



Fatherhood
Research
& Practice
Network

www.frpn.org

Learning Community Webinar: June 2, 2015

**Finding a Partner and Conducting a Successful
Evaluation: Researcher and Practitioner
Experiences**

Key Team Members & Committees

▶ Temple University



- *Jay Fagan, PhD, Project Co-Director*
- *Rebecca Kaufman MSW, Senior Research Coordinator*



▶ Center for Policy Research, Denver, Colorado



- *Jessica Pearson, PhD, Project Co-Director*
- *Nancy Thoennes, PhD, Project Consultant*



- ▶ **University of Pennsylvania, National Center on Fathers and Families**
 - *Vivian Gadsden, Ed.D.*
- ▶ **The Bawmann Group, Denver, Colorado**
 - *Marketing communications firm with experience developing materials and strategies to reach fathers.*
- ▶ **40 leading fatherhood practitioners and researchers**
 - *Steering committee and workgroups dealing with economic security, responsible fatherhood, co-parenting and communications*

Panel on Collaborations Between Researchers and Practitioners in the Fatherhood Field



▶ **Jennifer Bellamy**

Associate Professor, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver
Home Visiting for Fathers Project, Chicago, Illinois
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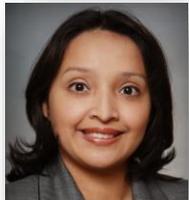
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Overview of FRPN

- ▶ Five-year, \$4.8 million grant (#90PR0006) to Temple University funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Oct 2013-Sept 2018.
- ▶ **#1:** Promote rigorous evaluation of fatherhood programs that serve low-income populations nationwide.
- ▶ **#2:** Provide training and technical assistance to researchers and practitioners to conduct better quality evaluations.
- ▶ **#3:** Disseminate information that leads to effective fatherhood practice and research.
- ▶ Broad audience of programs serving low-income fathers: OFA and non-OFA grantees, state-sponsored Fatherhood Commissions, programs linked to Head Start & Early Head Start, programs funded by states and local child support & child welfare agencies, etc.



Gaps to be Filled by FRPN

- ▶ Increasing the quality of evaluation research on fatherhood interventions.
- ▶ Funding research-practitioner teams to conduct rigorous evaluations.
- ▶ Developing and testing outcome measures relevant to low-income fathers, racial/ethnic minorities.
- ▶ Promoting evaluator-practitioner collaborations/information sharing.
- ▶ Building capacity among practitioners and evaluators.
- ▶ Disseminating and translating evaluation findings, for investigators, practitioners, policymakers, funders.
- ▶ Creating a sustainable, fatherhood research network.

FRPN Funded Projects: Round # 1

- ▶ Dr. Bright Sarfo (MEF Associates) and Mr. Joseph Jones (Center for Urban Families, Baltimore, MD). An RCT of the **Developing All Dads for Manhood and Parenting** (DAD MAP) fatherhood curriculum, a facilitated 16-session program (N= 140 fathers).
- ▶ Dr. Paul Lanier (University of North Carolina) and Ms. Patricia Beier (Wayne Action Group for Economic Solvency, WAGES, Goldsboro, NC). An RCT of **Circle of Parents**, a mutual-aid program that uses a peer-support group format (N=200 fathers).
- ▶ Dr. Jennifer Bellamy (University of Denver, School of Social Work) with Metropolitan Family Services, Chicago, IL. An augmentation of a larger RCT of **Dads Matter**, a fatherhood intervention in home visiting settings, with a focus on the role of the home visitor (N=200 fathers).
- ▶ Dr. Young-II Kim (Baylor University, Institute for Studies of Religion) and Dr. Brenda Oyer (The Ridge Project, Inc., McClure, OH). An RCT of **TYRO Dads**, a facilitated, five-week, fatherhood program operated at 11 sites in Ohio (N=400 fathers).

**RFP for Round#2: Jan. 2016; Begin: June 2016
(Letter of Interest, Invitation for Full Proposal)**



How FRPN is Building Capacity

- ▶ Design new measures of fatherhood program outcomes such as father engagement, co-parenting and child wellbeing and putting them on FRPN website
- ▶ Conduct a one-day certificate program on evaluation research for fatherhood program staff that qualifies for continuing education credit in social work (June 9, 2015 at Temple University)
- ▶ Conduct learning communities with researchers & practitioners interested in evaluation of fatherhood programs
- ▶ Develop materials, videos, webinars and other resources dealing with program evaluation on the FRPN website.
- ▶ Develop valid and reliable measures of key fatherhood program outcomes.
- ▶ Help programs find a researcher (and researchers find a program) interested in program evaluation in their area.
- ▶ Make presentations on FRPN and fatherhood research at conferences for academics, evaluators, and policy researchers.
- ▶ Publicize new fatherhood research on www.FRPN.org

Contact Us

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Today's Webinar



- ▶ What Programs Look For in a Research Partner
- ▶ What Researchers Look For in a Program
- ▶ The Roles and Responsibilities of Researchers and Practitioners
- ▶ How Programs and Researchers Divide the Duties Associated with a Program Evaluation
- ▶ Experiences of Researchers and Program Staff

Partnership Resources

www.frpn.org

To Find a Research Partner

- ▶ FRPN Website (www.frpn.org)
- ▶ Local Universities (Schools of Social Work, Family Studies, Human Development, Department of Sociology, and others)
- ▶ Society for Social Work and Research (www.sswr.org)
- ▶ Independent Researchers and Research Firms

To Find a Program Partner

- ▶ FRPN website (www.frpn.org)
- ▶ National Fatherhood Initiative (www.fatherhood.org)
- ▶ National Partnership for Community Leadership (www.npclstrongfamilies.org)
- ▶ Fathers and Families Coalition of American (<http://fathersandfamiliescoalition.org>)

Other Resources:

Research-Practice Partnerships

William T. Grant Foundation

- Structuring a Partnership
- Developing a Joint Research Agenda
- Developing Data Sharing Agreements
- Communicating and Using Research Findings
- Staffing
- Funding

<http://wtgrantfoundation.org/RPP>

What Researchers Look for When they Select a Program to Evaluate

- ▶ **Size:** Is the program large enough to meet statistical power expectations?
- ▶ **Retention:** Does the program have a demonstrated ability to retain participants? How do I find out whether or not the program is able to retain fathers?
- ▶ **Excess demand for services:** Are there enough participants to generate enrollment in a control group or a low-level treatment group?
- ▶ **Intervention strength:** Is the treatment strong enough to generate outcome effects? How do I find out whether or not the program is consistently implementing the treatment? Is it delivered in a consistent manner so that outcomes will be similar across intervention staff?
- ▶ **Intervention type:** Does the program provide a mix of services that meet the requirements of the funder. For example, OFA requires that programs offer parenting, relationship, and economic stability services that met a minimum threshold?
- ▶ **Strong counterfactual :** If there is a low-level treatment or control group is it sufficiently different from the treatment group? Does it receive a lower level of services or support from the program or other sources so that there will be a difference between groups?
- ▶ **Point of enrollment or random assignment:** Is there a clear point when participants can be recruited, enrolled and randomly assigned to treatment groups?
- ▶ **Quality of data:** Will the data be consistently and reliably collected? Can the researcher introduce new measures for data collection? Are the data that programs already collect of sufficiently high quality? How do I find out if the program is able to consistently collect data



Before Creating a Partnership: Points to Discuss

- ▶ Discuss questions of interest and what you hope to learn in evaluation
- ▶ Discuss evaluation approach: qualitative, quantitative, RCT, needs assessment
- ▶ Discuss roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Discuss division of labor: What will program and researcher do
- ▶ Discuss when and how you will communicate and meet with researcher
- ▶ Discuss what and how data will be collected
- ▶ Discuss seeing preliminary findings
- ▶ Discuss how the results of the evaluation will be disseminated.
- ▶ Discuss how will negative or disappointing results be handled
- ▶ Discuss fees & payment

An Example of How Programs and Researchers Divide the Duties Associated with a Program Evaluation

	Program Conducts	Researcher Conducts
Conduct outreach to identify interested fathers	X	
Describe program and random assignment to interested fathers	X	
Connect fathers to interviewer for baseline survey	X	
Obtain verbal consent and conduct baseline survey		X
Conduct random assignment		X
Serve program group fathers and track their participation	X	
Support program delivery (including recruitment/retention) through monitoring and technical assistance		X
Locate fathers and conduct follow-up survey		X
Analyze data and report results		X
Based on material developed by Mathematica Policy Research for the PACT Evaluation		

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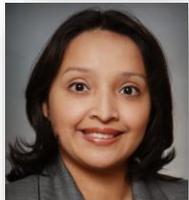
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Building an Effective Partnership



How did you find one another and who approached whom?



Why did you want to do a program evaluation? What did you want to learn?



What did you look for in researcher or program partner?



What were the roles and responsibilities of the researcher and the program partner? What did you discuss about these matters before you agreed to the partnership?



What changes (if any) did the program have to make in order to engage in the evaluation? Did the research plan have to change to match program needs and realities?





Researchers

- ▶ What suggestions do you have for researchers just getting started in looking for a program partner?
- ▶ How can researchers keep program staff enthused about the research?

Programs

- ▶ What concerns did you or staff have about an evaluation and how did you communicate with the researcher about this?
- ▶ How can programs use evaluation results?



Do you have any collaboration success or failure stories to share?



What have you learned about practitioner-researcher partnerships that you wish you had known before?



Summary

- ▶ Finding researchers and partners
- ▶ Establishing the partnership
- ▶ Designing the intervention/initiative
- ▶ Writing the proposal
- ▶ Operating day-to-day and maintaining the relationship
- ▶ Trouble-shooting anticipated and unanticipated issues
- ▶ Using the findings for future directions



Questions?

