

The Blueprint

News from the Fatherhood
Research & Practice Network

More Updates on Fatherhood Activities in States

Last month's Blueprint highlighted recent fatherhood activities and accomplishments in some of the 11 states that received [FRPN planning grants](#) in 2019 to enhance father inclusion. The following describes new fatherhood initiatives in several states that did not receive FRPN planning grants. They involve the use of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program funds, new legislative appropriations, and awards by child abuse prevention agencies.

Tennessee: Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) awarded \$25 million in TANF funds to Families Matter, a faith-based, family-service organization, and MAXIMUS which offers workforce and child support services. The three-year [AFIRM pilot program](#) aims to boost Memphis area fathers' ability to work and provide emotional and financial support for their children. TDHS also contracted with Deloitte to develop a [statewide fatherhood initiative](#) that includes creating grant opportunities for fatherhood programs throughout the state. TDHS sponsored its first-ever [Fatherhood Conference](#) in September.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma Human Services (OKDHS) is making a \$9 million investment of TANF funds over the next three years to 10 organizations in urban and rural counties that are implementing fatherhood-specific services across the state. The [awards](#) involve a [collaboration](#) with the Oklahoma State University Extension for weekly classes through National Fatherhood Initiative's 24/7 DAD program. Fathers are recruited through WIC offices, health agencies, job programs, and other community agencies.

Florida: Florida's 2022 [legislation](#) (HB 7065) appropriated \$68.9 million for a wide array of [programs and supports](#) to encourage responsible father involvement. Administered through the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the legislation supports mentorship programs for at-risk youth, and evidence-based parenting education to support father engagement. Funding also covers case managers who help fathers find employment and transition from incarceration, and a statewide awareness campaign on the importance of responsible fatherhood.

Texas: [Fatherhood EFFECT](#) (Educating Fathers for Empowering Children Tomorrow) programs provide parent education and resources in nine counties. Funded by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), Fatherhood EFFECT contracts with community organizations for educational and service interventions that aim to increase child safety by improving family functioning and social supports. In 2023, the program served 1,004 youth/families.

Arkansas: Arkansas recently strengthened its commitment to fatherhood by transferring its TANF program from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and moving the Arkansas Better Dads program from community-based organizations to DHS. Under the direction of a full-time employee, the TANF-funded (\$1 million) [Arkansas Better Dads](#) program partners with organizations to provide fatherhood training, father-child activities, and father involvement resources throughout the state. The program uses regional specialists to improve its geographical reach and plans to focus on prenatal engagement and pre-release services for incarcerated fathers.



Recent Resources

A new [brief](#) released by the Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center reports that as of October 2023, 14 states have either adopted (9 states) or will do so by the end of 2026 (5 states) a paid family leave program of at least 6 weeks. All 14 programs allow both parents (of any gender) to qualify for the program. Although unsuccessful, 23 states without a statewide program introduced legislation to adopt a statewide paid family leave program of at least 6 weeks. Paid family leave improves the family's economic security, child and parental health and healthy attachment. For information on other father-supportive employment policies and programs, see [chapter 7](#) of FRPN's *Policies and Programs Affecting Fathers: A State-by-State Report*.

The [American Institute for Boys and Men](#) (AIBM) was recently established. It will conduct non-partisan research on issues that affect the wellbeing of boys and men in five key areas: mental health, employment, the systemic disadvantages that Black boys and men face, and family life--including father engagement. The initiative is led by Richard V. Reeves, author of *Of Boys and Men: Why the Modern Male Is Struggling, Why It Matters, and What to Do about It*.

Happy Holidays!

Seasons greetings! We send you warm wishes for health and happiness in the coming year. Thank you for your continued support of the FRPN.

Contact Us to Learn More

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