

Guidebook to the Responsible Fatherhood Project Participant Management Information System

Introduction

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) contracted with The Lewin Group to assist eight DHHS-sponsored Responsible Fatherhood Projects with the development of management information systems tailored to the operations of each site. This technical assistance project was designed to assist each site with the development of data forms and a working automated data system to track participant characteristics, services received, outcomes, and costs. The automated system referred to in this project as the **Responsible Fatherhood Management Information System (RFMIS)** was designed to operate on Microsoft Access 97. The system was designed so that sites could tailor system components to local program operations and so that sites could adapt the system over time to meet future program needs (i.e., add new fields, change form views, and create new report formats in the future).

The data system that is the focus of this manual was developed based on an assessment of needs and capacities of local program sites involved in the DHHS-sponsored demonstration effort. Among the data collection activities involved in developing the system and this guidebook were the following:

- Telephone and in-person interviews with DHHS Administration on Children and Families (ACF) Responsible Fatherhood Projects located in eight states: Colorado, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, California, Wisconsin, Missouri, Maryland, and Washington;
- Telephone and in-person interviews with local and national evaluators of Responsible Fatherhood Projects;
- Two conferences that brought together representatives of Responsible Fatherhood Projects, local evaluators of Responsible Fatherhood Projects, the national evaluation contractors (Policy Studies, Inc. and the Center for Policy Research), the management information system contractor for the Responsible Fatherhood initiative (The Lewin Group), the management information system contractor for the Ford Foundation's Fragile Family Initiative (Metis Associates, Inc.), and representatives of the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE/DHHS) and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE/DHHS);
- Review of the management information system and forms developed for the Parents Fair Share demonstration (including a site visit to a Parents Fair Share project); and
- Review of existing materials and documents on tracking participant characteristics, participant outcomes, program services, and program costs in Responsible Fatherhood Projects.

The purpose of this guidebook is to provide each of the eight Responsible Fatherhood Project sites (and other interested responsible fatherhood initiatives) with written documentation on how to complete the RFMIS data forms and operate the automated system. Sections 1-3 of this guidebook are primarily intended for Responsible Fatherhood Project staff who are responsible for interviewing participants and completing forms. These sections include the following:

- [SECTION 1: PARTICIPANT DATA FORMS](#). This section provides copies of data forms for use in collecting data from responsible fatherhood participants. [in PDF format, nice for printing]
- [SECTION 2: EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED SET OF PARTICIPANT DATA ENTRY FORMS](#). This section provides an example of a completed set of data forms for a sample participant. [in PDF format, nice for printing]
- [SECTION 3: INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING PARTICIPANT DATA FORMS](#). This section provides detailed instructions on how to complete data items on each of the data forms.

The next sections of the guidebook are aimed primarily at project staff responsible for managing and operating the RFMIS. It includes instructions on how to install enter new data records, find and edit

existing data records, and generate reports. These sections include the following:

- [SECTION 4: GUIDE TO USING THE RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM.](#) The RFMIS was developed to operate on Microsoft Access 97. This section provides an overview of how to get started using the data system. It provides step-by-step instructions for getting into and exiting the system, entering data, locating records, and backing up data files. Users may also want to refer to the Microsoft Access 97 manual for more detailed instruction on how to operate the software (especially with respect to creating and generating new report formats).
- [SECTION 5: SAMPLE DATA ENTRY SCREENS.](#) This section provides a set of completed sample data entry screens. [in PDF format, nice for printing]
- [SECTION 6: LIST OF RFMIS DATA FIELDS.](#) This section identifies the data field names for each data item on the RFMIS data forms. [in PDF format, nice for printing]
- [SECTION 7: GUIDE TO GENERATING SAMPLE REPORTS AND DESIGNING NEW REPORTS.](#) This section provides instructions for generating a series of sample reports on participant characteristics, services received, and outcomes. Microsoft Access 97 has a highly flexible reporting capability that will enable sites to develop their own reports and print out data on any data item in the data system. This section includes instructions on (a) how to print out pre-formatted reports, (b) some basic guidance on how to create new reports, and (c) examples of reports printed out using sample data.

Technical Assistance

The Lewin Group is available to provide technical assistance on using the RFMIS and tailoring the data system to the operations of each site. Should you have any questions concerning the data forms, system installation, system design or system operations, please contact:

John Trutko, Consultant to The Lewin Group
Capital Research Corporation
1910 N. Stafford Street
Arlington, VA 22207
Telephone: (703) 522-6270
Fax: (703) 522-0885
E-mail: jtrutko@aol.com

Erica Chan
The Lewin Group
3130 Fairview Park Drive, Suite 800
Falls Church, VA 22042
Telephone: (703) 269-5784
Fax: (703) 269-5503
E-mail: echan@lewin.com

Where to?

[Main Page and Table of Contents](#)
[Introduction](#)
[Instructions for Completing Participant Data Forms](#)
[Blank Participant Data Forms](#)
[Example of a Completed Set of Participant Data Entry Forms](#)
[Guide to Using the Responsible Fatherhood Management Information System](#)
[Sample Data Entry Screens](#)
[RFMIS Data Fields](#)
[Guide to Generating Sample Reports and Designing New Reports](#)

Home Pages:

[Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation \(ASPE\)](#)
[Child Support Enforcement \(OCSE\)](#)

[U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)](#)

Revised 5/26/00