April 2013 Newsletter

Happy Spring!

March was a month for looking ahead. We have started our strategic planning process for the next three years and should have that completed by the end of this month.

The highlight of this last month was attending the Annual National Fathers and Families Conference hosted by the Fathers and Families Coalition of America. The CEO, James Rodriguez, was ecstatic to have someone representing from the state of Minnesota. He has been trying to increase the coalition and give it a larger voice by including as many other organizations.

The highlights of the conference were definitely the networking and hearing what is going on in other states. There was a roundtable specifically designed to share National Policy and Networking. There are a lot of states moving toward changing the access and visitation to 50 percent. Like Minnesota, there is a lot of disagreement about that being the best approach. Maryland is very close to getting having this legislation sent to their. We were also given an opportunity to share with others in our various regions. It was interesting to find out what else is going on especially in states like Wisconsin and Illinois. It was also frustrating to see that Minnesota is still the only state that has a Network, which tries to place the various programs around the state under one roof.

The other theme that played out was the idea of networking and collaboration. We need to establish relationships with organizations that have similar missions, missions that focus on the strength of the family more than its parts. Being creative is finding those partners that may not have been considered before, but always looking for similarities in mission. MFFN would have a more similar mission to an organization that is focused on family and less similar to those just focused on fathers.

It was interesting to hear about other states using a “Family Focused Solutions for Child Support Case Management” and the ways in which they are putting researched based methods to use to present that. In California, SCORE is the method that they are using, which takes 9 separate initiatives and uses that in their model for case management examples being: Alternative Enforcement, Debt Compromise, and Employment Assistance.

There was a focus on marriage, trauma, establishing fathering courts, co-parenting and capacity building. There are some new angles that are coming out as well with same sex parents and working with returning soldiers.

Overall it was a wonderful opportunity, and I look forward to being more involved with the National Coalition in the future. I see that Minnesota is ahead of many other states on Child Support, and Network Building. I hope to share that with others.

MFFN Membership
The Minnesota Fathers & Families Network is dedicated to supporting effective programs to enhance the responsible involvement of fathers in the lives of children, families and the community. As a professional development and networking organization, MFFN will help you
to strengthen your work, learn from others around the state, and build the field of fatherhood and family services practitioners. Link to the membership page on our website for more information or to become a member:

**Membership Levels**

**Friend of Fathers**
Join us at no charge to be a part of our listserv and receive e-newsletters, announcements or updates. (Training discounts offered with paid memberships). Existing and previous memberships will become a “Friend of Fathers status in 2013.

**Fatherhood Ally:** Individual paid membership
$50 and above (includes toolkit, annual meeting invitation, voting privileges, and discount to 2014 Annual Summit)

**Fatherhood Advocate:** Individual paid membership
$100 and above (includes toolkit, annual meeting invitation, voting privileges, and discount to 2014 Annual Summit and other MFFN offered trainings)

**Organizational Fatherhood Advocate:** Organizational paid membership
$200 (includes one toolkit, annual meeting invitation, voting privileges for up to 5 staff members and discount to 2014 Annual Summit and other MFFN offered trainings for up to 5 staff members).

With a paid membership, receive the new MFFN toolkit pictured below.

| ![MFFN Toolkit](image.png) |

**Conferences or Events of Interest:**

**Teenwise's Annual Conference**
Teenwise is holding its annual conference May 2-3, 2013 at the Earle Brown Heritage Center. Early registration ends April 19th. Link to their website: [http://teenwisemn.org/training/conference.html](http://teenwisemn.org/training/conference.html)

**MCFR Conference**
"Improving the Future for Families: Building Resilience and Managing Stress" and features Dr. Amit Sood, Director of Research and Practice at the Mayo Clinic Complementary and Integrative Medicine Program. The conference is being held May 3, 2013 at the Wellstone Center, St. Paul. Link to the website for additional information [http://www.mcfr.net/conferences.htm](http://www.mcfr.net/conferences.htm)
**Nurturing Fathers: Teaching Men Nurturing Skills**
Mark Perlman, a nationally recognized parenting educator and facilitator of fathering programs will be speaking in Park Rapids on May 17th. Additionally Citizen Fathers from Minneapolis will present. For more information on Mark Perlman: [http://www.nurturingfathers.com](http://www.nurturingfathers.com). More information and the agenda for the day: [Mark Perlman training.doc](Mark_Perlman_training.doc)
RSVP to Cleo Hartung at 218-237-5475

**Resources of Interest**

**PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)** symptoms are associated with a higher risk of divorce. Therefore, family support agencies should enhance their services for returning soldiers that screen positive for PTSD, according to a recent report titled: "Home Front, Post-Deployment Mental Health and Divorces." It was prepared for the Department of Defense by the RAND Center for Military Health Policy Research.

**Men's Therapy Group - Catholic Charities**
Steven Roecklein, Men's Group Therapist, is holding a Men's Therapy Group through Catholic Charities. This therapy group for men will deal with:
- Issues of anxiety (e.g., feelings of stress, worry, insecurity, tension, anger, fear and guilt)
- Problems of depression (e.g., low motivation, lack of interest in daily activities, loss of sleep and appetite, tiredness, hopelessness, agitation, loneliness and self-defeat thinking.
More information contact Steven Roecklein at 612-388-3588.

**Circle of Parents - Sharing Ideas. Sharing Support**
Men's breakout group meets 2 times per month in St. Cloud.

Minnesota Fathers & Families Network would like to help promote your event or conference by sending it in our monthly e-newsletter. Send information to mailto:info@mnfathers.org. We will make every effort to include the information and apologize in advance if your event or conference is missed.

**MFFN Change of Address:**

Minnesota Fathers & Families Network
3109 West 50th Street #134
Minneapolis, MN 55410-2102


Send us your photos and/or stories of you or someone you know being a father to Sarah Cheesman mailto:scheesman@mnfathers.org. We would love to put those on our website. If you send something to us, you are authorizing us to share it with our members or put it on our