Healthy Parenting in the 21st Century: Unique Challenges of Fathers

12th Annual Minnesota Fatherhood & Family Services Summit

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Monday & Tuesday Feb 2-3, 2015
Best Western Plus Kelly Inn, Saint Cloud, MN

Monday, February 2, 2015

7:00am - 8:00am
Breakfast

8:15am – 9:15am Welcome and Remarks

Strong Families with Strong Fathers Equals Strong Communities

Guy Bowling, Goodwill-Easter Seals MN FATHER Project

Guy will reflect on his personal experience, as a child growing up in a fatherless household, becoming a teen, single father and as the manager of a nationally recognized responsible fatherhood program, which serves low-income, non-custodial fathers of diverse cultural backgrounds. He will share insight as a practitioner with over 20 years of expertise in providing critical services to assist fathers in their efforts to become healthy, active and responsible citizens.
9:15am – 10:30am Keynote and Panel Presentation

Evaluating fatherhood programs: Benefits, Challenges, and Getting Started

Jay Fagan, PhD, Temple University, School of Social Work

This presentation will focus on the benefits and challenges of evaluation fatherhood programs. Several practitioners from Minnesota fatherhood programs will share their experiences with conducting evaluations of their programs. Jay will also discuss how to start or how to grow your evaluation activities. The objective of this presentation is for practitioners to plan next steps for evaluating their programs.

Panel members: Guy Bowling, Manager, FATHER Project, Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota and Glen Palm, PhD, Professor Emeritus in Child and Family Studies at St. Cloud State University

10:30am - 11:00am
Break, Exhibits, Networking

11:00am – Noon – General Session

Strategic Fathering: Fathering with the End in Mind

Gil Domally, Olmsted County Community Services and Rochester Area Fatherhood Network

The words “strategy or strategic” are words commonly used in corporate, military, sports, and other outcome focused settings. In these settings the words present the idea that there are thoughts, behaviors, and actions that increase the likelihood of achieving specific outcomes. Supporting 21st century fathers in their endeavors to navigate the unique challenges they face in route to promoting positive outcomes for their children is no different. This presentation will provide an opportunity to explore father engagement and fathering through a strategic lens.
Noon - 1:00pm
Lunch & Panel Presentation

The Power of Two: Putting the Pieces Together....Together Engaging Both Parents in Parenting

As fatherhood practitioners, we know that so much more can get accomplished when the two parents work together. The panel members will discuss how we can work with both the mother and the father to each bring a piece of this puzzle to the co-parenting table. There is so much more that can get accomplished when the two parents work together, and this discussion will offer tips to helping each parent understand that co-parenting is for the good of the children.

Panel members: Karla Decker Sorby RN PHN, NW MN & Tribal Nurse Consultant, MN Department of Health Family Home Visiting; Chrystal S. Wilkie, Family and Community Partnership Advisor for Minnesota Valley Action Council Inc.’s Head Start program; Jessica Croatt Niemi MSSW LICSW IMH-E®(IV), Mental Health Professional and Infant Mental Health Mentor; and AJ Dombeck, MFFN Board Vice Chair, Facilitator

1:00pm – 2:30pm
Breakout Sessions – 4 Options

A. The New Fatherhood: Cultural Contexts and Clinical Challenges
   Kirsten Lind Seal PhD, LAMFT, Lind Seal Counseling and Consultation, St. Mary’s University of MN
   The role of fathers in society has been changing over the last several decades. What sorts of struggles do fathers from different cultures face when working with clinicians and others who serve families? How can this knowledge help us better support fathers in families? And how do we define “culture?” A case study format will be used in order to describe and identify cultural issues that can come up with fathers who are struggling with the vast difference in cultural mores between US and other cultures. Several different cultural lenses will be utilized in order to broaden perspectives of fatherhood.

B. Co-Parenting: When the Focus is No Longer on the Child
   Deanna Scherr, MSW, Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker
   Parental Alienation is an old problem with little awareness. It is present in 80% in divorce cases that involve children. Severe cases are usually present in high conflict divorces. This class will explore how to recognize it, how it differs from estrangement, what to do when you’re the targeted parent and the long term effects on children. The hope is to bring awareness to our community, parents, teachers, legal professionals and other professionals.
C. How to Be a Great Father! . . . Post Incarceration

*Mr. Brian C. Wilson, Jr. MSW, Doctoral Candidate 2017, Life Track, Inc.*

Mr. Wilson will explain his experience in young adult fatherhood, incarceration, probation and parole, education, and support systems. The format includes time for questions and answers about his life after serving prison time in Illinois for drugs. Focus topics include the importance of education, how child support agencies work, how probation and parole officers work, and behavior modeling. Mr. Wilson has dedicated his life to education, social justice and being a great father. This session will provide hope for anyone trying to better their life, no matter their point of origin.

D. The State Child Support Program and the Establishment of Paternity

*Geneva Finn, JD Policy & Planning, Staff Attorney and Lindsay Daraitis, JD, Performance and Reporting, Child Support Program Administrator, DHS-Child Support Division*

The role of the state in establishing paternity is often confusing. Come learn about the state’s role in the establishment of paternity, the state’s objectives in establishing paternity, the rights and obligations of adjudicated fathers, and get a quick overview of paternity in the IV-D process.

2:30pm - 3:00pm

Break, Exhibits, Networking

3:00pm – 4:30pm

Breakout Sessions – 4 Options

A. Healthy Parenting: Nurturing Fathers through Unique Challenges

*Joe Johnson, Master trainer/consultant for the NFP/case manager/parent educator Father Project Hubbard County, licensed home visitor and community health worker, CHI St. Josephs Health*

During this informative session, you will learn about some of the biggest challenges that fathers face, and how the nurturing father’s curriculum can be used as a tool in your agency to help fathers overcome these challenges. Topics in the NFP program include the roots of fathering, fathering without fear and violence, the world of feelings and male nurturance, healing the father wound, and many more. Come and hear more about this evidence based program, listen to testimonial from fathers who have grown and become not just good dads, but the world’s greatest dads. Information will also be provided on how to bring NFP to your organization. A father and his son will attend to share not only the impact of the NFP but also the change a son has seen from his father.

B. Father’s Impact on Saving Babies: Reducing the Infant Mortality Rate

*Joyce Dickerson West, MSW and William Scott, MA, Parents as Teachers National Center, MO*

The United States has one of the worst infant mortality rates among industrialized countries. This interactive session will; increase awareness of infant mortality rate in Minnesota, share strategies based on best practices and the most recent research around the impact of fathers in reducing infant mortality risk factors of preterm births and low birth rates among our most vulnerable populations.
C. Protection and Enforcement of Parenting Time Rights

Walter Burk, Staff Attorney, Central Minnesota Legal Services

Obtaining court-ordered parenting time rights often does not end the struggle to see one’s children. Protection and enforcement of access to one’s children begins with effectively drafting one’s motion and proposed order for custody and parenting time. Once an order is issued, consistent practices can help to minimize interruptions of parenting time rights. If interruptions still occur, involving law enforcement and social service organizations can help restore parenting time. If necessary, a return to court can also alleviate continued interference with parenting time. Resources for enforcement of custody and parenting time rights will also be presented.

D. Supervised Parenting Time: What is it? Answers from the Alex and Brandon Child Safety Center, Brainerd

Vicki Flor and Linnea Ames, Mid-Minnesota Women’s Center, Inc., Alex and Brandon Child Safety Center, Brainerd

Supervised Parenting Time is About the Child. Parents, social service workers, GALs, and others will learn about options for parenting time, including supervised parenting time. Parents involved in disputes often face uncertainty about safe parenting time or possibly face no parenting time. Supervised parenting time is a good option for parents to alleviate concerns while providing child-oriented, safe, and secure parenting time. Supervised parenting time offers a way for the non-custodial parent to spend quality parenting time with the child when there is no contact between parents or re-establish parent-child bonds.

4:30pm - 6:30pm
Dinner on Your Own

8:00pm
Hospitality & Informal Networking
Husky Room – 2nd Floor
All Welcome
Tuesday, February 3, 2015

7:00am - 8:00am
Breakfast

8:15am – 9:00am Welcome and Keynote

Finding the Strengths in our Fathers and Families
J. Michael Hall, M.Ed.,
Strong Fathers – Strong Families, LLC.

The history of fatherhood has been one that has focused on FatherLESSness and deficit based programs. Even though we have seen some successful programs, we are still missing the mark. By focusing on fatherFULLness and strength based programs not only can we better strengthen and sustain fathers we can also attract more fathers into our programs. By making some small changes in our efforts we can make some huge changes in our outcomes.

9:15am-10:45am Tuesday February 3rd Breakout Sessions

A. African American Historical Trauma: Beyond the Baby Daddy
   Samuel Simmons, Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor, Samuel Simmons Consulting
   This presentation will provide an opportunity for professionals to explore the link between historical and current trauma experiences, beliefs, and behaviors that act as barriers to healthy African American father involvement. It will examine and discuss cultural competent trauma informed and community based best practices focused on father involvement that leads to a healthier future for our children.

B. Living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: A Father’s Perspective
   Ruth A. Richardson, Director of Programs, Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS) and Marc Laurie, MOFAS Family Resource Coordinator & Law Enforcement Officer
   Annually, in Minnesota an estimated 6,000 children are born with prenatal alcohol exposure. Prenatal exposure to alcohol may cause permanent brain damage and may result in learning and behavioral challenges. This presentation will provide a brief overview of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and the effects of prenatal alcohol exposure to provide more understanding of this often-misunderstood disability. We will also explore the journey of a father who gained greater understanding of his son’s strengths and challenges, and how understanding the impact of prenatal alcohol exposure helped his family redefine expectations.
C. Boisterous Boys (and Girls)
Mike Huber, MAEd, Seward Childcare Center
Spinning, grabbing, rough-housing, crashing. Why can't boys just play nicely? They are telling us that they need vigorous physical play to develop fully. All children have these needs. They also need supportive adults to help them experience big body play. Learn the benefits of this type of play and strategies for keeping things safe and fun.

D. Filling the Void: Providing Support Services for New Dads
Timothy Neumann, MFT, MA (in progress), Adler Graduate School and Michael Obsatz PhD, Professor Emeritus, Macalester College
Over the last fifty years, support services for women around the areas of pregnancy, birthing, nursing, and postpartum time have increased greatly. There are programs, support networks, and a great deal of information available to pregnant women and moms of newborns. Similar services for new Dads are less common. This workshop examines what currently exists for Dads as far as information, support, and counseling regarding pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, and the post-partum period. We will also explore ideas about the services that could be provided for new Dads, and why new Dads' involvement with their partners and children would be greatly improved if they were more included in the process.

E. Parents Forever: Supporting Fathers and Families Experiencing Separation or Divorce
Kjersti Olson Asst. Extension Professor, PhD Candidate, UMN Extension, Center for Family Development and Ellie McCann Extension Educator, UMN Extension Clay County
Parents Forever is a divorce education program that has been used throughout Minnesota and the U.S. for almost twenty years. This session will summarize the 2014 curriculum revision, share information on its on-line and in-person formats, and highlight co-parenting evaluation outcomes based on participation in the program. The evaluation outcomes will include information from qualitative and quantitative methods and provide insights into Parents Forever effects on fathers and families.

10:45am - 11:15am
Break, Exhibits, Networking
11:15am – 12:45pm Keynote and Minnesota Panel Presentation

The Role of State Government in Fatherhood
Steve Killpack, Community Endeavors Foundation, Healthy Fathering Collaborative

This presentation will explore federal and state government fatherhood initiatives over the past two decades. Fatherhood Initiative structures, policies and activities will be discussed, with particular attention to the role of partisan perspectives in the evolution of government’s role in fatherhood. The presentation will provide an in-depth overview of the history and activities of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, offering examples and lessons from Ohio that might guide the evolution of a state commission or task force in Minnesota.

Introduction to the Fatherhood Policy Working Group by Lowell Johnson. Panel members: Lori Lofrano, Child Support Liaison, MN Department of Corrections; Guy Bowling, Manager, FATHER Project, Goodwill-Easter Seals MN; Joe Johnson, Master trainer/consultant for the NFP/case manager/parent educator Father Project Hubbard Co, licensed home visitor and community health worker, CHI St. Josephs Health, Shaneen Moore, Deputy Director, Child Support Division, MN Department of Human Services; and Glen Palm, PhD, Professor Emeritus in Child and Family Studies at St. Cloud State University and MFFN Board member, moderator.

1:00pm - 2:00pm
Lunch & Excellence in Fatherhood Awards

2:00pm Conference Ends
Drive Home Safely
General Session & Keynote Presenter Bios

Guy Bowling is a parent educator, trainer, facilitator, consultant and community organizer. He is the Program Manager for the FATHER Project, a program of Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota. He is the proud father of two children Averi Diana 14, and David Edward 30. He is the grandfather of Gabriella Rae 18 months. Mr. Bowling has been a leader in the fatherhood field for 19 years with a special focus on working with low-income, non-custodial, unmarried fathers and their families in culturally specific and multi-cultural communities. His awards include the Ronald F. Johnson award, The Spirit of Fatherhood award and the Outstanding Individual award at the 2014 MFFN Summit. He has been the Manager of the FATHER Project since 2006. In that role, he oversaw the successful implementation of a five-year $2.5 million grant project funded through the federal Department of Health and Human Services, through the Office of Family Assistance (OFA). He remains in that role as the FATHER Project has received a one-year, $1.7 million grant award from OFA to expand its proven service model across Minnesota. The FATHER Project is currently one of six programs selected from across the country that is part of a rigorous random assignment evaluation conducted by Mathematica Policy Research.

Gil Domally is a husband and father of six children whose ages range from 22-11. He is a former Dads’ Program Coordinator, past MFFN board member, founding member and 2012 chair of the Rochester Area Fatherhood Network. His understanding regarding the unique challenges that fathers face is informed by his faith, experiences being fathered and being a father, work as a youth counselor, correctional worker, and child welfare case manager. Gil holds a Bachelor of Science from Liberty University and is a graduate of Concordia University’s Master of Arts in Family Life Education.

Jay Fagan, Ph.D is the Co-Director of the Fatherhood Research & Practice Network and Professor of Social Work, Temple University. Jay’s research focuses on interventions with at-risk fathers (nonresident, Head Start, adolescent fathers), effects of nonresident fathers on young children, parent education and co-parenting interventions for fathers, fathers and early childhood programs and fathering in the context of family processes. He is currently conducting studies on nonresidential fathers with children in foster care and the effects of mother-father co-parenting relationships on at-risk fathers’ involvement with children. He is the publisher of the textbook, Fathers and Early Childhood Programs (Delmar Publishing, 2004), with Dr. Glen Palm and, Clinical and Educational Interventions with Fathers (Haworth Press, 2001), with Dr. Alan J. Hawkins. Jay has published more than 60 research papers on responsible fatherhood in peer-reviewed journals and served as the founding editor of the journal, Fathering. Education: B.A., Trinity College, M.S.W., University of Pennsylvania, Ph.D., Columbia University. Publications: Fathers and Early Childhood Programs (2004), Clinical and Educational Interventions with Fathers (2001).

J. Michael Hall is the founder and president of Strong Fathers – Strong Families, LLC. He is the father of two sons in college and the husband to a beautiful middle school reading teacher. Mr.
Hall has been a special education teacher, a teacher of the gifted and talented, and an intermediate and middle school principal. As an educator, speaker and founder of Strong Fathers-Strong Families, he has presented to more than 140,000 fathers and parents at local schools, Head Starts, and regional and national conferences. J. Michael has worked with over 200 schools in Texas and in over 36 states with Head Start programs. He is a contributing author to the book on fathering entitled Why Fathers Count, and is considered one of the country’s foremost experts on working with fathers in schools and Head Starts. For his pioneering work over the past twelve years in the fatherhood field around the nation, he was recently honored as a 2012 White House Champion of Change.

Steve Killpack is the executive director of the Community Endeavors Foundation in Cleveland, Ohio. The Foundation’s primary mission is to develop and promote social and health services over the lifespan of fatherhood, beginning with young men who are not yet fathers through grandfathers and adult male mentors. Steve is a coordinator of the Healthy Fathering Collaborative of Greater Cleveland, a founding board member of the Ohio Practitioners’ Network for Fathers and Families and a Governor appointee to the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, 2007-14. He is also a community representative for the National Children’s Study and a member of the NCS Fatherhood Writing Team.

Jessica Croatt Niemi MSSW LICSW IMH-E®(IV) is a Mental Health Professional and endorsed as an Infant Mental Health Mentor. She specializes in working with children (and their caregivers) ages 0-5. She is certified to provide Parent Child Interaction Therapy and Trauma-Informed Child Parent Psychotherapy, evidenced based practices for young children and their caretakers. She also facilitates the Family Toybox, a family group focused on parenting young children. She provides mental health consultation for a variety of disciplines including Head Start, Public Health, Special Education, and Social Service professionals.

Karla Decker Sorby is the Northwest MN and Tribal Nurse Consultant with the Family Home Visiting Unit at the Minnesota Department of Health out of the Bemidji District Office. Prior to that, she worked for Otter Tail Co for nearly 20 years as the MCH Coordinator and used a variety of home visiting models, including NFP, with pregnant and parenting teens and Native American families. She got her first nursing degree from the Sisseton Dakota Oyate Tribal College in South Dakota, where she is from. She completed a BSN at Minnesota State University Moorhead and is currently working on a M.S. degree in adult educational research at BSU. She is a trainer with Johns Hopkins University for Family Spirit, an evidence-based home visiting program for American Indian families.”

Chrystal S. Wilkie is the Family and Community Partnership Advisor for Minnesota Valley Action Council Inc.’s Head Start program. She supervises the Family Advocates and oversees the parent and family engagement and the Strong Fathers program. She accepted the 2014 Program of the Year Award for Excellence in Fatherhood for implementing the Strong Fathers program in the nine counties that her agency serves from the Minnesota Fathers and Families Network.