

Fatherhood  
Research  
& Practice  
Network

# The Blueprint

News from the Fatherhood  
Research & Practice Network

## New Projects & Funding

### *FRPN Initiative Examining Policies and Programs That Improve Fathers' Economic Stability and Support Parent-Child Relationships*

The [Center for Policy Research](#) has received funding from [Rise Together](#) and Dr. Richard Reeves, President of the [American Institute for Boys and Men](#), with underlying support from Melinda French Gates, for a new project focused on supporting low-income fathers. With the [FRPN](#), we'll identify and evaluate the evidence-based policies and programs that help fathers engage positively with their children and achieve economic stability. This two-year project builds off of our previous FRPN work on the [state policies and programs affecting fathers](#) and will spotlight successful state initiatives and provide actionable recommendations to expand father-supportive strategies nationwide.



## What We're Reading: Practical Evidence from the Field

### ***Men's Economic Stress Matters for Families***

Equimundo's [State of American Men 2025](#) report aligns with the FRPN initiative on identifying the programmatic and policy solutions to support low-income fathers and, relatedly, their families. The report highlights that economic anxiety, social isolation, and rigid gender norms are taking a serious toll on men's well-being. Men struggling economically are far more likely to experience mental health challenges, which can ripple out to family relationships. Strengthening economic and mental health supports for fathers isn't just good policy, but it's also good for children and communities.

### ***Engaging Fathers in Home Visiting***

A [new study](#) by Stolz & LaGraff (2025) shows that programs can boost father participation by building a culture that values dads—through inclusive training, father-friendly practices, and strong supervisor encouragement. Fathers' engagement in home visiting depends less on an individual home visitor's years of experience and more on training, agency culture, and leadership support. Home visitors with social work backgrounds felt more confident involving dads, and those working in father-friendly agencies with supportive supervisors reported greater success and enjoyment in engaging fathers.

### ***Best Practices for Recruiting & Retaining Fathers in Parenting Research***

We know that fathers remain underrepresented in parenting research, which limits our understanding of them within family relationships. A [recent study](#) by Deneault and colleagues (2025) highlights best practices for recruiting and retaining fathers in parenting research. Interviews with fatherhood researchers revealed that effective recruitment means

reaching out to fathers directly (rather than just “parents”), offering flexible participation options, and building diverse research teams. To keep dads engaged over time, researchers emphasized the importance of establishing strong rapport and maintaining consistent contact between study waves. By designing studies that *intentionally* include and support fathers, researchers can generate more accurate, inclusive insights to inform both policy and practice.

## Recent Resources

### *Program Evaluation Toolkit*

[A toolkit](#) from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on their Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education (HMRE) programs provides guidance that can be used for developing and implementing fatherhood program evaluations. One suggestion is to include community members, including fathers and staff at other organizations that serve fathers, in determining how to best discuss the evaluation and the enrollment process with potential participants.

### *Guiding Principles for Grant Proposal Writing*

The National Partnership for Community Leadership (NPCL) and Practitioners for Fathers and Families (PFF) newsletter [“Finding What Works”](#) provides information on writing a successful grant proposal. The QR code in the newsletter provides access to more information and resources, including NPCL’s ongoing webinar series on funding sources and the grant writing process.

### *Upcoming Webinar*

National Fatherhood Initiative® (NFI) is hosting a webinar, [Building Father-Inclusive Programs Using the Four Stages of Father Inclusion](#), on September 23 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. EDT. The webinar will provide practical tools and a proven framework to include fathers in services.

## Contact Us to Learn More

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