



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Parent, Family and Community Engagement

Engaging Parents as Advocates and Leaders Webinar Series



Fostering Fathers' Leadership Skills June 16, 2020

Today's Host

Melia Franklin

Consultant

National Center on Parent, Family,
and Community Engagement



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Today's Conversation

Fostering Fathers' Leadership Skills



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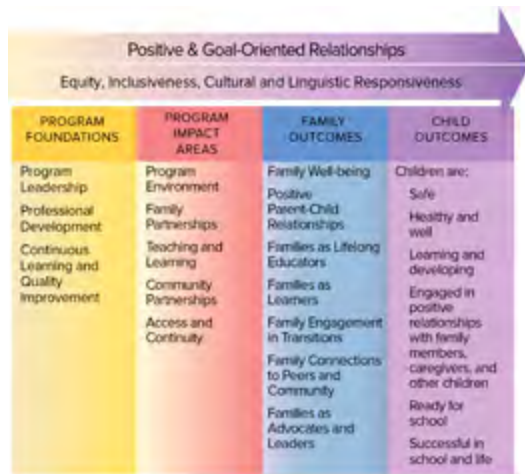
What we will explore today...

- How to prepare staff to successfully integrate father engagement into their programs
- Tips from programs that engage fathers as leaders and advocates
- Tools, resources, and ideas you can use to create a more “father-friendly” program



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Engaging Parents as Advocates and Leaders Webinar Series



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- Highlights tools, resources and exemplary strategies promoting equity, responsiveness and collaboration with families
- Explores an important aspect of positive family and child outcomes

Head Start's history promoting Father Engagement

- The Office of Head Start began focusing on the role of fathers in the early 1990s, beginning with male-involvement demonstration projects.
- In 2018, the Office of Family Assistance issued a memo to urge all federal family-serving agencies to prioritize and enhance father engagement



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Head Start Resources

Engaging Fathers on ECLKC includes:

- Wall Posters, Infographic
- Head Start Father Engagement Birth to Five Programming Guide
- Fatherhood Connection Webinar Series
- And more!

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Our Presenter



Kevin Bremond
First 5 Alameda County
Alameda County Fathers Corps



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Why is it important to engage fathers?

Studies show that father involvement is related to positive cognitive, developmental, educational, and socio-behavioral child outcomes:

- Improved weight gain in preterm infants
- Improved breastfeeding rates
- Higher receptive language skills
- Higher on reading achievement
- Stronger verbal skills
- Less behavior problems in school.



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Alameda County Fathers Corps



- Established in 2013
- Began with learning community for male service providers working with fathers and families
- Cross Systems Collaboration – First 5 (lead agency), Health Care Services Agency, and Social Services Agency
- Supported by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors

What we do:

- Fathers Corps Learning Community
- Father-Friendly Provider Network (FFPN)
- Fatherhood Partnership
- County-wide Father Friendly Principles trainings

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Father Friendly Principles

-  Include the needs of fathers
-  Provide father-friendly services
-  Portray positive father images
-  Create positions that serve fathers
-  Train staff on fatherhood issues
-  Expect father participation
-  Design programs for fathers



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Principles in Action



Include the needs of fathers

Tip: Collect contact information from fathers



Provide father-friendly services

Tips:

- Make eye contact and speak to both parents
- Ask dad if he has any questions or concerns
- Invite fathers to activities and celebrations



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Principles in Action



Portray positive father images

Tip: Pay special attention to waiting areas and common spaces!



Create positions that serve fathers

Examples: Father Engagement Specialist, Fathers' Advocate/ Mentor, Fathers' Parenting Liaison



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Principles in Action



Train staff on fatherhood issues

Tips:

- Remain neutral – you are on the child's side not mom's or dad's
- Ensure that staff are consistently and effectively engaging fathers
- Reflect and Acknowledge the baggage and/or bias you may bring



Expect father participation

Tip: Assume fathers are involved and want information about their child



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Principles in Action



Design programs for fathers

Tips:

- Identify strategies for staff to engage fathers
- Be intentional, it's not just going to happen
- Host father-specific parent/child activities



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Successful Father-specific Programs

- Program names speak to fathers
- Father specific
- Male facilitators
- Meet fathers where they are – Reliable referral process
- Trust and authenticity between provider and dad
- Leadership and staff are patient
- Non-traditional hours of service
- Incentives



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Successful Outreach Strategies

- Other fathers
- Male staff
- Authentic
- Go where they are: barbershops, schools, L&D recovery, GameStop
- Partner with other agencies/programs:
 - Workforce development
 - Probation and reentry
 - Manhood development
 - Child Support Services



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Tools You Can Use

- [Father-Friendliness Organizational Self-Assessment Tool](#)
 - Assess your level of readiness to implement the Father Friendly Principles



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Self-Assessment Tool Sample



Create Positions that Serve Fathers	Not Applicable (N/A)	Haven't thought about this or don't know	Started to think about this, but haven't made progress	Made good efforts, but have work to do	Efforts have been successful/ Ongoing progress expected
	0	1	2	3	4
12. Male staff are in place at all levels of leadership, program design, program delivery and recruitment of clients and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Male staff feel comfortable, valued and respected within the agency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Fathers who have completed programs are asked to work as mentors, recruiters, group facilitators, and so forth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Tools You Can Use

[Father-Friendly Principles Implementation Tool](#)

- Provides ideas and suggestions on ways to incorporate the Father Friendly Principles on three levels:
 - Client and Practice Implementation
 - Staff Capacity-Building Implementation
 - System and Policy Implementation



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Implementation Tool Sample



Create positions that serve fathers

Staff Capacity-Building Implementation

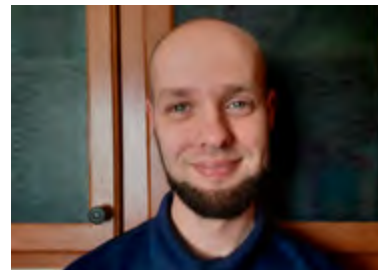
- Create conditions so that male staff feel comfortable, valued, and respected within the agency.
- Create positions to serve fathers' needs and actively recruit men to fill those positions (e.g., Father Engagement Specialist, Men's Mental Health Specialist, Fathers' Advocate/Mentor, Fathers' Parenting Liaison, etc.).
- Include the Father-Friendly Principles in new hire orientation materials.
- Assign a Father-Friendly Principles mentor to all new hires.

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Our Presenters



Matt Haviland
Parent Leadership/Male
Engagement Specialist



Travis Jones
Parent/Substitute Teacher

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Head Start for Kent County

- 1600+ families
- 13 preschool sites
- 4 EHS classrooms
- Home visiting
- Recognized as a leader in coordinated enrollment for early care and education
- Countywide commitment to father engagement



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Father Friendly Foundations

Father friendly principles at work:

- Male engagement position
- Father-specific programming
- Fatherhood “competency” training for staff
- Leadership and career pathways



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Father Friendly Strategies



Create positions
that serve fathers



Design programs
for fathers



Male Engagement Staff

- Piloted in 2007
- Fully staffed in 2017

Father-specific programming

- *Dad Cafes* build relationships and 2-way communication
- Volunteer opportunities modeled after the [Watch D.O.G.S. program](#)

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Addressing Unconscious Bias

“One of the primary reasons for the challenges female staff face in working effectively with fathers is the tendency of people to gravitate toward, spend time with, and be more comfortable around others who are similar. This fact extends to gender.” –Fagan, J. (1996)



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Father Friendly Strategies



Train Staff on
Fatherhood Issues

- Address unconscious bias, promote inclusive communication and outreach strategies.
- Staff Awareness Assessment: How Well Do Staff Relate to and Interact with Men?



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Leadership and Career Pathways

- Giving fathers ownership through collaboration
- Example: Top D.O.G.S. co-leading fatherhood group -- two-way partnership.
- Parent Sub program



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Getting Started

- Build off what you have, look for strengths and opportunities (SWOT)
- Start with Why
- Get men involved (staff or parent leaders)



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A Father Leader's Experience



Travis Jones
Parent/Substitute Teacher

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Communities



New Fatherhood Community on MyPeers!

- Register for an account:
<http://www.123contactform.com/form-2230355/My-Peers>
- Wait for MangoApps email message (2-3 days)
- Click the Login Link & create user profile
- Find the Fatherhood community and click “Join” on the landing page

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Thank You!



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Want to Take Your Family Engagement Practice to the Next Level?

Sign Up for Text4FamilyServices Today!

- This FREE text messaging service was designed for family services providers.
- It is also available in Spanish (español).

Just text **"PFCE"** to **22660** to sign up!



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OPEN CHAT



NETWORKING

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For more information, please contact us:
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