Making Your Organization Father Friendly

There are lots of fathers interested in becoming involved as leaders. Here are some ways to make your organization father friendly.

- Understand what father involvement and father friendliness mean
- Understand why father involvement is important for fathers and children
- Introduce Supporting Father Involvement (SFI)
  - The Tools
  - The Three Levels of Involvement
  - Conduct an Organizational Self assessment to identify what fathers currently find in your agency
- Identify best practices
- Learn how to incorporate strength-based Father Engagement & Involvement into your work
- Understand the myths and facts about Father Involvement
- Discuss “Right Now” Actions You Can Take!!
Supporting Father Involvement: Evidence Based Service for Children and Families

California Parent Leadership Conference
Ontario, California
February 09, 2011

Presented by:

Bobby Verdugo, Fatherhood Training Specialist

What We Provide

- Training
- Coaching
- Technical Assistance
- Network Building
- …And Much, Much More!!!

Visit our Website at: www.familyresourcecenters.net

Goals for Today!!!

- Introduce Supporting Father Involvement (SFI)
- Identify best practices
- Learn how to incorporate strength-based Father Engagement & Involvement into your work
- Discuss “Right Now” Actions We Can Take!!

A Paradigm Shift toward Father Involvement in Practice
(ADAPTED FROM FAMILY SUPPORT AMERICA)

- Beliefs and an approach to strengthening and empowering families with Fathers Involved
- Engaging in a grassroots, community based movement to Enhance Father Involvement
- Shifting social services delivery to encourage Father Participation
- Making Social Change

Myths and Facts about Father Involvement

Visit our Website: www.familyresourcecenters.net
**Myths**

- Fathers have low motivation to be involved with their kids.
- They need to be persuaded to become involved.

**Facts**

- For most men, the issue isn't lack of motivation. In a national study of parents with young children, more than 80% of dads said they wanted more time with their children.
- Fathers today report wanting to be more involved with their children than their fathers were with them.

  Nevertheless, there are serious barriers to fathers’ involvement.

**Myth**

- Because fathers spend much less time with children than mothers do, they have less impact on their children’s well-being.

**Fact**

- **It’s the Quality** of a father’s relationship with his child, not the quantity of hours he spends with the child, that’s related to the child’s development.

**Myth**

- In contrast to mothers, fathers need to be taught parenting skills.

**Facts**

- Fathers respond to infants’ cries as sensitively as mothers do.
- Fathers soothe their infants as effectively as mothers do.
- Fathers play more actively with their children than mothers do (helps motor development) and encourage more adventurous, exploratory behavior (helps cognitive and social development).
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY FATHER INVOLVEMENT?

- Direct care: feeding, dressing, soothing
- Play and recreation with the child
- Indirect care: preparing meals, arranging doctors’ appointments
- Active thinking, listening, feeling, & planning
- Financial support

Why Is Father Involvement Important for Children?

- Increase in:
  - academic performance
  - emotional and social competence
- Protects against:
  - abuse and neglect
  - delayed development
  - poor standard of living
  - smoking
  - criminality
  - truancy
  - promiscuity
  - depression/anxiety

National Compadres Network

- Is a national effort to reinforce the positive involvement of Latino males in the lives of their families, communities, and society.
- We believe that by increasing the positive support and influence of Latino males in their family and society we can reduce the incidence of substance abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, teen pregnancy, gang violence, and other family and community problems.
- This effort is based on our hope that children and families if we Latino men are positively engaged with their children and family, the next generation will have a safer, healthier, happier world in which to live, grow and thrive.

National Latino Fatherhood & Family Institute

- An Institute of the National Compadres Network (NCN)
- NLFFI addresses the multifaceted needs of Latino men and promotes a positive approach to working with Latinos, building on the strengths of familial & cultural traditions.
- Provides culturally sensitive social and educational services developed to strengthen and preserve families.
- Influence men to become strong fathers and responsible men and focus living the principles of Un Hombre Noble.
- Highlight the cultural assets that service providers can focus on to improve outcomes in a variety of programmatic interventions.

California Fatherhood Initiative

- Highlight the positive role that fathers and young men play to benefit children, families, and their community.
- Provide examples of local and regional efforts that include and serve fathers in a broad range of services.
- Outline the need for more strength-based programs, services and policies for fathers and young men.
- Highlight the educational, social, and health disparities that young men of color face in California.
- Partner with local, regional, and state level partners to become develop and promote a positive shared fatherhood vision.
- Engage organizations that reach and serve fathers and men in father roles from all walks of life and diverse cultural backgrounds.

GET READY FOR THE STATEWIDE LAUNCH!
Why Is Father Involvement Important? Let’s hear from them!

- Osvaldo “Ozzie” Cruz
- Richard Pacheco

Why Is Father Involvement Important for Mothers?

- Greater financial stability
- Less stress in all aspects of their lives
- Less depression

Why Is Father Involvement Important for Fathers?

- Involved fathers have better overall health.
- Involvement produces higher self-esteem, which produces more involvement.
- Involved fathers have greater satisfaction with work.
- Early involvement leads to sustained involvement.

ADULT MALE OUTCOMES OF INVOLVED FATHERING

Increased:
- Longevity
- Length of marriage
- Level of health
- Responsibility for relationships

Decreased:
- Accidental death
- Suicide
- Job Change
- Aggression/impulsivity

WE CAN IMPACT CHILD ABUSE IF WE CAN POSITIVELY IMPACT:

- INDIVIDUAL ADJUSTMENT
- COUPLE RELATIONSHIP
- FAMILY OF ORIGIN
- PARENT CHILD RELATIONSHIP
- STRESSORS & SUPPORTS
Fathers who are not Appropriate Resources for their Children & Families
- Fathers who are Abusive or Violent toward their Families
- Fathers With Significant Issues of Mental Illness or Substance Abuse (Severe Impairment of Daily Function)
- Fathers who do not offer a responsible role model of parenting to their children and families

Four Critical roles for Agency Staff in Supporting Father Involvement
1. Outreach & Recruitment of Fathers
2. Welcome & Engagement of Fathers in Services and Agencies
3. Assessment of Needs and Provision of Resources to Fathers for Family Strengthening
4. Advocacy for the Development of Resources within the Community and Agency for Involved Fathers!

WHAT DO FATHERS FIND IN OUR AGENCY?
- Do we speak a 'father' language?
- Do we value a 'father' participation?
- Do we sponsor 'father' engaging activities?
- Do we offer a 'father' friendliness?
- How can we Be & Do more to connect Fathers?

What is SFI?
- A Connecting Point for Agencies and Professionals Serving Children and Families
- Tools to Strengthen our Agencies and Ourselves in Connecting with Fathers
- Curriculum and Training for Fathers and Couples for Strengthening Relationships of Fathers

SFI: The Tools
- Informational Clearing House
- ListServ Membership and Participation
- Web Based Supporting Father Involvement Resources
- SFI Training for Agency Staff (Building Skills for Working with Fathers – Formerly Titled “SFI Case Management Training”)
- Organizational Self Assessment
- SFI 16-Week Curriculum / Intervention (for Fathers and Couples)
- Training and Technical Assistance for SFI Group Leaders
- Training and Support Material and Events
- Technical Support
- Implementation Support

Three Levels of Entry

Level 1 – “Ongoing Engagement”
Level 1 is for agencies interested in learning more about SFI in preparation for future SFI implementation. Level 1 involvement includes:
- General information on strengthening Father Friendliness;
- Access to web-based resources and information clearinghouse;
- Participation in local trainings and conferences.
Supporting Father Involvement

Begins with connection to the SFI website!!!

Level 2 – “Strengthening Father Friendliness”

Level 2 is for agencies ready to begin implementation of SFI. Level 2 involvement includes:

• All the elements of Level 1;
• The Father Friendliness Organizational Self Assessment (OSA); and
• Technical assistance to integrate SFI in the agency.

SFI Organizational Self Assessment

Father Friendliness

5 Areas of Organizational Function:

• Agency’s Physical Environment
• Staff Development Reflects Father Inclusiveness
• Agency Supports for Working with Fathers
• Agency Community Reputation for Father Friendliness
• Agency Policies, Procedures, and Operations

Easily Accessed at the SFI Website

Supporting Father Involvement

Father Friendliness is a process of:

• Assessing,
• Planning, and
• Working for Change!!!

It’s Well Worth It...
Level 3 – “Full Implementation”
Level 3 is for agencies in the process of implementing and integrating SFI into all of their operations. Level 3 involvement includes:

- All the elements of Levels 1 and 2;
- Formal training on implementing Fathers and/or Couples Groups;
- Agency staff training;
- Full integration of SFI into the agency’s organizational culture and operations;
- Support with assessment and implementation;
- Ongoing technical assistance and coaching.

Enhancing Organizational Father Friendliness

| Agency Function | Key Description/Behaviors in Father/Parent Engagement | Agency Outcomes/Indicators in Father/Parent Engagement | Agency Performance/Indicators of Progress in Father/Parent Engagement | Agency Financial, Staffing, Program Budgets and Implementation | Agency Financial, Staffing, Program Budgets and Implementation
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------
|                 | Implementing SFI to enhance agency’s understanding of |                        | Implementing SFI to enhance agency’s understanding of |                        | Implementing SFI to enhance agency’s understanding of |
|                 | family dynamics, including fathers and all family     |                        | family dynamics, including fathers and all family     |                        | family dynamics, including fathers and all family     |
|                 | members, and implementing an inclusive, affirmative  |                        | members, and implementing an inclusive, affirmative  |                        | members, and implementing an inclusive, affirmative  |
|                 | approach to the care of the family                   |                        | approach to the care of the family                   |                        | approach to the care of the family                   |
|                 |                                                        |                        |                                                        |                        |                                                        |

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Visit our Website at: www.familyresourcecenters.net

Thank you ☺

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