

Getting the Picture:

A Framework for Working Together to serve Women, Men and Families in Low-Income Communities

Prepared by
Jacquelyn L. Boggess
Center for Family Policy and Practice
boggess@cffpp.org
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1994

- “The role of men in the lives of children” was the topic of Al and Tipper Gore’s annual “family re-union.”
- National debut of the National Fatherhood Initiative—Wade Horn as Executive Director

June 1995-Nurturing Fatherhood

- President Clinton issued a memorandum to the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on supporting the role of fathers in families. In that memorandum, the President asked for a review of agency activities in four areas. These areas were:
- Ensure, where appropriate, and consistent with program objectives, that programs seek to engage and meaningfully include fathers.
- Proactively modify those programs that were designed to serve primarily mothers and children, where appropriate and consistent with program objectives, to explicitly include fathers and strengthen their involvement with their children.
- Include evidence of father involvement and participation, where appropriate, in measuring the success of programs.
- Incorporate fathers, where appropriate, in government-initiated research regarding children and their families.

1995

- Parent's Fair Share Demonstration Project (1994-1996)
- Ford/Mott/Casey Foundations' Strengthening Fragile Families Initiative

1996

- “End of welfare as we know it” law signed by Clinton.” which ended entitlement and strengthen the child support laws and the power of child support enforcement agencies to sanction non-payers.
- David Blankenhorn’s “Fatherless America” was published

October 1997

- Promise Keepers' “*Stand in the Gap: A Sacred Assembly of Men*” at the national mall in Washington, D.C.

1998 Father's Count Act

- July 23-Hearing of the Subcommittee on Human Resources—Fatherhood and Welfare Reform
- On March 3, 1998, Chairman Shaw, along with several other Members of the Subcommittee, introduced H.R. 3314, the "Fathers Count Act of 1998."
- Purpose of the legislation: to prevent this unfortunate cycle of children being reared in fatherless families by supporting projects that help fathers meet their responsibilities as marital husbands, parents, and providers. The bill is aimed at promoting marriage among parents, helping poor and low-income fathers establish positive relationships with their children and the children's mothers, promoting responsible parenting, and increasing family income.

Gore 2000 presidential campaign

- in what he called the "next generation of welfare reform" Gore called for responsible Fatherhood.
- Partners for Fragile Families Program (Ford Foundation, OCSE/HHS)

2005

- Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 includes competitive grants for “Responsible Fatherhood Programs.”

2006

- The Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Families Act of 2006 (Introduced by Senator Bayh for himself and Senator Obama)

Getting the Picture



Keep in Mind

- In 1998, about 50% of low-income noncustodial parents [nationally] had reported earnings that were below the poverty level.
- 60% of low-income, noncustodial fathers do not pay child support primarily because they have a limited ability to pay. (Office of the Inspector General 2000)

Services for Low-income Men

- Many low-income men are in need of services that are inaccessible to them or for which they are ineligible.
- Fatherhood programs can be designed to provide these services, and to respond to general and specific needs of fathers and their families.

What are we really looking at?

- Who is a part of the family?
- Who will benefit from the services provided
- How will looking at the whole picture benefit the children?
the parents?



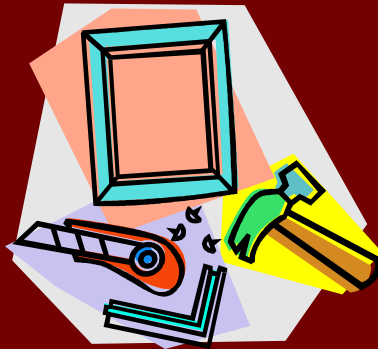
Three reasons fathers may not “show up” in the family picture

- He is “hiding in plain sight.”
- He has been involuntarily removed
- He is *apparently* uninterested and uninvolved

Attempts to deal with the incomplete picture

- **Proceed without him in the picture**--Sever ties with father, and support and encourage a restructuring of the family without him (AFCD model)
- **Expand the picture gallery**— Support and encourage father involvement and co-parenting in separate households (“Father-Friendly” service model)
- **Make a Family Portrait**—Support and encourage marriage (Marriage promotion model)

Framing the Picture-Services for Low-Income Fathers and Families



Framing the Picture

- Social services for fathers
- Attention to family violence
- Awareness of differences
- Fatherhood program partners
- Domestic violence advocate partners
- Cultural competence and sensitivity in service provision

Principles

- There are significant barriers to the ability of low-income men (particularly men of color) to be productive members of their families and communities.
- Programs must articulate and support the values of and encouraging child-well being, supporting responsible father involvement, providing social services for low-income men and women, ending intimate partner violence and supporting healthy family relationships.

Principles

- Cultural competency and cultural appropriateness are vital elements of all social services programs
- The role of men in the families is variously defined within various social, cultural, socio-economic and ethnic communities