Leading Minnesota’s campaign for healthy fatherhood.
Early in 2008, the Minnesota Fathers & Families Network reached its five-year anniversary. As we pass this milestone, it is an appropriate time to review our achievements, assess our strengths, and look toward our future.

In early 2003, the Network leadership was envisioning the development of a one-stop shop for professionals interested in research and training related to healthy fatherhood. The Network was preparing to meld a united fatherhood field from a disparate group of family service workers, social service employees, educators, and fatherhood advocates. Throughout these early years, the Network has been led mutually by a dedicated board, a committed group of fatherhood advocates, and a hard-working staff.

The Network has achieved success through relationship-building. We can all be proud of MFFN’s role as a credible convener of the diverse members of the fatherhood field and allied professionals. We can all be proud that MFFN is called-on with increasing frequency to speak on issues of fatherhood to the media, conference attendees, and policy makers. Together, we have built a strong reputation with limited human and financial resources.

The Network has achieved success through quality products. We can all be proud of MFFN’s resource-packed website, our educational series of fatherhood handouts, our top-notch annual conference, our collaboration-driven annual series of training workshops, the report, “Do we count fathers in Minnesota?” and the action plan, “Fathers to the Forefront.” Together, these resources offer Minnesotans easy access to the message that fathers matter for all children.

The Network has achieved success through a commitment to deeply held values. We can all be proud of MFFN’s efforts to represent a diverse professional field that, in many ways, resists an easy union. MFFN has stayed true to its mission to represent diversity in terms of race/ethnicity, geography, gender, and political ideology. At the same time, we have maintained our focus on healthy fathers and children as our primary beneficiaries. Together, we are promoting a level of discourse that bridges the divide that had often kept fathers isolated from discussions about families, children, and communities.

As the Network passes its fifth anniversary, we must continue to build on these successes of our early years. At the same time, we must commit to building beyond our early successes. MFFN must incrementally increase the number of staff, the level of leadership, and the professionalism of our image. MFFN needs to consistently develop an executable policy agenda, a concrete strategy to support programs through technical assistance/training, a bold plan for media relations, and a diversified fundraising plan. Through changes such as these, MFFN will need to clearly document how our work is positively impacting the lives of children, families, and communities. A vision of “healthy fathers for healthy children” must permeate our work.

MFFN is no longer a new organization. We have achieved important successes and we have developed a solid foundation. Our customers (professionals) and our beneficiaries (fathers, children, families, and communities) are waiting to see what’s next. We’re energized and look forward to working with you over the next five years, and beyond.

Paul Masiarchin, Executive Director

Jon Harper, President of the Board

Mission and Vision

Throughout 2007, the Minnesota Fathers & Families Network engaged in a long-term Strategic Planning Process with input from our members, strategic partners, board of directors, and staff.

The Strategic Planning Process resulted in a recommitment to the Network’s focus on systems change, community building, and serving fatherhood and family service professionals.

Our Mission: MFFN enhances healthy father-child relationships by promoting initiatives that inform public policy and further develop the field of fatherhood practitioners statewide.

Our Vision:
What we value and believe at the Minnesota Fathers & Families Network:

1. MFFN embraces fathers, children, and the father-child relationship as the key beneficiaries of our work.

2. MFFN values fathers as an essential resource for building healthy families and for encouraging child growth and development.

3. MFFN believes fathers and mothers both have primary responsibility for supporting, nurturing and guiding their children’s learning and development.

4. MFFN believes fathers and mothers merit equal opportunities to enhance and develop their capacity as responsible, engaged parents.

5. MFFN recognizes diversity among Minnesotans and the different cultural norms regarding family structure and family formation.

6. MFFN embraces communities without regard to race, ability, color, creed, religion, gender, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

7. MFFN values education as a means to counteract negative stereotypes and misconceptions about fatherhood.

8. MFFN believes that family service practitioners, educators, fatherhood advocates, and allied fields of professionals can enhance services to fathers and families through collaboration, training, and education.

9. MFFN encourages evidence based programming for fathers and families.

10. MFFN values the wisdom of the practitioner to carry out programming for fathers.

11. MFFN believes that, in order for children and families to thrive, the whole community – families, individuals, nonprofits, public systems, policy makers, the private sector, and funders – needs to work in partnership.

12. MFFN convenes a statewide nonpartisan membership network in order to support all Minnesota’s fathers and families.
MFFN’s fifth annual Fall Fatherhood Seminar Series, titled “Counting and Serving Never Married Families”, was sponsored in collaboration with University of Minn. Extension and the Minn. Initiative Funds. The 8 workshops across Minnesota attracted 290 total attendees. The day-long training was accompanied by a child abuse prevention meeting, sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota and the Children’s Trust Fund.

MFFN presented workshops or exhibit tables at over twenty professional conferences and training events sponsored by statewide and national associations, including:

- White House Conference on Faith and Community Service
- Family Law for the Judiciary: statewide judge’s conference
- National Head Start Association training conference
- Minn. Early Childhood Administrators conference
- Survivors for Violence Prevention national conference

Throughout 2007, MFFN and the McKnight Foundation co-convened a team of 50 professionals to write a 5-year statewide action plan for fatherhood, “Fathers to the Forefront”; the 25-page report was released in July 2007. In 2007, MFFN hosted its 4th annual winter conference, the Minnesota Fatherhood Summit, for over 200 family service practitioners from across the Upper Midwest. The two-day conference in St. Cloud, Minn., featured keynote presentations by former Minnesota Governor Al Quie; Adrienne Burgess from FathersDirect in London, England; and Tom Klaus from Advocates for Youth in Washington, DC.

Over 24,000 unique visitors accessed www.mnfathers.org in 2007. The website has been cited by various groups nationally as one of the best online resources for fatherhood professionals.

MFFN disseminated recurring fatherhood resources: 4 quarterly newsletters, 3 resource handouts on topics of healthy fatherhood, and monthly e-mail updates to over 2,000 practitioners.

MFFN worked with the media resulting in over 300 individual radio spots, two front-page stories in the Star Tribune, two front-page stories of local sections of the Star Tribune and Pioneer Press, coverage in the national Newsweek magazine, and local television coverage.

In 2007, MFFN had 330 members, representing family services professionals, educators, fatherhood advocates, and others from across the state. Members receive quarterly newsletters, monthly email updates, voting privileges, and other benefits.

In 2007, MFFN educated public policy decision makers about the importance of healthy fatherhood for the benefit of families, children, and communities. MFFN staff participated on 4 state government committees for policy recommendations.

MFFN co-chaired the 17th Minnesota Festival for Fathers and Families, attracting over 1,100 attendees. This is an excellent example of local collaboration with 25 sponsoring community agencies.

MFFN garnered Governor Tim Pawlenty’s support for the “Minn. Fatherhood Leadership Initiative” which proposed funding for statewide fatherhood programs (the budget proposal did not receive legislative approval).

In January 2007, MFFN presented six Excellence in Fatherhood Awards to Advocate of the Year—Outstanding Agency: Minn. Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting, St. Paul; Advocate of the Year—Outstanding Individual: Jeffrey Tibbetts, Fond du Lac Social Services, Cloquet; Program of the Year: Young Dads Program, Employment Action Center, Minneapolis/St. Paul; Policy-maker of the Year: Minn. Senator Thomas M. Neuville, Northfield; Father of the Year: Dwaine Simms, Twin Cities RISE!, Minneapolis; Individual of the Year: Melissa Froehle, Central Minn. Legal Services/FATHER Project, Minneapolis.

In 2007, MFFN received the Friend of the Family Award from the Minn. Council on Family Relations (pictured above).
MFFN 2007 Financial Report

Revenues
- Corporate/Foundation Grants 69.8%
- In-Kind 12.7%
- Program Revenue 8.6%
- Donations, Interest, Membership 5.6%
- Government 3.3%
- Fundraising 4.5%

Expenses
- Administration 26.5%
- Program Services 69.0%
- Fundraising 4.5%

Financial Report

Revenues for Fiscal Year 2007
- Foundation/Corporate Grants .................. 102,741
- Government .......................... 5,000
- Membership and Donations .. 5,022
- Interest ................................ 3,163
- Program Fees .......................... 12,610
- In-Kind Revenue .................. 18,630
- TOTAL .................................. 147,166

Expenses for Fiscal Year 2007
- Program Services .............. 87,124
- Administration* .............. 33,451
- Fundraising...................... 5,628
- In-Kind Expenses ........... 18,630
- TOTAL ......................... 144,833

* 2007 included significant expenses for a year-long Strategic Planning process, as highlighted on page 3 and in various other sections of this report.

2007 Funders and In-Kind Donors

2007 Funders: The following donors provided financial support to the Minnesota Fathers & Families Network for 2007.
- Banta Publishing
- Bush Foundation
- Goodwill / Easter Seals
- Grotto Foundation
- Initiative Foundation, serving central Minnesota
- International Dairy Queen, Inc.
- McKnight Foundation
- Minn. Department of Human Services, Children’s Trust Fund
- Northland Foundation
- Otto Bremer Foundation
- Saint Paul Foundation
- Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation
- Southside Community Health Services
- Southwest Initiative Foundation
- MFFN’s members (see pp. 10-11)

2007 In-Kind Donor Organizations: The following organizations supported MFFN’s work through major in-kind support.
- Carlton County
- Central Minnesota Legal Services
- Dads Make a Difference
- Goodwill / Easter Seals
- Initiative Foundation
- McKnight Foundation
- Minn. Dept. of Human Services
- Minn. Fathers’ Adoption Registry
- Minn. Org. on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting
- Northland Foundation
- Northwest Minnesota Foundation
- Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota
- Saint Cloud State University
- Saint John’s University
- Southern Minn. Initiative Foundation
- Southwest Initiative Foundation
- University of Minnesota Extension
- West Central Initiative

MFFN Strategic Goals: 2008—2010

Goal One: Systems and Programs
Enhance the quality of practice, programs, organizations and systems in areas of father-friendliness, gender-responsiveness, and father-inclusiveness.

Goal Two: Public Policy
Identify and promote policy changes that strengthen fathers and families.

Goal Three: Infrastructure and Outreach
Maintain and further develop a statewide membership organization.

Are you interested in helping us to reach our goals? Become a member today by visiting online www.mnfathers.org/members.html or call us at (651) 222-7432.
Members include attendees of the Minnesota Fatherhood Summit and individual payments received through March 2008.
Our Mission:
MFFN enhances healthy father-child relationships by promoting initiatives that inform public policy and further develop the field of fatherhood practitioners statewide.

Minnesota Fathers & Families Network
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