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Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance



NRFC Webinar Series

Outreach, Recruitment, and Retention for Responsible Fatherhood Programs

Transcript

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Moderator:

- Nigel Vann, Product Lead, National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

Presenters:

- Neil Tift: Outreach Project Coordinator, Native American Fathers and Families Association, Mesa, AZ
- Angel L. Flores: Program Supervisor, Dads Club at the Vista Community Clinic, San Diego, CA

Operator: Good day and welcome to the Outreach Recruitment and Retention for Responsible Fatherhood Programs conference call. As a reminder today's conference is being recorded. At this time I'd like to turn the conference over to Nigel Vann; please go ahead.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much, and good morning and good afternoon everybody. I do apologize for the technical difficulties here; we only found out right at the last minute that you couldn't hear the audio today on the computer, and I see people are still joining on the phone, but we are going to get started and hopefully everybody else can join us and hear what we're saying. As you just heard, it is being recorded so you'll be able to hear it later as well.

So again, this is today's National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse webinar on Outreach Recruitment and Retention for Responsible Fatherhood Programs: Lessons Learned. As those of you know who've joined us before, we provide these webinars on a regular basis as part of a learning community that you can contribute to and learn from and, as always, we welcome and encourage your input and participation. Along with the recording of the webinar there'll also be a transcript and all presentation materials, including slides and the handout, that will be posted on the website within the next few weeks, so we do encourage you to check back and review those. You can also see and listen to recordings and the materials from all our previous webinars. At the end of today's webinar there will be a Q&A session with the presenters and if you look at your screens in the bottom right hand corner there, that's where we ask you to put your questions for the presenters. I see you've also found the chat box on the left and we certainly welcome you to chat with each other in that box, but if you do have a question for the presenters please put that in the ask the question box. Next to the ask a question box you'll see the downloadable resources. There are various resources there that we'll be referring to during the webinar, so we encourage you to take a look at those and you can download them during the webinar and save or print for future reference.

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Now I'm going to move it up and hopefully more people are able to join it and hear the audio now. So here's our slide that covers the overview of the Clearinghouse. If you haven't joined us before, we are funded by the Office of Family Assistance and we provide these resources for fathers, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers. This is how you find us: our website is www.fatherhood.gov; you can find information on our toolkit and webinar links there. You can contact us via email at help@fatherhood.gov and we will always encourage you to use the national call center toll-free 877-4DAD411. That's set up for fathers to call and for mothers to call. We have trained mediators on the line, you can talk to dads and mothers on separate lines if need be, and we also have lots of resources for practitioners. We can help you connect to other resources in your community or nationally and always encourage you to join us on Facebook and Twitter.

So for today's webinar and we're going to be hearing from Neil Tift at the Native American Fatherhood and Families Association based in Mesa, Arizona and Angel Flores with the Dads Club Vista Community Clinic in San Diego, California. I'll introduce them both formally in a few minutes and we again have that Q&A session at the end of the webinar.

First of all, what we are going to do today which is slightly different for those of you who've joined us before—we typically have three presenters and each presenter gets about 15 minutes. Today we're going to break this one into two segments: first of all, each presenter is going to talk for about 10 minutes on recruitment and then we're going to have a section on retention after that. I think that'll help us keep this conversation focused. As an intro to the conversation I just want to briefly highlight some of the resources that are available at fatherhood.gov, like the toolkit that I mentioned on the previous slide. You can see all of these on the helpful resources list in the downloadable resources, so you can download our list of helpful resources that are specifically for this webinar. There are also other resources that presenters will also refer to as they go through. I did want to highlight the tip card for father and practitioners which there's a link to in the helpful resources list that you can download. That's been finally posted to the website in the last few weeks, but it's got some tips on there for practitioners in terms of recruitment, and it is printable as a tip card if you like. I'm going to be referring to this research-to-practice brief on the next couple of slides. This was published in 2011 and includes information from ninety studies of 70 responsible fatherhood programs as part of a strengthening families evidence review. I'll also encourage you to look at our previous webinars on outreach, recruitment, and retention that we've done in 2014 and 2007. Here's just a quick look at some of the materials in our toolkit that pertains to today's discussion.

I want to start out by really making the point that “outreach and recruitment” is a term we've sort of use a lot, and in a sense they can be thought of as interchangeable, but they are two distinct activities. I just wanted to point out how we distinguish them in the toolkit. The main goal of outreach is just to get the word out there. Once you've got the word out there you're hoping to get the referrals, you're hoping to get the guys to walk in the door. Once you get contact face-to-face with guys, it may even be in a community, but wherever you're first talking to them that's when recruitment starts. The key there is to really have staff on board who are going to listen to what the guys is talking about and make sure that your program is going to be in line with their needs. One of things I always think we should stress is not to oversell your program, particularly if you are working on enrollment numbers through a funder. Don't let that be paramount to what you're doing. What's most important is that you make sure you're matching your services to the needs of the fathers who are coming in, because if you don't do that they won't stay and then you're not going to have that retention bit going on. Also from the toolkit are just a few examples of outreach activities. I'm not going to go over these now: you're going to hear about these from the presenters as they talk about their examples, but these are examples of ways that you can get the word out in the community. The main point of these slides is so that you can go back and refer to them later. I just wanted to make sure to highlight information that is available. Certainly in terms of recruitment you've got to be able to find the participants, and then you've got to be able to establish credibility and again make sure that it's going to be real for them. Here's just a quick look at that research brief that I mentioned on the on the previous slide. These are just some of the main findings that are in there. There's a download link to it in the helpful resources document.

Anybody who's doing this work knows that meeting unique initial goals can be important and convincing father to stay can be difficult, but basically what I've always said is that fathers will come but it takes time. They will stay if you're offering something real. When you're doing that, your program can just keep churning over as long as the funding is there. Here's just an example of some of the promising practices that they talk about in that research brief: be clear that you have a clear plan of action; know where you're going to find fathers; have staff you can build rapport. But again, I think most programs, wherever you start out with, have to be flexible because you're going to end up changing your plan and your strategies. You are going to find eventually, if you're providing those effective services, that word of mouth is going to be a main corridor as time goes on.



Now, we're going to have a poll question to help us get a sense of who's on the line and to inform the presenters. I realize you may want to enter more than one of these, but just for the sake of being able to have a look at it, if you could just click on one. "If you are providing direct services, which of the following outreach strategies have you found most effective?" If there's something that works for you that's not on this list, feel free to put in that chat box because we can capture that information and share it later. It looks like more people are saying "forming partnerships through for referrals and services" than anything else. A few people are going for the "training staff or encouraging participants to spread the word," but I think we'll certainly agree here that forming partnerships is effective for more than half of you. Thank you for that.

Now I'm going to go ahead and quickly introduce Neil, and then we'll hear some words of wisdom from Neil. For those of you who are just joining us and are on the phone and couldn't hear the audio before, we do apologize. We only found out about these technical difficulties about a minute before we were ready to go on air so I hope most of you are able to join and hear us. So anyways, it's my great pleasure to introduce Neil Tift who's been a colleague in this field for almost 30 years. He's been doing it just about as long as I have, which helps me to feel a bit younger. He's been in his current position as Outreach Project Coordinator with the Native American Fathers and Family Association (NAFFA) since 2016. He also worked for NAFFA, though, from 2006 to 2010 in the interim. He served as the Father Involvement Program Director for the Child Crisis Center in Arizona in Mesa. He started the first Father Resource Center in the country in Minneapolis in 1990, and ran that for eight years before he moved to the DC area where he worked for the National Fatherhood Initiative for a couple years. Then, he worked as the director of professional advancement for the National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families. Those of you who are new the field maybe weren't aware that we had this National Practitioners Network, but it was a strong, effective operation for best part of 10 years. Maybe that's a slight exaggeration of time, but it would be great to see the rebirth of that at some point. Neil's also a family mediator, an educator, and men's therapist and service adjunct instructor at university, first in Minnesota and more recently in Arizona. As he likes to say, most importantly, he's the proud father of three and he's also the grandfather of 12 and he's been foster father of very many. I take my hat off to Neil and his wife Denise for the work they've done to help children. So, with that the time is yours, Neil.

Neil Tift: Good morning or good afternoon everybody. The information I'm going to be presenting is what I've drawn from over the years with the Fathers Resource Center and with other organizations I've worked for. NAFFA itself is an organization that works primarily, but not exclusively, with Native American fathers. Our core curriculum is called Fatherhood is Sacred, Motherhood is Sacred, and our founder has created curriculum where we train facilitators to go out into their communities, whether on tribal communities or in any other organization, to bring these principles to strengthen families. I continue to work with NAFFA, but one of my roles is to bring our resources to non-native communities. The theme really of NAFFA is that family is the heart of Native American culture and that there's no more work that's more important than being a good father and a good mother. Obviously, that applies in any culture.

When you are looking to develop your outreach for your fatherhood program, one of the things I found is that most agencies don't actually develop an outreach plan or a recruitment plan. That can be something that's given by the Board of Directors, or can be something it derived from the staff itself, but I think it's very important to develop a marketing plan. Then all of the staff, not just the staff that work directly with the fathers, know that that is it. They all will then make opportunities to implement that, no matter where they are. Whether it's bringing materials with them in their briefcase or in their back pocket, so when you go out go to a ballpark or you go to a basketball court and you see dads with kids you can go up to them and offer them material. There's lots of ways that we'll get into doing that, but I think it requires a conscious effort to say "how do we want to do this, how do we want to bring them in." I think it's also important to figure out which fathers you want to target for your organization: is it fathers of children with special needs? Fathers coming out of correctional facilities? Those coming back from combat? What is the specific population of fathers that you want to serve? If you have a geographic location or income level that you are restricted to, you need to make that part of the plan. You need to identify what specifically you want to offer to fathers, because as Nigel said before, you can't be everything to everybody. What we then want to do is to determine how you're going to do that. I can't serve all fathers: how do you refer those fathers that you can't serve to someone else? Then you want to have those staff implement that plan and take that wherever you go.

The most important element of serving fathers is that the staff need to be respectful of fathers. I've gone into programs where guys will walk in: men of color, any father, comes in. If, when they walk in the door, the staff who were there in the office grabs her purse and put it under her desk, that tells right away maybe they're not ready or not used to serving fathers. We need to look at what are

those small things that tell a father he's not respected, he's not expected to be there. We want to have materials that respect the specific population you are going to serve. Who is it, what language do they speak, what's their geographic background? How do we recruit fathers of different populations and respect where they're coming from so that we see that when we do serve them, we expect to be able to appeal to where they're coming from?

One of the big things, I think, is that there is a clear distinction in many families around the difference between maternal and paternal instincts. Dr. Kyle Pruett wrote a book 20 years ago called Fatherhood: just one word, and it's about the difference between maternal and paternal parenting styles. We here at NAFFA go out and train parents, and when we do the workshop for parents we call it "Mom Says No, Dad Says Yes." When we train staff we call it "Respecting Maternal and Paternal Parenting Styles." The idea is that the male and female staff all understand this. If any of your programs have a home visit aspect, you really need to have the staff respect that. Otherwise fathers are seen as "deficient" or "not doing it the same way moms do," and a lot of times they don't.

To recruit: men with kids going out and talking to men with kids, or fathers with their children, will often make it a little more comfortable for a dad who's a stranger. If you walk up to him and talk to him about what are the resources you offer for children or for fathers with children, you have to have staff that are comfortable working with a wide range of dads. If they come from different backgrounds, if they have tattoos, if they use language that's different from their own, if they've had very different experiences. When we go out on the reservations, we know a lot of times what we expect from the fathers on the reservations, but when we go into the urban areas there can be a much more diverse expectation of how you respect those fathers. You also want to look at who the community professionals are that work regularly with at-risk families, because a lot of our fathers might be from those families who are at risk. Think of agencies who you might not have partnered with before, whether they be domestic violence programs, Offices of Child Support Enforcement, or Head Start programs. Think of agencies that you really want to partner with. Then, your recruiters have to really believe in the importance of fathers in the lives of their kids. This is both male and female staff.

Where you go to find the dads: look in your community itself. What are the social media, what do they say, where the hot spots the dads go?

Organizations where fathers might go for help: fathers often may not be open to actually asking for help. If they get to a point where they might lose custody of their children, a lot of times that's where fathers will go. It could be for legal information; you might offer a family law clinic. You might have an attorney come in and work one-on-one with a father on issues around family law, like custody, visitation, child support, paternity establishment, divorce laws, things like that. The other big one for fathers a lot of times is employment. Right now it's a really good time, because for the first time in almost 20 years there are more jobs out there than there are job seekers.

Agencies that might help recruit fathers: who are those that fathers go to and where they are comfortable asking for help, versus those agencies where there's that image that they aren't really friendly toward fathers? Also, where the kids go with their fathers? One of the ones I suggest is Chuck-E-Cheese. Adults don't go to Chuck-E-Cheese unless they have kids, so if you're going to Chuck-E-Cheese, do you put up a flyer on their bulletin boards? Or have a pamphlet that you put in a display rack? Whatever it is, wherever you're going to recruit, think of where kids go with their fathers. Also, places where mothers go where they might ask for help: then, we're offering them the opportunity to share that information, especially if they're into co-parenting. Organizations that work with children: early childhood programs, childcare organizations, Head Start—they are very friendly toward fathers in many communities. Have you approached them to let them know about the resources you have for fathers of preschool aged children? Other places where you can get your message across include staff meetings. Every month we'd have a staff meeting and say, "let's think of two new arenas where we can go to recruit fathers where we might not have thought of before. What might those look like?" That's it for my part, I'm going to pass it on to Nigel.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much Neil. I'd just like to add one thing to what you were saying about the brochures: I think when you leave a brochure somewhere, we should also try and make sure that staff at the agency or even the Chuck-E-Cheese know about the programs. So, if they see someone looking at a flyer, they can say "Hey that's a great program."

Anyways, let me bring Angel to the table here. Angel is the program supervisor for the Dads Club of Vista Community Clinic in San Diego, and I would like to say I had the pleasure of going to Vista Community Clinic two or three times. It's been a while, but I saw a

previous iteration of their program. I was really impressed then with the work they were doing, and certainly from what I hear Angel's made the program even better since he's been there. It sounds like they're doing a great job. He's been the program supervisor there since February 2016 and currently supervises five case managers, one workshop facilitator, and one data specialist. He's worked a total of ten years in non-profit work where he's provided services focused on food, housing, and employment. He recently received the Employee of the Month award from Vista Community Clinic. He's also received a Community Outreach Partner of the Year Award from the San Diego Hunger Coalition, the Hunger to Health Award from Feeding San Diego, and the Whatever It Takes Award from North County Lifeline. He currently chairs the homeless court steering committee in the area and, like Neil, he's also got three children. He's got a daughter who's 13, a son who's 17, and a son who's 27, so he's got practical experience of being a father and got some great experience of how you adapt outreach and recruitment methods to get guys in and then keep them. Angel, the time is yours to share what you've been doing.

Angel Flores: Thank You Nigel. Hello everyone, good morning, good afternoon. Again, my name is Angel Flores and I'm the supervisor of the Dads Club. I'm really honored today to be able to talk a little bit about how our program started and the services that we provide. We actually started and began our services by holding a focus group. We held that with young fathers and older fathers, English and Spanish speaking, to see what the services that they would be interested in in a program that was catered to fathers. With that list, what we were able to do is create a list of what services they thought were important, and then create a mission and vision and an eligibility platform around those services to better see how we could serve them. The focus group was kind of our beginning cohort of the Dads Club program here in San Diego.

Once we were able to get that focus group and understand our services, the second thing we really wanted to focus on is how to create a logo and use colors so when we're out places they can recognize our program and our services. We used light shirts, we created a logo that was really friendly, and we continue to have our staff wear those shirts. They're more polo type shirts. We also created shirts for our Dads Club participants as well which also has the same logo, so they're also marketing it out. Some other marketing materials with the logo and phone number that we thought were important were pens for when I did presentations, brochures, mugs, backpacks, and lunch containers. These were like little incentives just for doing good work, but again wherever they went to work or wherever they went with these things, people were asking about the program. Then, when we were doing some of the hiring of the case managers, we really wanted to make sure that they had flexible schedules. More like an 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM shift, knowing that some of the fathers might work and might not be able to attend evening workshops, or being able to just kind of meet them where they're at when it comes to staying engaged into our program.

Once we got that all settled, then we really focused on how we're going to do the outreach. We really wanted to start off by identifying right when we got the contract those kinds of agencies that supported us trying to get the funding. So, we reached out to them and said "hey, we got the funding now. Now that you provided those support letters, can I come and do a presentation and tell you how the program is going to be of service in our community?" We used that as a starting point to get partnerships. While we did those, we also started focusing on agencies that have partnered up with other types of funding before, and reaching out to let them know that there's a new program with new services that they should know about. Then, going about in their neighborhood or in their community to find other agencies that served the same type of population.

What we think is important is to create a "cheat sheet" of talking points of the most important things about our program. This is just to appeal to agencies as well as to the fathers about the services that we'll be providing. When we created our fliers and our lister services, we didn't just list the services that we thought we could only provide; we listed services that we knew of with partner agencies where the only way that they would get that service from that other agency was to go through a referral to them. Understanding that, then, we listed it as our own service. We made it seem like these are services that we could provide because we understand that, and we're the only ones that could actually do that referral to get that service for them. For an example, on the downloadable resources in here, you'll find stuff like on our list like tattoo removal. We do a referral to the people that do the tattoo removal. They understand that they could go through us to be able to get that referral to connect them. Or, expungement of criminal records. We work with Clean Slate, so we would refer them to that service. We show that as a service that we provide. As for child support, we actually went to the child support department and created a form with them. Some of the challenges that they were working towards included how to better serve and get dads that owed arrears back into the child support department. We worked out a plan that works best for them.

Also, we understand that a lot of fathers serving time came to us because they were post-incarcerated and they wanted to get some child visitation or custody back into their lives. We understand one of the important things is to be able to get that referral to be able to do that, and so they needed to enroll into our program and complete our court-recognized parenting and healthy relationships workshops. The goal of all of this when we were seeking out agencies is to be able to create Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and to get some of those in place. That way, you can have you or your team go out and do presentations at these sites to get the staff more involved.

The presentations that I would do would have been with the child support department, the probation department, the child welfare department. That's what would allow us to try to work towards getting direct referrals. These are some of the ways that we were able to spread the word in the community. We created flyers that really focused on Medicaid, food stamps, probation, child support, or child welfare treatment center. That was a big place where we noticed that there were a lot of fathers that that really wanted the service. Then we started trying to work towards getting on some directories like the family court directory. Now we're on the probation directory. We thought that if we can get strong partners and be really involved with them, they would actually do some of the recruiting for us, as well as us going into the community. We got to know the individuals and agencies in our community that could better serve some of the same things that the fathers were interested in. We knew that, by doing this, our case managers could only do so much. That's why we thought it was important to partner up with and gain interns and volunteers from universities that have to complete a hundred hours of internship. They help us recruit as well as helping us with resumes or seeking housing and employment to better serve our fathers.

We also understood that there's always meetings out there in the community that focused on food, housing, shelter and employment, and we typically even today are always sending staff to meetings to be able to present our programs and to wear their shirts. From the end of the presentations of that meeting, we're seeking out the key players of who we want to reach out to see if we could do a presentation with their staff: pushing our word out in that way and being able to leave our flyers there. There were also a lot of times that myself and the team would just go to agencies to the request tours, sometimes with appointments and sometimes without. Most times they let us come in, tour the agencies, and worked out a way where we could present to their staff.

We thought it was good to begin these presentations with these agencies with these funny 30-second videos- it was really helpful for us to get them in the mindset of what we're trying to do, the services we provide, and that we really want to help the dads in our community. I think that covers where I'm at, and I'm going to send it back Nigel.

Nigel: Thank you, but I think you've got one more slide, Angel.

Angel Flores: Oh yeah, I'm sorry. What we were also able to do is create a phone screening. Not necessarily that everybody has to complete a phone screening to get into our program, but we used the phone screening for child welfare and child support. What I was able to work with them on is that anyone that checked the box; we would let them know if they got into the program. Anyone that they referred through fax or phone or through the screening, we gave them the updates of where they are at with that program. We prioritized them, because we know if we serve them well that they would continue to send dads our way.

Once we got started on the phone screening, and I do most of those, I really just try to be the listener. A lot of fathers are not able to speak at other places and they just really want to vent a lot of things that they are going through. We knew through the phone screening that we can meet their needs by being able to listen and motivate them, as well as having them explain their story. Then, we can go through the list of services that we provide, so right off the phone screening they would know when the workshop was, who their case manager was, what services they can work on. So, they knew exactly what they're signing up for even before they sign up. That's why we emphasize in the workshops that if we helped you get a job, these managers are flexible to finish out these workshops one-on-one with you. We don't use that as the first one; it is just only if they're unable to attend the workshops. After the phone screen, I usually send a text of the place, the location of where they would go, the time, and who their case manager is, and who to ask for. They usually respond "thank you" or something like that. So, I really try to build that rapport over the phone in the beginning, so that even before we see them they're already beginning to feel connected. Thanks a lot Nigel, I think that was the last slide.

Nigel Vann: Thanks Angel. I think we've got just a few minutes where we can respond to a few questions on recruitment before we go to retention. In fact, if I could just ask you, Angel: I know that you mentioned earlier that when you first got started with your recruitment plan, you ended up having to change things a little bit. Could you say a bit about how that happened? What you tried, what maybe didn't work quite as well, how you adapted your plan?

Angel Flores: In the beginning, we decided "let's not overwhelm them, and let's just try to provide these workshop series for one hour." But as time went on, we realized that it was even more challenging for them to come than for a longer period of time. That's why we decided to now bundle them up. Then we moved on to starting to do it for five weeks, two hours long, and by doing that it allowed more retention of the dads, just knowing that they can complete that within a manageable amount of time. What we also learned is that when we were in a directory, let's say for an example, the courthouse, some of the places that have parenting may charge. So, we came to understand that if we put it in a directory, we have to put some symbol or something to show that it's free of cost. That way, we would get referrals directly. So, through the services of our focus group, and then understanding our population once we get started, and even through our flow chart, we knew that we had to create something in the beginning. But, as time was going on and as we were learning our community and agencies and how we were going to provide those services, we had to continue to tweak up our program to really fit father's needs.

Nigel Vann: I think I said this at the beginning as well, but I think that every program has to adapt what they do. You start out with this great plan, but then you realize how it's not working quite the way you thought, so maybe we need to try this and that. Now, there's one thing that neither you or Neil addressed so this is a question for both of you: I'm just wondering, Angel, have you worked at all with local media? The TV, the radio, the newspaper, to get stories or even just to have ads on the radio or anything? And then I'll ask you, Neil, for your thoughts on that. Anything specifically with the media in your local area?

Angel Flores: What I could say is that they did a story on us when we first got the funding for our clinic. There was a big announcement made through our clinic. Other ways that we really get our stuff through the media, or especially social media? I mean obviously we have a Facebook that we utilize, but also to get us and our logo to the city that we're in: other agencies being able to use our logos as a symbol of our partnership. When they're presenting or we're working together on something, they also use our logo as well. We're just trying to make the logo stand out as a place where you would understand that there's a service that Vista Community Clinic has that's wanting to serve fathers.

Nigel Vann: Okay, well thanks. To Neil: have you got any tips to people on working with the media?

Neil Tift: A lot of times the media wants a hook. I mean, what's the story, what why would people want to read it, why would they send a reporter out? Typically, we'll find a function. For a couple years in Minnesota we had the Big Toys for Big Boys event. They would send a media and photographer because we had a hot air balloon, we had an ambulance, we had a fire truck, a dump truck, a race car. Dads could bring their kids and explore all of these vehicles. So, if it's noteworthy and positive.

We also had someone from the Arizona Republic a couple years ago do a story on Mother's Day about a mom where the dad took the kids away and killed them. That was the story on Mother's Day about a father. We approached them and said, "you know, you can do stories on that about it, but that's not a way to honor mothers or fathers." I think the media needs to be aware of what it is, because you need to look at what they want to hear about. If it's a positive portrayal of fathers and their kids, if it's an event that is noteworthy, typically if there's a hook they'll want to do it, but you got to have something that you know of ahead of time. What we say to the media, because we get contacted every year around Father's Day, is that we say "you know moms are moms 365 days a year and dads are dads 365 days a year. Let's not just do stories on dads the third week in June, but let's do it in February and October and other times too." Sometimes they will they will see the importance of that, but I would say that having a plan and knowing what you want to portray and how you want to do it. Media typically want to then get involved.

Nigel Vann: Great, thanks. The media can definitely be your friend, but they can also have stories there that aren't exactly what you want, so I really like the point about contacting the media if there is a story that's not particularly father-friendly and exploring ways to see what's going on and how we can change that narrative a bit.

Now we've already got some other questions on recruitment but I'll hold those until the Q&A session at the end. Please do keep putting your questions in the "ask a question box" down there in the bottom right hand corner and we'll get to as many as we can at the end of the webinar. As I said at the beginning, if we don't get it time to a chance to answer all the questions, I will ask the presenters to respond to these in writing and then we'll post them on the website later. For now, I want to just take a couple of minutes and go back to that practice brief that I mentioned at the beginning and give you a few more things that they came up with there in terms of retention. As we said at the beginning, it's not just about getting guys into these programs. If we're going to be effective and if we're going to have an impact on child well-being, which is the ultimate outcome from most parent programs, or even if just going to have outcomes for the fathers, even if it's just getting the guys a job, what helps keep the guys in the program long enough to meet those outcomes? One thing is to certainly make sure your program is father-friendly. Make sure that you have the right balance of duration and intensity. Angel mentioned in response to the earlier question that they started out with a 10-week program where they met once a week, and then they decided to change that to five weeks where you meet twice a week. That improved their attendance. You may also have to prioritize program goals. In some cases, fathers come in perhaps because they've got a greater interest in getting the job than they have in talking about parenting. But then, if they get that job, maybe they don't finish the parenting course. You've got to balance which goals you stress in your program, which is more important. If parenting is more important, then perhaps you've got to structure it a little bit differently, so you do all the parenting content upfront. You've certainly got to ease the barriers to help guys keep coming, because as we all know: life happens. Even if a father wants to be there, he can't always get there. The more you help him, the more he gets involved in training courses and educational courses and with changes in the employment situation, the harder it is for him to come to some of the parenting or peer support groups. So, how can we help him manage that?

Also in the brief they list what they call "promising strategies." They did clarify that the research didn't absolutely say if these things work or not, but I think you'd probably agree with me as you look at it that a lot of these things are crucial to the success of a program. Certainly, being able to provide food. I always think of food as meeting a physical need for sure, but also creating an opportunity just to break bread together and just to talk on an informal basis. You can't beat that for really getting to know the guys you're working with. Certainly, staying in touch with them if they don't show up. Giving them a call, finding out what's going on, providing some incentives, or maybe some makeup sessions. I know we're going to hear about most of these things from Neil and Angel. But, before we move on again, we are going to do our second poll question.

"If you provide direct services for fathers, which of the following strategies if you found most effective for keeping them involved in your program?"

And again, if you've got something else that's not on here, stick it in that chat box and we'll capture it. Thank you very much. I'll just give you a couple more seconds, but it's looking like you're going for the first the first bullet. Close to our fifty percent of you are choosing "maintaining a father friendly environment" because certainly if dads don't feel welcome they aren't going to stay. In fact, the way the bullets are listed is very much like last time. The first one is getting the most responses, and the last two are coming in second and third. So thank you very much for that, and I'll now give Mr. Tift back the microphone to share his wisdom on retention strategies.

Neil Tift: All right thank you. Retention means you get the guys back, obviously: the second, the fifth, the tenth time. One of the big ones I've found is that we need to respect men's learning styles. I'm going to be careful; you don't we wouldn't want to say that men and women have opposite learning styles. The idea is that when men come to a group with other guys there are certain things that work with them well for men's learning styles. You start with content that they're comfortable with. You start with information on setting limits, disciplining kids, or traditional activities and content that fathers are comfortable sharing. Men's learning styles tend to be very hands-on.

When I was a home visitor with the child crisis program, we'd go into a home and we'd talk to dad about a certain approach to talking to his child or playing with his child or setting limits with his child. We didn't use the term "discipline," we used the term "setting limits" because it offered them more tools in their toolbox. Men's learning styles: when they take information, they don't just apply it. They want to shape it, mold it to who they are and to their personality, and into their child's personality or their family style. Men's learning style is very action-oriented. Blending, making, picking things up, coordinating things, handling activities. If the



mom isn't able to breastfeed, how do you mix up the baby formula for the for the newborn? Demonstrating it and letting the fathers do it themselves. So, men's learning styles are very active and hands-on.

Paternal parenting styles are very important. Again, not just with home visiting, but anytime you're talking with dads. There are so many differences in many two-parent male/female households. Moms tend to focus on emotional expression with their children, dads tend to help their children focus on emotional regulation. So, moms might give the kids more words how to express their feelings, but a lot of times dads show them how to express it. Dads are more likely than moms to tell a child when it's okay to cry and not cry. If they're getting bullied should they fight or walk away from it? Emotional regulation is one of the most critical skills the child needs to develop to have healthy normal relationships and keep a job, if they know how to manage their emotions in appropriate ways. Boys especially need a masculine role model to learn how to handle that type. Paternal parenting styles are very important. As I mentioned, that's one of the workshops we do: maternal/paternal parenting styles. Staff and family members really need to respect that and understand that.

Staff who have common experiences with fathers: we at the Father's Resource Center and in other places absolutely hired women to work with fathers, but they had to have some common experiences. If you're working with a lot of divorced fathers, maybe have staff that are comfortable talking about divorce, separation, co-parenting, reuniting, you know, all the issues like that. If you work with fathers who are combat veterans, I think it's especially important that you have staff who've been there and done that. Or, guys who come out of prison: not short term jail, but long-term incarceration, you might want to especially have a guy who's been there and done that. The fathers themselves are going to have more respect for them because they understand that this is some experience they've shared together and it's real for them both. Staff must be sensitive to the barriers that fathers confront, especially low-income fathers. A lot of times, low-income fathers are excluded from the system. They don't really benefit from a lot of the opportunities that other fathers do.

Again, I was working with a group of women who were running a father's program and they were saying they were thinking of dropping this father's group that meets weekly, and I said "why, do you not have people showing up?" And the lady said they have almost 30 guys coming. I said "well, why would you drop it?" She said "well, they're always arguing with us." Well, a lot of guys in groups are comfortable with debate. There's dialogue, which is back-and-forth, and then there's debate. We have staff and they know that when they're running groups with men and with fathers of different backgrounds and different experiences, that debate is okay as long as it's respectful. It's okay. They're going to challenge the authority, they're going to challenge what's going. That was the top vote getter here for the poll question that was just posed by Nigel: a father-friendly environment.

I've provided a tool that I developed in 1992 and 1993. I call it the Assessment Guide on Father Inclusive Practices. It asks a series of questions in seven different domains: the physical environment, the organizational structure, the staff training. If you have staff that work with fathers on an annual basis, when you have a performance evaluation of the staff: do you evaluate them on their effectiveness of working with fathers? That could be something that shows you're a father-friendly environment and that staff are comfortable with it. You train staff on how to do that. If you have a diaper deck in the woman's room, do you have a diaper deck in the men's room? When you walk into the foyer, or the common area if you're a large agency, do you have materials that might appeal to men or fathers to read and not just for moms or women to read? If you take a look historically at resources for men and fathers in the United States, they're very different than what we've developed for women and moms. Resources for moms empower them, and that's good, it should. Father's work should never be about taking anything away from moms. But, it's definitely about how to help dads.

Most resources for dad look at their deficit: Child Support Enforcement, Department of Corrections, probation and parole. We need to look at the strengths of fathers so that when fathers come in the door, we start with their strengths. What works well when they're communicating with their children? What works well for them when they're setting limits with their children or teaching values to their children? We need to look at fathers' strengths, not their deficits. That's when they come back. We need to have high expectations of fathers. When they come in the door, we really want them to achieve and to do well. As I mentioned before, we do focus on and we advocate for fathers. For years I've called myself a dadvocate. Alan Shetland and I have used this for a long time: dadvocates. We advocate for dads, but it's never at the expense of moms. Fatherhood work isn't taking funding away from mom programs or bashing the system that helps women, but it's bringing fathers into the picture because a lot of times fathers are seen



as part of the problem. We're saying no, they need to be part of the solution. We want our resources to be affordable and accessible.

When we do parenting classes we have moms and dads, when we do other activities we have moms and dads. When I did anger management for fathers: it's just men. It's just guys dealing with their anger issues on emotional regulation and how to be safe around your kids. I said "this is different from domestic violence, this is anger management." You want to have these programs that are very father-specific: some should be men for men or fathers for fathers. One of the things that we do in our programs is occasionally, every six months or a year, we'll survey the dads coming in and ask: what are the services that we're not providing that we should? This is one of the ways that we found out that fathers wanted some of the programs offered in a third language. That's also how we developed the anger management part, because we had so many guys that were coming to the Law Clinic which we offer. The Family Law Clinic is a great way to get fathers in the door. They would be angry because they wouldn't get their kids, so then we said well forget the legal information, because they're struggling. We also need to give them skills and some tools on how to deal with their anger. Start where the fathers are, not what we think they should be. When you do groups, have the group or have the guys themselves set the rules. The first week, we have a big flip chart where we ask guys what should the rules be. We let them generate them. For example, what you hear here stays here. We insist on respectful language. In some of the groups, with some of the tougher dads, we don't have a rule that you can't swear, but we absolutely have a rule that you never use language that's racist or sexist or homophobic. That's not okay. If they do violate the rules, we have the fathers themselves enforce the rules. They're the ones that say it's not okay and they need to stop, and they're going to do something about it they want the rules that can be measured.

Next, retention strategy. Most guys, when we problem-solve, we're win-lose. When I watch the Minnesota Vikings, I want them to win. I don't want them to lose. But when I'm having a disagreement with my wife or my foster kids or my daughter, I need to shift to a win-win mindset. So, instead of humiliating somebody I had an argument with, I want to hear what they're saying and them to hear what I'm saying. Many men don't have opportunities for that win-win approach. For problem solving for families, I think it's very important that men see that if I disagree with my wife or the mother of my children, that she's right and I can find a way for us both to be right. He doesn't have to control her or say that she's wrong. The last one is look at what the stereotyping language can do. How does that harm us when it comes to talking about fathers babysitting for their children? "my father used to play with my brother and me in the yard. Mom would come out and say 'you're tearing up the grass!' dad would say 'we're not raising grass, we're raising boys.'" This is Harmon Killebrew from the ol' Minnesota Twins. "Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children and no theories." Whenever I do workshops and stuff, I try and find some quotes that are relevant. Some are humorous, or videos that I you might refer to. The idea is to have some fun and to interject something that's powerful and inspiring and uplifting, so then when they walk out, they feel that we really made a difference for them coming to this session. That's it for Neil.

Nigel Vann: Thank you Neil. Yes, thank you for the reminder that when we're talking with dads, we've got to have fun. I do want to just remind you all briefly that Neil mentioned his assessment guide, which you can download in the downloadable resources box there. There's also some resources for a father friendliness assessment in the in the Clearinghouse toolkit, which you can visit. There's a link to that actual resource list in the helpful resources list in the downloadable resources.

I'll also remind you that there's three Dads Club resources there in that demo box that Angel provided very graciously. He's provided an example of the brochure they used, an example of a flyer they used, and also a list of the benefits that are available to dads in the program. And so, with that, I'll bring Angel back to the mic. Tell us: how do you keep those guys involved the Vista Community Clinic, Angel?

Angel Flores: I think one of the first things we thought was important was to create different sites. North County is a pretty rural area. They have some city areas, but we were trying to meet them where they're at. We decided to create something where they can go to workshops in the coastal or inland or right in the middle. We provide about four to five different sites where we provide our workshops. When I'm phone screening and I find out what city they're in, I try to get them to the workshop closer to where they live. It's just easier for them. Or, the city maybe where they work. That might be the area where we're providing the workshop; whatever works best for the father.

I could say that one of the biggest things that we enjoy doing is providing food workshops. Food is something that I guess fathers really enjoy, especially when they're participating, and they are in that time where, you know, they might be a little hungry because they just came out of work. This just allows them to start really good conversation. We decided to take it one step further. One of the things we do is that at our workshops is we provide food. We'll go to the food bank before the workshops or earlier in the day. We'll pick up a lot of—it's really free food recovery programs, of food, of stores that were getting rid of stuff. We would pick up that food. Usually it's fruits and vegetables and bread and other things. We would just put it on the table in the back of the room and bring bags, and dads were allowed to take as much healthy food, knowing that they have to have their mind right as they're working on their gold plans and stuff. And, they have something to bring home from the workshop. We also added it to the case management component of home visiting. We thought it was important that when case managers are meeting dads for the first time and they're building that rapport, they bring a box of food. Typically we try to bring them food. We try to figure out what challenges they face: if they're homeless or not, if they're in housing or not. We try to be mindful of what food we do bring. We're constantly bringing food to our workshops and for home visiting.

Then, we always have interns and volunteers help out as well. They help out and set up the tables while the facilitators are setting up the workshop. They're kind of working in that cohesive team so it doesn't really fall always on the staff or the facilitator to be able to do these things.

What we decided to do to keep the retention going is first, we complete this enrollment day. Enrollment day is a time of the month where if I'm doing phone screening, I'm trying to get them to come to this one particular day. It's all hands on deck. All the case managers go, as well as the facilitator. So, they could kind of get familiar with the faces that they'll be working with. Once they're signed up for the workshop and they've filled out all the intake papers and the surveys, we would give them a gift card. We did that in the beginning, not that we kept that in the program. Again, our program changes as it goes, but in the beginning to get our names out we were doing that at our enrollment clinic. We felt that it was really helpful, and we really never marketed that they would they would get it at the clinic. So, it was more of an "oh, oh wow, I can get into this." It really got them to get more relaxed and helped us be able to build that rapport with them.

When I'm working with the case managers, I really focus on that first appointment with that contact, with the case manager and with the client. We talked about what I go through through phone screens, so all case managers kind of know what I'm talking to them about and so they could kind of get that feel. When I'm handling a soft handoff to them, they know exactly where to pick up. They would say "hey, I spoke with Angel and he assigned me to you, and I see some of the things that you might want to work on. Let's create some days and times that that could work out." It really made it more personable because we use their name and we're contacting them. Sometimes we'll do it through text. You know, whatever it makes them have that connection with us.

Once we did that, then when we're identifying the needs, we're really focused on what's the most important need. For them and for us it's usually transportation. We quickly start working on if, you know, if you know you are driving, then do you need gas cards? Gas cards are used for three different things: workshops, going the work, and seeing the children. So that's the what we use those for. And then transportation: Compass Cars, clothes for interviewing, and we use that too, depending on what they identify themselves as their needs. Then, sometimes things just come up and then they might need that type of service because of a situation that they found themselves in. We also explained how you can earn more, like an incentive. In house, we always say "hey, let's try to use about \$250 per dad," but on the outside they don't know that. So, we just usually say "hey, now that you're attending the workshops, I see you're really motivated. Let me go ahead and give you some of these gift cards to continue to encourage some of the success that we've seen from you so far."

Then, when the case manager makes that initial contact, we understand that they have to be really good listeners. Every time we're meeting new dads, we always talk about how there's never a service just particularly for dads. That's why our case management is so important for retention, because they're working on the needs that the father really wants to get to. It allows more success when you're combining it with the workshops.

At the workshops, we do enjoy doing funny videos. We usually use the beginning of the workshops as the, you know, "let's get some food, let's listen to some videos, let's get the workbooks out and some of the things that you might have worked on from last week," and we'll start addressing it. It just allows a good lead way for the facilitator to then begin the next session. But, right in the

beginning of it, we really like to talk about the importance of the program and how important it is that they're a part of something that hasn't really been created and the area that we in. That it's a service for fathers, and how important it is for them to follow through so this service can continue for the fathers that truly need them. Then we might have some testimonials. We'll have some graduates come and say what our services have helped them with. It's usually two to three minutes, but it's really to get the new guys that are in our group to understand that they might have similar situations. That's how the connection would be built from it.

Then we also do some basic ground rules. Then the other ground rules that we add to it are some of the ones that the dads in the group create within themselves. It's just so everybody could be mindful of how the workshops are going to be held, and to show compassion and empathy when they're kind of going through these types of challenges because we're serving dads from all walks of life. The fun things we try to get them involved is depending on where they're at, and what event that they might be interested in while they're in the Dads Club. Just recently we had a Father's Day event. We typically hold two events a year, and we just really love the joy. We show some of the videos from the last event of what we do and how important it is for them to bring their kids and family to these events It's really, you know, we make it a fun thing. A learning experience, but also us working together to work on the goals that they set for themselves.

Towards the end for those who are graduating...you know, people do start our program at different times. You will get a certificate and it's signed by me and a facilitator. It has you know the logo that's needed in it from our funder as well as our logo. It's really to show the appreciation. Now this one, it is court recognized. We do like to encourage them to finish out the workshops because that is the only way they would get their certificate. But, we understood that they could always come back to do the workshops. Sometimes there's dads that might have felt like they weren't ready for a program in the beginning because of one thing or another, and then decide to come back. We just pick up where we left off and continue to encourage that father and talk to him the importance of the reasons why he came back. And we address those and then continue on the goal plan that he created. When we do that, we really try to understand the most important things to address with them. We definitely tell them how we're going to work out the phase of the goal plan. We're going to address the most immediate needs, then the medium needs, and then the things that might take a long time.

So, for an example: housing. We might work with you to get on some of the affordable housing lists, but we might have to work on some things today for where you're going to stay at until they call you for some of the housing. So you have to be really flexible on the goal plans, but having them really helps you understand the things we could address right now or some of the things that we have to work on now that are going to be helpful for you down the line. We also let them know that we'll provide them support letters if it's for the court, or probation, for their partner if it's needed, or whatever they feel like a support letter is needed for. We're more than willing to share a support letter of some of the things that they did, or a release (if they're working with their partners) of some of the accomplishments that they're have. We find this really successful. We'll just be able to offer another service. It's something that they're really interested in.

Then at the end of the year, it's the holiday time. Right now, we're talking about what families we're going to identify to provide them turkeys. At the end of the year during the holidays, we have holiday baskets where they would get toys and stuff like that. Sometimes you have to start working on the list in September or October for the holidays that are going to happen in November in December. We tell them that when we provide you these gifts, you could say Santa gave it to them or you gave it to them. The important thing is for them to spend time during the holidays with their children.

Then, reminding them of some of the supportive services that we offer, so like assisting with driver's license. The biggest accomplishment for our Dads Club program is jobs. We always find them the jobs. Our spiel is "hey, if you're really seeking work, we could find you a job within 10 days. Just continue to work with us on the resume and application and our generic application, so you could continue to apply for jobs. We will support you with transportation and things you might need once you land that job." Here's some feedback from some of the clients, and the photos that you were seeing during my slides are families that were in our program.

"I'm so grateful for the Dads Club. They have done so much for reuniting my family and Vista Community Clinic has been a big part of the three daughter's lives from birth on. We love you so much."



“Awesome program to help bring back the family unit before it is long gone. Dads are important too.”

Another participant: “this program has allowed me to grow into a better father figure and taught me how to better communicate with my son.”

“This program has helped me in every aspect of life.”

We love sharing those kinds of stories with the dads and to know that we’ll be there for them if they’re ready, or not. To stay in contact with us, and we do follow up six months from now to see how they’re going, or to see if they need to come back for more services. We’ve learned in our program to better cater our fathers is to really have our case managers understand our fathers and meet them where they’re at, and then by providing a workshop curriculum that is fun and an active for them. I think that covers it.

Nigel Vann: Yes, thanks very much Angel. It is really important to be able to share those kind of stories with other dads, particularly can hear it firsthand from the dads. If you hear that this program is doing all these great things, then you’re going to want to be part of that. Thank you. In terms of the videos that you mentioned a couple of times, we had hoped to show a few samples of those. Unfortunately, with the technical difficulties, we have not been able to do that, but you can find them. The videos that Angel uses most of the time are actually the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse Public Service Announcements, and then we have some dad jokes on the website. You can find those on our website under the multimedia section. I think you’ll really enjoy picking the dad jokes; they’re a lot of fun.

We’ve got quite a few questions here, so we’ll address as many as we can and for those we can’t we will ask the presenters to respond and we’ll post them with the other materials. Let me start with you Neil. There was a question about the Fatherhood is Sacred curriculum and how it’s being used and who’s using it. Could you briefly say how many programs are using that? Is it only programs that are working with Native Americans? How widespread is it?

Neil Tift: Sure. Right now, for the Fatherhood is Sacred Motherhood is Sacred programs, we’ve trained facilitators on 210 reservations around the US and Canada since 2002. I have facilitated the groups here at NAFFA, and they’re for both native and non-native parents, but if you contact NAFFA we can give you information about signing up. Al Pooley, our director, can come to your community and offer the training if you have 12 facilitators. Or, you can come here in Mesa. We also offer it occasionally in different places: Montana, California, North Dakota, for when we have enough people there who want to have that.

Nigel Vann: Okay, great. And one more question for you, Neil. There’s a couple of questions about the marketing plan that you referred to at the beginning and someone’s wondering if there’s a sample of a good marketing plan that you could direct them to. Or, if you could briefly go over some of the elements of an effective marketing plan.

Neil Tift: Sure. “Marketing plan” is the more generic term. The “recruitment plan” is often what it is called, or an “outreach plan.” Any of those, I think, you can use interchangeably for a pilot program. The idea is that it’s generated from the top, so you get support from the board or from upper management or however your structure is. Then, staff are recognized for going out and doing that. We do it several different ways. We have that here, but this is for a specific curriculum. At other organizations where I’ve been, what we do is we assign different duties and we decide different priorities. One quarter we might focus on early childhood programs, for the next quarter you might focus on family resource centers. You don’t have to do that, but you determine certain categories where you want to do the outreach and the recruitment, and then you designate people that would do that.

One of the things that we’ve found that’s been really pretty effective, when I ran the Father’s Resource Center, is once a month all of our staff would go tour another program where they offered resources for fathers. So, we’d go to a father’s program in a different part of the metro area and we’d meet with the staff and get a tour and get a sense for what they’re doing. That’s how we found out about principles of case management; that’s how we found out about the different techniques to work with fathers of different backgrounds. The idea is that the staff are supported in doing that. Say it’s Saturday and you’re out running around and you end up finding an opportunity to tell some people about your program: that’s just part of your duties. The idea is that everybody is aware of what you offer, what the criteria are for people to come. You carry those materials with you. That’s part of how you get people to know about your program. There’s direct and indirect outreach. Direct is when you do it yourself; indirect is when you have other



agencies send that information to you or other agencies refer clients to you. That's a big one too. If you work with programs that serve families or serve moms and they don't have something specifically for dads or they don't have a staff person skilled in specifically working with fathers, whether it's male or female, they will then refer that father to you.

Nigel Vann: Great, thanks Neil. We're getting a lot of questions today so I'm pretty sure we're not going to be able to answer them all, but I will be asking the presenters to respond to some of them. Angel, somebody wanted to clarify how many employees you have doing the work? I think you did mention that beginning, but if you could tell us again how many employees you have and what kind of roles they're playing?

Angel Flores: Yes. We have one workshop facilitator, we have five case managers, and we have one data specialist, and then I do all the recruitment.

Nigel Vann: Okay, and then there was another question about how you get the dads involved in the phone screening? Is that something that they need to do before they join the program?

Angel Flores: So the way we get them to do it: first, it's on our brochures and all our marketing material, our phone number, so everywhere that's left that's how they call. And then when we create these partnerships with the agencies, we also have them call or use a referral form to be able to have them call. It's not necessarily that everyone has to get phone screened in order to get in our program. If it comes to it where it's that day and they couldn't do it, we will still invite them to the workshop. We'll always have a case manager there at the workshop where they could then complete that phone screening in person, as well as the intake and then the surveys to enroll them in that program. Those are the partner agencies that we work directly with.

For an example, Alpha Project: we do the workshops right on-site. We're there two days a week, so we don't do phone screenings. We come right on-site, and we already know the two days that we go and they're already ready to enroll. We've already left the intake package, so they're already filled out even before we get there. We check it over, ask any questions, and then begin with them on the surveys.

Nigel Vann: Okay, I have a couple more questions for you. I'm not sure we're going to have time to really get into them properly, but one is a follow-up to that you were talking to, Angel, about helping guys with child support and custody. The question is: are you also able to help them in terms of shared parenting, just to have a bit more time with their kids? Is that something you can get in to?

Angel Flores: So one of our partners is the family law facilitator. We had him come and walk through what that position looks like when people are getting services there. We partnered up with them. When it comes to child visitation, some of the key components that we learned from his presentation was really understanding what kind of connection the father has with the child right now, what is he trying to have, and what he should have ready before he goes to the family law facilitator. It's understanding that you might not get full custody if you haven't seen your child in three to four years or that you might have to get supervised. I kind of wake them up realistically on where they're at, and then our partnership allows me to refer them over where they would get the forms completed. I help them understand that they might have to go through the process of mediation to really focus on that. In the meantime, the important thing that I try to work with them on is preparing them for what that is going to look like when mediation comes. So, let's get that parenting and certificate under your belt before the court date, as well as making sure we have suitable housing and employment, and also making sure that there's no arrears in child support. Let's work on some of those while we're waiting for your court date so that when you do go to mediation, you have an understanding of the courts and an understanding of their interest for the child and what it might have to look like before they allow some of the visitation to actually take effect. So, that's our partnership.

Nigel Vann: Yes, there's just so much involved, and you help them with all of it. I'm going to have ask you to respond some of the other questions later guys.

Neil Tift: Yes, fine.



Nigel Vann: I do want to point out that you can see the email contact for the presenters there, so if you want to follow up with them directly to get a quicker response, feel free to do that. We are at that time though, so I do just want to briefly give our Office of Family Assistance representative John Allen just a quick minute to leave us with any closing thoughts, and I'm going to come back to Angel and Neil for any final thoughts as well. So, John, have you got any words you wanted to leave us with?

John Allen: I just want to thank Angel and Neil for their presentations today and providing us with more information to enrich the field and practice, as well as in their research areas, with this information. I just want to say to those that are on the phone: thank you for attending our webinar. It's our intention to enrich the field of father engagement. So, thank you Neil and thank you Angel.

Nigel Vann: thank you John. So Neil, any final word of wisdom to the world?

Neil Tift: To the world you might be one person, but to one person you might be the world. That's what we tell our dads. If anybody's interested in discussing bringing training, they can contact my email or website or my phone because we'd like to bring this whoever who might be interested in offering opportunities for enhanced father engagement.

Nigel Vann: Thank you very much Neil, we appreciate the words of wisdom. Angel?

Angel Flores: The only thing I want people to leave with is to really understand that in the beginning, partnerships and referrals could be really critical and important to provide a quality service. Understand that case managers have to listen to the father's needs to better serve them and to keep them the retention going. And, the flexibility of the times of the workshops: make sure there's something where they can do make ups, and then possibly train the case managers to do those workshops one-on-one to finish them out if need to be. Meet them where they're at. If it's a location where you have to drive to try to meet them where they're at, or meet them with what kind of services they're seeking out while you're creating that goal plan. Understand that the supportive services are really important to keep them involved into the program, but more importantly, to get them back into their kids' lives.

Nigel Vann: Okay, I appreciate it. And Angel, there was one question I really did want to ask you and I'm going to ask you to respond to in writing but I'm just wondering if you could respond to very very briefly because I know we're over time. There was a question about how you help the undocumented fathers. Obviously, you've got quite a few of those in the San Diego area, so is that something you can just give us like a 30 second snap answer on? Or would you prefer to wait for that in writing?

Angel Flores: No, I could go ahead and answer that. We do help really undocumented men. We would meet them in the garage or something like that. We provide our workshops English and in Spanish. If the dad really feels uncomfortable attending the workshops, we'll meet them one on one and do the Spanish ones one on one, or maybe in small groups with them. But we understand that they're working towards employment. What we try to do is create them their own business and we try to find either child care or landscaping or things that they're good at. We also try to connect them to services where they could find gigs and little small things, and then we connect them to partner agencies to work on documentation as well as a safety plan. We provide them food and services just like everyone else.

Nigel Vann: Okay, well, thanks again to Angel and Neil for sharing this information. I thank all the attendees for their time, and again, we will be posting all these materials and responses to questions we didn't get to on the website as soon as we can. I wish you all a good day, thank you very much.