national healthy marriage resource center

Engaging Men in Marriage Education

How-To Guide

November 2009

Table of Contents

Background 3

How to Get Men to your Relationship/Marriage Education Program 6

How to Keep Men in your MRE Program 9

Conclusion 9

Additional Resources 9

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Sample Flyer – "Duct Tape and Candlelight" 10
- Appendix 2: Sample Flyer – "Marriage is a Journey…" 11
- Appendix 3: Sample Flyer – "Team DADD Kickoff" 12
- Appendix 4: Sample Newsletter – "The Dad Difference" 13
- Appendix 5: Sample Organizational Self-Assessment and Planning Tool 14

Engaging Men in Marriage Educaiton

Background

Although both men and women are involved in marriage, relationship matters are often considered the woman's domain. For practitioners offering marriage and relationship education (MRE), this general belief can often make engaging men in your program a challenge.

Information is relatively sparse with regard to how men can be engaged in marriage education. There is research on men and commitment, and there are relatively frequent pop culture references to men and marriage regarding infidelity or gender roles, but very few resources are available for married men to support their relationship. However, we know from the field that men are interested in having a healthy marriage.

Men come to MRE services for a variety of reasons. It may be because of their wife's or partner's encouragement, because another man recommended it, or because of an underlying fear of marriage or relationship trouble — with little hope for what else to do. Practitioners, however, should not assume that just because a man attends an MRE course, that he has already bought in to the value of the program. This "How To" guide will provide some ideas for practitioners seeking to recruit and engage men in MRE programs.

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How to Get Men to your Relationship/Marriage Education Program

Men who benefit from marriage education are from all walks of life. This includes men of all ages, education levels, faiths, races, and cultures. Men who are CEOs can benefit from marriage education as much as unemployed men do. In fact, they are typically facing similar relationship challenges (being heard, parenting, meeting expectations, etc.).

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to fix things by emphasizing the workshop will teach strategies for problem solving and conflict resolution. Offer solution-based insights and teach the positive elements of marriage ("keys") that emphasize successful outcomes. For instance, "solve problems and create solutions" and "see results" could be integrated into your marketing materials to illustrate these concepts (See Appendices 1, 2, and 3). Brochures that promote "sharing feelings"," couple time", and "talking more" may not be as appealing to guys. "Talking about it" isn't itself an outcome. Make sure your materials have pictures of men on them and include testimonials from men. In fact, it is helpful to include all of the following elements on your web site and brochures.

Recruit in man-friendly venues. Be strategic in your outreach by handing out brochures at local sporting events or barber shops, for example, or by working with a local Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or employment program to obtain referrals. Your marketing materials could use metaphors that compare a marriage education program to an automotive "tune-up," or going to the gym for a workout, indicating the preventive nature of the program. Also, materials could underscore the wider array of skills-application, such as more effective communication, conflict resolution, and anger management—all skills that can be used in the workplace, and not just at home. Finally, you could emphasize the importance of fathers and that having a strong marriage is part of being a good father. Flyers can also be effective when placed in churches and universities.

Establish credibility. Men, even more so than women, tend to ask, "Why? Why are you qualified to give me advice on my marriage? Why will this workshop help us? Why do I have to come?" Start things off by forthrightly describing the facilitators' credentials, the purpose of the class, and the key takeaway goals for each participant.

Understand that most men work, or want to work. It is critical to offer workshops that accommodate work schedules. Depending on your community, this means you may have to offer evening or weekend sessions. Some program operators even offer workshops in a factory break room during the midnight shift's "lunch" hour. Remember that if your program interferes with work, men won't come. Conversely, if your program is supported by their employer, offered at work, or marketed as something that will help at work, you may capture their attention.

State the benefits of marriage to men. Most men got married because they fell in love and thought it was the right thing to do. It's unlikely they were told that marriage can actually be more sexually fulfilling, create more wealth or help a person live longer!

State the benefits of marriage to men. Most men got married because they fell in love and thought it was the right thing to do. It's unlikely they were told that marriage can actually be more sexually fulfilling, create more wealth or help a person live longer! According to The Case for Marriage (Waite & Gallagher), here are some research-based findings that tout the benefits of marriage to men:

- Marriage promotes better health habits and greater longevity among men, largely due to the care, attention and monitoring by their wives. In fact, men appear to reap the most physical health benefits from marriage and suffer the greatest health consequences if they get divorced.

- Annually, married men earn more money than do single men with similar education and job histories.

- For men, marriage provides as many benefits as education. Research shows it is likely that married men benefit from understood roles and responsibilities within marriage, and from the emotional support they receive from wives.

- Marriage strengthens the bonds between fathers and children. Again, countless research studies show that married fathers have better relationships with their children than unwed or divorced fathers.

Affirm that program participation doesn't imply there is a problem in a man's relationship/marriage. Keep your recruitment messages strength-based. Many men will respond well to the idea of doing this for their wife or to make her happy.

Assert that there is a link between being a great dad and being a great husband. Sometimes men will be drawn to a service that emphasizes their important role in their child's life, and this can be a great motivator to successfully engage and retain men (See Appendix 4).

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Make sure your marriage program is <u>not</u> confused with counseling. Choose your words carefully when

recruiting men. In all likelihood they may not want to "attend group," as that may sound like counseling or, even worse, men may fear sitting in a circle "sharing their feelings." While some men may be drawn to these, many programs have found greater success by marketing their program for its benefits to the couple (or family), and for the new tools it provides for couples who want to work out their challenges.

Don't promote the fact that it's a "free" service. For many people — and possibly men even more than women — there is a deep sense that "you get what you pay for." Depending on your funding restrictions, you may want to consider charging a nominal fee. Alternatively, some programs charge participants a deposit, refunded at the completion of the program, which helps the couple commit to attending. You may want to let men know they are getting a $500 service (for example) at no charge to them.

How to Keep Men in your MRE Program

Stay upbeat in your programming. In many circles men have gotten the message that they are "not good" at relationships. Your program needs to refute this myth and help equip men to be successful in their relationships.

Stay upbeat in your programming. In many circles men have gotten the message that they are "not good" at relationships. Your program needs to refute this myth and help equip men to be successful in their relationships.

Pick the right curriculum for your audience. Depending on the demographics of your group, try to find a curriculum with an overall language and tone appropriate to your audience. There are many curricula available now for targeted groups like expectant parents, low-income couples or that are faith-based. You can find a list arranged by category on www.smartmarriages.com or on the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center Web site www.healthymarriageinfo.org. Assess the program using the Marriage Education Assessment Guide at http://www.acf.gov/healthymarriage/doc/ACF_curriculum_assessment. The National Fatherhood Initiative also has a father-friendly and marriage-readiness curriculum for men (www.fatherhood.org). Talk with curriculum developers or other practitioners about the curriculum and how it has been received.

Make your workshop space comfortable to men. Successful programs engage men, in part, by creating a male-friendly environment. Create an aesthetically warm and inviting atmosphere that won't make men feel like they just walked into the women's section of a department store. Consider having couches or recliners, without floral upholstery. If there are posters on the walls, they should depict men as well as women. Some social service organizations host workshops and display posters with negative images of men as delinquent on child support, or show families that don't include men. Be aware of what you are telling men by the way you decorate your space. ESPN or another similar channel should be on the TVs if you have them. Man-friendly magazines and other reading materials should also be readily available (See Appendix 4). The men attending the workshop or class should be met by a male mentor or a male facilitator.

Make it work. In order to keep men in the program, it is essential for practitioners to create a learning environment conducive to the male learning style. This can be done through using interactive elements and concrete tools that couples can immediately use. Have other men in the room and add some humor! Make sure to integrate the kinds of problems men experience, or can relate to in marriage within your actual workshop. Doing so will help establish a good rapport with all attendees. For example, employment-related stories about how a communication skill can be applied in the workplace (as well as with one's spouse) might really hit home with the working men in your group.

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Let the men talk! Women tend to talk more than men. Be intentional about engaging men in couple sessions and including break-out sessions specifically for men. Alternatively you can offer a "dads group" as a supplement to MRE. This will help keep the men returning to your program, and encourage them to share their positive experience with other men. Similarly, your curriculum should be interactive. Few adults (especially men) want to be talked to or lectured to for a long time. Men typically feel a real sense of accomplishment when they are given a tool and an opportunity to problem-solve right then and there.

Use innovative approaches. A fun way to engage men is to utilize a personality test (e.g. Myer's Briggs Assessment), which can help men better understand themselves and their spouses (some curricula include this). This can lead to opportunities for self-determination that can then allow for activities to help the relationship. For example, make a list of shared activities the man enjoys that can be done as a couple. If he enjoys the activity, he is more likely to commit to sharing this time together. Another effective tool could be an exchange of emails or letters between partners which allows the man to collect his thoughts and express himself more confidently.

Train your entire staff — not just your healthy marriage instructors — to better understand men. This is especially important if your organization has traditionally served women and children. Some marriage educators say that engaging and retaining men in your program starts with your first contact with them. Developing rapport is essential; it is helpful to have male staff who can relate to the stressors and challenges of a relationship from the male perspective. All staff members, no matter what their gender, should be aware of the common male objections to participating in marriage education and be prepared to address them up front. Lack of adequate training can have a negative impact on the retention of men in the program, preventing them from seeking other assistance from your organization. To assess how men/father-friendly your organization is, see Appendix 5.

Talk about sex. Sex is an important part of any healthy, committed relationship. Address this issue by using language with which your entire program

team can be comfortable.

Serve refreshments. Everybody likes food, and one of the best ways to demonstrate that you appreciate the time a couple is investing in your program is to offer them a meal. This also provides an opportunity for some male bonding among the husbands.

Make the message appropriate to your clients. The literature on marriage programs shows that the overall messages in the program offered should be tailored to the participants' developmental/life stages. Some researchers call this being "temporal-specific." For example, what is perceived as relevant for a young engaged man will differ from a more seasoned father or a man starting his second marriage. The wise educator must work to ensure that the curriculum and program connects to the recipient's current experience. It may be helpful to take an inventory at the beginning of class to see what life stages your participants are in. Be sure to include relevant examples of each in your sessions.

Manage "hecklers." Some men may instinctively become the joker in your workshop. This may be a defense mechanism or a way to mask their own fear of being in a MRE workshop. Pull these guys aside, and try to get to know them. Early on, work to bring them into the group, rather than treating them as a distraction.

Keep things funny. Humor (like food) is an effective way to engage men. You don't have to be a stand-up comedian to engage men in your workshop, but explore video clips, cartoons, and quotes that drive home key classroom insights.

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Use incentives. Ideally, the value of your program will speak for itself, and keep men and women alike coming back. Yet, with people's busy schedules and the chaos of life, if you expect participants to return each week, you may want to consider the use of an incentive. If you do, keep men in mind when selecting these program-supportive incentives. You don't have to give away a lawn mower at the end of the workshop series, but a fuzzy blanket and romantic movie may not encourage the guys to fully commit. Sports tickets can be donated or simple things like a tool or a gift certificate to a hardware store could be

well received by the men in your audience. Think through whatever incentives you may offer, to make sure they appeal to men and women.

Conclusion

There are several challenges when it comes to recruiting men for participation in marriage and relationship education services. Practitioners should understand what attracts and appeals to men to not only bring them into the program, but also to keep them engaged in the curriculum. Considering men's needs will keep them confident that the services will result in a healthier relationship.

The National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (NHMRC) would like to thank Dr. Errol Bolden, a fatherhood consultant on program planning, development and evaluation for his contributions to this How-To Guide. We would also like to thank Josh Good, Rachel Derrington, MSW, Courtney Harrison, MPA, and Ervin Lucero of the Resource Center and Seth Caton from Dad's Matter for their contributions. This is a product of the NHMRC, led by co-directors Mary Myrick, APR, and Jeanette Hercik, Ph.D., and project manager, Patrick Patterson, MSW, MPH.

Additional Resources

Men Not Immune to Marriage
http://catholic.org/featured/headline.php?ID=1395&page=2

National Fatherhood Initiative FatherSOURCE
http://www.fatherhood.org/FatherSOURCE/Fathersource.html

National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse
http://www.fatherhood.gov/index.cfm

No Cry Zone: Psychotherapy With Men
http://www.continuingedcourses.net/active/courses/course040.php

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Magill. (2008). *Marriage Help for Men*. http://www.ArticleBiz.com

Ooms, T. (2005). *The New Kid on the Block: What is Marriage Education and Does It Work?* Center For Law and Social Policy. Policy Brief. 7

Ooms, T. (2007). Center For Law and Social Policy. Couples and Marriage Series, March 2007 Brief No. 10

Appendix 1: Sample Flyer

Marriage Tools for Regular Guys

DUCT TAPE

AND

CANDLE LIGHT

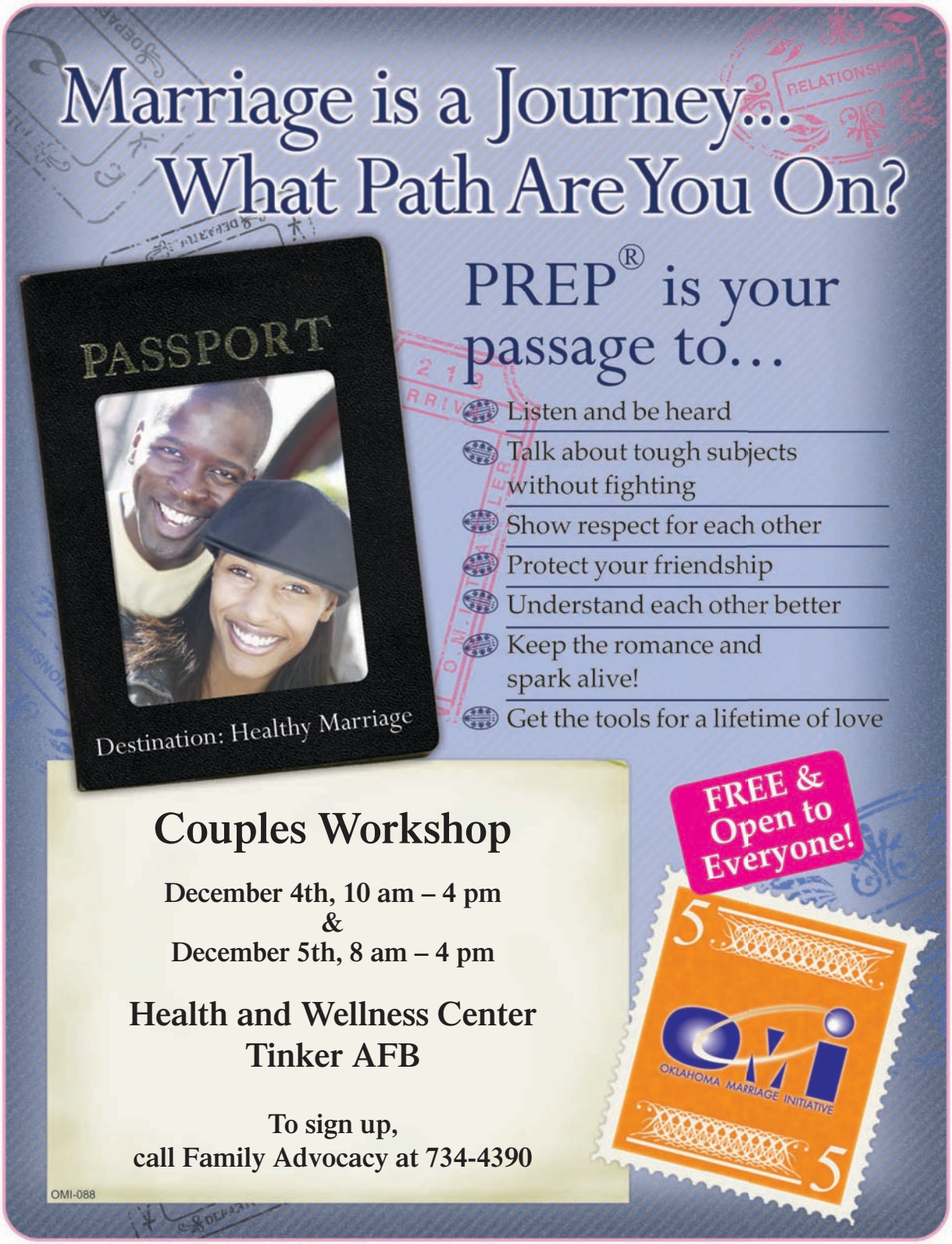
A marriage enrichment workshop from Community Marraige Builders that uses the LINKS curriculum.

Thursdays
Oct. 29 - Nov. 20
6pm - 8pm

Childcare and Dinner Provided

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families

Appendix 2: Sample Flyer



Appendix 3: Sample Flyer

This example is from the Family Expectations Program. This background and theme can easily be adapted to your healthy marriage and relationship education program.

Appendix 4: Sample Newsletter

This example is from the Dad's Matter Fatherhood Program. This gender-neutral newlsetter style can easily be adapted to your healthy marriage and relationship education program.

The Dad Difference

January 2009

Published by
Dads Matter
480A Coolspring Road, Uniontown PA 15401
Phone: 724-437-2590 x322
Fax: 724-437-8159
E-mail: dadsmatter@dadsmatter.info
Web: www.dadsmatter.info

How to make New Year's resolutions WORK

By Ryan Butter, Dads Matter Case Manager

3-2-1, Happy New Year!!! Yes it's that time of year again, time for New Year's resolutions. Did you quit smoking or lose 30 pounds last year?

If you gave up on last year's resolutions, then get your family involved. It will increase your chance of success and your kids will learn to set goals for themselves.

This year, set realistic goals for yourself. For example, don't plan to lose 30 pounds this year if you haven't worked out since the Steelers won the Super Bowl.

Make smaller, incremental goals like "I'm going to lose 10 pounds by June." Then look at how things are going in June.

Make a family workout night. You can burn 100 calories by

- Playing tag for 25 minutes
- Going on a science walk and talk about the seasons for 30 minutes
- Dancing with your "special someone" for 25 minutes.

Set goals as a family. Have everyone make a goal and write a plan to set them up for success. Nothing can raise your self-worth quicker than being successful.

Each month have a family meeting to talk about what's been working and how to improve your plan.

And make it fun, even if it's saving money or working out. Make it a game to see who's the biggest loser or winner!

Reward the winner with their favorite food or their choice of a movie for family movie night. It's always easier to be successful when you have support.

Free stuff to do!

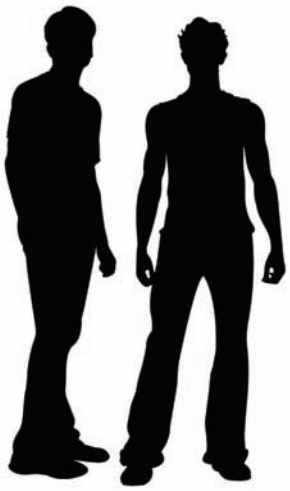
All activities should be free to attend, but there's generally a cost for rides and food. Questions? Call us at 724-437-2590 x322.

Dad 2 Dad - *get $$$ for gas! Free food!*
@ Bud Murphy's every week for six weeks starting Wed., Jan. 7, 5:30-7:30pm
Rt. 119 in Connellsville
- AND -
@ The PIC Office every week for six weeks starting Mon., Jan. 26, 5:30-7:30pm
480 Coolspring Road in Uniontown
Relax with other dads and learn how to deal with the tough stuff you face: discipline, communication, what to expect from your kids, physical and mental health, and more.
Call 724-437-2590 to sign up!

Caring After Christmas - MLK Food Drive
Mon, Jan 19 - all day
Downtown Brownsville
This food drive begins on MLK Day and lasts for one month in honor of the contributions of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Food will be collected in BARC main offices or the Welcome Center at 33 Market Street.

Sample resolutions: try them out in 2009!

These can work	*These don't work*
"I will join the gym on January 4th." - Write down the phone number and put it by the phone.	**"I don't want to be lazy."**
"I will watch only 10 hours of TV this week." - Tape it to your TV.	**"I won't watch TV ever again."**
I am spending 30 minutes jogging every Tuesday and Thursday before work. - Tape it to your alarm clock, so you can set it 30 minutes early.	**"I'm going to get in shape."**
"I will only eat a snack before bed on Friday and Saturday." - Tape it to your fridge.	**"I won't eat snacks ever again."**
"I'm going to cut my cigarette smoking from one pack a day to half a pack a day by June." - Write down how many you smoke each day, so you can keep .yourself going.	**"I'm going to quit smoking."**
"I'm going to forgive myself if I slip, and I won't give up." - Tape it everywhere.	**"I slipped...so I give up."**



Got questions? Dads Matter has answers - and if we don't, we'll find them! Call us at 724-437-2590 x321

Appendix 5: Sample Organizational Self-Assessment and Planning Tool

This example is from The National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL) and The National Head Start Association (NHSA) Fatherhood Programs. This assessment can easily be adapted to your healthy marriage and relationship education program.

FATHER-FRIENDLINESS ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING TOOL

This self-assessment package can help Head Start and other family service programs assess their organization's readiness to provide services to fathers and father figures. It was developed by:

The National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPCL)

In Partnership With

The National Head Start Association (NHSA)
The U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Region V
The Illinois Department of Public Aid, Division of Child Support Enforcement

There are three parts to the self-assessment package:

- Organizational Self-Assessment
- Action Plan for Becoming More Father Friendly
- Feedback on Usefulness of Tool.

NHSA and NPCL are FATHERHOOD PARTNERS

We are working in partnership to develop and enhance the provision of fatherhood services by Head Start agencies. The goal is to create an environment where staff, mothers, and fathers respect each other's roles, work together, and collaborate with other community organizations to ensure the availability of comprehensive services that support the role of fathers in the lives of their children. We do this in order to promote and enhance the well-being of every child.

For more information, contact:
Nigel Vann, NPCL's Director of Partnership Development, at (202) 822-6725
JoAnn Nelson-Hooks, NHSA's Fatherhood Coordinator, at (703) 739-7560.

FATHER-FRIENDLINESS ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING TOOL

Directions:

- Select a team or committee to complete the self-assessment. Ideally this team will include at least one decision-maker, various staff levels, and mothers and fathers of children in the program.

- The team will consider seven categories — Organizational Support; Position and Reputation in the Community; Agency Policies and Procedures; Staffing/Human Resources; Program Services; Physical Environment; and Communication and Interaction. Use the following scale to rate your organization for each of the statements included in the assessment:

  1 = Haven't even thought about this/completely disagree with statement.
  2 = We've started to think about this but haven't made much progress.
  3 = We've made some good efforts but still have some work to do.
  4 = We have successfully completed this step/completely agree with statement.

- After completing the assessment, use the action plan to identify the steps that need to be taken for your agency to be more fully ready to serve fathers and father figures.

- If you have any questions about use of the self-assessment tool or need any technical assistance or staff development training to help implement your action plan, you can contact Nigel Vann, NPCL's Director of Partnership Development, at (202) 822-6725, or JoAnn Nelson-Hooks, NHSA's Fatherhood Coordinator, at (703) 739-7560.

- After completing the self-assessment process, please complete the Feedback Form and return it to NPCL, attention of Nigel Vann. This will help us assess the usefulness of the tool and make any necessary adaptations.

FATHER-FRIENDLINESS ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING TOOL

Use the following scale to rate your organization for each of the statements included in the assessment:

1 = Haven't even thought about this/completely disagree with statement.
2 = We've started to think about this but haven't made much progress.
3 = We've made some good efforts but still have some work to do.
4 = We have successfully completed this step/completely agree with statement.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

How much support is there in your organization for providing services to fathers/father figures?

____ The organization's documented mission is inclusive of serving fathers.
____ The board of directors, policy council, and policy committee are committed to serving fathers and father figures.
____ The board of directors, council, and/or committees have members who are fathers with children in the program.
____ Literature and publicity about the organization reflect a commitment to serving fathers.
____ Funding for serving fathers is consistent and ongoing.

2. POSITION AND REPUTATION IN THE COMMUNITY

How does the community view the organization with respect to serving fathers/father figures?

____ The organization is recognized by community partners as a good resource for fathers.
____ The organization participates in community partnerships and collaborations concerned with providing services to fathers and families.
____ Fathers in the community view the organization as a place they can come to for assistance.
____ The organization is called on by the media or others for information about fathers.

3. AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Are the organization's policies and procedures uniformly inclusive of fathers?

____ Agency procedures have been assessed to determine if the interests of fathers are uniformly represented.
____ Intake and other data collection methods are standardized for both parents rather than just modified from the forms for mothers.
____ Program hours are scheduled to accommodate the time constraints of working fathers.
____ Policies that make it harder for fathers to be involved in the agency have been changed.
____ Policies have been instituted to facilitate male involvement. For example, instead of simply encouraging father involvement, the agency establishes a clear expectation that fathers of children should and will participate.
____ Agency policy allows services to be provided to both parents, regardless of how the other parent feels about that involvement (except in cases of domestic violence).
____ Personnel policies are friendly to both parents (for example, paternity leave and medical leave to care for sick children).

4. STAFFING/HUMAN RESOURCES

How prepared are staff to provide services to fathers?

General Staff:

____ The entire staff has received training on the issue of working with men, in general, and on fatherhood specifically.
____ Staff time and resources have been allocated for recruitment and outreach to fathers.
____ Staff are aware of issues faced by low-income fathers.
____ The majority of front-line program staff is open and receptive to the idea of providing services to fathers.
____ Staff working with fathers are fully integrated into the overall agency (for example, staff meetings, communication, decision-making, and socializing).
____ The ability to provide services to fathers is included on performance appraisals of all key staff.
____ Staff meet with other organizations serving fathers on a regular basis to enable cross learning about the most effective strategies for engaging and retraining fathers in parent involvement programs.

Specific Staff:

____ Specific staff have been designated to work with fathers, and they fully understand their roles and responsibilities.
____ Men are represented on the staff (paid and/or unpaid) at all levels.
____ Male staff are available to work with fathers, especially in the area of recruitment.
____ Male staff feel comfortable and respected within the agency.
____ Female and male staff work as a team.
____ Female staff (case managers, counselors, group facilitators) are comfortable working with fathers.
____ Fathers of children in the center serve as volunteers in the program.

5. PROGRAM SERVICES

Has a program for fathers been clearly articulated?

Approaches To Mothers:

____ Family goal-setting activities are inclusive of fathers.
____ Counseling with mothers includes a consistent focus on encouraging her to work cooperatively with the father of her child(ren].
____ When mothers don't want the fathers of their children involved, efforts are still made to gain her support and to work with that father (except in domestic violence and abusive situations).

Services To Fathers:

____ Fathers have opportunities to help design/feel ownership of the services being provided to them.
____ A needs and assets assessment has been completed in order to plan programs for fathers.
____ Program services that are clearly tied to outcomes have been planned and implemented specifically for fathers. The program involves more than just incorporating fathers into existing services for mothers.
____ Parenting groups for fathers have been designed with male psychological issues in mind and focus on empowering men by helping them grasp their essential role in their children's healthy development. Groups attend to beliefs and emotional issues that are barriers to active parenting. Groups address the development of key skills (listening, anger management, and positive discipline) and help fathers understand the specific needs of boys and girls at different developmental phases.
____ Information about community services for fathers (legal assistance, education and

employment assistance, batterers' programs, and so on) has been collected. Relationships have been forged with key people in these agencies.

____ A relationship has been forged with the local child support enforcement agency.

____ Staff make, or are prepared to make, referrals for fathers to other agencies (domestic violence, substance abuse, employment/training, and so on).

____ Sufficient funding exists to provide services to fathers.

____ Fathers who have completed the program are to work as mentors, recruiters, group facilitators, and so forth.

6. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

How inviting and welcoming is the physical environment for men and fathers?

____ Focus groups or individual fathers (from the target population) have been invited to the agency to assess father-friendliness and make suggestions for making the space more welcoming to them.

____ The physical environment has a general feel that is inviting to men/fathers.

____ Positive and diverse images of men and fathers are displayed.

____ Literature available for parents to pick up and read is appealing to fathers and reflects services or programs that they might participate in.

____ There is a room or area in the agency that has been designated as a space for men/fathers (at least during designated weekly hours) that contains resources for them and provides a space for just socializing or participating in group activities.

____ The designated program space for mothers includes positive images of men/fathers.

____ Men are present and it doesn't seem like a place just for women and children.

7. COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

How are fathers treated and communicated with inside the agency?

Interaction With Fathers:

____ Fathers who drop off children are greeted warmly.

____ Efforts are made to interact with fathers who accompany mothers to the program even when they tend to hang back

____ When mothers and fathers come to the agency together, communication is directed equally to both and not primarily to the mother.

____ Contact information is systematically taken on the father of children regardless of the father's marital status or living arrangements.

____ Written announcements, newsletters, and the like are addressed to both parents if they live together and if they don't, the communication is sent to both.
____ Staff interact with fathers in a style that demonstrates respect, empathy, and high expectations.

Staff Attitudes:

____ The message is given to fathers that their role as active parents is critical to their children's development.
____ Input is sought from fathers about what they want and need from the agency.
____ Positive comments about men are expressed in both formal and informal settings.

ACTION PLAN FOR BECOMING MORE FATHER FRIENDLY

DIRECTIONS: *Once you have completed the self-assessment tool, you will have a clearer idea of what your agency still needs to do. Turn the checklist items that received ratings of 1, 2, or 3 into action steps. Once you have completed this form, go back and put asterisks beside your top three priorities, both short-term and long-term.*

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Short-term action steps:
1.
2.

Long-term action steps:
1.
2.

POSITION AND REPUTATION IN COMMUNITY

Short-term action steps:
1.
2.

Long-term action steps:
1.
2.

AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Short-term action steps:
1.
2.

Long-term action steps:
1.
2.

STAFFING/HUMAN RESOURCES

Short-term action steps:
1.
2.

Long-term action steps:
1.
2.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Short-term action steps:
1.
2.

Long-term action steps:
1.
2.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Short-term action steps:
1.
2.

Long-term action steps:
1.
2.

COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

Short-term action steps:
1.
2.

Long-term action steps:
1.
2.

If you need Technical Assistance or Staff Development Training to help implement this plan, please contact Nigel Vann, NPCL's Director of Partnership Development, at (202) 822-6725, or

JoAnn Nelson-Hooks, NHSA's Fatherhood Coordinator at (703) 739-7650.