

network notes

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Community partners welcome MFFN to Plymouth, MN

With the willing energy and help of volunteers and supporters, The Minnesota Fathers & Families

Network hauled all the belongings of a successful nonprofit organization in boxes from its



capitol location in St. Paul, to Plymouth, MN. Finding a new home was one of MFFN's new executive director, Bob Gustafson's first assignments. After considering various Twin City locations and with board support, Gustafson signed a lease for a 230 square foot office at the new home of Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners (IOCP).

The office is on the mezzanine level of a newly renovated former grocery store at the corners of Highway 101 and County Road 6. "This new space provides MFFN a great opportunity to build awareness, form new partnerships and maximize resources. It puts MFFN in an environment with other community and family focused organiza-

tions," said Gustafson. "We look forward to being IOCP's neighbor."



IOCP is a nonprofit that serves about 1,400 families from eight west suburban communities each year. IOCP responds to emergency needs, supports families by moving them toward stability and positive

change, and engages volunteers and partners in service, leadership, and capacity building. In addition to a food shelf and resale operation, IOCP offers programs that address housing, employment, child care, transportation, and community connections.

"It's a win-win for IOCP and MFFN," said Gustafson. The site has plenty of free parking, is easy to find, and offers MFFN use of conference rooms and other supports as needs arise. All occupants will celebrate the grand opening later this month. Check the MFFN website for more information about the move and details about the open house. MFFN's new address and phone number are listed below.

Our mission

The Minnesota Fathers & Families Network enhances healthy father-child relationships by promoting initiatives that inform public policy and further develop the field of fatherhood practitioners statewide.

A voice for fatherhood

MFFN seeks to provide a voice for Minnesota's fatherhood and family services organizations. If you have a best practice or information you would like to share, please contact MFFN. *Network Notes* is published four times a year and is distributed online and in print.

Fatherhood Summit 2012 to celebrate a decade of learning

2012 Conference to focus on fathering across the lifespan—SAVE THE DATE—January 23-24, at the Kelly Inn, St. Cloud, MN

MFFN is excited to convene its tenth annual fatherhood summit as another excellent conference and growth opportunity. Dr. Robert Palkovitz, professor of Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Delaware, Dr. Rose Brewer, Professor of African-American Studies at the University of Minnesota, and Minnesota State Demographer Tom Gillaspay are confirmed keynote speakers.

New this year, MFFN will offer an optional pre-conference institute presented by Palkovitz and Dr. Glen Palm, former MFFN board member and St. Cloud State University Professor of Child and Family Studies. The three hour intensive institute, *Fathers in Families: Diverse Pathways for Reworking Fathering*, will weave together information

including ideas about:

- Reworking Fathering
- Things that Always Matter
- "Good Fathering" in Diverse Contexts
- Complex Family Systems
- Family Contexts and Diversity
- Needed Understandings of Child Development
- Misunderstandings about Discipline and Child Guidance
- Fathers' Effects on Children's Development
- Children's Effects on Men's Adult Development

Other keynote speakers and offerings to be announced. Registration for the event and exhibitors will open late fall online. Fees are expected to remain a value. Sponsorship and other exciting partnership opportunities still remain. Send an e-mail to info@mnfathers.org if you, your organization, or your employer is interested in helping.

Leading Minnesota's campaign for healthy fatherhood.

Minnesota Fathers & Families Network
1605 Highway 101 North
Suite C-700
Plymouth, MN 55447
info@mnfathers.org
www.mnfathers.org
763-473-7432

Recent funders

MFFN thanks the following entities for their support in 2010 and support for the Summit:

Bush Foundation
Greater St. Cloud Area Thrive
Greater Twin Cities United Way
Independent School Dist. 318, Grand Rapids Initiative Foundation
Mardag Foundation
McKnight Foundation
MN Dept. of Corrections
MN Dept. of Human Services, Children's Trust Fund
Northland Foundation
Northwest Minnesota Foundation
Order of Saint Benedict—Saint John's Univ.
Otto Bremer Foundation
Q Foundation
Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation
Southwest Initiative Foundation
United Way of Ottertail County
University of Minnesota School of Public Health, Center for Leadership Education in Maternal and Child Public Health
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Office of Child Support Enforcement
West Central Initiative

Contribute now

MFFN is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law. Donate online at www.mnfathers.org or e-mail info@mnfathers.org. Thank you.

Leadership Circles building awareness, encouraging father friendliness, and advancing toward goals

The five communities, Alexandria, Chisago County, Moorhead, Park Rapids, and Rochester, involved in the 2011 leadership circles have been busy this summer preparing for their third sessions this fall. MFFN consultant Pat Krauth has arranged for some tremendous speakers and has guided the participants to put their plans into action to achieve their leadership goals. Krauth commented that the leaders are doing a great job pulling their groups together for planning and working on the objectives they set for their specific sites.

Some of the sites have done some great marketing with local papers and program newsletters and are working on getting the fatherhood message to the masses in their communities while they pursue more opportunities. Some took advantage of the June Father's Day holiday to spread awareness about the community participation in the leadership circles and the issues fathers face. Krauth, with the help of the circles, is compiling resource lists for each community that will be available online and distributed in print form this year.

Some sites are making Fatherhood 101 presentations to local organizations and their staff and some are working to get the messages to their business communities and to engage them in this important work. Three of the sites are exploring the possibility of replicating the Goodwill/Easter Seals FATHER Project. There are exciting opportunities for some great partnerships to be established.

It is great to see all of these communities and the organizations involved get excited about leadership development and to build some great collaborative partnerships focused on fatherhood. There are many great ideas percolating up as each community builds lasting relationships with stakeholders and other community service providers. They are working together to improve father awareness, father friendliness, and father engagement in their communities and within their own organizations.

Contact Pat Krauth at Pkrauth@mnfathers.org for more information about the Leadership Circles.

Hue Man Partnership Project to address men's health crisis



South Minneapolis non-profits including Southside Community Health Services, J. Most and the Command Steppers, KMOJ-FM Radio, Mad Dads of Minneapolis (Men Against Destruction-Defending Against Drugs and Social-Disorder), Sabathani Community Center, Samuel Simmons Consulting, and UCare founded the Hue Man Partnership. They pledge to work together to address the health crisis among their diverse community's young, middle-aged men.

On August 20, 2011, these agencies with a focus on the health and wellness of men living in urban communities will convene its kickoff event at 10:00 a.m. at the Sabathani Community Center located at 310 East 38th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55409.

This is an opportunity to bring together community organizations and men, engaging them in health and wellness activities and educational topics.

If interested in being an exhibitor or for further info, contact Clarence Jones, Community Engagement Director, Southside Community Health Services (612) 821-2812.



WEIGHING IN

MFFN 2011 Fall Seminar Series

How father involvement fosters more active, healthier children.



Fall seminar series to look at father involvement in children's nutrition, activities, and overall health

Today's children are heavier and more sedentary than ever before. Screen time dominates children's biggest non-school activities, while many "family" meals are dictated by hurried decisions for super-sized portions at value prices. We can use fathers' influence as a key resource to reverse these trends and support healthy environments. Both residential and live-away fathers affect their children's physical and mental health.

In this day-long seminar presented by MFFN, the University of Minnesota Extension Program, the Emily Program, and the Minnesota Department of Health, family and health professionals learn strategies to help fathers use their place at the table to improve relationships with activity, food, eating, and self for their children, stepchildren and families. MFFN will present the workshop at 8 locations beginning in October.

Participants will leave the seminar with information and strategies to mobilize fathers to:

- Separate health and nutrition myths from facts
- Use their father influence to spark a child's interest in physical activity
- Understand the connection between "father hunger" and other family appetites for healthy relationships, nutrition, and enjoyment of the body.
- Address challenges and opportunities around breast feeding, food access, cultural traditions, visitation, communication and other issues influencing child health.
- Approach shopping and cooking as bonding activities, rather than "just" chores

- Manage screen time and respond to media standards about food, eating, and body
- Coach fathers to be effective coaches, guides, and mentors in sports and other organized activities.

Sites

- Little Falls, Oct. 6, Initiative Foundation
- Park Rapids, Oct. 7, St. Joseph's Area Health Services
- Rochester, Oct. 18, Community Service Center
- Minneapolis, Oct. 20, Lutheran Soc. Serv. Center
- Willmar, Oct. 27, Site to be determined
- St. Paul, Oct. 28, MDH Snelling Office Park, Red River Room
- Proctor, Oct. 31, P.A.C.C.
- Alexandria, Nov. 2, PrimeWest Health

Tentative agenda

- 8:30 – 9:00 Registration and coffee
- 9:00 – 10:15 Weighting for Health: Separating Myth from Fact
- 10:30 – 11:45 Father Hunger & Other Family Appetites
- 11:45 – 12:15 Lunch
- 12:15 – 1:15 Fathers, Physical Activity, and Body Experience
- 1:15 – 2:15 Fathers & Food: food access, cultural values, chores vs. bonding activity, visitation, lifelong nutrition
- 2:30 – 3:15 Community Panel
- 3:15 – 4:00 Screen Time, Dad Time, & Sedentary Kids
- 4:00 – 4:30 Conversation, Questions, Ideas, Adjournment

MFFN 2011 Board of Directors

- Rebecca Ahlstrand, Carlton County Human Services, Carlton
- Jennifer Barshack, Parents as Teachers, St. Paul
- Molly Crawford, MN Dept. of Human Services, St. Paul
- Gilbert Domally, Family Service Rochester, Rochester
- Karla Drown, Southwest Human Services, Marshall
- Jennifer Garbow, Univ. of MN Extension, Crookston
- DeeAnn Gieseke, Watonwan County Early Childhood Collaborative, St. James
- Michael Jerpbak, Crossroads College, Rochester
- Lowell Johnson, Brainerd Lakes Early Childhood Coalition, Brainerd
- Joe Kelly, The Emily Program, St. Paul
- Nathan Knutson, MN Dept. of Corrections, Moose Lake/Willow River
- Brad Kramer, Southwest Initiative Foundation, Hutchinson
- Lori Lofrano, MN Dept. of Corrections, St. Cloud
- Ellie McCann, Univ. of MN Extension, Moorhead
- Lynn Nesland, Otter Tail Wadena Community Action, New York Mills
- Larry Oberg, Otter Tail - Wadena Head Start, New York Mills
- Velura Peterson, St. Louis County Health & Human Services, Virginia
- Sam Simmons, Samuel Simmons Consulting, Minneapolis





Leading Minnesota's campaign for healthy fatherhood.

Minnesota Fathers & Families Network

1605 Highway 101 North, Suite 700-C
Plymouth, MN 55447

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MFFN Seeks Nominations

Board of Directors nominations open to interested individuals.

MFFN maintains a Board of Directors comprising 11-21 members. Members represent the seven regions throughout the state and include men and women from diverse racial/ethnic groups, occupational groups, and experience. Individuals may self nominate to join. Nominations accepted this fall for three-year terms beginning in January. More information is online at <http://www.mnfathers.org/board.html>.



Early Childhood Sector Analysis

MFFN's report, recommendations, to be released soon

MFFN will release its second sector analysis project which looks closely at father involvement in early childhood programs in Minnesota. More than 500 professionals and fathers responded to data collection surveys showing an understanding of the importance of father involvement in early childhood programs and revealing challenges to father involvement which MFFN may investigate further. The report will be available online and a limited number of copies will be printed by funds from the McKnight

Foundation. For more information, Contact MFFN's contractor, Tom Fitzpatrick at tfitz@hotmail.com.

Happenings

21st Festival of Fathers August 13 in Minneapolis

The annual festival, initiated in the early-1990s, seeks to strengthen the positive role and perception of men, specifically fathers, in their families and communities. The event celebrates the essential impact of fathers and father figures in the lives of children and families. More than 20 non-profit, faith-based and government agencies collaborate each year to sponsor the event. The free event will continue the tradition of food, families and fun. In an effort to expand the reach of family-oriented community resources, exhibit tables are set-up by many of Minnesota's agencies and social services organizations that provide services to fathers and families. All activities and lunch are provided at no cost to participants. Join others on Saturday, August 13, from 12:00 - 4:00 pm at North Commons Park, 1801 James Ave. North., Minneapolis. More details are online: www.mnfathers.org/festival.html

