



A Conversation About State-Level Initiatives for Father Inclusion: The FRPN Planning Grant Program

FRPN Webinar

November 5, 2019

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Fatherhood Research and Practice Network

- Six-year, \$4.8 million cooperative agreement to Temple U & CPR
- Funding by U.S. DHHS, ACF, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, 2013-2019
- Targets fatherhood researchers & programs serving low-income fathers

#1

Promote
Rigorous
Evaluation

#2

Build
Evaluation
Capacity

#3

Disseminate
Information



Why Focus on State-Level Policy?

States have a great deal of autonomy in family policy and funding

- 33 states have unobligated TANF balances (\$3.3 billion)
- Child support agencies have resources & tools that could help
- Few states have fatherhood commissions or initiatives

State-level initiatives have the potential to overcome

- Service instability & turnover from short-term funding grants
- Limited political power & policy reach for father inclusion
- Inability of isolated service programs to address many needs

State-level initiatives can accomplish a lot

- Coordinate across multiple human services agencies
- Improve positive father engagement and outcomes for kids
- Return on Investment due to earnings, taxes & avoided costs

Father engagement in human services agencies is a federal priority

- ACF-ACF=IM-18-01, October 17, 2018

Statewide Father Inclusion Planning Projects

- **Overall goal:** Generate system change aimed at enhancing father inclusion in state programs and policies
- **Method:** Competitive awards to 11 states (20 applicants)
- **Grantees:** CO, CT, KY, MI, MN, NC, PA, RI, SC, WA, WY
- **Leads:** CBO (6); University (2); State agency (2); Fatherhood org (1)
- **Requirements:** Diverse planning teams; Involve State child support director; Four check-in calls w/FRPN staff, Submit final Summary and Action plan outlining Goals, Activities, Accomplishments, Next Steps
- **Funding:** Flexible awards of \$10,000, January-Sept. 2019
- **FRPN Support:** Preparation of site-specific logic models, Learning community calls, Bi-monthly check-In calls offering technical assistance and resources
- **Other Features:** Autonomy to determine own goals, activities, strategies and spending;

FRPN State Planning Mini Grants

CO	Families First Colorado
CT	State of Connecticut, Department of Social Services
KY	Lexington Leadership Foundation
MI	University of Michigan, School of Social Work
MN	Minnesota Fathers and Families Network
NC	North Carolina State University, School of Social Work
PA	The Strong Families Commission
RI	Parent Support Network of Rhode Island
SC	South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families
WA	Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Economic Services Administration (ESA), Office of the Assistant Secretary
WY	Wyoming Children's Trust Fund

Featured Planning Grantees



Michigan

Rich Tolman

**School of Social Work
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South Carolina

Richard Barr

**SC Center for Fathers and Families
rbarr@scfathersandfamilies.com**



Kentucky

David Cozart

**Director
Lexington Leadership Foundation
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Washington

Anne Stone

**State Director,
WA Frontiers of Innovations
Dep't Social and Health Services
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Key Goals Identified by FRPN Planning Grant Teams

	Develop Lasting Organizational Structure for Father Inclusion	Cultivating High- Level Legislative & Executive Support	Obtaining Funding for Fatherhood Commissions & Services	Building Multi-Agency Partnerships & Alliances	Engaging Fathers for Authentic Input to State Agencies & Programs	Collecting Data on Barriers to Father Engagement, Unmet Needs, Service Gaps and Fatherhood Resources & Services
CO	+			+		
CT		+			+	+
KY	+	+	+	+		
MI	+		+			+
MN				+		+
NC		+		+		+
PA	+	+		+		+
RI		+	+		+	+
SC			+	+		
WA		+			+	+
WY				+	+	



Questions on Goals

- Why was creating an organizational structure dealing with fatherhood a priority for Michigan?
- Why was creating multi-agency partnerships a priority for Kentucky?
- Why was collecting data on the father experience a priority for Washington?
- Why was obtaining funding and forging alliances for funding a priority for South Carolina?



Main Activities FRPN Teams Pursued

	Interviews, Focus Groups & Surveys with Impacted Fathers	Building Multi- Agency Coalitions	Strategic Planning & State Policy Review	Conducting Fatherhood Summits & Conferences	Engaging in Legislator Education & Cultivation of Champions	Planning & Funding a Permanent Statewide Fatherhood Commission
CO	+			+	+	+
CT	+			+	+	+
KY	+	+	+	+	+	+
MI	+	+	+			+
MN				+		
NC	+			+	+	
PA	+	+	+	+	+	+
RI			+	+	+	+
SC	+	+			+	
WA	+	+		+		
WY			+			

Questions on Activities



How did Kentucky engage in strategic planning and what were the key outcomes?



How did Michigan build relationships with state agencies and programs and what were the chief benefits?



How did South Carolina build relationships with state agencies and what were the chief benefits?



How did Washington collect information on impacted fathers and what were key learnings?



Main Challenges that FRPN Planning Teams Encountered

	Political and Organizational Issues	Difficulty Engaging or Managing Impacted Fathers	Geographic Distance and Time Constraints of Partners	Lack of Data on Father Engagement
CO	+		+	
CT		+		
KY	+		+	+
MI		+	+	+
MN		+		
NC	+		+	+
PA	+		+	
RI				+
SC	+			
WA	+	+	+	+
WY		+	+	

Questions on Challenges

- What fatherhood data gaps did Michigan encounter?
- How did the time constraints of partners affect the planning effort in Kentucky?
- What types of challenges did Washington experience in managing father engagement?
- What political and organizational challenges did South Carolina encounter in its father inclusion effort?



Accomplishments Achieved by FRPN Teams

	Increased Knowledge of Barriers, Resources, & Needs of Fathers	Creation of Information Databases & Data Collection Tools	Development of Multi-Agency Coalitions	Development of Strategic Plans and Funding Strategies	Press Coverage	Conducting Fatherhood Summits
CO			+			
CT	+		+		+	+
KY			+	+	+	+
MI	+	+	+	+		
MN		+	+			
NC	+	+	+			+
PA			+			+
RI	+	+	+	+		
SC	+		+		+	
WA		+	+			+
WY			+	+		

Questions on Achievements

Every site cited the development of broad, multi-agency coalitions or councils as a key planning grant achievement.

Briefly describe your coalition-building achievements and the following:

Kentucky: Strategic Plan

Michigan: Increased knowledge on fatherhood resources & gaps

South Carolina: Press coverage

Washington: Fatherhood Summit



Next Steps for FRPN Planning Grant Teams

	Ongoing Coalition Meetings & Expanding State Partners	Creation of Fatherhood Commissions And/or Legislative Advocacy	Securing Long-Term Funding	Improving the Image of Fathers and Changing the Culture	Data Collection & Policy Evaluation on Fatherhood	Conducting Fatherhood Summits
CO				+		+
CT	+		+	+		+
KY	+	+	+	+	+	
MI	+	+	+		+	
MN		+			+	+
NC		+		+	+	+
PA		+			+	+
RI		+				+
SC			+	+	+	
WA	+	+	+	+	+	
WY	+		+		+	

Questions on Next Steps

What next steps does **Kentucky** plan to take to create a Fatherhood Commission?

What next steps does **Michigan** plan to take to secure funding for fatherhood services?

What next steps does **South Carolina** plan to take to identify gaps in father services?

What next steps does **Washington** plan to take to improve the public image of fathers and change the culture around fatherhood?



FORTHCOMING FRPN BRIEF

FRPN Planning Grant Initiative on Father Inclusion in Policies and Programs for Children and Families at the State Level

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www.frpn.org



Introduction

This Fatherhood Research & Practice Network (FRPN) brief introduces incarcerated fathers before discussing programming, role fathers on communities, families, and children. Next, we explore the experiences of fathers before, during, and after their incarceration. Finally, we discuss the challenges and opportunities for incarcerated fathers that have demonstrated positive outcomes.

Incarceration in the United States

Incarceration is defined as confinement, typically within a prison or jail, for a period of time. In the United States, incarceration is used for a wide range of offenses, from minor infractions to serious crimes. Incarceration is also used for individuals who are deemed to be a risk to the community or who are unable to care for themselves. Incarceration is a complex issue that involves many factors, including social, economic, and cultural factors. This brief explores the experiences of fathers before, during, and after their incarceration, and discusses the challenges and opportunities for incarcerated fathers that have demonstrated positive outcomes.

Introduction

This brief reviews some of the ways in which federal, state, and local initiatives in the U.S. have attempted to ensure that father involvement is reflected in programs and policies dealing with children and families. The examples provided are not comprehensive but cover much of the national activity that exists at the state level and illustrate the various ways in which father engagement issues are being addressed.

The brief begins with a summary of how father involvement issues emerged at the national level and describes key federal funding mechanisms. It then provides examples of state and local initiatives, most of which focus on providing direct services to fathers in the child support system to increase their employment, child support payments, and parent involvement, although a few also aim to create system-level change across multiple public agencies. The brief concludes with a discussion of research on the benefits of these programs and of some elements that link initiatives across geographical settings.

Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Grants

In 2010, the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released five-year competitive grant awards totaling \$4.5 million per year to 30 organizations in states for New Pathways for Fathers and Families Programs. Five other organizations received grants to serve fathers transitioning from incarceration to their families and communities. The awards are part of HHS's discretionary grant program originally authorized under the Deficit Reduction Act of 2009 and reauthorized under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2015. The funded programs aim to improve the well-being of children and families through the provision of services dealing with marriage and relationship education, economic stability, and responsible parenting. Some grantees are doing additional research on the types of programs and strategies that are most effective.¹

employment benefits to eligible fathers through no fault of their own. Under State law and requirements of State law, fathers on a quarterly basis may receive a quarterly benefit based on their earnings. Researchers can determine how much a father has earned in a given time period.

Center for Policy Research in Family Studies, Colorado State University, Colorado. The table shows the number of fathers and control group cases that were enrolled in the program and the number of fathers who were enrolled in the program.

to as risk factors or barriers to father involvement. Fathers who experience these challenges may be more likely to experience difficulties in their relationships with their children and families. Fathers who experience these challenges may be more likely to experience difficulties in their relationships with their children and families. Fathers who experience these challenges may be more likely to experience difficulties in their relationships with their children and families.

offer their children. For example, qualitative research has shown that mothers want their baby's father to be involved with the child, but only if the father does not have too many problems of his own and can provide for his children. (Bly, Rickman, & McDowell, 2008). It has been suggested that high levels of father involvement during the child's early years may have long-term positive effects on later paternal engagement with children (Fagan & Lee, 2012). Fathers may have a difficult time recovering from the negative effects of their role as the child grows older because they have not been able to form early bonds with the child or because their relationship with the mother was poor.

Although the research literature has shown positive effects of low income fathers' challenges on paternal involvement with children, there is little available information about the types of challenges that fathers enrolled in responsible fatherhood programs experience.



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