- ▶ **Father presence does not simply mean physical presence, but emotional, intellectual, and spiritual involvement as well.**
- ▶ **Societies that fail to reinforce a cultural ideal of involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood get increasing amounts of father absence and its consequences.**
- ▶ **Widespread fatherlessness is the most socially consequential problem of our time.**

Eberly served as president and CEO, Horn as director and David Blankenhorn, author of "Fatherless America" and president of the Institute for American Values, as the organization's founding chairman of the board.

In 1996, Horn took over as president and Eberly assumed the role of chairman and CEO. NFI's national headquarters were moved from Lancaster, Pennsylvania to Gaithersburg, Maryland. NFI immediately began focusing on the educating and engaging part of its mission by launching one of the most recognizable, successful and longest running public-service announcement campaigns in history that, as of this writing, has garnered more than \$500 million in donated television, radio, outdoor, print, and Internet media. NFI created its *Father Facts*™ publication—the most comprehensive collection of data on the costs of father absence and the benefits of father involvement—and established bi-partisan task forces of U.S. senators and representatives to address the crisis of father absence at the federal, state, and local levels. The next few years saw NFI grow in size and reach with an expanded National Fatherhood Clearinghouse and Resource Center



(NFCRC) to address the equipping part of its strategy. NFI developed outstanding brochures, posters, fatherhood curricula, workshops, and other resources. NFI acquired funding from private foundations and developed contract work with the federal government and the states of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Texas, Indiana, Louisiana, and a privately funded regional initiative in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. NFI also created an opportunity for individual citizens to become NFI members, thus giving every American a chance to support this vital work.

Eberly and Horn both served until 2001, when each took positions in government. In the summer of 2001, the board named Roland C. Warren, former board member and NFI executive vice president, as president.

## How to Use This Kit

Regardless of whether you are new to efforts to strengthen fatherhood or have been working in the field for years, we hope this kit will offer you ideas and information that will help you build stronger relationships between children and their fathers in your community, thus strengthening families. You might get some new ideas, fresh inspiration, a different perspective, or just the nuts and bolts information you were searching for. We see this kit as a reference for anyone working on this issue.

### As a Community Organizer

You might be looking to find ways to strengthen father-child relationships through your association with a wide range of service providers in your community. This guide will help you think about three primary strategies for strengthening fatherhood—educating, equipping, and engaging. You will also learn about potential funding streams for your efforts.

### As a Program Developer for a Large, Family-focused Organization

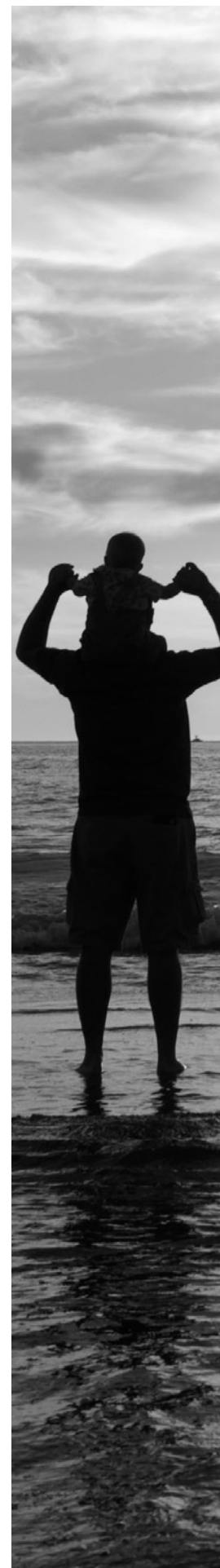
Your organization might be considering beginning or strengthening a fatherhood program. You can use this guide to acquaint yourself with NFI resources that will assist you in defining and achieving your objectives for growth in the area of fatherhood programming.

### As a Program Developer for a Father-focused Organization

As part of an existing fatherhood organization, you might use in-house resources or resources from other fatherhood organizations. This guide will help you become more familiar with our resources and implementation strategies.

### As a Concerned Citizen

If you are a concerned citizen, an elected official, a member of the clergy, a retiree who wants to make a difference, a member of the media, or anyone else concerned about father-child relationships; you will find good information to take your concerns and transform them into constructive actions on behalf of fathers and families in your community.



# STRATEGIES FOR BECOMING INVOLVED IN THE FATHERHOOD MOVEMENT

## Introduction: Finding a Constructive Tone and Positive Message

**There are two key ingredients to building and harnessing public support for our mission—a constructive tone and a positive message.**

People are most willing to listen to and support us when we talk from the heart about the positive aspects of healthy father-child relationships.

There are two key ingredients to building and harnessing public support for any mission—a constructive tone and a positive message. People are most willing to listen to and support us when we talk from the heart about the positive aspects of healthy father-child relationships. While not everyone has enjoyed a healthy father-child relationship, most people agree that children who enjoy an involved, responsible, and committed father are blessed in many ways. Cast a vision of the positive effects of strengthening fatherhood—such as increased graduation rates; increased mental, physical, and emotional health; and wholesome childhoods filled with wonderful experiences.

Anyone who has spent more than 15 minutes thinking about the problem of father absence in America can easily become overwhelmed by feelings of despair, anger, frustration, desperation, and cynicism. We understand and have experienced the powerful emotions associated with this line of work. At the same time, we know that it is very difficult to harness public support as a ranting and raving leader. Consequently, we **recommend that in your public discourse about these issues that you strive to present information in a calm, positive, constructive, and professional manner.** Your capacity for diplomacy and measured response to difficult questions will dictate the extent to which you can build trust in your community.

We frequently say that fathers play a unique and irreplaceable role in the lives of their children. We want to help more fathers have healthy relationships with their children and loving, respectful relationships with the mothers of their children.





## Understanding Dads (Hint—They’re Different from Moms)

Many resources for “parent education” are primarily designed for use with mothers, and, not surprisingly, the majority of parent educators work with mothers. Service providers who work with mothers often realize the importance of working with fathers as well. Our resources and information are designed to attract and hold the interest of fathers.

## Why Marriage Matters

Research shows that married fathers are more involved in the lives of their children than any other population of fathers. Across cultures, marriage is the institution that most reliably connects children with their fathers. We partner with healthy marriage organizations at the national, regional, and local levels to increase men’s access to information and resources that will help them form and sustain healthy marriages.

At the same time, we understand that marrying the mother of their child isn’t an option for some divorced and never-married fathers, so our resources are also designed to strengthen the relationships between unmarried fathers and their children. We also work diligently to help the next generation of fathers understand the importance of marriage for healthy father-child relationships.

## Urgency and Patience—You’ll Need Both

Working to strengthen fatherhood requires a sense of urgency. With 24 million American children—1 of every 3 children—going to sleep apart from their biological father every night, it seems easy enough to develop and consistently nurture a sense of urgency about father absence.

At the same time, harnessing public support for your efforts requires patience. Launching any new program or initiative always takes more time and money than initially planned on.

Use this starter kit to help you think through your next steps and long-term goals. Father absence sadly will not go away overnight. We have found that the most successful programs and initiatives were well considered and planned before the organizers took action. That doesn’t mean that you need to spend years on phase one (planning). It does mean, however, that it takes time to build any new program. You will be most effective if you think before you act.



# Educating your Community:

## Developing Awareness, Interest, and Support

While father absence is a problem that affects every community in the United States—indeed, many communities across the globe—it is a problem that, historically, receives little public attention. In recent decades, it has become normal to think in terms of family diversity, and to minimize or avoid addressing the problems associated with father absence. In this section you will find information about NFI resources to assist you in constructively drawing attention to the problems and consequences of father absence and the benefits of involved, responsible, and committed fathers. We also offer guidance on collecting and sharing data about fathers and fatherhood in your community.

**Educating your community starts with gathering, understanding and communicating the facts of fathers absence and the benefits of father involvement.**

## National Facts

Educating your community starts with gathering, understanding, and communicating the facts of fathers absence and the benefits of father involvement. It all starts with learning about national facts and what's happening with the fatherhood movement nationwide.

### Key National Facts at Your Fingertips

NFI updates key national facts about fathers every few years. NFI's *Father Facts* is the authoritative guide to national data on father absence and involvement. We highly recommend that you purchase *Father Facts* to share with the citizens in your community. Please visit **FatherSource™** at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org) to purchase your copy.

NFI also provides *The Father Factor: How Father Absence Affects Our Youth*, a quick-reference resource that provides an overview and key facts that builds awareness of the many issues affected by the crisis of father absence. You may order copies through our website.

### U.S. Census Bureau

Next to NFI, the best source of national data on the proportion of children growing up without their fathers is the U.S. Census Bureau. The census data includes the proportion of children growing up without a biological, step or adoptive father at the state, community, and zip code levels. To get this data, go to [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

### Fatherhood Today eNews

One of the best ways to keep abreast of happenings in the fatherhood movement is to sign up for our free *Fatherhood Today* eNews electronic newsletter. This outstanding newsletter updates individual and organizational members about the activities and progress of NFI on our resources, and on innovative partnerships we form with organizations in many sectors that sometimes include ways for you to be involved. You can also become a member of NFI's Dads Club™. Encourage community members, leaders, and organizations to sign up for the newsletter and join the Dads Club™ as well so that they, too, may stay abreast of the latest developments with NFI and our resources and partnerships.. Visit our website at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org) to learn more.

## The NFI Military Fatherhood Award™

Each year NFI awards a military dad who goes above and beyond to stay connected to his family while navigating the challenges of military life. Consider nominating a military dad you know and let others know about this great recognition. For more information, or to nominate a father you know, visit [www.militaryfatherhoodaward.org](http://www.militaryfatherhoodaward.org).

## Other Ways to Educate with NFI Resources

You can access public service announcements, for educational purposes (not for broadcast), and order brochures, publications, and other materials from NFI for distribution in your community. We are very proud of our resources and have found that they are effective in building and harnessing support for healthy father-child relationships. For more information, please visit our website at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org).

## State and Local Facts

To harness the support of leaders and citizens of your community, be prepared to provide them with facts about fathers and child well-being in your state and community. This data also comes in handy when providing media interviews.

The most persuasive data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau, your state office of vital statistics, and local agencies that work with families. If you have funding for a baseline survey of community knowledge and attitudes about fatherhood, we highly recommend that you conduct one. Annual surveys of community knowledge and attitudes about fatherhood will help you measure the effectiveness of your efforts. It's also a good idea to conduct a periodic assessment of the programs and services that are available to fathers in your community.

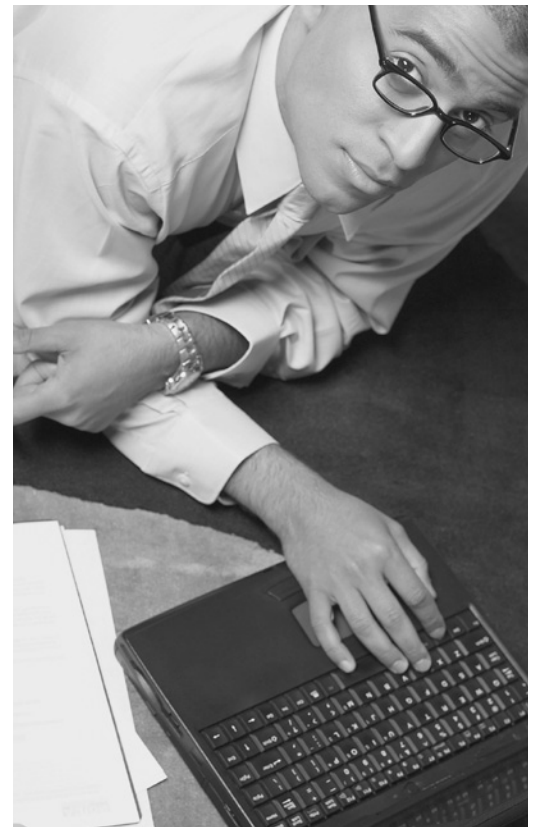
Focus on gathering three kinds of data at a minimum: 1) the proportion of the different kinds of dads living in your community, 2) the negative outcomes for children related to father absence, and 3) the positive outcomes for children related to father involvement. The latter data is the most important data to gather. You will be most successful when you use child-well being to frame the issue of father absence and involvement.

## Data Sources for Father Facts in Your State and Community

Some of the following recommendations for finding data might no longer be viable when you begin your research. If that is the case, use an Internet search engine to call the offices we cite and ask them how to use their websites to get the information you want.

Most vital statistics for counties and communities are compiled by state offices of vital statistics. There you will be able to find data about your state and community and be able to compare your data to surrounding communities and to national data provided by NFI.

To find state, county, or city data, go to <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>, and click on your state and then on your county or city. This website will give you basic demographic data useful for grant



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writing, such as median household income, percentage of households in poverty, percentage of children under 18 years old, and the racial/ethnic background of your community. Click on “More Data Sets” and you will find links to data on all sorts of information, such as social characteristics of the population. You should be able to find information about the marital status of residents in your county and then calculate the rates per thousand people over 15 years of age. To calculate the marriage rate per thousand, for example, divide the number of married people by the total population over 15.

At the very minimum you should be able to provide information for the most recent year in your community about:

- ▶ Rate of father absence (specifically, the proportion of children under 18 growing up without a biological, step, or adoptive father).

To calculate this rate, divide the number of female-headed households with children under 18 by the total number of families with children under 18.

- ▶ Births to married dads
- ▶ Out-of-wedlock births
- ▶ Marriage and divorce rates

You might also want to compile trend data—the same data over the past 5-10 years and over the past several decades. This will tell you whether father absence, out-of-wedlock childbearing, marriage, and divorce rates are going up, down, or stabilizing.

The most persuasive data reports rates per thousand. You can report, for example, the number of marriages and divorces per thousand people living in your community.

## Other Father Facts

There are as many kinds of fathers as there are types of pies. You can use many variables to “slice up” and describe dads who are fathering in different situations. Here are some of the typical ways in which you can categorize fathers and where you can find data on them. Before you start to gather information on dads, identify the variables you will use that make the most sense for your community.

**Child-support Dads.** Your local office of child support enforcement should be able to provide you with trend data about fathers in your community paying child support. They are required to compile this data under federal law. You can find out the number of fathers paying child support, the number not paying child support, and how much money is owed (known as “arrear”) by all of the fathers not paying child support.



You might also want to compile trend data—the same data over the past 5–10 years and over the past several decades. This will tell you if father absence, out-of-wedlock childbearing, marriage, and divorce rates are going up, down, or stabilizing.

**Non-custodial Dads.** Your local office of child support enforcement is probably the best resource for gathering data on fathers living in your community who do not have primary custody of their children.

**Single Dads.** For data on single dads, contact the office of child support enforcement in your state or community. Sometimes this information is also available through the U.S. Census Bureau or through your state office of vital statistics.

**Incarcerated Dads.** For data on dads from your community in federal prison, contact the U.S. Department of Justice. Data on dads in state prisons might be kept by your state department of corrections. Data on dads in county prisons might be kept by a county department of corrections or sheriff's office. Sometimes your state or county office of child support enforcement will know how many fathers from your community are incarcerated.



**Military Dads.** If you have a military base in your community, you can bet that some dads will be deployed, and for those not yet deployed, it is likely that they will soon deploy. Because of privacy issues and other military policies, it might be difficult to get specific data on military fathers. Talk with the family-support personnel on base and ask what you can do to help. To find information about your local active duty installation's family program, you can visit the websites of the military branches ([www.army.mil](http://www.army.mil), [www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil), [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil), or [www.marines.mil](http://www.marines.mil)). Additionally, it is likely that there is a National Guard or Reserve Unit in or near your community. You can find out more about family programs for Reserve or National Guard dads by looking in the government section of your phone book, or searching websites for military families, such as the National Guard Bureau Family Program ([www.guardfamily.org](http://www.guardfamily.org)) or the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs ([www.defenselink.mil/ra](http://www.defenselink.mil/ra)).

**Stepdads.** Few communities, unfortunately, have a way of accurately reporting statistics on stepfathers. We suggest seeking out an organization in your community that might provide assistance to stepfamilies. Such an organization might have an estimate of the number of stepdads in your community. For national data on stepdads, contact the Stepfamily Association of America ([www.stepfam.org](http://www.stepfam.org)).

**Granddads.** The U.S. Census Bureau can provide data on the number of children in your community living with a grandparent. Search the bureau site using the keyword "grandparents." You can find the latest data on the number of grandchildren living with both grandparents (grandmother and grandfather). If you want data on children raised only by their grandfather, you should talk with someone at the bureau to see if that data is available.

**Married Dads.** The U.S. Census Bureau can also provide data on the number of children in your community living with a married dad.

**There are as many kinds of fathers as there are types of pies. You can use many variables to "slice up" and describe dads who are fathering in different situations.**

# Costs of Father Absence

As noted earlier, it is vital that you are prepared to discuss the costs of father absence. Here are a few key costs and the data on them that you should know.

## Child Poverty Rates

Children in father-absent homes are more likely to live in poverty than are children who live with their fathers. Your local department of social or human services likely has information about the number of children living in poverty by family structure in your state and county. There are also many non-profit organizations, such as a state children's trust fund, that will have this data.

## Child Health Problems

Low birth weight, SIDS, childhood asthma, childhood obesity, childhood depression, suicide and other mental health disorders have all been positively linked with single parenting and divorce. Your state and local public health departments likely keep data on childhood health problems.

## Childhood Behavioral Problems

Childhood aggression has been positively linked with father absence. Your department of education likely keeps statistics on disruptive children, suspensions, and placements in schools for children with behavioral problems. You might be able to find out the family structures of the children and compare them with the family structures as a whole in your community.

## Teen Sexual Activity Rates

Higher rates of teen sexual activity have been positively linked to father absence. Public high schools often survey their students about their sexual behavior and these surveys are available to the public through state departments of education and independent school districts. Schools rarely ask the students about their family structure to determine whether or not it is a factor contributing to teen sexual activity rates. The federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) might also be a good source of this data gathered through teen risk-behavior surveys.

## Teen Pregnancy

Father absence puts girls at substantially higher risk for becoming pregnant as a teenager. Teen parenting rates are generally available through your state office of vital statistics, state health department, and the CDC.

## Graduation Rates

Graduation rates are considerably lower for teens in single and divorced-parent homes. Your county and state departments of education can tell you the graduation rates in your community. Few departments of education will be able to tell you graduation rates by family structure.

## Test Scores

Test scores are also related to family structure. Departments of education, however, do not ask for family structure when testing.

**Father absence has been linked to issues such as child poverty, health problems, behavioral problems, teen sexual activity rates, teen pregnancy, graduation rates, and test scores.**

Father absence has been linked to issues such as child poverty, health problems, behavioral problems, teen sexual activity rates, teen pregnancy, graduation rates, and test scores.





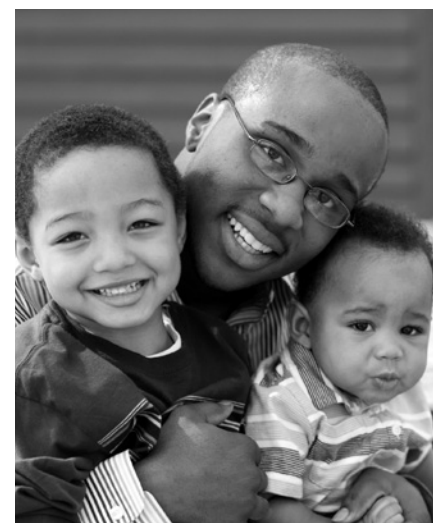
## Equipping Leaders, Other Decision Makers, and Practitioners

**Help your community's leaders, citizens, and professionals turn their feelings of helplessness into focused and constructive action by getting them involved in your efforts.**

In every community there are leaders, citizens, and professionals who, on a daily basis, see and despair about the consequences of father absence. Yet they don't always know what they can do to make a difference. Help them turn their feelings of helplessness into focused and constructive action by getting involved in your efforts and finding ways to provide community leadership and education. This section will help you think about ways to harness and mobilize community support for your efforts.

### Recruiting Leaders Dads

In every community there are many dads who just seem to understand and accept their role and responsibilities. These are the dads you see every day. They're wiping noses, bandaging knees, leading scouts, playing catch, and shopping for their children's clothes and shoes. Keep your eyes peeled



for these guys, because they can help you train and educate men whose adaptation to fatherhood isn't as natural or comfortable. After you identify a group of responsible fathers, invite them to attend a fatherhood program or service you offer. Ask them to observe your program or service and to consider offering a similar program or service at their place of worship or other community setting. Then offer training for those willing to provide leadership. A great place to locate these dads is in fraternal organizations, such as the Kiwanis, Lion's Club, and Rotary. These organizations have armies of men dedicated to community service. Why not make that service increasing the proportion of children in your community who grow up with involved, responsible, and committed dads?

## Parent Educators

As we have previously noted, most parent-education programs are designed with mothers in mind. So it's no wonder that so many fathers have a difficult time finding support in their communities. NFI has designed group-based curricula and resources for father education and skill building—such as our **24/7 Dad™** programs and **Doctor Dad™ Workshops** described below—and interactive fathering resources like **24/7 Dad™ Interactive**—that are structured for how men learn best. Parent educators can use these curricula and resources to offer support for fathers, or to make their existing courses more father-friendly. Either way, NFI can help parent educators market their courses to fathers. Visit our website to learn more about these outstanding resources.

## Community Leaders

Many community leaders are also active and responsible fathers or married to active and responsible fathers. These leaders can help you get your message out and increase participation in your events and programs. Just remember that you will need to be patient. It often takes time from the first meeting with a leader to when he or she is able to play a significant role in your efforts. Be sure to keep leaders informed of your progress and find creative ways to involve them in a leadership role. Political and religious leaders can be very drawn to your message, which is why it's vital that your message is one that builds and harnesses public support.

NFI has curricula, workshops, and other resources that can reach fathers in every sector of society as outlined below. Because we continually update and expand our programs and curricula for fathers, and to get more detailed information about our resources, visit our website ([www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)) and subscribe to our weekly **Dad E-mail™** service for the latest updates and new programs and resources. Many of our curricula, programs, and other resources are available in English and Spanish.

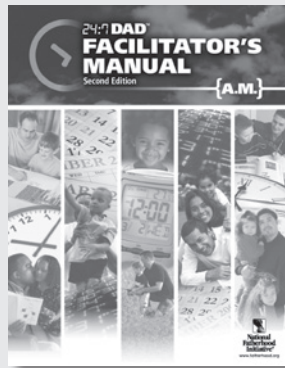


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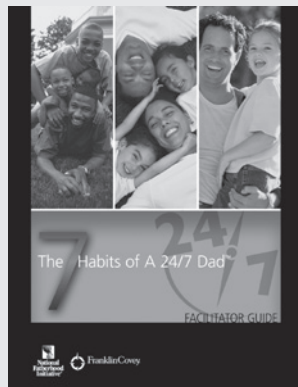
## Selected NFI Curricula and Products



### 24/7 Dad™ Programs

The 24/7 Dad™ family of fatherhood programs are a unique, comprehensive set of fathering curricula that were developed by a team of parenting experts and fatherhood practitioners. Included in this suite of resources is a basic fathering program (24/7Dad™ A.M.) and a more in-depth program (24/7 Dad™ P.M.). Now in their 2nd editions, each program consists of 12 two-

hour sessions and can be implemented in a group-based setting or one-on-one. A Christian version of this program, available as the 24/7 Dad™ **Power Hour**, was created for use as a small-group discussion program in a church, ministry, or Christian organization setting and includes a DVD and participant guides. 24/7 Dad™ **Interactive** is a CD-ROM-based version of the program created for those who can't or won't attend small group meetings. This version allows dads to improve their fathering skills anytime, anywhere they have access to a computer. Go to [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org) to find out how organizations are using the 24/7 Dad™ programs to help fathers in their communities.



### The 7 Habits of a 24/7 Dad™

Easy to implement and flexible for a wide-variety of programs, use **The 7 Habits of A 24/7 Dad™** to get your fatherhood program started or as the perfect complement to more in-depth fatherhood programming.

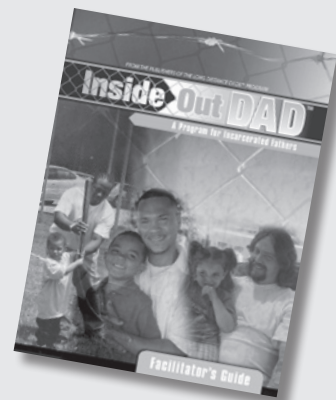
This activity-filled workshop guides men as they adopt and apply seven helpful habits that will revolutionize their fathering skills and help them connect with their kids.

**The 7 Habits of A 24/7 Dad™** is an eight-hour workshop fatherhood practitioners can run that combines the fundamental fathering principles from National Fatherhood Initiative's 24/7 Dad™ programs with FranklinCovey®'s timeless 7 Habits, making it easier than ever to engage fathers!



## InsideOut Dad™

This innovative, evidence-based program for incarcerated fathers is just what you need if you want to start reaching out to this group of fathers in your community. The program teaches inmates how to connect with their children while they are still on the “inside” and includes a strong emphasis on helping incarcerated dads to successfully connect with their children when they re-enter society and the lives of their families upon release. Visit NFI’s website for more information on this cutting-edge program.



## Doctor Dad™ Workshops

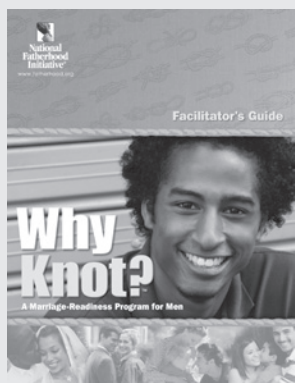
NFI offers four 2-hour workshops especially for expectant and new fathers of all backgrounds—from teen fathers, to never-married fathers, to suburban dads-to-be. Designed by a physician and a registered nurse, the **Doctor Dad™ Workshops** teach fathers how to care for the basic healthcare needs of infants and toddlers. Use them in your community-based organization, in a corporation, in a hospital, pregnancy, or birthing center, or just about anywhere you might find new or expectant fathers. NFI’s website can tell you more about how to start using these great workshops that will get dads connected, right from the start.

## New Dad's Pocket Guide™

It’s never been easier to give new dads the skill-building resources they need to get involved right from the start! This handy, durable guide provides essential hints, tips, and strategies that every new dad needs to know. With key health and safety information, the **New Dad's Pocket Guide™** increases health literacy and equips men with a handy guide they can reference at any time.

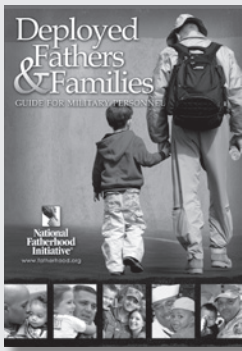


Perfect for hospitals, birthing centers, pregnancy care centers, community-based organizations, corporate settings—any place you find new dads! Topics include preparing for your child’s arrival, providing for your newborn’s needs, and practicing what it takes to be a great dad.



## Why Knot?™ A Marriage-Readiness Program for Men

Prepare men for one of the most important decisions they’ll ever make and equip them to be committed fathers with this easy-to-facilitate program! **Why Knot?™** is a ground-breaking curriculum that helps men breakdown common misconceptions about relationships and marriage, equipping them with important attitudes and skills. Created for men ages 18-30, it’s the perfect compliment to programs that provide relationship skills critical to sustaining healthy marriages.



## Deployed Fathers and Families™ Guide.

Deployment and the rigors of military life cause military families to experience high rates of stress, divorce, and severe disconnect with their children. Through our **Deployed Fathers and Families™ Guide**—now in its second edition—and other resources offered through NFI's line of resources for the military community, NFI seeks to educate families about ways they can stay connected and strong during deployment, and ease dad's return home after his deployment ends. NFI also provides a unique service for military families called "Drop Dad a Line." This free service gives children the opportunity to send their military father a message by posting it on NFI's website for their fathers to see.

## Downloadable FatherTopics™ Workshops

As a result of feedback from facilitators of fatherhood programs NFI has developed a new series of downloadable workshop manuals that allow you to run affordable, topical workshops for fathers on a variety of important issues that may be barriers to a father's involvement.

Delivered as stand-alone workshops or as supplemental sessions to your fatherhood programming, FatherTopics™ Workshops allow you to deliver relevant, engaging fatherhood content in as little as 3–4 hours.



## Capacity-Building Workshops

NFI's suite of one and two-day workshops are designed to build the skills of community-based organizations in delivering fatherhood programming that you can bring to your community. These workshops include:

- ▶ **Father Friendly Check-Up™**—Staff conduct an assessment of their organization's father-friendliness and get a customized prescription with strategies for becoming father-friendly.
- ▶ **The 7 Bright Spots to Designing Your Fatherhood Program™**—Staff learn seven keys (bright spots) for creating an exceptional fatherhood program.
- ▶ **Social Marketing for Fatherhood Programs™**—Staff learn how to effectively market a fatherhood program and how to design print materials that appeal to fathers.
- ▶ **Building Systems that Support Marriage in Fatherhood Programs™**—Staff learn a seven-component model for creating systems that support marriage in fatherhood programs.
- ▶ **Community Mobilization™**—Staff learn how to use NFI's proven model for mobilizing a community to address father absence.

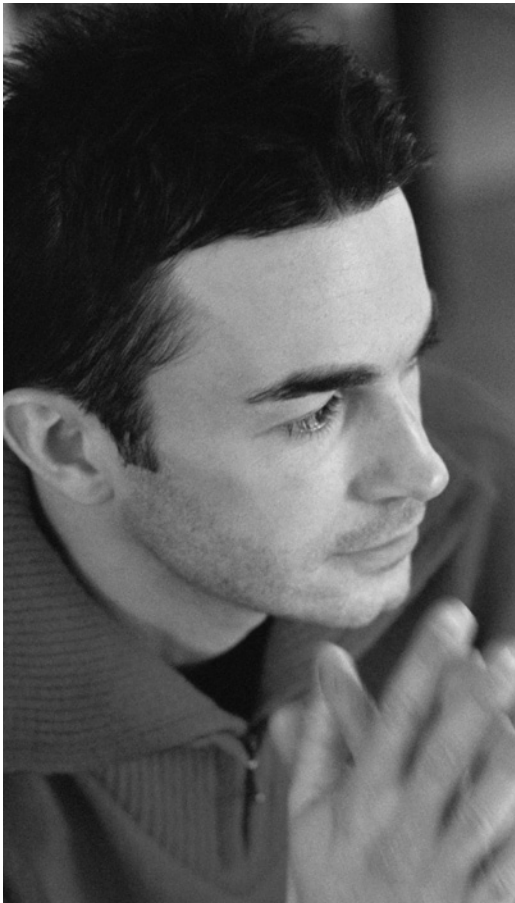
NFI also delivers customized workshops and webinars that address the specific needs of organizations that work or want to begin to work with dads.

**Other Resources.** Visit our online **FatherSource™** at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org) for a complete list and description of the many other resources you can use as you equip your community to help fathers become more involved, responsible, and committed to their children.

# Engaging Your Community: Implementation and Organization Strategies

There are many ways to engage your community in strengthening fatherhood. Start by thinking about the people and organizations that would be your strongest allies, and build from there. Any number of people and organizations in theory should care about and be willing to take action to strengthen fatherhood. You will likely find a core group of strong allies. They might or might not match the list of people you think should take the lead role. The important thing is identifying your supporters and developing a strategy that best takes their needs, strengths, and constraints

into consideration. And the key, as always, is to work with people who are committed and passionate about addressing father absence. Beware of people and organizations that simply want to work with you because there might be funding available in the future for this work.



## Other Things to Think About

- ▶ Public Relations—Most people will want to know what organization or agency is sponsoring your efforts.
- ▶ Funding—Nearly all donors will want to know who is receiving their donations.
- ▶ Long-term Success—A strategic plan will help you to communicate your goals and objectives as well as your plans for implementation.

## Two Approaches

There are two basic approaches to engaging your community in addressing father absence: mobilizing your entire community or starting a program that provides direct services to fathers. You can also do both, but you need to think about which approach you will take before moving forward. The information that follows covers both approaches. Before you read that information, however, there are four questions for you to ask and answer as you decide which approach to take.

## Should I form a non-profit?

Whether you want to mobilize your entire community or provide direct services, you might decide that there is a large enough need that a stand alone non-profit makes sense. Or, it might be that the agency you work under has made it difficult to implement a strong fatherhood program or community initiative. Starting an independent non-profit is no small undertaking. It takes time to build an infrastructure that can support the administration of large grants and to raise donations. If you are just getting started, we suggest that you work under the auspices of an existing agency and then think about spinning off an independent agency if you find the existing agency isn't willing to provide the resources needed to work effectively with dads.



If you have determined that you are ready to start a non-profit, use the online tools of Innovation Network ([www.innonet.org](http://www.innonet.org)) to help you design your organizational infrastructure, mission, objectives, vision, goals, etc. You should also consult a lawyer or other professional who specializes in helping form non-profits. And contact the Internal Revenue Service for information on the legal and other requirements for acquiring non-profit status.

## **Should I integrate fatherhood programming or a fatherhood initiative into an existing organization?**

This is probably the easiest way to get started with a fatherhood initiative or program. If you have an agency in your community that would welcome the addition of programs—and, perhaps, spearhead a community fatherhood initiative—take advantage of the opportunity. Sit down with key leaders at the agency and talk through existing resources for fathers, service gaps for fathers and potential strategies for addressing those service gaps. Frame the discussion using the three E's—educate, equip, and engage.



## **How can I involve community leaders?**

While it might not be necessary to involve community leaders at the outset in starting a fatherhood program, it is absolutely necessary to involve them from the start of a community fatherhood initiative. NFI has worked for years with mayors, governors, and other elected officials on how they can promote and support involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood.

## **Who are my “natural and necessary” partners?**

Your organizational structure and implementation plan will determine your natural and necessary partners—the individuals and organizations whose influence and input will be vital to your success. (Remember that funders are a natural and necessary partner.) After you identify these folks, ask yourself who you need to meet as you plan your strategy. As with any successful community initiative or program, your success will depend on the extent to which you are able to build a team that will support your efforts and help you achieve positive results.

**There are many ways to engage your community in strengthening fatherhood.**

Start by thinking about the people and organizations that would be your strongest allies, and build from there.

# Approach #1:

## Engaging Fathers with a Direct-Service Program

The first step in starting a direct-service program for fathers is to conduct a needs and assets assessment of your community. You need to understand the “fatherhood landscape” in your community—the rate of father absence, the gaps in services for fathers, the programs for fathers (and the kinds of fathers they serve), etc.—before you can select a group of fathers to serve.



The next step is to identify and understand the kind(s) of fathers you want to serve. Programs designed to reach specific populations of fathers are often more effective than programs for all fathers. As a fatherhood leader in your community, you can’t possibly address all the needs of all fathers by yourself. Educate yourself about the unique needs of specific populations of fathers and educate, equip, and engage other practitioners to help you address as many groups of fathers as possible. (To learn a comprehensive model for creating an exceptional fatherhood program, attend a **The 7 Brights Spots to Designing Your Fatherhood Program™** workshop or contact NFI to bring this workshop to your community.)

### Identifying and Understanding Different Kinds of Fathers

As mentioned earlier, there are many variables that you can use to categorize dads. You can use age, race/ethnicity, geographic location (e.g., urban or rural), age of children, how many children a father has, and occupation, just to name a few. While not an exhaustive list of the kinds of fathers you might serve, what follows is a description of the most common ways in which programs group fathers.

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**Fathers Raised in Father-absent Homes.** It’s no secret that fathers who were raised in father-absent homes are more likely to be absent from the lives of their own children. Sadly, many of these men will not have healthy, positive, and satisfying relationships with their father or children. Men who fail to heal from their childhood wounds all too often pass their wounds on to their children. So it’s imperative that fatherhood leaders use meaningful and effective tools to help men understand their fathers and forgive and learn from their father’s mistakes. Men can face their future as fathers with reasonable confidence when given training, education, and support.

**Expectant and New Dads.** Research and our own experience has revealed that fathers are most open to guidance and instruction in the months leading up to and immediately following the birth of their first child. Most men want to be responsible, loving, caring, and committed fathers. Fathers who are involved early on in their child’s life—whether they are married to the mother of their child or not—are more likely to stay involved than those who play a more distant role. Few men, unfortunately, are provided with training on fatherhood, and still fewer are adequately prepared for the challenges of raising children. We have several effective resources—such as our **Doctor Dad™** workshop and our **New Dad’s Pocket Guide™**

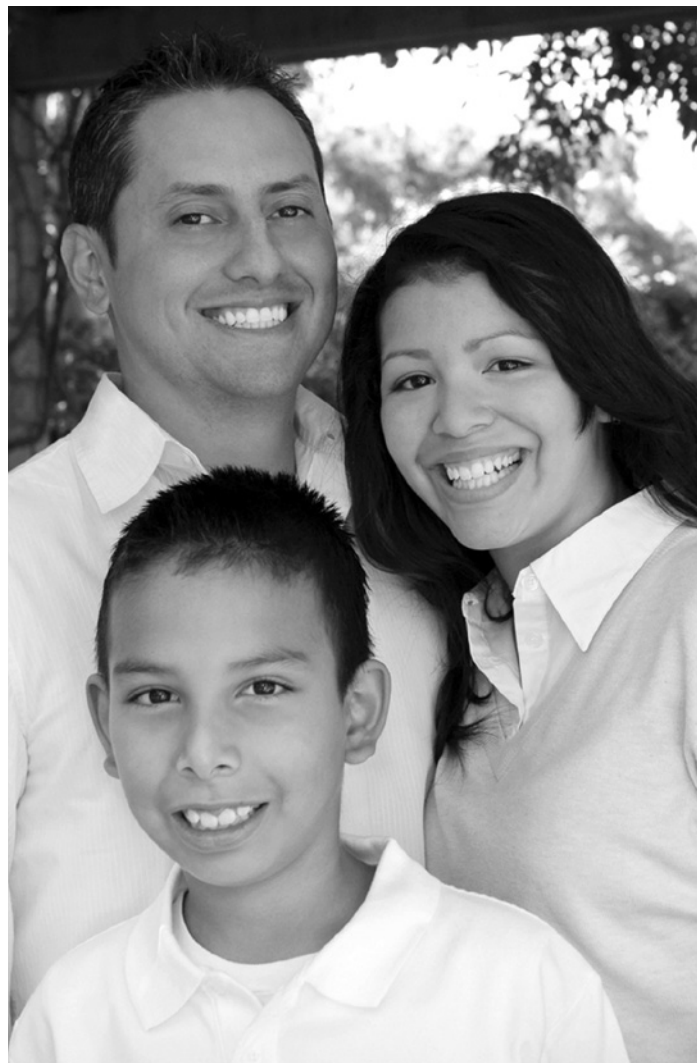
for new fathers—that address both the immediate needs and long-term objectives of expectant and new fathers. Our curricula address, among other things, the skills needed to build healthy relationships with children and the mothers of those children. We address constructive approaches to conflict resolution and prioritize the need to reduce the risk of family violence.

If you plan to offer regular courses for expectant and new fathers, we suggest that you meet with hospitals, birthing centers, and childbirth educators in your community. Let them know who you are, what your program entails, and why you believe it's important for fathers to receive fathering and parenting education. After you build trust and make a positive impression, you are likely to receive referrals.

**Married Fathers.** On average, married fathers enjoy the healthiest and most productive relationships with their children. Still, married fathers are not universally active and involved in the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual development of their children. Some fathers are present physically, but absent in other ways. NFI works to ensure that married fathers connect with and constructively participate in the lives of their children from the time their children are born.

It can be tempting to see married fathers as the most stable population of fathers and, therefore, the population least in need of supportive programming and events. We understand the temptation to neglect married fathers in order to address the more urgent problems faced by unmarried fathers. We have found, however, that when married fathers are neglected that they all too often become unmarried fathers. **Supporting healthy marriages is the first line of defense against father absence and weak father-child relationships.**

We encourage you to place a high priority on helping and encouraging married fathers to sustain their marriages and, at the same time, develop strong relationships with their children. If you are working with married fathers, you should be prepared to address their needs and concerns as husbands as well as their needs and concerns as fathers. When planning activities and events, be sure you think about the implications for marriages. To be successful, you will need to build and harness the trust, support, and confidence of the wives of the fathers who participate in your program. We have found that wives appreciate events and programs for fathers that provide child care.

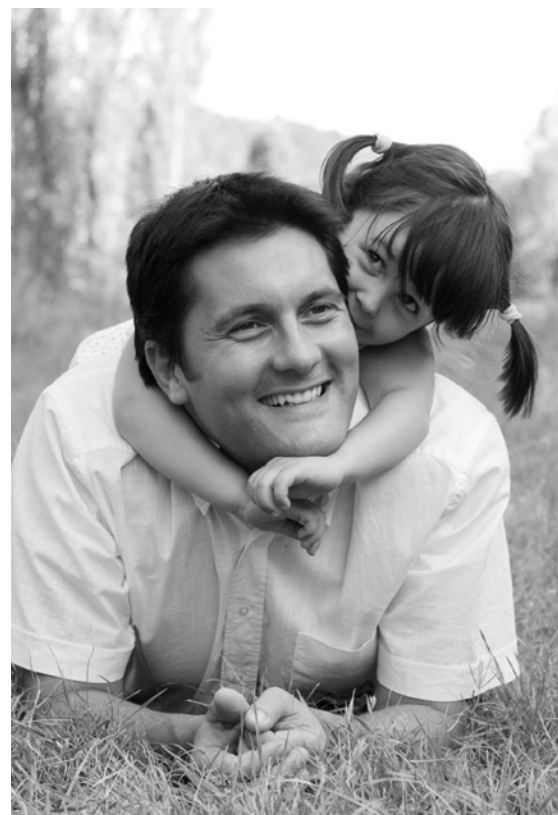


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**Divorced and Never-married Fathers.** More often than not, divorced fathers are non-custodial parents. Likewise, fathers who have children out-of-wedlock and never marry the mother(s) of their children face the same challenges of being a non-custodial parent. Living apart from children all too often leads to strained and distant relationships. And, unfortunately, some of these fathers harbor deep resentment and anger toward the court system and their former wives and mothers of their children. Some of the issues that you will need to help these fathers work through include:

- ▶ Identifying clear and achievable goals in being involved in their children's lives
- ▶ Becoming a positive role model
- ▶ Understanding the importance of being trustworthy and reliable
- ▶ Collaborative co-parenting with an ex-wife/mother of their children
- ▶ Regular, constructive communication between Dad and Mom
- ▶ Positive activities to engage in with their children
- ▶ Quality child care during visitation
- ▶ Developing reasonable and age-appropriate expectations of the father's involvement
- ▶ Adapting to the changes brought on by the developmental needs of their children
- ▶ Responsible dating and marriage/re-marriage



If you choose to work with divorced or never-married dads, you will certainly need to work with the court system in your community. Most men and women who work in the field of child-support enforcement recognize that financial support for children is just one piece of responsible fatherhood for divorced and never-married, non-custodial dads. Most child-support enforcement agencies and staff now support efforts to help fathers build healthy relationships with their children and are happy to partner with organizations that successfully connect fathers with their children. After you determine the programs you will offer, request a meeting with your local director of child-support enforcement and discuss ways his or her office can refer fathers to you.

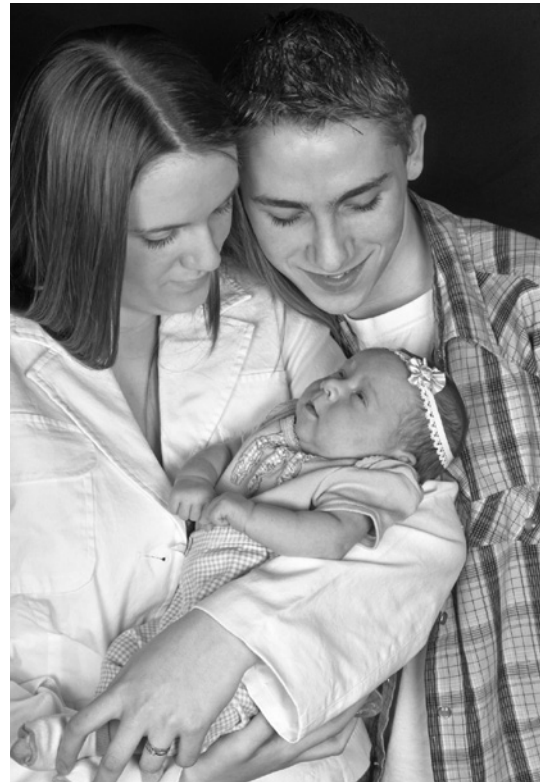
On the other side of the coin, some divorced and never-married fathers have full custody of their children and serve as single parents. While many of the resources designed for single mothers can help these fathers, we have found that men often appreciate receiving information that addresses their unique challenges and concerns. Some of the challenges faced by these single dads include:

- ▶ Understanding and appropriately responding to the developmental needs and demands of sons and daughters
- ▶ Understanding and addressing the issues raised by well-meaning but insensitive family members, friends, and colleagues
- ▶ Maintaining physical, emotional, and physical health
- ▶ Developing a support system

- ▶ Identifying the warning signs of stress
- ▶ Reducing stress
- ▶ Responsible and appropriate dating and marriage/re-marriage

**Stepfathers.** Millions of American children live with stepfathers. It is important to recognize that some stepfathers face considerable challenges in forming and sustaining positive and constructive relationships with their stepchildren, especially when they enter into a stepfather relationship with older children (e.g., teenagers). Despite good intentions, children frequently resist developing attachments to stepfathers.

Often stepfathers have children from a previous relationship or marriage. You are well advised not to minimize or underestimate the challenges faced by fathers raising children from multiple relationships. Tragically, the highest rates of child abuse and neglect occur in homes where stepfathers and co-habiting boyfriends are present. With that said, children can and do thrive in stepfamilies, and men can flourish as stepfathers when families receive the information and support they need.



**Men Cohabiting with Mothers and their Dependent Children.** As marriage has weakened as a relationship and institution, live-in boyfriends and girlfriends have become increasingly prevalent in children's lives. We do not see this as a positive trend. Sadly, cohabiting relationships can leave children to cope with a painful cycle of attachment and abandonment. Consequently, we strongly encourage you to discourage men from cohabiting with mothers and their children. Men should wait until they marry the mothers of their children to move in with them.

At the same time, we recognize that some men who live with mothers and their children from previous relationships often function as male role models and surrogate fathers, and that they can raise healthy children. To the extent possible, help these men recognize the effect they have on the children in the home and help them strive to play a positive and responsible role in relationship with them.

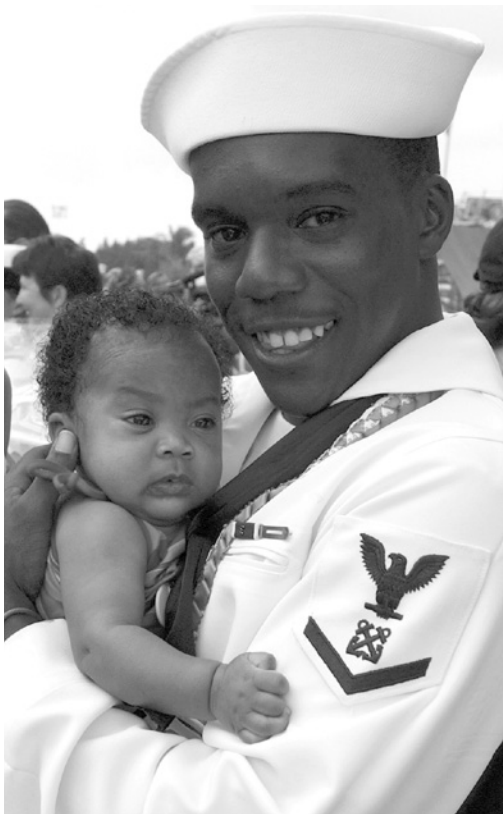
**Teen Fathers.** The majority of teen fathers are ill equipped for the responsibilities of fatherhood. Few have the skills necessary to secure and sustain employment that pays enough to support a family. Few have the skills required to raise children. NFI has long worked to help teen fathers step up to their roles and responsibilities as fathers. Many of our resources, such as our **24/7 Dad™** programs, are used with teen fathers.

**Military Dads.** Fathers in the military have unique challenges caused by the stresses and demands of their jobs, including time spent away from their families during long deployments or shorter temporary-duty assignments.

But, because military dads are just regular dads, you might find that the most effective way to work with military fathers in your community is to simply provide them with the resources and

**NFI has long worked to help teen fathers step up to their roles and responsibilities as fathers.**

Many of our resources, such as our **24/7 Dad™** programs, are used with teen fathers.



opportunities to participate in programs in the same way you would offer it to a non-military father. Just be ready to offer resources, such as NFI's brochures or the **Deployed Fathers and Families™ Guide**.

To get started working with military fathers, work on building morale. There are a lot of ways to build morale. Your first point of contact should be the family-support center at your local military base or reserve component HQ office. Ask the personnel that run the family program or public affairs office how you might help military dads.

In addition to providing military dads with NFI's helpful resources, here are a couple of other ideas on helping military dads. Consider identifying local corporations that will make product donations to military dads that could help them stay in touch with their children while they are away. Phone cards or audio/video recorders are one possible idea. Consider working with organizations in your community that might already be providing donations to deploying units and see if you can include some NFI resources, such as the **24/7 Dad™ Interactive CD-ROM** or a **New Dad's Pocket Guide™** as well. Professional sports teams will often donate balls used in the previous season to send overseas. It is sometimes possible to have the balls signed by the players—just be sure to ask before the end of the season.

Many agencies are already doing initiatives toward supporting military personnel and their families. Local military offices or a Internet search will identify programs you can get involved in.

Deployment often reduces the amount of disposable income available for family entertainment. Community members are often willing to donate gently used books, magazines, DVDs, videos, phone cards, and other entertainment for troops abroad and their families at home. We know of one fatherhood organization that set up a "Media for the Military" drive at an athletic club and received over 1,000 items in one month. Also, systems are set up to provide emergency financial assistance for military families. To donate to these efforts, contact your local military-family program office to get detailed information. For the deployed father, it is very comforting to know his family is being taken care of at home. This allows him to safely and effectively focus on his mission.

**Incarcerated Dads.** As of this writing, 2.3 million Americans are incarcerated. The vast majority of inmates are men and over half are parents. An incarcerated father has 2 children on average, and more than half of incarcerated fathers are the primary source of their children's financial support prior to incarceration. Approximately 55 percent of these fathers have children under the age of 18. These fathers are in prison for a wide range of offenses, some of which raise legitimate concerns about their capacity to build healthy and constructive bonds with their children. Remember, in working with all fathers, the primary concern should be the safety and well-being of children. This does not mean, however, that incarcerated fathers should not or cannot build healthy relationships with their children. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The fact is that many incarcerated fathers pose no more danger to their children than fathers who are not incarcerated. Indeed, NFI has helped thousands of incarcerated dads to build healthy relationships with their children while in prison through our curricula for incarcerated fathers, including **InsideOut Dad™**, and to transition into the lives of their families upon release. The key thing to remember is that most incarcerated fathers will be released

**Deployed fathers need two primary things—ways to communicate and connect with their children, and morale builders.**

**There are a lot of ways to build morale. Your first point of contact should be the family support center at your local military base or reserve component HQ office.**



from prison. Helping them connect to their children, as involved fathers could be just the motivator that they need to encourage them to abandon a cycle of crime.

Rather than looking at every incarcerated father as part of a monolithic group, consider the following questions as you decide which kind of program or service to provide to an incarcerated father:

- ▶ Is he in prison for a violent or non-violent offense?
- ▶ How long has he been in prison, and how long will he stay?
- ▶ What risks, if any, does he potentially pose to his children or the mother of his children?
- ▶ Is he being treated for mental illness or substance abuse?

Before working to build relationships between incarcerated fathers and their children, strive to help incarcerated fathers who are mentally and emotionally unstable or who are addicted to drugs or alcohol to address their issues. This might entail working for years on anger management, alternatives to violence, and addictions treatment before focusing on involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. **InsideOut Dad™** can be an excellent compliment to programs that address such issues.

After you establish a baseline of emotional stability and maturity, we encourage you to facilitate relationships between fathers and their children. This could entail assistance with:

- ▶ Written communication
- ▶ Audio-taped or video-taped communication
- ▶ Telephone communication
- ▶ Supervised visitation
- ▶ Transitioning back into the lives of their families upon release



The strategies you will be able to employ will vary with the level of the security of the correctional facility.

**Newly-released Fathers.** Fathers who are released from prison frequently face considerable obstacles as they strive to re-enter society and reconnect with their children. Establishing a comprehensive system of support for transition into the community can make a big difference in ensuring that fathers are able to put down roots. Provide assistance with or connect fathers to agencies that provide job placement, job training, and housing. Several studies have shown that marriage is one of the most stabilizing influences for formerly incarcerated men, dramatically reducing the likelihood that they will re-enter prison. While we don't recommend that you set up a dating service for newly-released dads (unless you already own one), we do suggest that you provide information and education about the benefits of marriage for men.

As you strive to assist formerly incarcerated fathers to build positive relationships with their children, ask yourself the following questions:



**High out-of-wedlock birth rates, declining marriage rates and high divorce rates have contributed to increased roles and responsibilities for grandmothers and grandfathers.**

**Long deployments and incarcerations also frequently contribute to children and grandchildren moving in with and relying upon grandparents.**

- ▶ Which public policies undermine or support the formation of healthy father-child relationships for formerly incarcerated fathers?
- ▶ How can you change the policies that undermine and bolster the policies that support healthy father-child relationships? You should, for example, be aware of barriers to housing, jobs, public assistance (e.g., food stamps), and child care faced by formerly incarcerated fathers. Prepare to advocate for change where necessary.
- ▶ Which programs and activities can you offer that will enable formerly incarcerated fathers to connect with their children in a safe environment?
- ▶ Which agencies can you partner with to assist you in helping these dads secure a stable re-entry?

**Granddads.** High out-of-wedlock birth rates, declining marriage rates, and high divorce rates have contributed to increased roles and responsibilities for grandmothers and grandfathers. Long deployments and incarcerations also frequently contribute to children and grandchildren moving in with and relying upon grandparents.

While many grandfathers are happy to help and ready to serve, others are uncomfortable or ill prepared for the burdens and limitations of raising a second set of children. Grandfathers are sometimes concerned with the degree of responsibility or irresponsibility demonstrated by their children as parents, and resent demands placed on them by poor choices. They need a safe place to talk through their experiences and feelings, as well as opportunities to develop constructive approaches to raising their grandchildren.

**Other Dads.** NFI strives to identify the unique needs and concerns of wide range of fathers. In addition to the fathers described above, there are resources to help identify and meet the unique needs of fathers, such as:

- ▶ Adoptive dads
- ▶ Stay-at-home dads
- ▶ Disabled dads
- ▶ Dads who travel extensively or work long or non-standard hours

## Selecting a Program and Marketing It

After you have identified and begun to understand your fathers, the next step is to select a program/curriculum, services, and other resources that you will use to educate and equip fathers to become involved, responsible, and committed. NFI has evidence-based and research-based and proven curricula, programs, and workshops—identified throughout this kit—to reach fathers in very specialized

sections of society. There is no reason for you to “reinvent the wheel.” To get a current list of curricula and more detailed information about our resources, log onto our website at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org) or call our national office.

After you choose a program(s) or service(s) to provide to a specific group(s) of fathers, your next step is to market and promote the program or service. Marketing a program or service is the greatest challenge of all. It not only involves recruitment, it involves retention and creating a positive image of your program or service in the community to generate referrals. Although not an exhaustive list, here are some strategies that have worked for fatherhood programs and services.

## Recruitment

- ▶ Use strategies that maximize word-of-mouth marketing (e.g., “bring a friend”)
- ▶ Use current and former participants as spokesmen for the program
- ▶ Get referrals from community partners
- ▶ Use attractive/attention-getting printed materials that appeal to men
- ▶ Gain access to men by going to where they are (e.g., schools, workplaces)
- ▶ Target men through businesses frequented by men (e.g., car repair shops and sporting goods stores)
- ▶ Contact men during the prenatal period, when motivation and interest in parenting is highest
- ▶ Staff the program with men
- ▶ Use sports events and activities
- ▶ Place advertisements in the sports section of the local newspaper(s)
- ▶ Use food
- ▶ Provide assistance or referrals for issues important to specific groups of men (e.g., legal assistance for men involved in custody issues)
- ▶ Market the program through well-respected men in the community
- ▶ Use as multiple communication mediums
- ▶ Provide childcare
- ▶ Provide incentives of interest to men (e.g., gift certificates for landscaping or hardware and fix-up projects)
- ▶ Make the program easy to access
- ▶ Use positive portrayals of men
- ▶ Work with your court system to have men referred to your program as an alternative to incarceration or as a requirement of divorce decrees





## Retention

- ▶ Provide peer support (man-to-man)
- ▶ Empower fathers to improve their lives
- ▶ Celebrate fathers' accomplishments
- ▶ Maintain confidentiality
- ▶ Provide case management and referral to meet critical needs and wants
- ▶ Provide a curriculum and information that is based on universal aspects of good fathering
- ▶ Provide incentives to attend (e.g., meals and transportation)
- ▶ Provide activities for the entire family (dad, mom, and child)
- ▶ Create a father-friendly environment
- ▶ Require a reasonable investment of fathers' time
- ▶ Allow fathers to shape the program (e.g., fathers help plan and evaluate the program and continually survey fathers on needs and wants)

## Create a Positive Image in the Community

- ▶ Maintain the integrity of the program
- ▶ Create productive relationships with community-based organizations
- ▶ Establish relationships with other fatherhood programs to eliminate “turfism”
- ▶ Create media opportunities that present the program and fathers in a positive light
- ▶ Provide services in communities where the fathers live
- ▶ Promote the benefits of the program/fatherhood for children
- ▶ Organize Father’s Day events and other celebrations of fatherhood
- ▶ Sponsor events that focus on children’s well-being
- ▶ Encourage program participants to get involved in the community and promote the program
- ▶ Become a resource of fatherhood information for the media

The most effective way to identify strategies to market your program is to talk with the kinds of dads you want to serve. For more information on how to create an effective marketing campaign, contact NFI about bringing a **Social Marketing for Fatherhood Programs™** workshop to your community.

## Evaluating a Program

As more family-service agencies add fathers to their client base, and as new programs designed to serve fathers are being implemented across the nation, effective evaluation methods are critically important for professional credibility, program accountability, program improvement, and sharing of best practices. To help fatherhood programs implement effective evaluation methods, NFI offers technical assistance on outcomes-based evaluation techniques.

Outcomes-based measurement is a cost-effective method for measuring program impact, improving program service delivery, and supporting staff and organizational technical needs. Outcomes-based evaluation focuses on answering the key questions: “How has my program made a difference?” and “How are the lives of program participants better as a result of my program?”

Outcomes-based evaluation can help you:

- ▶ Increase program effectiveness
- ▶ Communicate program value
- ▶ Provide a logical, focused framework for guiding program activities
- ▶ Generate useful information for decision making
- ▶ Document success

Outcomes-based evaluation processes provide the following benefits:

- ▶ Information that communicates the proven benefits of programs to the public, community, and donors
- ▶ Information that guides sound program decisions based on objective data
- ▶ Hard data to prove a program makes a difference
- ▶ More control over the results of services
- ▶ Information to improve the program planning process
- ▶ A vehicle to show a community that the organization is responsive and serves as a good steward of the community's resources
- ▶ Increased use of sound management practices
- ▶ A tool for satisfying requirements of primary funding sources

Outcomes-based measurement entails:

- ▶ Preparation—identifying the program's input's, activities, and outputs
- ▶ Defining the program—clearly defining the program's purpose, services, population, and outcomes
- ▶ Developing the measurement framework—the logic model—that specifies program outcomes, measures and indicators, data sources, and goals
- ▶ Test and trial—track and collect data, analyze findings, report results, and examine the outcomes system

A key approach to include in evaluating a program is pre-intervention and post-intervention data collection on the fathers you will serve. The basic idea is to compare the changes in fathers knowledge, attitudes, and behavior associated with being an involved, responsible, and committed dad that occur between the time they start the program and after they finish it. All of NFI's curricula have pre and post-intervention tools that measure the effectiveness of the programs.

For more information on how to evaluate your program, contact NFI headquarters.

**Effective evaluation methods are critically important for professional credibility, program accountability, program improvement and sharing of best practices.**

To help fatherhood programs implement effective evaluation methods, NFI offers technical assistance on outcomes-based evaluation techniques.

## Approach #2: Engaging and Mobilizing the Entire Community

If you decide to mobilize your community, there are two basic approaches: involving a range of sectors of community life at once or starting with one sector and building from there.

### **A Multi-sector Coalition—the Whole Elephant**

You might have started to address father absence in your sector and become aware of the many service gaps for fathers. Mobilizing an entire community by establishing a community wide, multi-sector coalition to address the needs of fathers is no small task. Yet it can be done.

We suggest that you begin by defining the community you wish to serve. Are you a citywide, countywide, or statewide initiative? This decision will help you determine whose leadership you need to engage. We have found that initiatives that serve cities and counties work well. After you start to serve your city or county, other communities in your state can replicate your model. You will then become a part of a statewide network of fatherhood initiatives that can work collectively to lobby and advocate for father-friendly policies and funding for fatherhood initiatives.

**NFI's Community Mobilization Model™.** NFI has extensive experience in mobilizing communities to address father absence. We have developed a proven model based on this experience that you can use to mobilize your community and that is graphically illustrated below. Refer to the Appendix for a detailed description of how to mobilize your community using this model.

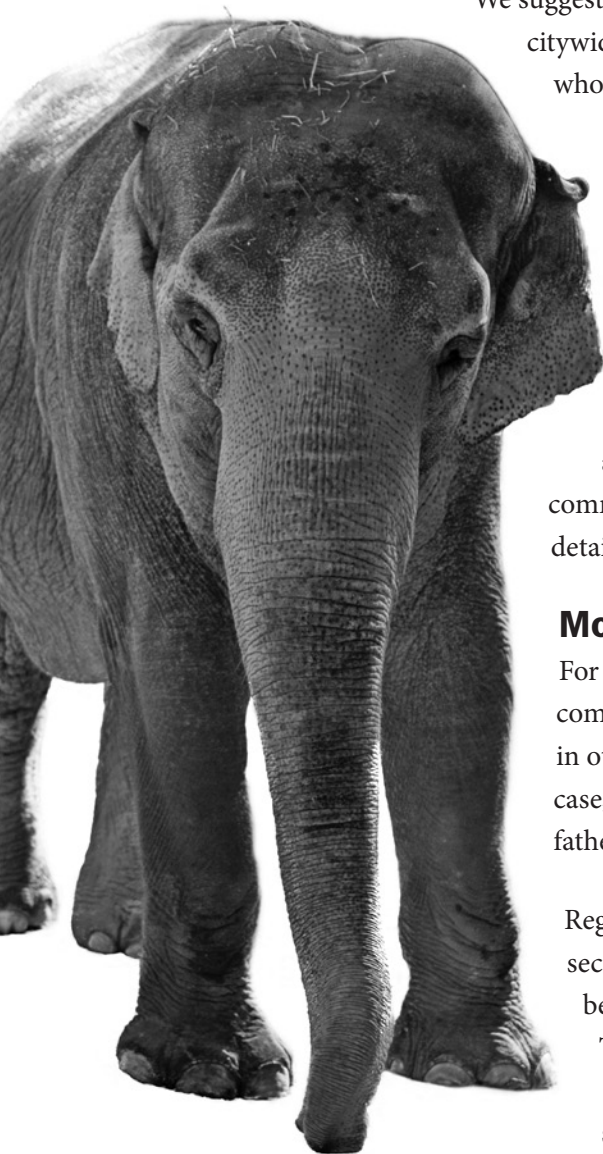
### **Mobilizing a Single Sector—A Part of the Elephant**

For any number of reasons, you might only be able to mobilize one sector of your community. NFI encourages you to do what you can, and recognize that leaders in other sectors might decide to build on your initial leadership. That being the case, we encourage you to be aware of what other sectors can do to strengthen fatherhood, should you be asked.

Regardless of the approach you decide to take, your focus should be on mobilizing sectors of community life. Every community has a number of sectors that can be activated to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood.

This section will help you understand sector involvement. All sectors can be connected through a community fatherhood initiative. NFI recognizes 11 sectors that exist in nearly every community—business, civic, community

activist, education, faith, government, health, law enforcement, media, philanthropy, and social services. You might have others you wish to include, such as the military or entertainment sectors.





**Business.** The sleeping giant in the fatherhood movement is the business community. Think about it. Where do fathers spend most of their time? That's right—at work. Moreover, many fathers tie their sense of purpose in life, and the very definition of who they are, to their work. What better place to reach fathers than in their workplace? Both married and unmarried fathers face significant challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities. Long work hours, frequent travel, stressful workplace relationships, demanding responsibilities, and the fast pace of change all contribute to father fatigue. The fact is that when fathers succeed in balancing work and family, they are more productive and happy at work.

NFI has developed a wide range of resources to help employers and human-resource professionals implement family and father-friendly policies in the workplace, such as our, “**12 Ways to Balance Work and Family**” brochure and **24/7 Dad™ Interactive**. We also have resources, such as the **New Dad's Pocket Guide™** and a variety of brochures on specific topics (e.g., how dads can be involved in their child's education), that are packaged in a convenient way for human-resource offices to distribute to new dads or to dads who are just looking for more ideas on how to balance their work and family responsibilities so they can maintain the best possible relationship with their children.

**Civic.** In most communities, you can find fatherhood leaders in the Rotary, Lions Club, League of Concerned Women Voters, neighborhood associations, and other civic groups. Often you can present information about your efforts as a guest speaker. Civic leaders can get involved by helping promote your fatherhood activities, becoming a moral sponsor for an event, or a mentor for a father. Many of these organizations have an army of men and fathers who are looking for ways to give back to their community. Indeed, that's the very essence of these organizations. What better way for these men to give back than by helping fathers connect with their children?

**Community Activist.** As you attend more community events, you will often share information and resources with other community activists (loosely defined as “people who make things happen”) who are working to address important social issues. Partner with these activists and consider opportunities for collaboration, resource sharing, and cooperation. As a community activist, you can help organize a fatherhood summit to explore the benefits of father involvement.

**Education.** One very important way to involve fathers in the lives of children is through the education system. Educational organizations, such as schools and Head Start programs, can implement character-education programs for youth or develop strategies for helping fathers to become involved in their child's education. As an educator in your community, you play a vital role in educating families about the importance of involved, responsible, committed fathers to improve the well-being of children.



The sleeping giant in the fatherhood movement is the business community. Where do fathers spend most of their time? many fathers tie their sense of purpose in life, and the very definition of who they are, to their work. What better place to reach fathers than in their workplace.



Teachers and school administrators are on the front lines of coping with the costs and consequences of father absence. They face the behavioral, emotional, and social problems of children whose fathers have abandoned or neglected them. Think through strategies that involve fathers in school events and activities, educating parents about the value and importance of father involvement, and helping parents to access resources to protect and preserve their marriages.

Health educators can include curriculum content about the importance of fathers and the costs of father absence. Debate and public-speech coaches can have their students address the topic of fatherhood.

Contact NFI or visit our website ([www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)) to identify resources that you and school staff can distribute to dads via schools. NFI has developed a CD-ROM called **Boyz2Dads™** for teenage boys that prepares them to be tomorrow's great dads and will encourage them to make good decisions when they face pressure to engage in risky behavior.

**One very important way to involve fathers in the lives of children is through the education system.**

Educational organizations, such as schools and Head Start character-education programs, can implement programs for youth or develop strategies for helping fathers to become involved in their child's education.

**Faith.** Churches, synagogues, mosques, temples, ecumenical, and interfaith organizations can promote, foster, and nurture healthy father-child relationships. If you are a member of the clergy or an active participant in your faith community, or you simply want to mobilize this sector, you can help by:

- ▶ Providing information about the unique and irreplaceable role of fathers
- ▶ Providing marriage education, marriage preparation, marriage counseling, and marriage enrichment programs
- ▶ Assisting never married and divorced fathers in building healthy and positive relationships with the mothers of their children and their children
- ▶ Providing regular events and activities for fathers and their children
- ▶ Providing opportunities for fathers to fellowship with one another while participating in an activity, such as attending or collectively watching a ball game, hunting or fishing, playing golf, or camping
- ▶ Celebrating Father's Day with the same enthusiasm as Mother's Day
- ▶ Promoting abstinence until marriage as the ideal way to be sexually responsible
- ▶ Articulating a theology or philosophy of involved, responsible and committed fatherhood
- ▶ Developing a list of referrals for fathers who need specific interventions or assistance
- ▶ Working with elected officials to identify and address public policies that affect the health and quality of father-child relationships.

We have found that communities of faith that work together can often be more effective in addressing the diverse needs of fathers than if they strive to work in isolation. To increase your effectiveness, consider

forming or leading a fatherhood task force in your wider community of faith (such as other churches in your denomination) or in another association of faith leaders (such as a local clergy association). NFI has developed the **24/7 Dad™ Power Hour** that churches and other Christian-focused organizations can implement. For more information on this program, visit our website at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org).

**Government.** NFI strives to keep track of local, state, and federal laws and public policies that affect the nature and quality of father-child relationships. We work with mayors, governors, and other elected officials throughout the United States who identify and address policies that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, compromise father-child relationships. Government officials can help promote policies that will mobilize resources to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood.

Our website includes helpful data and information for government leaders, their staffs, and others interested in mobilizing this sector.

As part of a broader effort that NFI has to engage policy leaders on this issue, NFI works with bi-partisan task forces on fatherhood (U.S. Representatives and Senators). NFI engages these key legislators as they work to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood through legislation for the U.S. and in their states or communities. We suggest that you consider forming a task force of elected officials in your community or local government and encourage your U.S. Senators or U.S. Representative to become a member of one of NFI's task forces. Membership signifies a commitment to the responsible fatherhood movement, a devotion to supporting legislation that promotes and fosters involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood, and a commitment to making our country's cities more father-friendly.

**Health.** If you work in the field of **mental health** or want to mobilize this part of the health sector, NFI can supply you with programs and resources that promote healthy relationships between fathers and their families. Indeed, many mental-health professionals use our fatherhood programs, such as our **24/7 Dad™** programs. Our resources encourage, among other things:

- ▶ Respectful relationships between fathers and mothers
- ▶ Healthy models of responsible fathers
- ▶ Father involvement in daily activities, such as dressing, feeding, bathing, etc.
- ▶ Ongoing conversation about topics important to children
- ▶ Responsible supervision of children's activities
- ▶ Talking about and preventing risky behavior
- ▶ Age-appropriate discipline
- ▶ Proactive, nurturing parenting
- ▶ Financial responsibility
- ▶ Personal responsibility



**NFI engages key government officials as they work to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood through legislation for the U.S. and in their states and cities.**





Our resources also help fathers identify and address barriers to responsible fatherhood from their childhood experiences. These resources address such barriers as:

- ▶ Feelings of abandonment;
- ▶ Unhealthy attachments to their own dad and mom; and
- ▶ Anger management.

Mental-health providers from your community can also be involved in preventing unsafe and unhealthy relationships between fathers with mental-health issues and the mothers of their children and between these fathers and their children. Some families face considerable mental-health challenges. Mental illness; physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; and substance abuse all afflict families and fathers at alarming rates. NFI has developed resources and can refer you to resources that will help you design programs for prevention and early intervention. **We believe that in all relationships, safety must be a primary goal.** A healthy relationship is a safe relationship.

When fathers with mental-health issues pose a threat to their children's or the mother's safety, they need to understand that the children's and mother's safety and well-being comes first. Sadly, this often means that these fathers need to first address their problems before they can connect with their children in healthy ways. These fathers might need services such as:

- ▶ Anger management
- ▶ Addiction treatment
- ▶ Psychiatric care
- ▶ Abuser intervention

You can help these fathers, their children, and their families by insisting on safety and well-being in relationships, and holding out hope that with effective treatment and intervention, safe and healthy relationships are possible in the future. Motivate these fathers to get the treatment they need so they can effectively and safely father their children.

If you work in the field of **medical health** or want to mobilize this part of the health sector, NFI can also supply you with programs and resources that promote healthy relationships between fathers and their families. Fathers frequently play an important role in preserving and protecting the health of their children. From the moment of conception, we encourage physicians and other medical-health professionals to find creative ways to foster and promote father involvement. There are many strategies that you can implement in the medical health arena to support father involvement. For example:

- ▶ Childbirth education classes for couples
- ▶ Baby care classes for couples and fathers
- ▶ Evening office hours to accommodate fathers who want to attend their children's check-ups
- ▶ First aid classes offered at convenient times for fathers
- ▶ Informational brochures for men about caring for infants, toddlers, and children at different ages and stages of growth

NFI has designed a number of resources for fathers who wish to play a key role in their children's medical health, such as our **Doctor Dad™ Workshops** and our **New Dad's Pocket Guide™** for new fathers. We can help health care educators learn how to increase father participation and make their courses father-friendly.

**Social Services.** Organizations and professionals in this sector can create an infrastructure to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood that involves the entire family. Social-service agencies can establish a resource center for fathers in their community with assistance from NFI. This is the sector of the community where you will most likely find existing fatherhood programs and services or plans to develop them. Quite often, you will find some of “the movers and the shakers” of your community in this sector who can affect change in the area of programming and services for fathers.

**Media.** If you work in the media or want to mobilize this sector, you can help raise awareness about father absence and involvement, and implement strategies to help increase healthy and responsible fatherhood. The media can play a significant role in getting the word out about your fatherhood initiative and can help you develop a marketing campaign.

Two types of media that can be invaluable to your efforts are **donated media** and **earned media**. Donated media involves newspapers and magazines (print), radio and TV stations, and websites that donate ad space or time to run what are typically called public service announcements (PSAs). NFI has been very focused on acquiring donated media for our national PSA campaign, which started in 1997. NFI has generated more than \$500 million in donated print, radio, TV, outdoor, and Internet ad space and time. We have partnered with the Ad Council and others to produce new PSAs every year that you can acquire to use for educational purposes. If you would like information about our print, radio, TV, and Internet campaigns, visit our website at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org) or contact our national office.

You might have opportunities to speak with members of your local media about the importance of fatherhood and the effects of father absence. This kind of opportunity is called earned media. Think about creative ways to draw media to the importance of strengthening fatherhood and the effects of father absence on children and their fathers.

**Legal/Law Enforcement.** The courts and law enforcement officers play a significant role in father-child relationships. The sad fact is that the vast majority of incarcerated people are men, and many of them are fathers, most of who grew up without a father. The courts (e.g., judges) and law enforcement personnel are often the first leaders that come to the table when a community addresses father absence. They are daily witnesses to many of the most disturbing consequences of absent dads.

The criminal justice system can also promote responsible fatherhood by offering fatherhood programs to incarcerated fathers, such as NFI's **InsideOut Dad™** program and our “Staying



**Two types of media that can be invaluable to your efforts are donated media and earned media.**

Donated media involves donation of ad space or time to run what are typically called public service announcements. Earned media involves developing opportunities to speak with members of your local media about the importance of fatherhood and the effects of father absence.



Involved With Your Child While Incarcerated” and “How to Create a Reentry Plan” brochures designed for incarcerated dads.

**Philanthropy.** NFI has helped many philanthropists concerned with father absence develop grants for national, state, and community fatherhood programs and initiatives. Many philanthropists simply need to be made aware that connecting fathers with their children can help them pursue their funding priorities, such as strengthening families and improving child well-being. If you are a philanthropist and are considering funding a program or initiative to strengthen father-child relationships, we encourage you to use this guide to assist you in identifying your funding priorities. Philanthropists can hold a funders summit to help your community learn the importance of funding fatherhood programs and initiatives.

## Coping with Resistance to the Fatherhood Movement

You can anticipate a certain amount of resistance when providing leadership on fatherhood. Take a pro-active approach to leadership by visiting key leaders in your community before publicly launching your initiative or program.

Prepare yourself to answer questions about how your initiative or program will address:

- ▶ The feelings of single and divorced mothers and fathers
- ▶ Domestic violence (toward women, men, and children)
- ▶ Your or your organization’s political affiliation (we recommend you take a nonpartisan approach to addressing this issue)
- ▶ Your or your organization’s religious affiliation (we recommend that community-wide initiatives involving multiple sectors take a non-sectarian approach)
- ▶ Your experience as a father, in relationship to your father, or in relationship with your husband

**But don’t bring up these issues unless you are asked about them.** There’s no reason to put a bee in leaders’ bonnets. To do so will invite questions that, if not answered well, could derail your efforts. Treat all questions raised as legitimate and learn from each meeting. This approach will help you fine tune your public message and prepare you to constructively address concerns as they are raised by community members.

It might seem strange that some people are so concerned about you or your organization. After all, you are providing leadership on an issue more important than you or your organization. Most often the issue is trust. People want to know that they can trust you. The other issue is involvement. Sometimes leaders simply don’t want to deal with the issues you present, so they’d rather pick you apart.



Despite your best efforts in pro-active leadership, you might find that some people read into your initiative a desire to undermine and minimize the contributions of single mothers and the economic and social advances women have made in recent decades. If you encounter this reaction, the best thing you can do is repeat your message and apologize for misunderstandings. But, remember to stay positive and stress the importance of your work for the well-being of children.

Our best advice is to keep your mission, vision, goals, and objectives at the forefront of your mind and in the minds of community leaders. Your community and our nation will not change overnight. Stay strong and remember that you are part of an important national movement.

## Raising Awareness

**If you're not quite ready to mobilize and entire community or even a single sector, there are many activities you can do to raise awareness about the importance of getting dads involved in their children's lives. Use these ideas to "test the waters" before deciding to move forward with a mobilization effort. Many of these ideas can be included in an action plan to mobilize the community or a single sector.**

**Educate Dads Through Community Events.** Through nationally publicized special events, NFI exposes segments of the population to the message of involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood and expands our message to include more complete information and practical steps on the "how" of getting involved.

In this important regard, NFI has seen success in its efforts to penetrate many areas of our society. NFI was, for example, privileged to present NASCAR driver Dale Jarrett with a 2004 Fatherhood Award at the Michigan International Speedway during the Sirius 400 Father's Day race. We were able to reach 400,000 NASCAR fans with the message of involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. This effort generated an increase in calls for information and resources and shows great promise in influencing a significant segment of our society.

NFI also conducts events that encourage and reach out to dads. One such event is the **Military Fatherhood Award™** that honors fathers who do exceptional things to stay involved in the lives of their children during deployment and in the face of the everyday challenge of serving our country. For more information, visit our website or [www.militaryfatherhoodaward.org](http://www.militaryfatherhoodaward.org).

Through these projects and others like them, NFI draws attention to the substantive work we are doing to strengthen fatherhood. You can do the same with creative events that capture the community's attention.



**Father's Day is an ideal time to sponsor an event for dads and draw attention to the unique and irreplaceable role of fathers in the life of their children.**

**There are many father-child events that you can encourage community organizations to offer.**

The most successful fatherhood initiatives complement substantive programming with public outreach.

**Community events** are a great way to help create positive relationships between your organization and the community you serve. You can also generate clients for your services by marketing those services at community events.

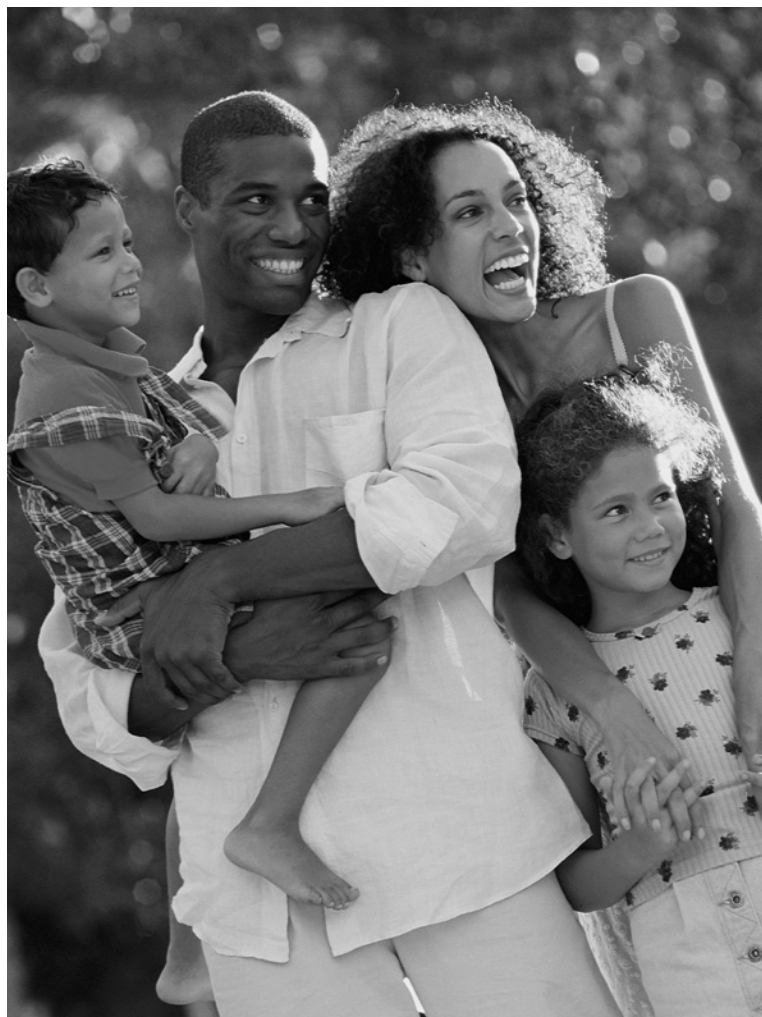
**Father's Day** is an ideal time to sponsor an event for dads and draw attention to the unique and irreplaceable role of fathers in the life of their children. The following list includes a few recommendations for Father's Day activities:

- ▶ Barbeque
- ▶ Fishing expedition
- ▶ Golf fundraiser
- ▶ Promotional sticker
- ▶ Father's Day cards for non-custodial fathers, deployed fathers, and incarcerated fathers
- ▶ Gym bags for new dads—"manly" diaper bags
- ▶ Father-child baseball games
- ▶ Father-daughter dances
- ▶ Boating trips
- ▶ Other outdoor activities

**"Father Flicks"** is another creative community event that can help brand your program or initiative. Your local movie theater might be willing to offer a series of father flicks around Father's Day. Keep in mind the nature of the films and their appropriateness for children of different ages.

There are many **father-child events** that you can encourage community organizations to offer. These events include breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and play dates (Saturday mornings are a great time for fathers and children to get together). When conducting such events with groups of children such as scouts, school groups, or Sunday school groups, allow children without a dad to bring a man who is a significant role model in their life.

You can set up a **fatherhood booth** about your organization at just about any community event. To increase traffic to your booth, provide free trinkets (e.g., pens or pencils with the name of your program or initiative) or a fun activity, or two or three. A table with just brochures is a lonely table, though consider stocking



up on NFI's brightly colored and eye-catching posters, brochures, and resources to give to or show dads who stop by. The following activities and products can increase traffic to your booth:

- ▶ Face painting
- ▶ Pens/pencils
- ▶ Water bottles
- ▶ A baby changing table stocked with diapers and wipes
- ▶ A shaded rocking chair or two
- ▶ A clown and a helium tank for balloons
- ▶ Temporary tattoos
- ▶ A craft project
- ▶ A bouncy house
- ▶ A cotton candy or snow cone machine
- ▶ Lemonade
- ▶ A raffle or drawing for a prize(s)



**Town Meetings and Other Community Events.** Offer a series of breakfast, lunch, or evening **leadership meetings** in your community that address topics related to father absence and involvement, such as:

- ▶ Identifying and meeting the needs of fathers
- ▶ Key attitudes for fatherhood success
- ▶ Child support
- ▶ Child abuse/neglect
- ▶ Marriage
- ▶ Child custody
- ▶ Out-of-wedlock child-bearing

Then work with your community leaders and elected representatives and ask them to co-sponsor **fatherhood summits, town meetings, and other events** where community members can help you identify significant service gaps, harmful policies that affect fathers in your community, and community assets and resources that you can draw from. You will then want to follow up with elected officials and community members who are prepared to take action on specific goals and objectives. For a detailed description on how to mobilize your community using a fatherhood summit, see the Appendix.

**Involving the Media and Promoting Your Program or Initiative.** The media can be a powerful ally in getting your message out into the community. You simply need to understand how to best get your message across.

**You can set up a fatherhood booth about your organization at just about any community event.**

**To increase traffic to your booth, provide free trinkets (e.g., pens or pencils with the name of your program or initiative) or a fun activity, or two or three.**





The first step is to spend time thinking about the message you want to communicate. Think about the message that will most likely generate and harness public support for your efforts.

The following messages resonate with most people:

- ▶ A father plays a unique and irreplaceable role in the life of his child
- ▶ We want to help more fathers have healthy and positive relationships with their children
- ▶ We want to help more fathers have positive and healthy relationships with the mothers of their children
- ▶ Men benefit from healthy relationships with their children
- ▶ Women and mothers benefit from having involved, responsible, and committed fathers in the home
- ▶ Any male can make a baby, but it takes a man to be a father
- ▶ We support the formation and development of healthy marriages
- ▶ We respect and appreciate the hard work, dedication, and personal

sacrifices of single and divorced mothers—at the same time, we do not believe that mothers should shoulder a disproportionate burden for raising children, maintaining a home and generating income

There are many effective ways to promote your program or initiative. One classic way is to use **press releases or “media advisories.”** As your organization builds its infrastructure and begins offering programs or decides to run a fatherhood initiative, inform the press of what you are doing. Press coverage will build awareness about your activities and help increase participation. If you have never written a press release, ask for guidance from someone with experience.

Use **radio and television** to promote your program or initiative. Getting on the radio, especially during drive time, can be a great way to build and harness public support for your effort. To find a list of local contacts, you might want to research the websites of larger organizations that regularly use the radio, such as your state restaurant association. You might be able to secure an interview about a new program or initiative, or have a press release read on air.

Getting on television can be a little more challenging, but many local stations want to cover “human-interest stories” on air. Most communities have public access and local news stations you can contact to promote your program or initiative. Call your local network and cable stations and ask to speak with the person responsible for community relations.

Your **local newspaper** will likely be interested in running stories about your new initiative or program. Send them press releases so that they can decide which of their reporters to assign to your story. Try to develop a relationship with one or two reporters that will cover your program or initiative and events on a continual basis. Reporters are especially interested in stories about the

transformation that fathers have gone through as a result of participating in a fatherhood program. They often run these stories on or around Father's Day. Newspapers and magazines across the country have run our print PSAs for free. They might do the same in your community.

The **Internet** is now a standard tool for promoting a fatherhood program or initiative. Developing a basic website is fairly easy these days. You can develop and post a **website** for very little money, and some companies or organizations with a server might host your site free of charge. (In fact, most Internet Service Providers (ISPs) provide free space to host the websites of subscribers. Contact your ISP to find out more.) You simply need to purchase web-development software and purchase a web hosting plan. A website developer might be willing to donate his or her time to develop your site.

**E-mail** is one of the most cost-effective ways to get the word out. You can use e-mail to announce meetings, share information, and report progress. Encourage others to sign up for NFI's free **Dad E-mail™**, a weekly e-mail service that includes news and information relevant to fatherhood issues, advice for fathers to "sharpen" their fathering skills, as well as regular updates on NFI products, trainings, and events. To keep current with NFI, you can sign up for our **Dad E-mail™** via our website.

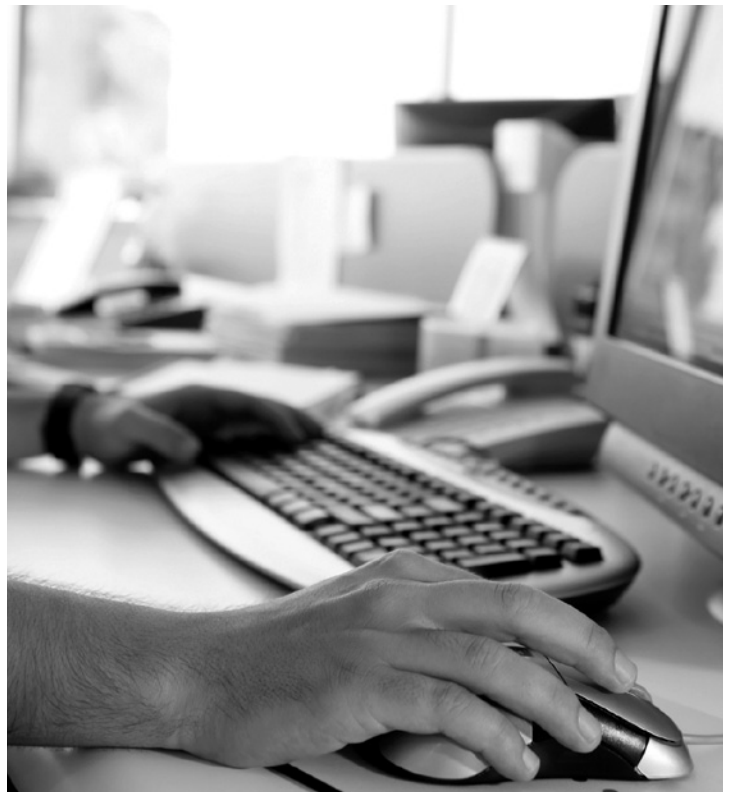
Most media outlets provide some measure of **free or nearly-free advertising** for non-profits. If you are just getting started, you might want to ask a supportive, experienced non-profit leader for a list of media contacts.

Find a **volunteer marketing and advertising professional**. There are a lot of people in this world who are marketing, advertising, and business-development professionals. Many of them care about fathers and are concerned about father absence. Look for professionals who have some expertise in marketing to men. Professional volunteers can help you develop an identity package (logo, business card, and letterhead), a brochure about your organization, or a marketing plan for your program or initiative.

## Funding

No discussion on how to launch a fatherhood program or initiative would be complete without a discussion on funding. It probably goes without saying that it can be quite difficult to run an effective fatherhood organization without financial resources. You need money to pay for staff, marketing, advertising, office supplies, and other operational expenses. But how can you identify and capture funds for your organization? Here are some general guidelines.

**Public funding.** As an organization providing a service to society through your work with fathers, you might be eligible for certain types of public grants. The advantages of obtaining



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**It probably goes without saying that it can be quite difficult to run an effective fatherhood organization without financial resources.**

As an organization providing a service to society through your work with fathers, you might be eligible for certain types of public grants. There are also a number of private foundations that fund community-based organizations and projects.

public grants are three-fold. They provide on-going support and are often easier to renew than are funds from private funding sources if the program continues to exist, they can provide substantial support, and they are not a “fickle funder.” The disadvantages include increased paperwork, additional recordkeeping/infrastructure, and legal responsibilities among others.

The Federal Government uses two kinds of grants.

- ▶ There are grants handed out by an agency of the Federal government (also known as “discretionary” grants). An example of this type of grant is a homeless assistance grant given out by the Department of Health and Human Services to a homeless shelter.
- ▶ There are grants that put Federal money in the hands of states, cities, or counties for them to distribute to charities and other social-service providers, usually under their own rules and regulations (also known as “formula” or “block” grants).

For more information on resources and grant opportunities, you can check the following resources:

- ▶ The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance ([www.cfda.org](http://www.cfda.org))
- ▶ [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)
- ▶ the Federal Register
- ▶ Request For Proposal (RFP) Announcements on [www.hhs.gov/grantsnet](http://www.hhs.gov/grantsnet)
- ▶ Your own state government’s website

Before pursuing public support, be sure to consider the following issues:

- ▶ The time and resources needed to apply and manage government funds
- ▶ The eligibility requirements outlined for each grant (make sure that your organization meets all these requirements)
- ▶ Approval from your organization’s Board of Directors

**Private Funding.** There are a number of private foundations that fund community-based organizations and projects. Visiting foundation websites to explore the projects that they have funded is a good way to see if your program aligns with their missions. Many websites that list private foundations will allow you to search by topic. In the search box, you can simply type the words “fatherhood,” “families,” “children,” or any other descriptive that accurately talks about your organization. You can then view a list of the private foundations that fund fatherhood and family programs. An example of this kind of website is The Foundation Center at [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org). But the best way to get information is to develop relationships with foundation presidents and program officers by contacting them by

telephone. While they might not fund your program or initiative on your first try, an ongoing relationship will increase the chances that they might eventually fund your effort.

**Other Funding Options.** There are also less traditional ways for you to raise funds for your fatherhood program. Here are some other options worth exploring.

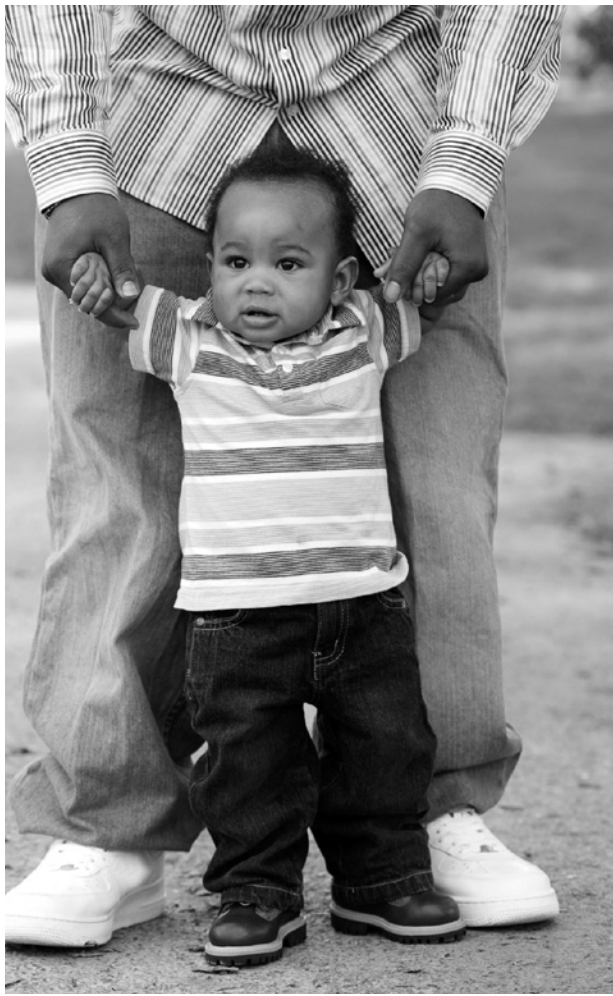
- ▶ Approach local companies about sponsoring your effort. Offer a press release and some tangible benefits, such as highlighting the company name at an event you are planning. Most businesses are looking for ways to enhance their image in the community. Although exploring financial support for your program is an option, you might find greater success in approaching them for “in-kind” contributions. Businesses are much more willing to donate products than cash, and they will often donate items with a value much higher than a cash donation. Consider seeking in-kind donations for basic office supplies as well.
- ▶ Community-based foundations that give within your geographic area are likely to help your organization if you articulate how you serve their communities in their geographic giving area.
- ▶ Create a top-10 list of individuals in your community (not necessarily business leaders) that you believe have influence and financial resources. Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lion’s clubs could be a place to start. Share the vision of your fatherhood program or initiative with them. Depending on your community, this might be better accomplished one-on-one, by telephone, in person, or in a group meeting, such as a breakfast or lunch event. Ask them to consider supporting the program financially. If you are uncertain who would be on the top 10 list or if you think there might be others you’ve overlooked, there are websites that provide other options. For example, “donor research sites” capture information that politicians are required by federal law to record and report on any individual who contributes to their campaign. There are many websites that provide publicly available information, such as <http://indorgs.virginia.edu/portico/home.html>. This resource is a collection of websites, containing publicly available information, compiled for the use of advancement or “development” professionals. These kinds of sites provide insight on an individual’s resources and the kinds of issues he or she is most passionate about. These tools can help you develop a plan on who to approach within your community.
- ▶ Initiate a direct-mail campaign to garner support for your organization. “List brokers” collect and track information from individuals who are interested in specific subjects. These individuals have given consent to receive information on new products, services, or social-service organizations via the mail. To find a list broker that can help you select appropriate prospecting lists, simply go on-line and search for “direct mail lists.” There are even companies that offer a “one-stop-shop” approach, providing the list, printing, and mailing as a package.



Many websites that list private foundations will allow you to search by topic.

In the search box, you can simply type the words “fatherhood,” “families,” “children” or any other descriptive that accurately talks about your organization. You can then view a list of the private foundations that fund fatherhood and family programs.





We recommend looking into list brokers in your area for the latter approach.

**A Final Word on Raising Support for Fatherhood Work.** Because this issue is so personal to so many people who can help support your work, in all your fundraising efforts, be sure to let everyone know that the work you are doing is directly connected to **what is important to them**.

Whether you are soliciting corporations, individuals, or foundations, always find out what interests and motivates them. People financially support that which is important to them, so find those interests that lie within a program or project of your organization and present that to potential funders.

Most importantly, don't get discouraged. You will be rejected. And, sometimes, you might feel as though everyone thinks your mission and work is not important. You might find that many people you talk with "already have causes they support." Persistence, encouragement, and a steadfast vision will see you through to success. If someone says they support another organization (and therefore can't support yours), find ways to work with the organizations they support (when possible), and you might find that in time their funder becomes one of your supporters! Remember—if at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

**Most importantly, don't get discouraged. Persistence, encouragement, and a steadfast vision will see you through to success.**

Should you ever need technical assistance from NFI, we are here to help you most effectively reach your audience and mobilize your community to improve the well-being of its children.

Choose from the below categories to send an e-mail to NFI with your question on that topic. Your e-mail will be directed towards the NFI personnel who have an expertise in that area, and a response to your question will be sent back to you as soon as possible. If none of the e-mail addresses listed below address the topic of your question, then send your question to [info@fatherhood.org](mailto:info@fatherhood.org).

#### **Corrections Programming**

For questions and technical assistance on the **InsideOut Dad™** curriculum and on working with incarcerated fathers, send an e-mail to [corrections@fatherhood.org](mailto:corrections@fatherhood.org)

#### **Community-based Programming**

For questions and technical assistance on the **24/7 Dad™** curricula (including our **24/7 Dad™ Power Hour**), **FatherTopics™** Workshops, and on other community-based programs and resources of NFI, send an e-mail to [community@fatherhood.org](mailto:community@fatherhood.org). For questions and technical assistance on the **Doctor Dad™ Workshops** for fathers, and on men's health issues, send an e-mail to [healthcare@fatherhood.org](mailto:healthcare@fatherhood.org).

### **Military Programming**

For questions and technical assistance on our work with the military and related programs, send an e-mail to [military@fatherhood.org](mailto:military@fatherhood.org).

### **Starting and Running Programs or Initiatives**

For questions and technical assistance on starting or running a fatherhood program, service, or initiative at a state or community level, send an e-mail to [info@fatherhood.org](mailto:info@fatherhood.org).

### **Capacity-Building Workshops**

For questions on our capacity-building workshops or bringing a workshop to your organization or community, send an e-mail to [workshops@fatherhood.org](mailto:workshops@fatherhood.org).

### **NFI Speakers**

For questions on securing an NFI speaker for your conference, meeting, or event, send an e-mail to [speakers@fatherhood.org](mailto:speakers@fatherhood.org).

All of us at NFI hope that you have found the information in this kit to be of great benefit. One of the best ways to take advantage of the information presented in this kit is to partner with NFI by becoming a member of NFI's Dads Club™. That way, you will be kept abreast of the latest trends, strategies, and effective programs for mobilizing communities and serving fathers.

By becoming a Dads Club™ member, you will help us promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood in America. For more information on becoming more involved with NFI as or a Dads Club™ member, visit our website at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org).



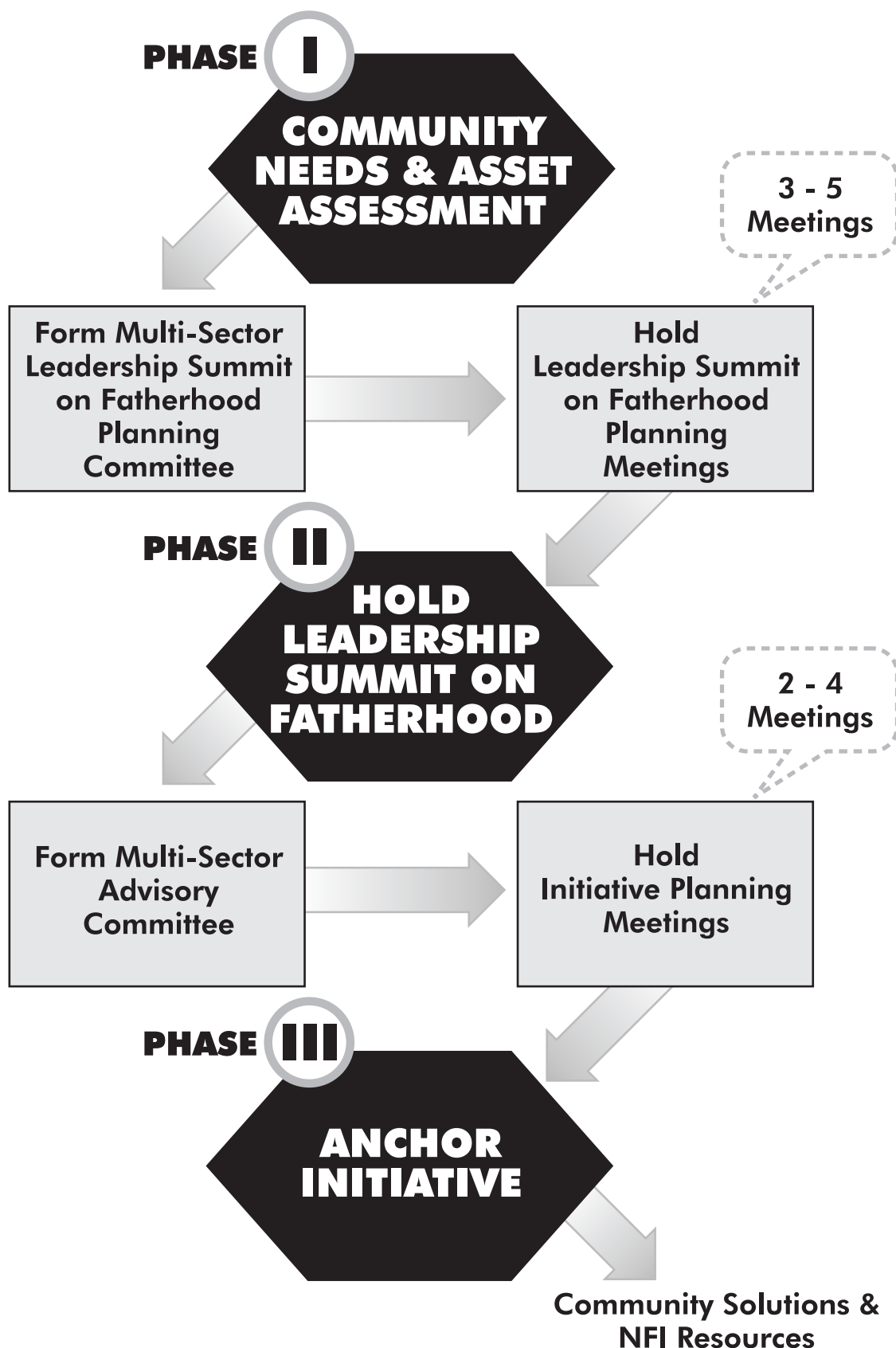
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**National  
Fatherhood  
Initiative®**

[www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

# APPENDIX: NFI'S COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION APPROACH™



# Introduction

So, you want to mobilize a community to promote responsible fatherhood. That's a tall order, but far from an impossible one. At National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI), we've learned a lot about this challenge. This appendix offers our best practices, but it's not definitive. We encourage you to improve upon them. Examine the Community Mobilization Approach™ from all angles. Take it apart like a mechanic disassembles an engine. Clean the fuel injectors. Drain and fill the radiator. Change the timing belt. Identify what works, what doesn't, and what you can add that will produce a well-oiled machine that ignites a fatherhood initiative in a community.

NFI's Community Mobilization Approach™, which is diagrammed at the beginning of this Appendix, consists of: (1) a needs and assets assessment of the community's ability to promote responsible fatherhood, (2) a Leadership Summit on Fatherhood attended by community leaders, and (3) implementing an action plan for a fatherhood initiative that uses NFI resources and solutions generated by the community.

Keep three things in mind as you use the model. First, you must instill in community leaders the following vision:

To promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood, communities must do more than expand programs and services to include fathers and create new programs and services for dads. Communities must change the cultural institutions that form the different sectors of society. Comprehensive initiatives include change at the individual and environmental levels. You can't share this vision too often.

Use this vision is to expand the vision of community leaders. Many leaders think that a fatherhood initiative only involves creating services and programs for dads (and, often, for only low income, non-custodial dads), and that the only people who need to plan an initiative are the ones who work with fathers every day.

Creating programs and services is a vital component of an initiative. But it is only one component. Planning an initiative that reaches into every corner of a community means that leaders from many sectors of community life must shape it.

Fatherhood initiatives must include strategies that will change the environment in which fathers live and in which boys and girls are







**Fatherhood initiatives must include strategies that will change the environment in which fathers live and in which boys and girls are raised.**

**Only by changing the institutions that shape our lives will the culture change to support responsible fatherhood.**

raised. Only by changing the institutions that shape our lives will the culture change to support responsible fatherhood. Every sector of our society must instill the following belief in everyone: the true measure of a father is whether he is involved physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually in the lives of his children. An increase in the proportion of children with responsible fathers will not happen without institutional change that touches the lives of every father.

The second thing to keep in mind is that motivating community leaders is like giving a dog peanut butter. The dog wants the peanut butter, but once he has it, he doesn't know how to eat it. He will lick and smack and run around for an eternity. You can even leave for a while, and when you return, he'll be doing the same thing. You will find that community leaders will want what you have: expertise and access to resources in the fatherhood field. But without direction—your direction—they might not know what to do with what you have to offer. Community leaders are often people of action. They will want to know a little about the history of the fatherhood movement and the reasons why fathers are so important in the lives of children. But what they want more than anything is for you to tell them what you want them to do and to provide them with the tools to do it. Don't be afraid to offer your advice, to offer them NFI tools (e.g., print materials, curricula, and services), and to structure your work with leaders as outlined in this appendix.

Finally, the mobilization process can last for several months, and perhaps a year or longer. The time you invest in the process is well worth it. Be patient.

# Phase 1:

## Community Needs and Assets Assessment

It is vital that you first understand what a community needs to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood and the assets (resources) in a community that can mobilize to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. Based on the anthropological procedure known as Rapid Ethnographic Assessment (REA), this section describes a four-component procedure that facilitates the rapid gathering of data on programs and services for fathers. This procedure is especially useful when you have limited time and resources.

In the context of fatherhood, this procedure is called a Rapid Ethnographic Assessment of Programs and Services (REAPS). That's a mouthful. The goal of the REAPS is to gather data that helps to identify the factors that will help mobilize a community in the most effective way possible. It will help you identify the leaders and organizations that can help with the mobilization process. And, it generates the kind of data that can attract funds for a community-wide fatherhood initiative. Ideally, this procedure will also identify a potential “champion(s)” in the community that could spearhead an initiative—assuming, of course, that you have not chosen to be the champion.

## Objectives of the REAPS

The REAPS has the following objectives. It helps:

- ▶ Identify the need to address father absence
- ▶ Identify the services and programs for fathers that exist in the community, and the service and program gaps
- ▶ Identify the assets in the community that can be mobilized to promote responsible fatherhood
- ▶ Identify potential strategies to weave the promotion of responsible fatherhood into the social fabric of the community
- ▶ Collect information critical to attract funds for a sustainable community-wide fatherhood initiative
- ▶ Recruit leaders for a committee to plan a Leadership Summit on Fatherhood
- ▶ Identify a champion(s) to spearhead a fatherhood initiative



# REAFS Methodology

The REAPS methodology is comprised of four components. While you can consider these components as “steps” conducted one after the other, you can conduct some of them simultaneously. The data that you gather during any step may apply to one or more of the other steps. Therefore, these are not necessarily linear steps.

## Component 1: Gather Secondary Data

The first component of REAPS involves compiling secondary (existing) data on issues related to father absence and involvement. Look for data that shows the proportion of children in the community who live without a father in their lives and the prevalence in the community of the symptoms related to father absence, such as teen pregnancy, out-of-wedlock-births, child poverty, divorce rates, and school drop-out rates. Look for studies that have focused on the positive effects of father involvement in the community. Use this data to create indicators of father absence and involvement that you can use as a baseline against which to measure the effectiveness of strategies that the community might develop.

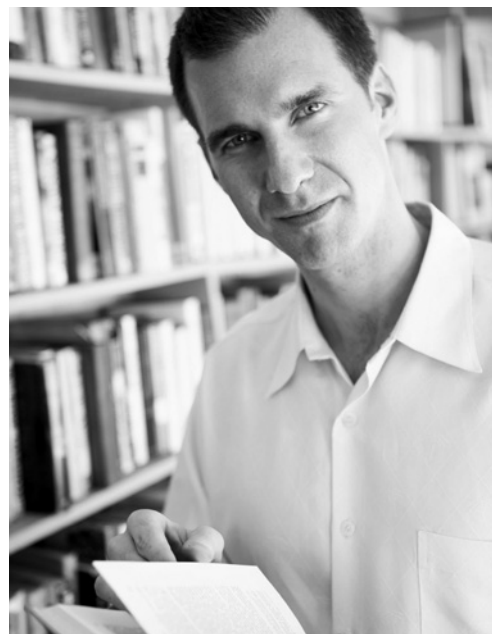
The kind of data to gather should include, but not be limited to:

- ▶ The proportion and total number of children who live without a father (the U.S. Census Bureau has 2000 data by county, city, and zip code); and
- ▶ The prevalence of child and other outcomes that research has correlated with father absence (e.g., teen pregnancy, behavioral problems in school, and alcohol and drug abuse).
- ▶ Other data identified on pages 10-13 of this guide. (These pages also provide guidance on where you can find data.)

Segment this data by demographics, such as race and income. Create visual images that illustrate the data. Create a map, for example, that groups zip codes into “zones” based on similar rates of father absence. You should compare community data to statewide and national data when possible. (NFI’s *Father Facts* contains a wealth of national data.) How you illustrate the data, and the comparisons to statewide and national data, will provide a snapshot of where the greatest need to promote responsible fatherhood exists, from the perspective of children whose fathers are absent physically, and how the community fares compared with the rest of the state and the nation.

## Component 2: Create a Community “Assets” Map

This component involves mapping (e.g., plotting) the known programs and services for fathers in the community. It also involves mapping the known programs and services for families that serve mothers exclusively, or almost exclusively, that could be expanded to include fathers. The map should include a description of the programs and services for fathers. Each description should mention the kind of father(s) served, the program or service offered (e.g., specific fatherhood curricula used), whether the program or service for fathers has been evaluated, and, if it has been evaluated, the results of the evaluation. It should also include contact information that can be compiled into a resource guide on programs and services for dads. Don’t limit the assessment to programs and services offered by government agencies or non-profit organizations. Look for programs and services offered in the civic, faith, education, healthcare, and law enforcement sectors. Identify father-friendly programs and services that businesses might offer to their employees (e.g., benefits) or to community residents.



Identifying the assets shows the gaps in programs and services, but keeps the focus on the strengths of the community instead of its weaknesses. It is better for the community to start promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood from its strengths, not its weaknesses.

### **Component 3: Conduct Semi-structured Key Informant Interviews of Focus Groups with Leaders in Different Sectors**

The first two components in the REAPS focus on collecting quantitative data. This component involves gathering qualitative data via semi-structured interviews (a combination of open-ended and close-ended questions) or focus groups with key leaders in the following 11 sectors of community life:

- ▶ Government (federal, state, or city/county)
- ▶ Non-Profit, Social Service
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Faith
- ▶ Business
- ▶ Health care
- ▶ Media/Entertainment
- ▶ Philanthropic
- ▶ Civic and Cultural Groups
- ▶ Law Enforcement
- ▶ Organic/Neighborhood Leaders

There is no required number of leaders that you should interview or number of focus groups to conduct. To get useful data, however, you should interview at least three to five leaders in each sector. If you conduct focus groups, you can have a mix of leaders from different sectors in a group or conduct sector-specific groups. The latter approach will, of course, take more time to get feedback from all of the sectors. Use a “snowball” sampling technique to maximize resources and time during the recruiting process. This technique involves asking leaders you interview to identify other leaders in their sector whom they think are well informed about the dynamics of that sector.

Use a data collection technique that makes the best use of time and resources. Whether you interview leaders in person or on the telephone or conduct focus groups, design your questions to generate the following information:

- ▶ Existing programs, services, and initiatives for fathers in the leader’s sector and in other sectors
- ▶ The level of concern the leader has about father absence, and the level of concern the leader perceives other leaders in his or her sector have about father absence



**To get qualitative data, interview key leaders in each sector of community life.**

**Use a “snowball” sampling technique to maximize resources and time. This involves asking leaders you interview to identify other leaders in their sector whom they think are well informed about the dynamics of that sector.**





- ▶ The attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions the leader has on the negative impact of absent fathers on children and the positive impact that involved fathers have on children
- ▶ The level of commitment that the leader has to address father absence (e.g., general support for a community-wide initiative and personal commitment to participate in creating an initiative)
- ▶ The most effective ways to promote responsible fatherhood within the leader's sector
- ▶ The assets in the leader's sector that could be mobilized
- ▶ The barriers in the leader's sector and in the community to promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood
- ▶ The history of collaboration in the community in addressing social problems, especially in the area of children's issues (e.g., parenting), and the extent of the participation of the leader's sector in such collaborations
- ▶ Existing initiatives and other community efforts that could expand to include the promotion of involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood
- ▶ The level of interest that the leader has in joining a planning committee for a Leadership Summit on Fatherhood

**Place calls to community leaders and explain that you want to improve the well-being of children by increasing the number of children growing up with involved, responsible and committed fathers.**

- ▶ Other leaders in the sector who might be interested in joining a planning committee (questions should uncover the motivation of the leader to join the committee and barriers that might prevent the leader from joining the committee)
- ▶ A list of key players in each sector who should participate in a leadership summit

These interviews or focus groups should provide additional information for the first two components. They should also reveal potential champions that could spearhead a community-wide initiative.

## **Recruiting Leaders for Interviews or Focus Groups**

If you are new to the community that you want to mobilize (i.e., you have recently moved to the community or live in another community), consider using the following process to recruit leaders for interviews or focus groups. This process will help you identify the first one or two leaders to approach in each sector.

### **▶ Step 1: Internet Search**

Begin with an Internet search of organizations in the community. Look for organizations and leaders that are involved in the life of the community (e.g., they sponsor community events and celebrations). Let's say you want to mobilize a community called East Riverside. A simple search to start off with could be a Boolean search using phrases like "East Riverside AND Kiwanis" or "East Riverside AND chamber of commerce" to identify leaders in the civic and business communities. Key websites to explore are those associated with the community's chamber of

commerce, local government, and school district. These sites often contain listings of community events with sponsors.

### ► Step 2: Phone Call

After you have developed the list of potential leaders to approach, place calls to them and explain that you (and any leaders or groups that have partnered with you) want to improve the well-being of children by increasing the proportion of children growing up with involved, responsible, and committed fathers. Discuss how the support of community leaders will be critical to this effort. Tell leaders that you want to schedule a time to interview them over the phone or in person, or to participate in a focus group that you will schedule or have already scheduled. Be sure to tell the leaders why you selected them.

### ► Step 3: Follow-up Letter

Immediately thereafter, follow-up with a letter that highlights the points discussed during the phone conversation, that reinforces the importance of the leaders participation in mobilizing the community to promote responsible fatherhood, and that includes the date, time, and, if the interview is in person, the location of the interview. (A focus group will require in-person participation of the leader.) If the leader is someone who has access to demographic data or other information valuable to the assessment, ask him or her to send you that information prior to the interview or focus group. You might want to discuss the information during the interview. Be sure to include attachments, such as NFI's Community Mobilization Approach™ diagram and information on the leadership summit, which will help the leaders understand the context of the assessment and their importance within it.

### ► Step 4: Conduct the Interviews

### ► Step 5: Thank You Letter

Send a letter that thanks leaders for their time and that reinforces how important the information they provided will be to the effort. Send the letters as soon after the interviews as possible.



## Component 4: Analysis and Report Writing

The rigor of the analysis you conduct on the quantitative and qualitative data you gather will depend on: (1) the need for a certain level of rigor (e.g., Is your assessment funded? Does the funder require a certain level of rigor?); (2) the analysis skills at your disposal (e.g., Are you a researcher? Do you have access to a researcher?); and (3) the time you have to complete the analysis. At the very least, you should summarize the data and draw conclusions from it on the need to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood and the challenge that the community will face in doing this based on the assets and gaps in programs and services for dads. Write the report so that community leaders without a research background can understand the results of the assessment. A sample report of a community assessment appears at the end of this appendix.

Do not disseminate the results of the assessment yet. The first time you introduce the results should be at the first meeting to plan the Leadership Summit on Fatherhood. As you move leaders through the summit planning process, ask them when it will make sense to release the results of the assessment to the rest of the community. If released at the right time, such as a month before the summit, the results can help build momentum for the summit and mobilizing the community. Share the results of the assessment at the leadership summit.

## Phase 2: Leadership Summit on Fatherhood: A Catalyst that Mobilizes Communities

The Leadership Summit on Fatherhood (LSF) helps community leaders from across sectors combat father absence and promote responsible fatherhood. Because the LSF brings community leaders together, it is not open to the general public. NFI believes that a successful fatherhood initiative must first mobilize community leaders to promote father involvement. Leaders then create a grassroots initiative that reaches the rest of the community.

The LSF helps leaders capture a vision of how to promote responsible fatherhood community-wide and within different sectors, such as the media, education, healthcare, business, and government sectors. Leaders from different walks of life will exchange ideas, suggestions, and challenges that will shape an action plan to promote responsible fatherhood that will reach into every nook and cranny of a community.

At NFI we want to change American culture to revere fatherhood as much as motherhood. Herein lies the critical role of the LSF. It is the first sign that community leaders want to create an environment that encourages fathers to connect with their children physically, emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually.



### Goals and Objectives of the LSF

The goals of the LSF are to cast a vision about how to mobilize the community around fatherhood and to motivate community leaders to participate in the fatherhood movement. The objectives of the event are to help leaders:

- Understand why father absence is a crisis and why fathers are so important to the well-being of children
- Realize that the consequences of father absence affect them; therefore, every leader has a stake in promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood
- Understand they can do something to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood within their sector
- Learn about NFI's ability to help them build capacity in their community to serve fathers and families
- Identify ideas for how to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood

**Step 1: Identify a leader or several leaders with a passion for this work.**

**This leader(s) must have the ability to motivate other leaders from different sectors to join a committee that will plan, publicize, and implement the summit.**



# Steps required to implement a LSF

## Step 1: Identify a Leader or Several Leaders with a Passion for This Work

You will need a minimum of 12 weeks to schedule, coordinate, publicize, and implement a LSF. Use the following steps as a guide.

This leader(s) must have the ability to motivate other leaders from different sectors to join a committee that will plan, publicize, and implement the summit. (The needs and assets assessment should help you accomplish this step.)

An elected official—such as a mayor, county judge, or state representative—the head of the chamber of commerce, the superintendent of schools or a well-known community activist—might serve in this capacity. An even better option is to work with an existing multi-sector coalition or network of leaders that deals with an issue related to fatherhood, such as parenting, child development, or teen pregnancy. You will save the time that it takes to create a new group and the time that it takes for people who are not used to working together to become comfortable with one another. If this group lacks representation from some sectors, it is easier to add leaders to this group than it is to start from scratch.

**The members of the planning committee should know about local and regional family services and possess the capacity to influence programs and services for families in the community, county, or region.**

This person, coalition, or network will serve as your primary contact in the community. Your contact must understand the vision for creating cultural change at individual and environmental levels. Some people will already have this vision. Others will have difficulty grasping it at first, but will eventually adopt it. And, unfortunately, others won't ever adopt it. You can only work with the people who already have the vision or who will understand it eventually.

Give your contact a copy of this kit. It is your best tool for sharing the vision. If you can afford it, provide a copy of the kit to every leader who joins the committee. For the current price of the kit and to order it, visit FatherSOURCE™, NFI's resource center, at [www.fathersource.org](http://www.fathersource.org). Ask your contact to help you indoctrinate the leaders who will join the committee into the vision.

Your contact will perform the following activities:

- ▶ Help you recruit leaders to join the committee
- ▶ Remind leaders to attend meetings
- ▶ Answer questions from community leaders, organizations, and other residents about the effort to mobilize the community

Make sure that your contact understands this commitment.



## Step 2: Create a Multi-sector Committee to Plan, Publicize, and Hold the LSF

Work with your contact to form a planning committee comprised of leaders who represent many sectors. Why is it important to have leaders from many sectors? Because they can encourage leaders they know to attend the summit. If the LSF doesn't motivate leaders from different sectors to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood, there is little chance that a community will launch a successful fatherhood initiative.

The members of the planning committee should know about local and regional family services and possess the capacity to influence programs and services for families in the community, county, or region. You should include men and women on this group.

The committee should include representatives from as many of the following 11 sectors as possible:

- ▶ Government (federal, state, or city/county)
- ▶ Non-Profit, Social Service
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Faith
- ▶ Business
- ▶ Healthcare
- ▶ Media/Entertainment
- ▶ Philanthropic
- ▶ Civic and Cultural Groups
- ▶ Law Enforcement
- ▶ Organic/Neighborhood Leaders



Keep in mind that a person might represent more than one sector. A mayor who is a member of the Rotary Club, for example, could speak for the government and civic sectors.

### Words of Caution

Don't spend too much time recruiting leaders from all of these sectors, because the reality is you will be fortunate to have representatives from more than five or six of these sectors. Still, it's worth the effort to have as much sector diversity as possible.

Don't recruit more than 15 leaders. (You might need to recruit more leaders at first because of attrition.) If the group is larger than that, it will be difficult to do the tasks necessary to host a LSF. Some leaders might ask you to recruit enough people to field a college football team because they want to involve everyone in planning the event. Don't be tempted or pressured to involve every leader in the planning of the event. Groups that are too large move too slowly. As the group develops its plan for the LSF, the members can involve other leaders by asking them to provide the resources needed to hold the summit.

Community leaders might also pressure you to recruit a lot of leaders from organizations that provide direct services to fathers. These leaders will say that it's important to include these representatives because the organizations know what fathers need and want. You should commend leaders for this desire and follow this recommendation with caution.



This note of caution might seem strange to you, especially if your organization provides direct services to dads. Think about it for a moment. Organizations that serve fathers often understand the needs and wants of the fathers they serve. But, this focus on direct service can create a conflict between the desire of the organization to acquire funds for its programs and services and the goal of the LSF to create a community-wide initiative. Recruit only the organizations that understand the need to develop a community-wide initiative that includes direct services as only one component. They must be able to separate their own interests from the interests of the community. You should not, however, include more than two or three of these direct-service organizations on the planning committee, including your own organization if you serve dads. One sector should not dominate the committee.

### **Step 3: Hold the First Planning Meeting**

After you form the committee, you will guide the members through the planning process and provide a model for the event that the committee “tweaks” to meet the unique needs and wants of the community.

The length of the first planning meeting, and the subsequent meetings, will vary from community to community. Work with your contact to identify the best day, time, and length for the first meeting. Schedule the meeting to last for at least two hours, and longer if possible. If you can schedule one-half day or even a full day of planning, you will reduce the number of times the committee has to meet.

The main goal of the first meeting is to develop trust between you/your organization and community leaders. Provide committee members with an introduction to you/your organization, the Community Mobilization Approach™, and the LSF. Focus on two objectives during this meeting.

- ▶ First, briefly introduce yourself/your organization and the LSF. You should take no longer than 15 or 20 minutes to do this. Don’t delve into statistics about father involvement, because you will lose the interest of your audience.
- ▶ Second, answer questions from the committee members. Even though you will introduce yourself/your organization and the LSF, some members will have myths or misconceptions about your work/the work of your organization and what the LSF will accomplish. You can also count on the members asking about the commitment they must make to participate in planning the event. The presentation and providing the leaders with the diagram of the Community Mobilization Approach™ at the beginning of this appendix and the “Basic LSF Contributions” description at the end of this appendix should reduce the number of questions that you will field. (You may copy the pages that include the diagram of the model and that describe the basic contributions so that you can give them to the leaders.) The “Basic LSF Contributions” document outlines a typical division of labor between you/your organization and the committee members. Use this document to start the discussion that will lead to assigning tasks for each committee member to undertake. The tasks are divided in such a way that you/your organization will take the lion’s share of the “grunt” work while the primary objective of the committee members will be to get leaders to the event. Vary this division of labor based on your/your organization’s resources and the resources of the committee members and their organizations.

## Step 4: Hold Subsequent Planning Meetings

After your initial meeting, your goal is to complete the planning process as quickly as possible. You will probably need to hold at least three planning meetings. This rule of thumb will vary with the length of the meetings and the characteristics of the group that you work with. (If the first meeting lasts longer than two hours, you might accomplish the two objectives above and several of the objectives below.)

You have four objectives:

- ▶ Divide the division of labor for organizing the LSF among the committee members.
- ▶ Ask for volunteers who will complete the activities that the committee is responsible for. Record which members will perform each activity.
- ▶ Then set the agenda for the LSF. Present the committee with an agenda that is similar to the one below as a starting point for this discussion. You can vary this agenda for a morning, afternoon, or evening event.

6:00 p.m.–6:30 p.m.	Introductions, Welcome, and Invocation
6:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m.	Dinner and Introduction to the Fatherhood Movement
7:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.	Keynote Speaker(s)
8:00 p.m.–9:30 p.m.	Facilitated Group Discussion
9:30 p.m.–9:45 p.m.	Reconvene and Evaluation

The most vital part of this agenda is the facilitated discussion. You might have committee members who will try to persuade the committee to not have this discussion included in the summit. Do your best to convince the members of the importance of this discussion. It is the most important part of the summit and the key to moving into the final phase of the mobilization model—anchoring a fatherhood initiative.

- ▶ Finally, go over the structure for the facilitated group discussion and choose the facilitators and scribes from the committee members. (See “The Facilitated Discussion” section below for a detailed description of this part of the summit.) You can also have the committee members select leaders in the community who are not part of the committee. This strategy will increase the involvement of leaders in the summit.

The ideal LSF is not a gala event, but a business casual or business-formal event that lasts from 2 and ½ to 4 hours. Communities have held successful summits organized as a “breakfast” or “long, working lunch” that leaders fit into their hectic schedules.



**The facilitated discussion is the most important activity of the LSF because it generates ideas from community leaders on how to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood.**



Promote the event as a non-partisan, non-sectarian endeavor. The event should appeal to people and organizations with diverse views. A fatherhood initiative that grows out of a LSF must also have this broad-based appeal so that leaders can comprehensively promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. The location of a summit says a great deal about the non-partisan, non-sectarian nature of the event. Hold the summit in a location that is neutral politically and easy to access, such as a hotel, high school auditorium, or community center.

Begin the summit with an overview of the positive impact of fathers in the lives of children, and, if appropriate, the status of the fatherhood movement in the state or community in which the event is held. If a fatherhood initiative exists, present the accomplishments of that effort.

Recruit a speaker who will draw leaders from different sectors and who can motivate them to take action. An ideal keynote speaker is a prominent businessperson, high-profile politician, or celebrity with a compelling story to tell—ideally about fatherhood—and with a passion for promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. The committee might decide to have one or more speakers, which is fine. After the speaker(s) commits to attend the summit, you will need to talk with him or her before the event to ensure that his or her remarks help the summit to accomplish its objectives.

## The Facilitated Discussion

The facilitated discussion is the most important activity of the LSF because it generates ideas from community leaders on how to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. Think of it as a “controlled brainstorming session.” The discussion should last for at least 1 hour and 30 minutes to give leaders ample time to respond to the questions for each sector. The leaders will use the results of this discussion as the basis for a strategic plan to mobilize the community.

The discussion is not meant to touch on all of the issues related to fatherhood, because it is impossible to address all of the issues in such a short time.

**Structure for the Discussion.** When leaders RSVP to attend the summit (see “Step 6: Mailing Formal Invitations and Handling RSVPs” below for a description on how to handle the RSVP process), divide the leaders into groups that focus on each of the 11 sectors you recruited leaders from to join the planning committee and invited to attend the summit. When leaders RSVP, tell them that a part of the summit will be a facilitated discussion that will generate ideas on how to promote involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood in the community. Ask leaders which of the 11-sector groups they’d like to participate in. Each group should include no more than 10-15 participants. When a group has reached its limit, don’t allow any more leaders to join that group. If a leader RSVPs after the group has reached capacity, politely ask him/her to select another sector group.. This limit makes it easy for all of the participants to take part in the discussion, for



facilitators to control the discussion, and for you to get input on how to promote fatherhood in as many sectors as possible. If some sectors have fewer than four or five participants, consider combining two sectors together. There will be plenty of time for the leaders to discuss both sectors.

The goal of the discussion is to have each group prioritize the activities they believe will have the greatest impact on promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood in the sector. The facilitators can accomplish this goal by first explaining the purpose of the group discussion and that it is a brainstorming discussion. Leaders should not comment on the viability of implementing the ideas shared. They should not criticize or demean an idea. The focus should be on what can be done, not on what can't be done. The details of the plan, including strategies for implementing the activities, will be discussed by the leaders who decide to participate in implementing the plan after the summit.

Use the process for the facilitated discussion described at the end of the Appendix on the pages titled, "Process for Facilitated Discussion at Leadership Summit." It describes a process that, if followed correctly, will result in a list of prioritized strategies for each sector. Leaders will leave the summit with a feeling that they accomplished something important instead of simply having an unstructured discussion about promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood. Meet with the facilitators the day before or, if on the day of the event, several hours before the summit begins to go over the process and answer any questions they might have. **NFI gives you permission to copy the two pages that describe the process so that you can provide explicit instructions to each facilitator on how to conduct the discussion. (These pages along with the pages that describe the Basic Contributions of the LSF and the Community Mobilization Approach™ are the only pages in this kit that you may copy.)**

In addition to the questions described in the document, the facilitators should also ask probing questions that will clarify and expand upon leaders' answers. Depending on the progress of the discussion, and the time left in it, facilitators could flesh out ideas by asking which individuals and groups in the community will be important to involve in implementing the ideas for the sector.

At the end of the discussion, the facilitators should ask the leaders which of them would be willing to participate in a group responsible for finalizing the portion of the action plan they discussed. This group would meet several times after the summit to finalize the plan. The facilitator should also ask for one group member to lead the group and be responsible for organizing the follow-up meetings. The facilitators should pass a sign-up sheet around the group on which the leaders who volunteer can write their contact information.

The discussion is not meant to touch on all of the issues related to fatherhood, because is impossible to address all of the issues in such a short time. Therefore, the questions should remain general. The committee, however, may add a question or two that will provide information useful to local fatherhood efforts. Community leaders might want, for example, to increase the success of an annual Father's Day event. They might want to generate ideas on how to promote this event and want the opinions of other leaders.

**The most important factor for a successful summit is not its size. It's whether the leaders who participate in the LSF are the leaders whose interest will spark a fatherhood initiative in a community.**



The committee can assign the members who don't facilitate groups to act as scribes and take notes on a flip chart. Scribes take the burden of taking notes from the facilitators, which helps the facilitators to concentrate on the discussion. If there are not enough committee members to take notes, a facilitator may ask a summit participant, you, or your organization's staff to serve as a scribe.

The scribes' notes should indicate the ideas that pertain to each sector, and which ideas are in response to which question. Recording the discussion in this way will make the analysis of the discussion easy to do.

### **A Word about the Size of a LSF**

One of the first questions that committee members will ask you is, "How many people should attend the summit?" Your answer depends on the interaction among four factors: (1) the leaders you want to attend the summit; (2) the budget for the summit; (3) the in-kind contributions of the community (e.g., a location and food); and (4) the size of the community.

The summit seeks the participation of key leaders in a community, or whom some people call the "movers and shakers." The most important factor for a successful summit is not its size. It's whether the leaders who participate in the LSF are the leaders whose interest will spark a

fatherhood initiative in the community. It's not necessary that every leader participate in the summit for it to be successful. It's just not realistic to expect that every key leader will attend the summit.

A large budget and significant in-kind donations—whether from the organizations represented on the committee or other community groups—will allow for a larger attendance. These resources will provide the means to hold the LSF in a nice location, such as a hotel ballroom, and to serve high-quality food. Committee members can seek donations from their own organizations or sponsors to pay the expenses of a well-known speaker whose appearance might produce a large crowd.

It's reasonable to expect that the size of the LSF should reflect the size of the community. A summit in an urban community of 1 million residents should draw a larger audience than one held in a rural community of 10,000 residents. The committee should reach an agreement on a maximum attendance for planning purposes (e.g., catering).

## **Step 5: Market the LSF**

Marketing a LSF has three basic components.

- A promotional effort that targets leaders from different sectors. Committee members can provide you with mailing lists of leaders in different sectors. Make use of e-mail, meetings and other communication mediums to reach leaders. Make sure that you include the names of persons who attend the summit in a database that you can use for other purposes, such as fundraising efforts and informing leaders of the progress of the initiative after it is launched.

- ▶ Committee members extend personal invitations to leaders in their circles of influence. The difference in whether a leader attends the summit might be a call, letter, or e-mail from a respected friend or colleague. This invitation allows the committee to begin marketing the summit before mailing formal invitations.
- ▶ Media coverage before and after the event. If a member of the media participates on the planning committee, it can lead to significant media coverage of the summit. If you can get coverage on the planning of the summit, you are more likely to receive coverage of the summit when it is held. Send a press release before the summit for coverage of the event. If the summit is successful, send a press release after the LSF so that community residents and leaders who didn't attend the summit will learn about its success.

Some committee members might suggest other promotional or marketing ideas. Use the suggestions that will increase the likelihood that key leaders will attend and avoid the ones that will encourage the general public to attend.

The list of invitees can include, but is not limited to, the following kinds of leaders.

- ▶ **Elected Officials**—the mayor, city council members, county commissioners and judges, and state and national congressional representatives from the community.
- ▶ **Government Employees**—local, state, and federal government leaders who manage programs that serve families (e.g., Head Start; Department of Human Services; Health Department; Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and children with special health care needs).
- ▶ **Direct-service Providers**—leaders of organizations that provide direct services to fathers and potential fathers and their families, and to youth (e.g., YMCA, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boy and Girl Scouts, and men's centers), and faith organizations that provide services to families (e.g., Catholic Charities, Jewish Community Services, Lutheran Social Services, and Community Ministries).
- ▶ **Fraternal and Civic Organizations**—college fraternity and sorority officers, and representatives of organizations such as the Kiwanis, Rotary Club, Lion's Club, the JCs, and the Junior League.
- ▶ **Business Leaders**—representatives of the chamber of commerce, and corporations and other businesses with a significant presence and history of philanthropic work in the community.



**Some committee members might suggest other promotional or marketing ideas. Use the suggestions that will increase the likelihood that key leaders will attend.**



► **Health Care Professionals**—staff from hospitals, emergency centers, public and private clinics, physicians, and alternative-health care providers in private practice, executives from HMOs and PPOs, lactation consultants, and childbirth educators.

► **Mental Health Professionals**—psychologists and male therapists who specialize in working with men on parenting, domestic violence, anger management and grief work, and staff that work in addiction treatment and chemical-dependency programs.

► **Philanthropies and Other Charitable Groups**—directors and program officers from foundations and corporate-giving programs located in the community.

► **Media Professionals**—reporters, columnists, DJs, and TV network staff, especially those who are friendly toward issues that affect men and fathers.

► **Faith-based Organizations**—ministers, priests, rabbis, imams, and youth ministers.

► **Educators**—administrators from primary, secondary, post-secondary, technical, and trade schools (e.g., elementary, middle, high school, and universities). Consider university and college faculty who teach psychology, anthropology, family studies, social work, education, child development, and related fields of study.

- **Parent Educators**—especially those who teach parenting courses to men and women.
- **Law Enforcement Staff**—probation, parole, juvenile justice, child support, and child protection officers and staff; and staff from the local sheriff and police departments.
- **Corrections Facility Staff**—administrators, chaplains, and staff responsible for inmate-education programs.
- **Legal Professionals**—bar association representatives, family law attorneys, judges, and free-legal-aid staff.
- **Cultural or Ethnic Organizations**—especially those groups that represent the diversity of cultures, races, and ethnicities in the community (e.g., the Urban League and the League of United Latin-American Citizens).
- **Women's Advocates**—especially those who work in women's shelters and domestic violence programs.
- **Veterans Organizations**—these organizations include such groups such as Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the American Legion.
- **Grassroots Leaders**—these leaders are the men and women who champion causes in their communities (e.g., draft petitions, bring issues before the city council, and pursue environmental justice).



## Step 6: Mailing Formal Invitations and Handling RSVPs

Create a master mailing list from the lists of leaders given to you by committee members, or that were given to the organization by the leaders on the committee who volunteered to compile the lists. (During the planning process, encourage an organization to take on this task and to create the master list. This will save you/your organization a lot of time and allow you to focus on other logistics.) Mail formal invitations to leaders at least six weeks before you hold the summit. This will give leaders time to put the event on their calendar. (If you implement personal invitations from leaders on the committee, other leaders will already have the summit on their calendar!) Six weeks is not too far in advance that leaders will forget to attend the event or ignore the invitation because the event is too far away. An overly expensive invitation isn't necessary; however, don't skimp on the cost and send out an invitation that looks unprofessional.

You should include information on how to RSVP in all of your marketing and promotional materials. It is wise to keep the RSVP process under your/organization's control. (One reason to maintain control is that the RSVP process helps you track which leaders respond from each sector, which helps for planning the facilitated discussion.) This might mean that you control the entire process or that you work with another individual or organization on the planning committee to divide the RSVP responsibilities. You could, for example, have invited leaders to RSVP to another organization (e.g., the fatherhood champion you're working with) whose staff would record the RSVPs, compile the mailing list for the formal invitations, and then send the list to you on a periodic basis (e.g., once a week) so that you can track the progress of the responses and make name tags and a registration sheet for the summit.

At a minimum, record the following information from leaders who RSVP:

- ▶ Name
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Phone number and e-mail address
- ▶ Number of guests who will attend with the leader and their names and organizations (you might want to limit the number of guests to one or two people)
- ▶ Which sector group they would like to participate in during the facilitated discussion

In conducting many summits across the country, we have learned that it is a waste of time and money to include an RSVP card with the invitation that leaders must complete and mail. Leaders prefer to RSVP by telephone or e-mail. RSVP via fax is a better option than an RSVP card, but is not necessary when you allow leaders to respond by e-mail or telephone.

## Step 7: Hold and Evaluate the Summit

The next, and final, step is obvious: hold the summit and evaluate it. It is impossible in this guide to tell you how to run the summit beyond following the guidelines offered above, because each summit is unique. Still, you should have a registration table, a registration sheet (one that has leaders' names printed on it that leaders can check off when they arrive), and pre-printed name tags (with blank nametags for leaders who didn't RSVP, but who come anyway). Make sure that your sign-up sheet allows you to capture contact information (i.e., name, organization, phone number, and e-mail address) on leaders who attend, but did not RSVP.

Before the summit ends, ask leaders to evaluate it. The evaluation will help you determine whether the event accomplished its objectives.

## Set the Stage for the Next Phase

Don't lose momentum after the summit. If you wait too long to return to the community and help community leaders establish a fatherhood initiative, one of two things will happen. First, an initiative never starts. Second, it takes several months to reinvestigate leaders to come together again.

When the committee sets the date for the summit, it should also schedule the first meeting to begin creating the action plan for the initiative. Schedule the meeting for no longer than one month after the summit, and the sooner the better. You can inform the leaders who attend the summit about this meeting, which shows them that the work started at the LSF will continue. And it gives the leaders who volunteer during the facilitated discussions to help plan the initiative a date that they can record in their calendars.

## Phase 3: Anchor A Fatherhood Initiative

The next phase in developing a local fatherhood initiative involves working with leaders to finalize the Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood that you or the fatherhood champion will implement. NFI calls this phase “anchoring an initiative.” You will facilitate this phase just as you did the planning of the LSF. It will take at least two meetings for leaders to anchor an initiative.

Your job is to help leaders accomplish the following objectives:

- ▶ Create a multi-sector advisory committee comprised of 20-30 leaders that will finalize the action plan
- ▶ Identify one or two short-term actions to get the initiative rolling, and set in motion plans to implement these actions
- ▶ Make plans to use NFI's resources as part of the initiative

Some leaders will want to immediately use the results of the facilitated discussion at the summit to create a strategic plan. Don't be swayed by leaders to do this, because anchoring an initiative is the first step that leaders must take.

## First Planning Meeting

Invite leaders to the first planning meeting who planned the summit and who volunteered at the summit to plan the initiative. The goal of the first meeting is to help leaders understand what happens after the summit. Your objectives are to:

- ▶ Share the vision that a fatherhood initiative must create change at individual and environmental levels
- ▶ Review NFI's Community Mobilization Approach™
- ▶ Inform leaders about the goal and objectives of this phase
- ▶ Explain that you/your organization will facilitate this process, not determine what the community should or should not do (although you will offer suggestions)
- ▶ Ensure that leaders understand the importance of forming a multi-sector advisory group to guide the initiative, even beyond this initial set of meetings
- ▶ Identify other leaders who can increase the diversity of the sectors, gender, races, and ethnicities represented on the advisory group



The first five objectives are self-explanatory. To accomplish the final objective, you must identify which sectors are and are not represented on the group. (Ideally, the advisory group should include two or three representatives from each sector. This strategy increases the chance that at least one representative from each sector will attend every meeting.) First ask the leaders at the meeting which of the following eleven sectors they represent and record the results:

- ▶ Government
- ▶ Education (e.g., schools)
- ▶ Non-profit Social Service
- ▶ Health care (e.g., hospitals and healthcare professionals)
- ▶ Law Enforcement/Judiciary
- ▶ Faith
- ▶ Civic (e.g., Rotary, Kiwanis, Junior League, and Neighborhood Associations)
- ▶ Philanthropic (e.g., foundations)
- ▶ Business
- ▶ Media
- ▶ Organic/Neighborhood Leaders

As you did when you organized the summit planning committee, remember that a leader can represent more than one sector.

Next ask the leaders for the names of other leaders whose participation would fill out the underrepresented sectors. You can use the list of leaders from the summit to stimulate ideas on who might be interested in joining the committee. Assign the leaders at the meeting to contact the potential group members and invite them to the next meeting.

**Work with  
leaders to  
finalize the  
Community  
Action Plan  
to Promote  
Responsible  
Fatherhood  
that you will  
implement.**

## Subsequent Planning Meeting

Now that you have increased the diversity of the advisory committee, you will accomplish the objectives below in the following order:

- ▶ Help the group to prioritize the list of actions for each sector and to identify the timeline, persons responsible, and resources required to carry out the actions
- ▶ Identify one or two short-term actions that will “kick-start” the initiative and that will help the leaders and the community to see the initiative moving forward
- ▶ Identify NFI resources that the initiative will use

During your preparation for the first meeting, you will have accomplished the first step in creating an action plan tailored to the community. To continue the transformation of the plan, you must help the advisory committee to develop the details that will “flesh out” the plan. These details include prioritizing the activities in each sector, the timeline for carrying out each activity, the persons or organizations responsible for each activity, and the resources (e.g., money, manpower, and political support) needed to implement each activity.

## Transform the Facilitated Discussion into an Action Plan

Decide whether the group will work as a whole to prioritize each sector or whether members will work with leaders from their own sector to prioritize the activities in their sector. Have each sector select a representative to serve as the point person for ensuring the activities in the plan are accomplished.

## Identify One or Two Short-term Activities for the Initiative

Committee members can lose their motivation when an action plan focuses on long-term goals and lacks actions that can be accomplished quickly. It’s important to help the committee to identify one or two actions that they can conduct within the first two or three months. The group can work on these activities even as they finalize the rest of the action plan. A sample action plan is included at the end of this appendix.

Most advisory committees that NFI has helped organize have either implemented a new event for the public (e.g., a Father’s Day event) or taken part in an existing event to publicly launch the initiative. They have also decided to schedule a series of training sessions conducted by NFI and sponsored by the local initiative. These activities bring immediate recognition and success. By the time these activities are done, the leaders should have already put other aspects of the action plan in motion.

## Conclusion: Be Patient

Some communities will mobilize quickly and easily. Leaders will immediately take ownership of this process and motivate a diverse group of people to become involved. Other communities will move slowly, and at times it will seem as though it’s impossible to move forward. It might take months to find the leaders who will see this opportunity for what it is: a chance to improve the well being of children and to strengthen families, which are the bedrock of communities. Don’t give up on a community that struggles to move forward, because finding the right leaders might be just around the corner.





# Basic LSF Contributions

## Division of Labor Leadership Summit on Fatherhood

### You/Your Organization

- ▶ Facilitate planning meetings
- ▶ Send e-mail summaries and reminders regarding meetings
- ▶ Assist with securing speakers and a master of ceremony (MC), if needed
- ▶ Compile mailing lists
- ▶ Print invitations
- ▶ Mail invitations and RSVP cards
- ▶ Handle RSVPs
- ▶ Handle financials
- ▶ Write media advisory and distribute to local TV media
- ▶ Provide laptop and LCD projector
- ▶ Coordinate facilitated discussion
- ▶ Prepare information packets
- ▶ Staff registration table
- ▶ Other incidentals (e.g., name tags, foam-core board / banner for event, speaker plaques)

### Planning Committee

- ▶ Remind committee members to attend meetings via phone or mail
- ▶ Secure location for summit
- ▶ Secure speakers
- ▶ Secure MC
- ▶ Arrange for food (e.g., catering)
- ▶ Secure decorations (e.g., table centerpiece)
- ▶ Secure entertainment
- ▶ Secure sponsorships from local organizations (non-monetary)
- ▶ Provide mailings lists to you/your organization/lead individual or agency
- ▶ Make phone calls / extend personal invitations
- ▶ Secure proclamations from elected officials
- ▶ Distribute media advisory to local radio and print media
- ▶ Provide flip charts, markers, and easels for facilitated discussion
- ▶ Provide facilitators for discussion (depending on structure of discussion)
- ▶ Help with registration

# Process for Facilitated Discussion at a Leadership Summit

**Goal:** Produce a list of actions/strategies that will have the greatest impact on promotion responsible fatherhood in selected sectors. These actions will be included in an action plan for promoting responsible fatherhood in [YOUR COMMUNITY, COUNTY, STATE, ETC.].

**Objectives:** 1) conduct a controlled “brainstorming” session that eliminates crosstalk among group participants and that generates a significant amount of ideas for promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood, 2) prioritize the strategies using “multi-voting” to identify the strategies participants think will have the most impact.

## Process:

### **1) Introduce the discussion. Tell participants the goal of the facilitated discussion (read the goal above) and the process for the discussion.**

- a) Explain that the first part of the discussion will involve brainstorming strategies using a round-robin format. Each person will in-turn “call out” a strategy. This process will continue until all ideas are exhausted or until time runs out.
- b) Explain that the second part of the discussion will prioritize the strategies in terms of which ones participants think will have the most impact on promoting involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood in the selected sector in [YOUR COMMUNITY, COUNTY, STATE, ETC.].

### **2) Before beginning the discussion, go over the following ground rules:**

- a) There is no cross-talk among participants. When a person shares a strategy during brainstorming, no other participant should comment on its viability. If a person would like to expand on a strategy that someone has shared, he or she may do so when it is his or her turn to share. If someone needs clarification, however, on the strategy—e.g., the participant doesn’t understand it—he or she should raise his or her hand to be recognized by the facilitator.
- b) Everyone’s turn is limited to 30 seconds during the brainstorming session.
- c) All ideas are considered valid at this time.
- d) Ask participants if they would like to add any ground rules. (Limit additional ground rules to no more than three [3].)

### **3) Select a person to record the ideas during the brainstorming session. Tell the volunteer to number the strategies and to use as few words as possible to record the strategy.**

NFI gives you permission to copy pages 70-71, which describe the process for facilitated discussion at a leadership summit so that you may provide explicit instructions to each facilitator on how to conduct the discussion. (These pages, along with pages 47 and 69, are the only pages in this kit that you may copy.)



**4) Conduct the brainstorming session in a round-robin fashion. You can simply ask who would like to start and after that person shares, go either clockwise or counter-clockwise around the group.**

Spend no more than 30 minutes on brainstorming. Ask for clarification on strategies if participants' strategies are unclear. Rephrase strategies in brief terms for the recorder if a participant is a bit long-winded in explaining their strategy. Remember to remind participants to limit their turn to 30 seconds if necessary.

**5) After the brainstorming session, move into multi-voting.**

- a) Explain to participants that you will now begin to prioritize the list of strategies using "multi-voting".
- b) Explain how multi-voting works. Count the number of strategies, including the strategies on the universal action plan for the selected sector, and divide that number by 1/3. If you have 24 strategies, for example, then 8 is one-third of 24. Each participant receives a number of votes equal to 1/3 of the number of strategies (e.g., 8 votes for a list of 24 strategies). Participants then vote for the "x" number of strategies they think will have the most impact on promoting responsible fatherhood in that sector (e.g., the top 8 strategies from a list of 24).
- c) Ask participants to place an "x" next to their top three strategies.
- d) Allow as long as participants need to vote, but no longer than 20 minutes.
- e) After participants have voted, move down the list strategy by strategy asking participants to hold up their hand if they voted for that strategy.
- f) Instruct the recorder to count and write down the number of votes by each strategy. Take about 10 minutes for this.
- g) With the participants help, re-arrange the strategies in order of most to least votes.

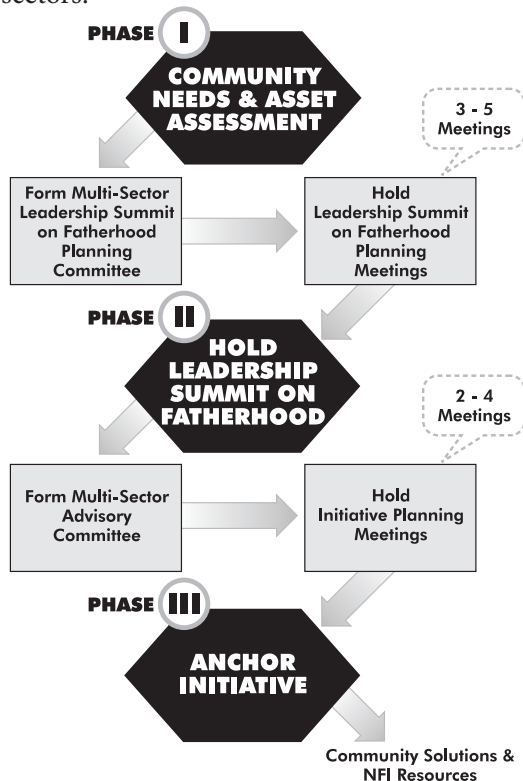
**6) Wrap up the discussion by opening the floor for any comments.**

# A Rapid Ethnographic Assessment of Programs and Services (REAPS) for Fathers in Guernsey County, Ohio

## Introduction

The Ohio Commission on Fatherhood (OCF) has partnered with National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) in 2011 to assist 12 Ohio counties mobilize around responsible fatherhood. Guernsey County was one of the 12 counties selected to participate in this Community Mobilization Initiative.

NFI's Community Mobilization Approach (CMA), which is diagrammed in Figure 1 below, consists of 3 phases: (1) a needs and assets assessment of the counties' abilities to promote responsible fatherhood; (2) a Leadership Summit on Fatherhood attended by county leaders; and (3) implementing an action plan for a fatherhood initiative generated by a broad cross-section of county sectors.



This report is the culmination of Phase 1 of this ongoing initiative in Guernsey County.

## Secondary Data on Fatherhood

According to 2009 U.S. Census Bureau data, over 24 million children live apart from their biological fathers. That is 1 out of every 3 (33%) children in America. Nearly 2 in 3 (64%) African American children live in father-absent homes. One in three (34%) Hispanic children, and 1 in 4 (25%) white children live in father-absent homes. In 1960, only 11% of children lived in father-absent homes.

Children who live absent their biological fathers are, on average, at least two to three times more likely to be poor, to use drugs, to experience educational, health, emotional and behavioral problems, to be victims of child abuse, and to engage in criminal behavior than their peers who live with their married, biological (or adoptive) parents.<sup>1</sup>

The annual cost of father absence in America is staggering. The Federal Government spent at least \$99.8 billion providing assistance to father-absent homes in 2006. This is a conservative estimate; it does not include federal benefit programs for communities, indirect costs related to poor outcomes of children from father-absent homes, and long-term costs in reduced tax income from low-earning single-parent families.<sup>2</sup>

1 National Fatherhood Initiative, 2007. *Father Facts Fifth Edition*.

2 Nock, Steven L., and Einolf, Christopher J. 2008. "The One Hundred Billion Dollar Man."

Prepared By:



**National  
Fatherhood  
Initiative®**

[www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

With

Contributions From:  
Public Strategies, Inc.  
Guernsey County  
Children Services  
An Initiative of the  
Ohio Commission  
on Fatherhood  
April 2011



In Ohio, father absence is at 25.7% or 7.3% lower than the national average and Guernsey County ranks about even with the state average at 26.5%. Guernsey County's largest city, Cambridge, is significantly higher at 53%.<sup>3</sup> Of the 403 children enrolled in the Guernsey County Head Start Program, 201 or 50% are living in single parent homes with the father absent. Of the 246 children age birth to 3 years enrolled in the Guernsey County Help Me Grow Program, 113 or 46% live in father absent homes. Both of these programs are income-based which supports the state and national statistic regarding children in father absent homes being more likely to live in poverty.

Mental illness is a major challenge in Guernsey County. Our county is covered under the Six County Board for our mental/behavioral/drug/alcohol services, yet Guernsey County has not passed a mental health levy since 1986. We see the impact of inadequate funding as it relates to father absence in many ways. Over 50% of children who are receiving emotional or behavioral health services from Thompkins Children & Adolescent, Inc. (one of our county's public agencies) come from father absent homes. In 2010, 86% of all individuals involved with Guernsey County Children Services were involved due to some form of mental illness AND 29% of all children in care for the same time period were in care because of their own mental illness.

There's no doubt that father absence and poverty are strongly related. Data shows that it's more difficult to get fathers to

provide financial support when they are not married to the mother and when they lack an emotional connection to their children. Children in father-absent homes are five times more likely to be poor. In 2002, 7.8% of children in married-couple families were living in poverty, compared to 38.4 % percent of children in female-householder families.<sup>4</sup> 27% of all children in Guernsey County in 2005 were living in poverty compared to 19% statewide. Guernsey County lost 1,743 jobs from 2000-2009 compared to 1,743 statewide and unemployment rate is 12% which is 2% higher than the state of Ohio. The decrease in employment was 12% in 2009 compared to 9% statewide. Guernsey County per capita income in 2009 was \$26,901 compared to \$35,889 statewide.

Guernsey County's teen birth rate (age 15-19) of 50 births per 1000<sup>5</sup> is 9 higher than the state and national average of 41 per 1000.<sup>6</sup> Data from a snapshot in time from Alcohol & Drug Services of Guernsey County indicate 10% of those individuals receiving services are adolescents. They currently have 15 active adolescent clients receiving services from the Agency, 11 or 73% are from homes with no father present. There is a clear connection between father absence and teen pregnancy since a father's behavior and values uniquely influence a girl's expectations about boyfriends and husbands. In addition, boys learn from their fathers what kind of husband and father they should become and how to treat girls and women. Research shows that boys raised in single-mother homes are at a higher risk of teen pregnancy<sup>7</sup> and teenage girls without

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3 2005-2009 American Community Survey

4 U.S. Census Bureau, Children's Living Arrangements and Characteristics: March 2002, P200-547, Table C8. Washington D.C.: GPO, 2003.

5 Source URL: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/node/2199/14>.

6 Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics. VitalStats. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/vitalstats.htm>. Accessed 4/15/2011.

7 Teachman, Jay D. "The Childhood Living Arrangements of Children and the Characteristics of Their Marriages." *Journal of Family Issues* 25 (January 2004):86-111.

fathers were twice as likely to be involved in early sexual activity and seven times more likely to get pregnant as other adolescents.<sup>8</sup>

#### **FATHER ABSENCE**

National: 33%

Ohio: 26%

Guernsey County: 26.5%

Cambridge: 53%

#### **TEEN BIRTH RATE (PER 1000)**

National: 41

State: 41

Guernsey County: 50

#### **CHILDREN ABUSED OR NEGLECTED (PER 1000)**

Ohio: 10

Guernsey County: 14

#### **ADOLESCENTS ADJUDICATED FOR FELONIES (PER 1000)**

Ohio: 14

Guernsey County: 11

Children who grow up without their fathers are at greatest risk for child abuse. In fact, the presence of a child's father in the home lowers the likelihood that a child will be abused.

Compared to living with both parents, living in a single-parent home doubles the risk that a child will suffer physical, emotional, or educational neglect.<sup>9</sup> There were 549 new allegations of child abuse/neglect in Guernsey County in 2007.<sup>10</sup> There were 14 children per 1,000 who were abused or neglected in Guernsey County in 2006. That is 4 more children higher per 1,000 than the state rate. In 2010, Guernsey County Children Services investigated 400 reports of child abuse and neglect. While Statewide Automated Child

Welfare Information System (SACWIS) does not allow for the opportunity to collect data regarding fathers, a moment in time count indicated 3 out of every 4 children involved with Children Services on 3/15/11 are from father absent homes.

There were also 11 adolescents per 1,000 in Guernsey County who were adjudicated for felonies in 2006.<sup>11</sup> Often, the "story behind the story" of a violent crime committed in America reveals a "crime of fatherlessness." In other words, children who grow up without the presence of an involved, responsible, and committed father are significantly more likely to engage in criminal activity. Adolescents who live in single-parent families were significantly more likely to commit status, property, or person delinquency when compared to adolescents living in two-parent families.

This was consistent even for controlling for sex, minority group status, and the mother's education (as a proxy for income).<sup>12</sup> In 2010, Guernsey County Juvenile Court filed unruly charges on 101 youth and delinquent charges on 300 youth. As of 3/15/11, 171 youth are currently on probation with Juvenile Court. 21% of these youth are living with both parents, 57.3% are living in father absent homes, and 12.8% are living with single fathers. Less than ½ of 1% of the 171 youth on probation have any father involvement. Research shows that children of father absent homes are 50% to 150% more likely to abuse drugs<sup>13</sup> and that 75% of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers are from fatherless homes. While it is it

8 Ellis, Bruce J., John E. Bates, Kenneth A. Dodge, David M. Ferguson, L. John Horwood, Gregory S. Pettit, and Lianne Woodward. "Does Father Absence Place Daughters at Special Risk for Early Sexual Activity and Teenage Pregnancy?" *Child Development* 74 (May/June 2003): 801-821.

9 America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being. Table SPECIAL1. Washington D.C.: Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1997.

10 Ohio PCSAO Factbook, 2007.

11 Children's Defense Fund-Ohio. County Fact Sheet Data, 2008.

12 Anderson, Amy L. "Individual and contextual influences on delinquency: the role of the single-parent family." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 30 (November 2002): 575-587.

13 National Fatherhood Initiative, 2007. *Father Facts Fifth Edition*.

difficult to compare specific data to Guernsey County since there are no inpatient treatment programs for adolescent addiction, we do know that 10% of the individuals receiving drug and alcohol services in our county are adolescents and 73% of those adolescents are from homes with no father presence.

**Less than ½ of 1% of the 171 youth on probation in Guernsey County have any father involvement.**

Education is another critical issue that father absence affects. Students living in biological father-absent homes are twice as likely to repeat a grade in school; 10% of children living with both parents have never repeated a grade, compared to 20% of children in stepfather families and 18% in mother-only families.<sup>14</sup> Guernsey County experiences an average of 18% school dropout rate as compared to the state average of 13%. Between the school years 2003 to 2006, 1477 youth in Cambridge High School were reported truant, which resulted in an in-school suspension (an average of 492 children each year). Even though data indicates Guernsey County has a significantly lower high school graduation rate (82%) than the states average (87%), we were unable to gather concrete data as to the actual number of fatherless homes with children in school. But antidotal data from elementary, middle school, and high school principals indicated the majority of children with academic challenges such as; school retention; dropout; truancy; multi-discipline's; and functioning below grade level come from single parent homes, the majority of which are father absent homes.

The national figures for suicide is an average of 11.5, per every 100,000 persons, Ohio suicide rate is 11.5 per every 100,000 persons while

Guernsey County's rate is 14.8. Guernsey County has a suicide rate higher than the state and national averages. Guernsey County ranks number 13 out of 88 Ohio counties with 1 being the county with the highest suicide rate. Since 2004, Guernsey County has experienced two confirmed suicides to adolescents, both were female and both involved children from fatherless homes.

## **Guernsey County Leader Focus Group Results**

There were fourteen focus group participants in addition to the representatives from the county lead agency. These individuals represented a broad cross section of the community and had unique experiences working with fathers and families. Participants represented the following organizations/ community sectors (Note: some individuals represented more than one sector of the community):

- Village of Byesville (city of Byesville)
- Cambridge Developmental Center
- Chaplin for the state
- Children Services
- Department of Job and Family Services
- Child Support
- Juvenile Court
- Cambridge attorneys
- Mayor of Cambridge
- Thompkins Child and Adolescent Services
- AVC Communications
- Chamber of Commerce
- Guernsey County Commissioner
- Firefighter
- Paramedic

<sup>14</sup> Nord, Christine Winquist, and Jerry West. Fathers' and Mothers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools by Family Type and Resident Status. (NCES 2001-032). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Studies, 2001.

- Foster/adoptive parent
- Fatherhood program facilitator
- Law enforcement

All focus group attendees agreed that there is a need to address father absence in Guernsey County. Some participants were knowledgeable about statistics related to fatherhood and child well being. However, the majority was more familiar with the issues they observe first-hand in their line of work and/or in the community at large (i.e. challenges with mothers playing the role of mother and father, children being in the middle of parental conflict, etc.). Participants indicated that father absence occurs with non-custodial fathers as well as with fathers who have full or partial custody of their children. The focus group attendees discussed the need to engage all types of fathers. A number of pressing needs were identified related to father absence including:

- Access to information for fathers that want to be involved with their children but don't know how
- Increased awareness (for mothers and community in general) about the importance of father involvement
- Education for fathers (including education about legal rights for visitation, etc.)
- A general lack of responsibility/commitment/intentions of being a family and keeping relationships in tact (for both men and women)
- Lack of mentors in the community or "social dads"
- Community organizations and general systems are not always father-friendly which can be discouraging for fathers
- Overall change in culture viewing mothers as "all knowing caretakers" and recognizing fathers as integral parts of children's well being

After discussing a variety of needs related to father absence, the focus group attendees agreed that the most pressing needs were helping fathers gain access to information (particularly through the courts) about how to become more involved as well as creating awareness in the community about the importance of father involvement.

The participants felt that the fathers most in need were those that want to be involved. These fathers may be denied access to their children by the child's mother or the parents of the mother; they may have access to their children but are not as actively involved as they could be; or they could be incarcerated and/or facing re-entry and need assistance re-engaging with their children. Focus group attendees mentioned that these fathers could be reached through the following avenues:

- Court system and letters to attorneys
- Child support agencies
- Sports associations/arenas
- Schools
- Churches
- Mental health agencies (specifically youth counseling centers)

Although participants agreed that father absence needs to be addressed in Guernsey County, they indicated that there are no broad initiatives that focus on responsible fatherhood. There are, however, programs, services, and special activities in the community for fathers. These include:

- An elementary school sponsored "Donuts with Dad" activity
- Head Start fathers' services every other month
- Children Services' "Boot Camp for New Dads" and "On My Shoulders" programs



- Special Father's Day services and gifts provided by local churches

In addition to programs and services specific to fathers, the focus group participants also identified other community services/activities that could be expanded to be more “father friendly” and/or engage more fathers. These include:

- Family Matters program: enhanced to include programming specific to responsible fathering during and after divorce (similar to Parenting Beyond the Drama program)
- Collaborating with the Youth Commission to coordinate events for youth and dads during the month of June
- Working with schools and sports leagues to sponsor father focused events
- Engaging new fathers before and at the birth of their child (i.e. hospital programs, special new dads groups, father-focused gifts, etc.)

While a variety of services and activities were identified as having the potential to expand to serve fathers, the focus group attendees agreed that for Guernsey County, it would be most beneficial to focus on expanding programming related to fathering during and after divorce. Parental conflict and frequent decrease in father involvement following divorce appear to be of major concern in the county.

The possibility of expanding existing services prompted enthusiasm among focus group participants however, there are still gaps and services that do not currently exist that are needed. Participants mentioned that legislation and policies can inhibit agencies from providing optimal services to fathers. Employment and the need to create more jobs

and job training programs were also discussed as major gaps in Guernsey County. Attendees were also firm in stating that programming for mothers related to the importance of father involvement is needed as many in the county (including judges and other leaders) regard mothers as having a more important role in children's development. Teen pregnancy prevention programming was also mentioned as a needed service to teach young men and women about the role of fathers.

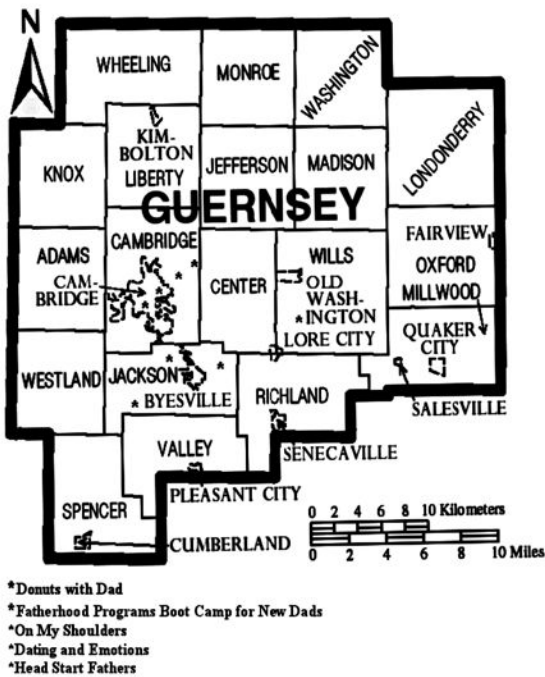
Focus group participants identified a number of existing assets/resources in the community that could be mobilized to promote responsible fatherhood. Committed individuals in the community were mentioned as being of substantial importance. Additionally, entities such as schools, employment and social service agencies, county jails, attorney offices, and local businesses could also add to efforts to promote responsible fatherhood. Potential funders and funding opportunities were also discussed, although this is an area where focus group participants felt that additional work needs to be done. The Cambridge Mayor discussed the possibility of focusing staff resources to identifying funding opportunities once a focused strategy to promote responsible fatherhood has been developed. Some funding suggestions included:

- Kiwanis Club
- Zane State – Paul Brown
- Shriners International
- Wal-Mart
- Eagles, Elks, and Moose Clubs
- Muskingum University – evaluation
- Guernsey County Foundation – Dave Wilson
- Muskingum County – Forever Dads
- Kevin Ritz – Philanthropist

- Deerassic Park
- Churches

The focus group participants expressed interest in continuing to work with the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood and its efforts to improve father involvement across the state. Most focus group participants plan to attend the Leadership Summit on Fatherhood. All attendees agreed that county judges and magistrates need to be represented at the Leadership Summit on Fatherhood and concerted efforts will be made to include them.

## County Assets Map



Guernsey County is fortunate to have 5 currently active father-specific programs. **Boot Camp for New Dads** is a monthly program sponsored by Guernsey County Children Services and held in northern Cambridge Township. **On My Shoulders** is sponsored by Guernsey County Children Services & held in downtown Cambridge City. **Play Group for Head Start Fathers** is sponsored by GMN Tri County and offered in Cambridge, Lore City, Byesville, south of Cambridge and held every other month. **Donuts with Dad** is sponsored

by Cambridge City Schools. **Dating and Emotions** is being piloted in Rolling Hills School District.

With the exception of the **Play Group for Head Start Fathers**, which is limited to a small percentage of dads, all of the other programs are located in Cambridge City. The map shows some geographic gaps in easily accessible fatherhood programs and services in most areas of the county.

Another area of opportunity is in the kinds of dads served. Programs that target non-custodial dads, incarcerated dads, military dads, and dads with special needs are some areas that should be considered. It is also recommended that Guernsey County leaders create a comprehensive list of organizations that serve moms and children and explore the possibility of helping those organizations create father-specific programs. An initial list of specific organizations is bulleted on page 5 of this report.

## Conclusions

This report brings to light many specific needs within Guernsey County. It identifies some key issues that increasing involved, responsible, and committed fatherhood can help remedy and some gaps in the geographic locations of programs and services. There are opportunities to target specific kinds of dads who aren't currently being reached.

This report also reveals many assets that have not been fully utilized that can be of great assistance as Guernsey County anchors a County Fatherhood Initiative that mobilizes all sectors around fatherhood. We have a unique opportunity now to enrich fathers, families, and communities in Guernsey County.

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the **BUSINESS SECTOR**:

<b>Objective(s): By December 2012, the sector will host a briefing on responsible fatherhood and its relevance to the business community.</b>			
<b>ACTIVITIES</b> <b>What will be done?</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> <b>Who will do it?</b>	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> <b>By when?</b> <b>(Day/Month)</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b> <b>(Funding/Time/People/Materials)</b>
Contact Chamber of Commerce to schedule meetings with core leaders  Contact Hospital to reserve location if needed apart from the Chamber  Prepare presentation—discuss importance of flexible working arrangements and its connections with productivity, opportunities to support upcoming events	1. Mike Miller  2. Mike Miller  3. Carri Brown	1. January 2012  2. January 2012  3. September 2012	1. Networks with Business Sector  2. Facility Space/Regular Chamber Meetings  3. Research and networks
<b>How will we weave these activities into this sector?</b> <b>(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)</b> We will combine this effort with the existing Chamber of Commerce meetings and networks.			
<b>How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?</b> Progress will be reviewed quarterly.			
<b>What will we consider as evidence of success?</b> Evidence of success will be made by the existence of the community briefing.			
<b>How will we evaluate success in this sector?</b> Pre and Post briefing surveys will be considered to measure business indications of the relevance of fatherhood to the business mission.			

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the CIVIC SECTOR:

**Objective (s):** Civic groups will conduct a book drive and literacy campaign to encourage fathers to read, prior to the end of December 2012, with the Library hosting a reading circle for fathers and their children.

<b>ACTIVITIES</b> What will be done?	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> Who will do it?	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> By when? (Day/Month)	<b>RESOURCES</b> (Funding/Time/ People/Materials)
Organize a book drive	1. AHA Museum Board	1. Initial planning meeting in February 2012/ December 2012 for the drive	1. AHA networks
Sponsor a Reading Circle for Fathers and their children (Create posters similar to the ones about famous people reading)	2. District Library	2. December 2012	2. Library leadership
Participate in Dolly's Imagination Library	3. United Way	3. December 2012	3. United Way organizations, community volunteers

**How will we weave these activities into this sector?**

***(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)***

Existing reading circles, board meetings, and community networks will coordinate. A subgroup chair person will be sought.

**How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?**

Progress will be reviewed quarterly.

**What will we consider as evidence of success?**

Encouraging fathers to read to their children is a success. No fathers in Fairfield County now participate in the Imagination Library, so a record of new participations will be kept. The number of books will be tracked, and the book drive's existence will be a success, as will the existence of the reading circle or special event at the Library.

**How will we evaluate success in this sector?**

No fathers in Fairfield County no participate in the Imagination Library, so a record of new participations will be kept. The number of books will be tracked, and the book drive's existence will be a success, as will the existence of the reading circle or special event at the Library.



# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the **COMMUNITY ACTIVISM SECTOR**: (this includes grassroots leaders):

<b>Objective (s): The Community sector will hold a Dunk with Dads event at the next Gus Macker tournament.</b>			
<b>ACTIVITIES</b> <b>What will be done?</b> Contact Main Street Leadership with idea and conduct a brainstorming session about what needs to be accomplished.	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> <b>Who will do it?</b> 1. Becky Edwards	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> <b>By when?</b> <b>(Day/Month)</b> 1. July 2011	<b>RESOURCES</b> <b>(Funding/Time/People/Materials)</b> 1. Community networks and possibility of purchasing the rubber awareness bracelets that are similar to other advocacy bracelets. Money for bracelets is needed.
<b>How will we weave these activities into this sector?</b> <b>(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)</b> The event will be a part of the Gus Macker tournament. Other potential partners include the YMCA. Jeff Bender is a contact person who serves on the board. The YMCA likely would serve as a place to hold the event if needed.			
<b>How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?</b> Progress will be reviewed quarterly.			
<b>What will we consider as evidence of success?</b> Holding the Dunk with Dad event will be evidence of success. (It is okay to adjust the event to a different physical activity if that makes more sense for the community.) Holding the event will be a success. Dad and children will participate in a healthy activity together. Additional community awareness will occur.			
<b>How will we evaluate success in this sector?</b> We will track the number of participants in order to create a baseline.			

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the **EDUCATION SECTOR**:

**Objective(s):** The Education sector will continue to support the partnership with JFS known as No Kidding Ohio in the 2011/2012 school year.

<b>ACTIVITIES</b> What will be done?	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> Who will do it?	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> By when? (Day/Month)	<b>RESOURCES</b> (Funding/Time/ People/Materials)
Hire next peer educators	1. WIA Youth, Teenworks	1. July 2011	WIA allocation and portion of grant to be matched with child support funds  Partnerships with business, education, and government social service agencies
Train educators	2. WIA Youth, Teenworks, and the CSEA	2. August 2011	
Conduct sessions	3. No Kidding peer educators	3. Through June 2012	
Evaluate program	4. Education partners and WIA Youth	4. Ongoing and through December 2012	

**How will we weave these activities into this sector?**

***(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)***

Peer education courses are part of classroom activities. WIA and CSEA program objectives intersect with the common mission.

**How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?**

Progress will be reviewed monthly.

**What will we consider as evidence of success?**

Teens will receive valuable information about the realities of parenthood and will increase their understanding of these realities. The program will be updated to include a specific fatherhood component.

**How will we evaluate success in this sector?**

The No Kidding statistics will be compared to the initial pilot statistics.

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the FAITH SECTOR:

**Objective (s):** Victory Hill church will lead an effort to identify the existing faith community's activities to engage fathers; the resulting information will serve as a point of reference for future projects and will be provided to government and community groups, such as Head Start, Protective Services, and other groups.

<b>ACTIVITIES</b> What will be done?	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> Who will do it?	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> By when? (Day/Month)	<b>RESOURCES</b> (Funding/Time/ People/Materials)
Conduct a survey of faith-based community to identify resources	1. Timothy Teague	1. December 2011	1. Networks within community
Create an informational tool	2. Kimberly Teague	2. May 2012	2. Electronic surveying
Provide to partners	3. Kimberly Teague	3. Father's Day 2012	3. Color copies/ electronic database
<b>How will we weave these activities into this sector?</b> <b>(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)</b> Ministerial connections will be utilized.			
<b>How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?</b> Progress will be reviewed quarterly.			
<b>What will we consider as evidence of success?</b> An up to date list of resources will be available for referrals—and additional conversations and dialogues will begin.			
<b>How will we evaluate success in this sector?</b> A simple database will exist.			

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the **GOVERNMENT SECTOR** (local city/county government, not state or federal governments):

<b>Objective (s):</b> By the end 2011, at least one federal grant application relating to fatherhood will be offered.			
<b>ACTIVITIES</b> <b>What will be done?</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> <b>Who will do it?</b>	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> <b>By when?</b> <b>(Day/Month)</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b> <b>(Funding/Time/People/Materials)</b>
A logic model will be prepared.  Necessary partners will be contacted.  Research will be conducted.  A grant proposal will be drafted.  Evaluation of the grant will be conducted.  Additional grant proposals for visitation and related services will be researched	Carri Brown	By the end of 2011	Carri Brown and necessary partners
<b>How will we weave these activities into this sector?</b> <b>(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)</b> JFS will review the fatherhood opportunities along with other research tasks for the agency.			
<b>How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?</b> Progress will be reviewed monthly.			
<b>What will we consider as evidence of success?</b> Being awarded a grant is evidence of success.			
<b>How will we evaluate success in this sector?</b> Being awarded a grant is success, and all grants will come with an evaluation plan.			



# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the **HEALTH SECTOR**:

**Objective(s):** The Health sector will promote physical activity and fatherhood simultaneously, in connection with the Gus Macker event. (This is in connection with the Community Activist objective.)

<b>ACTIVITIES</b> What will be done?	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> Who will do it?	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> By when? (Day/Month)	<b>RESOURCES</b> (Funding/Time/ People/Materials)
Connect with Becky Edwards and identify a FCACF Council member who represents the Health sector to help lead this event	FACF Council member	July 2011	Community networks and possibility of purchasing the rubber awareness bracelets that are similar to other advocacy bracelets.

**How will we weave these activities into this sector?**  
**(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)**  
 Short meetings can be held following the Council meetings.

**How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?**  
 Progress will be reviewed quarterly. It is okay to adjust the event to include a different physical activity at an existing event if it makes more sense to do so, based on the plans of Main Street and other organizers in action.

**What will we consider as evidence of success?**  
 Holding the event will be a success. Dad and children will participate in a healthy activity together. Additional community awareness will occur.

**How will we evaluate success in this sector?**  
 We will track the number of participants in order to create a baseline.

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the **LAW ENFORCEMENT SECTOR** (this includes police, correctional facilities, and the legal and judicial communities):

<b>Objective (s): The Sheriff’s Department and Police Departments will host an essay contest for children and present the winners with a certificate.</b>			
<b>ACTIVITIES</b> <b>What will be done?</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> <b>Who will do it?</b>	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> <b>By when?</b> <b>(Day/Month)</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b> <b>(Funding/Time/</b> <b>People/Materials)</b>
Prepare purpose statements and action plan jointly	1. Tim Voris and other representatives	January 2012	Networking with Fatherhood Summit attendees  Support of media
Prepare press releases	2. Carri Brown	March 2012	
Collect essays	3. Group representatives	May 2012	
Announce winner	4. Sheriff and Chiefs	June 2012	
<b>How will we weave these activities into this sector?</b> <b>(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)</b> The essays will be conducted in connection with Father’s Day – An activity for Mother’s Day will also be considered.			
<b>How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?</b> Progress will be reviewed quarterly, beginning in January 2012.			
<b>What will we consider as evidence of success?</b> Increasing awareness of fatherhood from the perspective of respected community leaders is success.			
<b>How will we evaluate success in this sector?</b> The number of articles, radio spots and essays submitted will be tracked. The winning essays will be published in the newspaper.			

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the **MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT SECTOR** (this includes sports):

**Objective (s): 90.9 will conduct a series of fatherhood related spots on the radio.**

<b>ACTIVITIES</b> <b>What will be done?</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> <b>Who will do it?</b>	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> <b>By when?</b> <b>(Day/Month)</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b> <b>(Funding/Time/</b> <b>People/Materials)</b>
<p>A plan for the series of radio spots will be brainstormed. At least 4 spots will occur within one year.</p> <p>Connect with WLOH (Ann Darling) and LSN (Paul Jassogn) for at least two spots within the next six months.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Steve Rauch</li> <li>2. Jeff Bender</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The first interview will occur in June 2011</li> <li>2. By December 2012</li> </ol>	<p>Networks with local leaders, as well as state and national leaders.</p>
<p><b>How will we weave these activities into this sector?</b>  <b>(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)</b>            Local radio stations and education networks appreciate information about community issues.</p>			
<p><b>How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?</b>            Progress will be reviewed quarterly.</p>			
<p><b>What will we consider as evidence of success?</b>            Conducting the spots is success because awareness increases and dialogues continue.</p>			
<p><b>How will we evaluate success in this sector?</b>            The number of spots will be tracked as a baseline.</p>			

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the **PHILANTHROPIC SECTOR** (this includes public and private foundations, corporate giving):

**Objective (s):** The Community Endeavors foundation will support grant projects for Fairfield County and will participate in an Advisory Council for research and education, if the Council is approved by the federal grant.

<b>ACTIVITIES</b> What will be done?	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> Who will do it?	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> By when? (Day/Month)	<b>RESOURCES</b> (Funding/Time/ People/Materials)
<p>Community Endeavors and OPNFF will offer information and technical tools with website resources about fatherhood practitioners. FCACFC will announce the resources at a full council meeting, to encourage additional agencies to sign up.</p> <p>Community Endeavors will participate in the Advisory Council for research if approved by the federal government.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Steve Killpack</li> <li>2. Carri Brown (flyer for Council)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. June 2011 and ongoing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. OPNFF newsletters and federal grant</li> </ol>

**How will we weave these activities into this sector?**

***(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)***

Information about OPNFF will be woven into newsletters and other communications, including FCACF emails to announce OPNFF resources.

**How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?**

Progress will be reviewed quarterly.

**What will we consider as evidence of success?**

At least five new agencies will sign up for the OPNFF information. Additional awareness about statewide resources will be made available

**How will we evaluate success in this sector?**

At least five new agencies will sign up for the OPNFF information. OPNFF and Community Endeavors will participate in a research advisory council if it is approved.



# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood within the NOT PROFIT, SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR:

**Objective(s):** By July 2011, the Metropolitan Housing Authority will conduct an information and referral event, adding fatherhood materials and SBS posters to the displays.

**Objective:** Social services sector will provide information to help identify what it would take to increase grant proposals for housing assistance, mental health services, and intensive case management services for fathers who are striving to be responsible fathers.

<b>ACTIVITIES</b> What will be done?	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b> Who will do it?	<b>DEADLINE(S)</b> By when? (Day/Month)	<b>RESOURCES</b> (Funding/Time/ People/Materials)
JFS will provide materials and volunteers for the Metropolitan Housing event.	1. Carri Brown	June 2011	1. Carri Brown, Jodi Smith, Mike Miller
All agencies will research potential grant opportunities.	2. All agencies	June 2011 and ongoing	2. Council members
Market data will be provided in terms of housing, mental health services and intensive case management.	3. Provider agencies	August 2011	3. Kristin Ankrom
Grant proposals (fatherhood and reentry) will be maintained for other agencies to use a model.	4. Carri Brown and Kristin Ankrom	August 2011	4. Carri Brown and Kristin Ankrom

**How will we weave these activities into this sector?**

***(Are there initiatives or other efforts we could partner with?)***

JFS volunteers will be sought for the housing event. Ongoing networks and connections will support grant activities. JFS will announce access grant awards in its regular publications.

**How often will progress be reviewed for this sector?**

Progress will be reviewed quarterly.

**What will we consider as evidence of success?**

Evidence will be participation in the housing event. Evidence will be demonstrated by the availability of at least two grant proposals (as models) by August 2011.

**How will we evaluate success in this sector?**

Timely submission of data will support grant applications.

# Sample: Community Action Plan to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

## OVERALL SHORT-TERM GOALS FOR THE COMMUNITY

1. By July 27, respond to the federal grant proposal relating to research opportunities. (Carri Brown)
2. Seek two volunteers to add fatherhood awareness component to housing event. (Carri Brown)
3. Design announcement about OPNFF tools for a Council meeting. (Carri Brown)
4. Contact Main Street Leadership to begin planning for Gus Macker connected event in 2012. (Becky Edwards) Jeff Bender will serve as a contact for the YMCA.
5. Hold a radio spot about the importance of Fatherhood. (Steve Rauch)
6. Hold two radio spots about Fatherhood and related services. (Jeff Bender)