

Around the Regions

Region 5

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REGION 5 – CHICAGO

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Helping Men Become Responsible, Committed, Involved Fathers

Region V Fatherhood Initiative:

Building and Enhancing Fatherhood/Male Involvement

Region V Program-Wide Commitment to Father Involvement

The Fatherhood Initiative is one of the top priorities for the Region V Administration for Children and Families (ACF). For this reason, Region V ACF has designed its fatherhood efforts to carry out identified objectives. The objectives include:

- Promoting father-friendly policies and practices across all ACF programs.
- Providing technical assistance to states, tribes, and grantees in developing and implementing fatherhood and male involvement programs.
- Enhancing partnerships among Child Support, Child Care, and Head Start.
- Developing the early literacy of children to improve school readiness, and helping men become involved in their child's development.
- Bridging Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage Initiatives through a continuum of collaboration.
- Establishing partnerships with organizations and professional associations with a vested interest in supporting fathers and males along with their families.

ACF Region V's continued commitment to the Fatherhood Initiative is illustrated by the following activities:

- Providing information and forums in preparation for the funding opportunities for the Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage initiative under the Deficit Reduction Act in 2006. Total funding approved by Congress was \$750 million for five years, of which \$100 million was appropriated for the healthy marriage initiative and \$50 million for the fatherhood initiative.
- Awarding supplemental funds to Head Start programs in 2004-2005 to integrate Fatherhood activities into ongoing operations, participating in fatherhood conferences and trainings and funding the 2001 Fatherhood Special Initiative (FSI) grants.
- Leading the development and continuing the distribution of the "Father-Friendliness Organizational Self-Assessment and Planning Tool" (a.k.a. "Father-Friendly Assessment").
- Encouraging states within the region to assess and improve policies to be more father-friendly.
- Assisting states, tribes, and grantees to integrate fatherhood and male involvement programs into service delivery systems.
- Providing on-going support for fatherhood collaborations.
- Participating in reading essays for the annual Illinois Fatherhood Initiative Fatherhood Essay Contest.
- Supporting the on-going efforts of the Region V Fatherhood Workgroup.
- Completing and tracking the ACF Fatherhood Strategic Plan.
- Maintaining and enhancing the Region V Fatherhood Listserv.
- Remaining involved with a variety of innovative father and male involvement partnerships and activities.
- Providing father-focused workshops at conferences like the 2006 International Fatherhood Conference sponsored by the National Partnership for Community Leadership (NPCL), the 2006 Chicago Fatherhood/Healthy Relationships Conference, and various 2006 and 2007 State Head Start Association conferences.
- Providing training on the *Building Blocks for Father Involvement* to Region V ACF staff and Technical Assistance Network contractual staff.
- Offering fifteen cluster-training events on the *Building Blocks for Father Involvement* to assist 128 Head Start grantees that participated in the Father Factor Institute in strengthening their father involvement programs.

To help you navigate through Region V Fatherhood Materials, the following quick links will take you right to these topics.

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Fatherhood Funding

The latest Fatherhood grants, announced in October 2006, allocated \$50 million annually for responsible fatherhood programs. The measures were part of a bill that reauthorized welfare reform. The fatherhood programs are to promote the objectives of the ACF Fatherhood Initiative. The key authorized activities include: Healthy Marriage Services, Responsible Parenting and Economic Stability for Fathers.

Responsible Fatherhood Grant Awards

Illinois

Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County Inc., Chicago; City of Chicago, Chicago; Circle of Parents, Chicago.

Indiana

Indiana Department of Correction, Indianapolis; Indiana Youth Institute, Indianapolis.

Michigan

Detroit Workforce Development Department, Michigan Works! Detroit; Baraga Houghton Keweenaw Child Development Board Inc., Houghton; Community Action Agency of Jackson, Jackson; Oakland Family Services, Pontiac; Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency (OLHSA), Pontiac; Wayne-Metropolitan Community Action Agency, Wyandotte.

Minnesota

Urban Ventures Leadership Foundation, Minneapolis; Resource Inc., Minneapolis; Minnesota Council on Crime and Justice, Minneapolis; Goodwill Industries, Inc. St. Paul.

Ohio

Lighthouse Youth Services, Inc., Cincinnati; the RIDGE Project, Defiance; WSOS Community Action Commission Inc., Freemont.

Wisconsin

Rosalie Manor Community and Family Services Inc., Milwaukee.

Region V's funding for fatherhood and on-going funding opportunities have contributed to the further development of many Early Head Start and Head Start fatherhood / male involvement programs. In 2005, fatherhood grants were awarded to 191 of the 232 Head Start grantees in the region. Grantees' applications described efforts in father involvement and explained how these funds improve and sustain father involvement. Funding levels were based on each grantee's funded enrollment level.

Approaches in developing and enhancing fatherhood / male involvement programs have varied a great deal. The agencies undertook a variety of efforts to make their sites friendlier. Some agencies used father-child photographs, posters and flyers. Other agencies simply provided reading materials that were geared towards the interests of fathers. Additionally, agencies implemented many father-child programs that included hands-on activities and supported family and early literacy. Agencies have also instituted a range of efforts to bridge Healthy Marriage and responsible Fatherhood.

Fatherhood Review

In April 2004, ACF Region V reviewed grantee activities at sites that received fatherhood funding and demonstration grants to determine best practices and lessons learned. The review is entitled “Programs that Promote Father Involvement and Children’s Early Literacy and Language Development.” (Please click [here](#) to view the Review and Analysis.)



The review presents best practices highlighted by the grantees and offers advice to Head Start agencies starting a new fatherhood program. The report also summarizes recommendations and lessons learned from the grantees. Here are just some of the ideas:

- ✓ Use teams of staff and parents to visit each site and conduct the “Father-Friendly Assessment”;
- ✓ Develop a database to collect and track extended families’ contact information;
- ✓ Use actual photos of children and men from the site to make handmade posters instead of purchasing commercial posters;
- ✓ Dedicate a Family Services Coordinator to a caseload strictly for non-custodial parents;
- ✓ Offer job-training programs for fathers;
- ✓ Offer a “coffee house setting” for culturally diverse fathers to have a place where they can come and talk about education and raising children.

The Fatherhood Review contains many recommendations made by Early Head Start and Head Start staff. Below are some of the recommendations:

- ✓ Partner with other agencies and build community networks.
- ✓ Conduct a survey at the beginning of the program(s).
- ✓ Keep surveys open-ended so the grantee can obtain new ideas of the needs and interests of men in the community.
- ✓ Solicit input from all parents before an event or program is planned.
- ✓ Make fathers feel comfortable and let them know that their opinions are valued.
- ✓ Interact with the men at the bus stop or as they arrive at the center to drop children off.
- ✓ Visit each center monthly to encourage and keep fatherhood interest high.
- ✓ Provide on-going fatherhood training for all staff members.
- ✓ Invite a father from each center to come to all-staff meetings to talk with staff about his experiences and his wishes for the program.
- ✓ Involve fathers in the training that is being offered on literacy for staff.
- ✓ Make sure that a mother is involved in planning.
- ✓ Create and distribute a father newsletter or have a male-section in the agency newsletter.
- ✓ Bring in representatives from Child Support to provide training and guidance.
- ✓ Help the men with legal services, such as driver’s license suspension, paternity issues, credit problems, and parking / speeding ticket problems.
- ✓ Conduct activities that promote fathers and children working together on a hands-on project.
- ✓ Have a partnership with a local high school so that students can come in and read to the children or participate in other activities.

Region V has widely distributed the Fatherhood Review and Analysis. The report and its “Lessons Learned” have been regularly featured at sponsored workshops. Some of those include: Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services Fatherhood / Healthy Relationships Conference (November 2006); Seventh Annual Southwestern Fatherhood and Families Conference, in Phoenix, Arizona (February 2006); and International Fatherhood Conference in Atlanta, Georgia (June 2006). Since April 2004, when Region V initially

distributed the report through the Region V Fatherhood Listserv to over 300 participants, ACF has distributed over 500 additional copies of the report, to grantees, child care agencies, state collaboration offices, state and community partners, and interested parties who requested copies.

Fatherhood Workgroup

The Fatherhood Workgroup is another way Region V supports the Fatherhood Initiative. Workgroup members from each ACF program area meet on a quarterly basis. The group also represents Region V at various fatherhood and family conferences, training events, and meetings. Members contribute information to the national Fatherhood Website, help the region promote father / male involvement, encourage the creation of father-friendly environments and work together to develop and support regional, state and community collaborations. The workgroup's contact information is listed at the beginning of these materials.

Fatherhood Capacity Development Workshops

The Fatherhood Workgroup plays an important role in selecting capacity development workshop topics to enable Region V staff to keep up to date with current legislation, research and ground-breaking programming. The group plans workshops that provide practical job related information to share with grantees and program partners. The Workgroup has presented workshops with topics such as Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and Helping Children of Incarcerated Parents.



In 2007, the Fatherhood Workgroup sponsored a workshop in partnership with the Department of Labor (DOL) on March 14, 2007, entitled "Opening Doors: The Department of Labor and Employment and Training Administration Opportunities for Parenting Men, Women and Youth." Participants learned about various Department of Labor-Employment and

Training Administration discretionary programs.

Two workshops took place in 2006. On January 30, 2006, ACF presented the workshop, "Child Welfare and Fatherhood: Reintroduction of Absent Fathers as Placement Options in Child Welfare Cases." Speakers represented the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services; the Midwest Center on Workforce and Family Development, Inc.; and the Cook County Public Defender's Office. On June 26, 2006, ACF held a second workshop, "Fathers of Tradition," featuring a presentation by the Executive Director of the American Indian Center of Chicago.

For more information about the American Indian Center of Chicago please view their website at <http://www.aic-chicago.org/> or contact Joseph Podlasek, Executive Director, at joep@aic-chicago.org or at 773-275-5871.

The Region V Fatherhood Listserv



ACF launched the Region V Fatherhood Listserv on March 24, 2004. As of May 2007, the Region V Fatherhood Listserv includes 333 active participants. Listserv participants share a commitment to fatherhood and male involvement efforts for the sake of the children and their families.

The initial members were mostly Head Start and Early Head Start grantees. The Listserv has expanded to include partners from Child Welfare, Child Support, Runaway and Homeless Youth Services, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families' (TANF) programs, state agencies, and other community-based organizations. In 2006 and 2007, the Listserv gained new members from diverse agencies such as the SAFER Foundation, the American Indian Center of Chicago, Illinois Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force, the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago, the Open Door Youth Shelter at The Night Ministry, the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration/ Region V, and from many state fatherhood associations.

**To join the Listserv, send an e-mail to join-fatherhood@lyris.acf.hhs.gov.
By becoming a participant, you will obtain new information quickly and
receive invitations to take part in the FREE quarterly Collaboration
Network Conference Calls!**

Listsers members receive grant information, recent research, new training materials, and announcements of upcoming events. They also exchange information and answer questions to help each other in the development or enhancement of fatherhood / male involvement efforts. They have assisted each other in searches for trainers on topics such as parenting classes for ex-felons, newsletters for fathers, speakers for conference agendas, and pertinent website sources.

As a listserv member, you can share information and make announcements by sending your information via e-mail directly to ACF Region V. Please send your articles / information you want to share to Nancy Sanchez at nancy.sanchez@acf.hhs.gov, with a "cc" to Elizabeth Hailey-Smith at elizabeth.haileysmith@acf.hhs.gov. Region V offers several listservs in addition to Fatherhood, such as Healthy Marriage, Faith Based and Tribal listservs. Please be sure to specify on which listserv you would like your message to go out. Messages are subject to editing by the Regional Office to comply with Federal Government requirements.

The Region V Fatherhood Strategic Plan

An important part of the Region V Fatherhood/Family Strengthening Initiative has been the development and implementation of Region V's Annual Fatherhood Strategic Plans for calendar years 2004 through 2007. Region V Fatherhood Workgroup members solicited input and worked together to develop the strategic plans.

Region V staff uses the strategic plans as guides to promote father-friendly practices in all areas of its programs and to integrate father and male role model acceptance. The strategic plans outline the steps Region V staff members are taking to develop partnerships to enhance fatherhood and male involvement through outreach, sharing information and implementation. The following are examples of implementation activities by program area:

Child Support Enforcement: Region V Child Support staff provided Fatherhood materials to Child Support Directors and Managers on September 18, 2007, at the Urban Jurisdictions meeting September 18-20, 2006, at the Holiday Inn Center Hotel, Chicago. Region V Child Support staff continues to assist in planning and carrying out the Region V quarterly Collaboration Network Calls in partnership with Head Start, Child Care, and partners from Child Welfare, TANF, and Runaway and Homeless Youth. Child Support continued its outreach to fathers by releasing both English and Spanish versions of a brochure entitled “Child Support from the Father’s Side,” which explains who must pay child support, when, why and how. To access the brochures please click [here](#).

To continue collaboration activities between Head Start and Child Support, staff developed a Child Support Collaboration Liaison Chart with the contact information for each of the Child Support Liaisons in the region and sent the list out to the Fatherhood Listserv. The list was updated and distributed in January 2007.

On June 14, 2006, at the Indiana Child Support Training Conference, Region V Child Support staff met to work in collaboration with Indiana Child Support, the Indiana Head Start Association, the State Judiciary, and the Indiana Department of Corrections. Participants focused on the real need to help incarcerated fathers with their efforts to pay their child support and to improve issues with the child support system and introduced plans for a “Prison Pilot.”

On September 8, 2005, Region V staff joined many partners at a special training event with representatives from the Allen County IV-D Office, the Huntington County IV-D Office, the Director of the Indiana Judicial Center, the IV-D Magistrate for Marion County, the Chaplain of the Marion County Jail, the Marion County Sheriff’s Department, the Indiana Child Support Bureau, the Indiana Head Start Association, and Illinois Child Support. Region V Child Support staff took part in Indiana’s Child Support Training on June 16, 2005, presenting a Federal update that referenced the importance of collaboration in an effective Fatherhood Initiative. Region V Administrator Joyce Thomas spoke about the Fatherhood Initiative as the luncheon speaker at the Indiana conference. For more information and a copy of the liaison chart, please contact Geneva Bishop at gbishop@acf.hhs.gov.

Child Welfare: Child Welfare staff took part in the planning and outreach for a Region V sponsored workshop with the Department of Labor entitled, “Opening Doors: The Department of Labor (DOL) and Employment and Training Administration Opportunities for Parenting Men, Women and Youth” on March 14, 2007. In July 2006, Region V staff worked to identify model fatherhood practices in the Child Welfare field. Staff completed the review of State Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention program applications for fatherhood. On January 30, 2006 staff welcomed speakers from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Midwest Center on Workforce and Family Development, Inc., and the Cook County Public Defender’s Office to a Region V Capacity Development workshop. The very well attended workshop was entitled, “Child Welfare and Fatherhood: Reintroduction of Absent Fathers as Placement Options in Child Welfare Cases.”

Child Welfare staff took a very significant father-friendly step when they modified a widely used Father-Friendly Assessment Tool for potential use by Child Welfare and community partners. Staff sent the new Child Welfare Assessment Tool to the state child welfare agencies and also to Tribal contacts. Staff members surveyed the Children’s Bureau funded National Resource Centers (NRCs) to gather information on training, technical assistance and resources available

to the states on fatherhood and male involvement, and shared this information region-wide. For more information, please contact Constance H.F. Miller at constance.hf.miller@acf.hhs.gov.

Child Care: Region V staff sent father-focused materials to the state Region V Head Start State Collaboration Directors in preparation for the Head Start Technical (TA) Meeting in September 2006. Staff also sent letters to Region V State Child Care Agencies emphasizing the use of “Father Friendly” language in program applications and other materials and encouraged the State Child Care Administrators and State Child Care Resource and Referral Networks to promote inclusion of non-custodial fathers with providers. The goal was to assist state representatives in promoting positive Fatherhood role models in Early Education programs in each of the states. The Region V State Child Care administrators were provided with a copy of the “Father-Friendliness Organizational Self-Assessment and Planning Tool for Early Childhood Education Programs” and the Region V Fatherhood Brochures, entitled “Focus on Fatherhood” in English and Spanish. Staff encourages the Head Start Collaboration offices in the six Region V states to take part in the ongoing Quarterly Collaboration Network Calls and to distribute the information to Child Care partners and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network about joining the Region V Fatherhood Listserv and acquiring *Building Blocks* materials. For more information regarding Child Care activities, please contact Harlan Smith: hasmith@acf.hhs.gov.

Head Start / Early Head Start: On April 20, 2007, Region V staff, representing the Fatherhood Workgroup, read fatherhood essays as part of community collaboration with the Illinois Fatherhood Initiative (IFI) in Chicago. In March 2007, staff took part in the Community and Economic Development Association, Inc., of Cook County (CEDA) Head Start Male Involvement Conference, entitled, “Responsible Fatherhood: Do it with PASSION.” Staff gave opening remarks on behalf of Administrator Joyce A. Thomas and the Head Start Technical Assistance (TA) Network Program Governance Specialist conducted a workshop entitled, “Daddy, Read Me a Story.”



Region V Head Start management took part in the Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services Fatherhood / Healthy Relationships Conference November 2-3, 2006, giving remarks at the opening session of the conference and sponsoring a workshop at the conference. Staff encouraged grantees to consider how to “bridge the gap” from Fatherhood to Healthy Marriage. Chicago area grantees were invited to attend a Region V ACF-sponsored Chicago Area Healthy Marriage meeting, July 19, 2006 at ACF in Chicago. Chicago area Head Start grantees had the opportunity to update meeting participants on recent fatherhood activities and future plans. Head Start staff also participated in the Region V quarterly Collaboration Network Calls and in state association conferences. Region V also organized and presented fatherhood information at the Wisconsin Head Start Association conference in February 2006. Please contact Chandra Allgood-Foster for more information: callgood-foster@acf.hhs.gov.

Office of Community Services (OCS): Staff attended a Region V ACF collaboration meeting on January 30, 2007, to enhance father involvement and family strengthening with community partners from Ohio. Staff took part in a networking meeting facilitated by Region V Administrator Joyce A. Thomas with the Illinois Council on Responsible Fatherhood on October 24, 2006, at which the Region’s Fatherhood Strategic Plan was discussed as well as collaboration plans for the future. Staff have distributed the Father-Friendly Assessment Tool to all state Community Action Agency (CAA) organizations and requested that the

organizations share the Assessment Tool with their members and partners. On May 2, 2006, Region V sponsored a Fatherhood Workshop at the Illinois Community Action Association Conference in Springfield, Illinois, and distributed information about the Fatherhood Strategic Plan and the Fatherhood Listserv.

Staff reached out to fatherhood and community-based organizations at an “Assets for Independence Funding Opportunity and Partnerships Information” meeting that it organized and presented on August 30, 2005. This effort helped organizations take an asset-based approach to fighting poverty. For more information, please contact Elizabeth Hailey-Smith: ehailey-smith@acf.hhs.gov.

Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY): Region V RHY focused on outreach to all the Region V Runaway and Homeless Youth Grantees by sharing information about the Region’s October 24, 2006, Collaboration Conference Call on “Staff training and development in relation to the Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage Initiatives” through the RHY network. One of the speakers on the call was a Transitional Living Specialist from Project Oz in Bloomington, Illinois. Fatherhood information was distributed, including ACF Fatherhood and Child Support brochures, at the Region V RHY Conference on June 27-29, 2006. Staff promoted the Fatherhood Initiative at the Illinois Council on Responsible Fatherhood and Congressman Danny Davis Conference and Resource Fair in Chicago, June 3, 2006. Due to on-going Region V RHY outreach many RHY grantees and contractors have joined the Fatherhood Listserv. RHY staff distributes fatherhood brochures and encourages fatherhood programming at site visits, community meetings and conferences on an ongoing basis. For more information, contact Jenny Weiser at jweiser@acf.hhs.gov.



Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): Staff helped plan and facilitate a Region V Capacity Development workshop on March 14, 2007, entitled, “Opening Doors: The Department of Labor (DOL) and Employment and Training Administration Opportunities for Parenting Men, Women and Youth.” The presentation included information about current DOL resources and interagency collaborations. Staff took part in several Region V sponsored Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage Initiatives during July 18-19, 2006. Staff discussed Fatherhood and Parenting Counseling following a half-day presentation titled, “Maintaining and Building Strong Tribal Family Relationships” presented by the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe during the Region V Tribal TANF Symposium held September 11-13, 2006. In July 2006, staff announced projects within Region V that received Department of Labor Awards which included:

- Wings of Faith, Inc., Detroit, Michigan
- Hard Hatted Women, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio
- Springfield Community Federation, Springfield, Illinois
- Enterprising Kitchen, Inc., Chicago, Illinois
- African-American Friendship Association for Cooperation and Development (AAFACD), Inc. St. Paul, Minnesota
- Project Soar of Northeastern Minnesota, Duluth, Minnesota
- Franklin Initiative-Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Bloomington, Indiana
- Turning Point Applied Learning Center, Inc., Hillsboro, Ohio

Programs serve individuals who face significant hurdles to employment and include a focus on welfare recipients, high school dropouts, and ex-offenders. Grantees provide personalized care and supportive services, such as mentoring or life skills coaching, to enable individuals to fully use the employment services offered at local One-Stop Career Centers. Staff presented materials on Fatherhood and related programs to the Compassion Capital grantee and sub-grantees representing Faith and Community-Based Organizations in Wisconsin on May 21, 2006. Staff regularly shares information on the Fatherhood Listserv about new funding opportunities, states' TANF participation rates, information regarding the Healthy Marriage Initiative, faith-based partnerships, and new events. Some of these resources are also available on the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance (TA) website. The Welfare Peer TA Website information gives updates on working with the hard-to-serve population, job attainment, and transitional jobs. To access this information directly, go to <http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov>. For more information contact Thomas Schindler at thomas.schindler@acf.hhs.gov.

Tribal Programming: ACF staff shared information about the Fatherhood Initiative, including the Region V collaboration with the Midwest Center on Workforce and Family Development, Inc., on September 19, 2006, at the Region V sponsored Indian Child Welfare Collaborative. Staff highlighted resources and collaboration opportunities available. Staff conducted a site visit and observed the relationship enhancement services enabling a better understanding of fatherhood and the male role at the Red Cliff Reservation in Wisconsin on July 31, 2006.

Recognizing the need to better understand Urban Native American and Fatherhood challenges, staff developed and facilitated a workshop on June 26, 2006, entitled, "Fathers of Tradition" for Region V staff. The Director of the American Indian Center (AIC) of Chicago discussed what the Center members are doing to engage fathers using the traditions of their people. Staff promoted the Fatherhood Initiative at the Minnesota Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Meeting on June 15-16, 2006. Staff organized and facilitated a fatherhood workshop, "Strengthening the Fatherhood Component in Your Child Care and Head Start Program" at the Region V "Celebrating American Indian Families" Tribal Conference in Minnesota, on May 18, 2005.

For more information on Fatherhood and Tribal programming, please contact Krista Thomas at kthomas@acf.hhs.gov. For more information on any of the Fatherhood Strategic Plan activities, please contact Dianna Durham McCloud at dianna.mcloud@acf.hhs.gov.

Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage Focus at Conferences and Meetings

Ohio Head Start Association Social Work Conference

On March 7, 2007, Region V's, Family Life and Healthy Marriage Specialist, delivered a keynote at the Ohio Head Start Association conference, "Because the Kids Do Better." The presentation recounted the history of the Healthy Marriage Initiative, the justification for Head Start in supporting the Healthy Marriage Initiative and several low cost and no cost options for supporting the Healthy Marriage Initiative.

The Community and Economic Development Association, Inc., of Cook County (CEDA)

On March 9, 2007, Region V staff took part in the Community and Economic Development Association, Inc., of Cook County's (CEDA) annual Male Involvement Conference. Region V

ACF staff presented remarks on behalf of Region V Administrator Joyce A. Thomas. Region V Head Start TA Network Program Governance Specialist presented a workshop entitled, "Daddy, Read Me a Story."

The City of Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services Fatherhood / Healthy Relationships Conference

Region V took part in the Opening Session of the 2006 Fatherhood/Healthy Relationships Conference sponsored by the Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services. The focus of the conference was on training, resources, development and strategies regarding responsible fatherhood/male involvement and successful relationships. This conference was seen as a priority for the Department and the Office of Head Start because it was focused on integrating fathers/males into the lives of young children through strengthening parental relationships. Region V also organized and presented a workshop entitled, "There are no Cookie Cutters Here: Translating Federal Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage Priorities to Local Initiatives."

The Southwestern Fatherhood Conference 2006

Region V developed and presented a workshop entitled: "Most Likely to Succeed Fatherhood Best Practices: Legacies from the Field" at the Seventh Annual Southwestern Fatherhood and Families conference in Phoenix, Arizona. The workshop reinforced the conference theme, "Defining Legacies," and presented an opportunity for Region V to applaud the legacies of its many Head Start/Early Head Start father/male involvement coordinators and to share information from the dialogues conducted between Region V and these experienced staff members.

The Illinois Community Action Association Conference

Region V developed and presented a workshop at the Illinois Community Action Association Conference in Springfield, Illinois, on May 2, 2006. The workshop was entitled, "Community Action Agencies and Father Involvement: Best Practices and Lessons Learned." Workshop participants were interested in receiving Region V's Review and Analysis, "Programs that Promote Father Involvement and Children's Early Literacy and Language Development," ([click here](#)) as well as to become participants of Region V's Fatherhood Listserv.

The International Fatherhood Conferences

Region V ACF encourages active participation in the National Partnership for Community Leadership (NPCL) conferences. The upcoming 2007 conference, "Strengthening Fathers in Fragile Families through Employment, Education and Health, will be held June 13-15, 2007 in Atlanta, Georgia. In 2006, Region V ACF organized and presented a workshop entitled, "The Good, The Bad and the Possible: Partnerships and Collaborations to Bridge Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage." at the Eighth Annual International Fatherhood Conference convened at Morehouse College. Approximately 80 people heard the workshop speakers discuss the WinShape Report, "Framing the Future" and give information from Illinois and Michigan Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage initiatives as well as from faith-based community initiatives in Illinois and Northwest Indiana that bridge Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage.

Region V staff attended, presented and moderated at the NPCL Seventh Annual International Fatherhood Conference in 2005 in Detroit, Michigan. Region V's Administrator, Joyce A. Thomas, served as the moderator of the Plenary Session entitled, "Fatherhood and Marriage: Do We Need Both?" Region V also organized and sponsored a workshop, which focused on

“Translating Federal Priorities into Local Initiatives.” The conference concluded with the presentation of a number of special awards. Ms. Thomas received the Judge David Gray Ross Award, given annually to a public official for outstanding contributions to the advancement of government efforts that promote responsible fatherhood and strong families.

For more information about NPCL, please view the website www.npcl.org or contact the office at (202) 822-6725 or toll free at 1-888 775-NPCL. Upcoming conference information can be found at www.npcl-ifc.org

Region V Youth Development Conference

The 2006 Region V Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Provider Conference occurred on June 27-29, 2006 in Chicago, Illinois. During the conference, ACF Region V RHY staff distributed Fatherhood materials including information on the ACF Fatherhood Initiative as well as the Region V Fatherhood and Child Support brochures. Staff encouraged participants to join the Fatherhood Listserv, and representatives from the Children’s Home and Aid Society of Illinois (CHASI), the Youth Service Bureau of St. Joseph County, Indiana, and Stopover, Inc (Indiana) joined the listserv.

Region V RHY staff promoted the ACF Fatherhood Initiative at the Region V Youth Development Conference on June 28-30, 2005, discussing and circulating information about the Fatherhood Initiative and Fatherhood Resources with RHY grantees and other potential partners. Staff achieved their goal of bringing the important role of fathers to the attention of conference participants.

Region V Participation in Father-Focused Community Events

Fatherhood Workgroup members and other Region V staff regularly attend father-focused community events. They distribute information such as the Region V Fatherhood Brochures (in English and Spanish), the Review and Analysis of Fatherhood Programs, and the Fatherhood Child Support Brochures (in English and Spanish). On March 3, 2006, Region V staff shared the Spanish Fatherhood brochure at the National Head Start Hispanic Institute in Denver, Colorado. For more information about the Institute, view the website at <http://www.hsnrc.org/hispanic2a/>.

Each year, Region V ACF staff takes part in the reading and judging of Fatherhood Essays for the annual Illinois Fatherhood Initiative “What My Father Means to Me” Essay contest. On April 20, 2007, staff joined in the community final reading of the more than 25,000 essays that came from all parts of Illinois. Region V staff took part as essay finalist readers on April 16, 2006. Region V staff attended the February 21, 2006; “State of Fatherhood Meeting” at which Illinois schools, fathers, and students who participated in the Fatherhood Essay Initiative were honored.

On March 9, 2007, Region V staff took part in the Community and Economic Development Association, Inc., of Cook County (CEDA) annual Male Involvement Conference. The Region V Head Start TA Network Program Governance Specialist presented a workshop entitled, “Daddy, Read Me a Story.” On March 10, 2006, in Oak Lawn, Illinois, a Region V staff person served as a speaker at the Male Involvement Conference of the Community Economic Development Association (CEDA), entitled, “Men of Destiny”. Staff also presented the Federal

perspective on the Fatherhood Initiative to confirm and direct attention to the fact that the Federal Fatherhood Initiative has been and continues to be one of ACF's key federal priorities: ***helping men become responsible, committed and involved fathers.***

On June 3, 2006, Region V personnel representing several Federal ACF program areas staffed a resource booth at the Illinois Council on Responsible Fatherhood Conference in Chicago, entitled, "Paving a Pathway to Parenthood: Investing in Fathering." Staff distributed Federal fatherhood and family strengthening brochures, as well as the benefits of joining the Region V Fatherhood Listserv.

Region V Partnerships to Support Fathers and Families

Midwest Center on Workforce and Family Development, Inc. (MCWFD)

Region V continues to encourage the efforts of the Midwest Center on Workforce and Family Development, Inc (MCWFD). That organization sponsors an agenda that complements Region V's fatherhood effort. In 2007, Region V and the MCWFD reached out to potential partners in all six states in the region to launch a unique collaboration to encourage and strengthen the roles of fathers in the lives of their children. The collaboration has begun the development of plans for Fatherhood Policy Forums starting with the development of an Ohio Forum that will build upon the work that has been started in that state.

The collaboration between Region V, the MCWFD and partners will bring together state agencies and key community and faith-based stakeholders to develop a regional plan to promote father-friendly and family strengthening policies and practices in each of the six states of Region V. This effort will address the support needs of fathers and work to strengthen programs for children and families as a whole. The collaboration will analyze gaps and barriers in policies and service, learn about promising practices from family support practitioners, and develop recommendations to develop a cooperative effort across state lines. On-going information and discussion will be available through the Region V Fatherhood Listserv.

For more information about MCWFD, you may contact Jerry Hamilton, Executive Director, Midwest Center on Workforce and Family Development, Inc, 6929 Mariner Dr., Suite C, Racine, WI 53406; (262) Phone: 886-9421; Fax: (262) 886-9431 or e-mail him at jhamilton@mcwfd.org. You can also go to the Center's website at <http://www.charityadvantage.com/mcwfd/Aboutus.asp>.

Region V and Family Support America

Region V worked in collaboration with Family Support America (FSA) until that organization disbanded on July 31, 2006. In 2006, Region V and several partners worked to develop, sponsor, and serve as speakers at three workshops at the FSA Conference. Two workshops that were delivered on March 27, 2006, focused on fatherhood entitled:

- "Bridging the Gap: Fatherhood to Healthy Marriage" and
- "A Father Focus from CW, CS, EHS/HS, RHY, and HMI: What Can We Learn From This "Alphabet Soup"?"

For more information about these workshops, please contact Lois Rakov at rakov_lois@bah.com.

Head Start, Child Support, Child Care Collaboration

Collaboration Network Conference Calls

A unique Region V initiative in existence for more than four years is the Region's Collaboration Network Call, which brings together partners to network and share information. Discussion topics have included bridging fatherhood and healthy marriage programs, access and visitation, expungement issues, Head Start male involvement and fatherhood program challenges, teen fathers, collaboration development, evaluation of fatherhood programs and helping children whose parents are incarcerated.

The April 24, 2007, call featured speakers on the topic, "Bridging Fatherhood, Healthy Marriage and Domestic Violence." On January 23, 2007, presenters from Michigan and Iowa led a discussion on "Mandated Fatherhood programs." Participants on the calls include representatives from Head Start and Early Head Start programs, state and county child support programs, state child welfare programs, RHY programs and Region V ACF Head Start, Child Care, Child Support, Developmental Disabilities, Child Welfare, TANF, and RHY program staff.

For more information about the Collaboration Network Calls and for notes from the calls, please contact Mike Vicars at (312) 886-5339 or at mvicars@acf.hhs.gov.

"Child Support, Child Care, and Head Start Collaboration: Innovations and Ideas"

An excellent document on collaboration models is available from the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). This final report describes six collaboration grants awarded by OCSE. Two of the six states nationwide that received collaboration grants were Minnesota and Illinois. The report, which highlights and compares approaches, experiences, and lessons learned from the six grant projects, remains a valuable source of ideas for continued partnerships. The report can be downloaded from: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pubs/2003/reports/headstart/.

Region V and the Healthy Marriage Initiative

Grant Awardees

Healthy Marriage Initiative grants were announced in October 2006. The awards allocated totaled \$100 million a year nationally for the five years for healthy marriage programs as well as \$50 million annually for responsible fatherhood programs. The measures were part of a bill that reauthorized welfare reform.

Illinois

SGA Youth & Family Services Chicago; Meier Clinics, Wheaton.

Indiana

Community Marriage Builders, Inc., Evansville; Abstinence for Singles, Gary; Cornerstone of Hope Church, Inc., Indianapolis; Fathers and Family Resource/Research Center, Inc., Indianapolis; Madison County Community Health Centers, Inc., Indianapolis.

Michigan

Child and Family Resource Council, Grand Rapids; Trinity Health Michigan, Pontiac.

Ohio

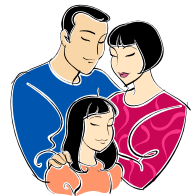
Beech Acres Parenting Center, Cincinnati; Cuyahoga County Board of County Commissioners, Cleveland; Governor's Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives, Columbus; Elizabeth's New Life Center, Inc., Dayton; Operation Keepsake, Inc., Mayfield; Marriage Savers of Clark County, Inc., Springfield.

Wisconsin

Foundation for a Great Marriage, DePepe; Center for Self-Sufficiency Inc., Milwaukee; Parents Plus, Inc., Neenah; Laugh Your Way America, LLC, Stevens Point.

Region V Encourages Healthy Marriage Initiatives

Region V provided outreach through the Region V Fatherhood Listserv for the Marriage, Abstinence, and Fatherhood Roundtable held January 24, 2007, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, organized by the Foundation for a Great Marriage. The agenda summarized the 2007 goals and action plans, and explored possibilities for collaboration and cross-promotion. For more information please view their website at <http://www.foundationformarriage.org/>.



Region V Administrator Joyce A. Thomas spoke at the 3rd Annual Indiana Healthy Marriage and Family Conference, April 25-28, 2007, in Indianapolis. The theme of the conference was "Strengthening Family Ties Through Networking." The mission of the Indiana Community Healthy Marriage & Family Coalition (IHMFC), the organizer, is "*to identify and promote the value of healthy marriages and vibrant families.*" For more information, you may e-mail info@ihmfc.org or contact: IHMFC, 1669 Columbia Avenue, PO BOX 55036, Indianapolis, IN, 46220.

Region V staff attended the kick off event for the Chicago Alliance for Latino Marriages, CALMA, Family Bridges Program on February 1, 2007 in Chicago. At the event, which was conducted in Spanish and English, CALMA announced their educational programs for singles and couples and their many future plans. CALMA held a Clergy Day, April 25, 2007. For more information about CALMA and about the Family Bridges Program, you may call 1-877-41BRIDGE or send an email to rgiglio@meierclinics.com.

Region V Staff took part in an Ecumenical Church Leadership Development conference on August 7, 2006, at the Convention Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. The conference, entitled, "A Family Affair," emphasized family ministry from generation-to-generation, best practice models for relationship education, premarital and marriage counseling, family counseling services, and shared practical information about developing and maintaining healthy relationships. The conference was a collaboration of the Progressive National Baptist Women's Department, the National Council of Churches' Justice and Advocacy Commission and the Education and Leadership Ministries Commission.

On July 19, 2006, Region V convened a Chicago Area Healthy Marriage Initiative "Upfront and Center" meeting on July 19, 2006, at the Chicago ACF facility. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the opportunity for Chicago Area Healthy Marriage Initiative (HMI) grantees, plus

Fatherhood Initiative Head Start grantees to assist each other and future grantees in enhancing and expanding the Healthy Marriage Initiative. Region V ACF Administrator Joyce A. Thomas welcomed participants to the “Upfront and Center: Best Practices” meeting and expressed appreciation for the interest and commitment of those present. Ms. Thomas spoke about how this networking opportunity can assist Chicago area Healthy Marriage Initiative (HMI) grantees, partners, future grantees, state and community agencies, Head Start, Early Head Start and faith-based agencies in enhancing and expanding the HMI. Ms. Thomas also discussed possible action items that could bridge Fatherhood and HMI activities, focusing attention on minority and underserved communities.

Participants discussed initial ideas for the formation of a Chicago Area Healthy Marriage Coalition. Participants wanted to share information and continue their connections to other individuals doing similar work. Participants represented the Family Ministries, Archdiocese of Chicago; Chicago Alliance for Latino Marriages (CALMA); Community Economic Development Association, Inc., (CEDA); Chicago Commons; Children and Youth Services; Community Action Partnership of Lake County; Illiana Coalition for Family and Community Restoration; Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, Division of Child Support Enforcement; Indiana Marriage and Family Coalition, Inc.; Jewish Child and Family Services, Refugee Family Strengthening Project; Martin Temple AME Zion; Parents as Peacemakers; Region V Head Start Technical Assistance (TA) Network; Rockford Meld; and Region V staff.

For more information on Chicago Area HMIs, please contact Dianna Durham-McCloud at dianna.durham-mcloud@acf.hhs.gov.

Among the 2005-2006 Chicago Area Healthy Marriage grantees:

Archdiocese of Chicago

Family Ministries Office

For more information go to www.chicagolandmarriage.org/

Juliet Beriou, Special Projects Director

(312) 751-835

jberiou@archchicago.org

CALMA, Chicago Alliance for Latino Marriages

news@chicagoalma.com or contact

Alicia La Hoz

(630) 653-1717 x214

alahoz@sbcglobal.net

Families United through Understanding Relationships and Empowerment (FUTURE),
Department of Health Care and Family Services

Karen Newton-Matza

(312) 793-8215

karen.newton-matza@illinois.gov

Illinois Refugee Family Strengthening Project

Tatyana Fertelmeyster

(847) 392-8820

tatyanafertelmeyster@jfcschicago.org

The Martin Temple Community Foundation
Teresa Prim
(773) 785-9605 or (773) 493-8624
sequane@sbcglobal.net

Rockford MELD
Marriage First Program
For more information please view www.rockfordmeld.org or contact
Rodney Prunty
(815) 965-8336 (x 21)
dstanley@rockfordmeld.org

On April 24, 2007, Administrator Joyce Thomas welcomed participants to one of Region V's quarterly Collaboration Network Calls. This call focused on "Bridging Fatherhood, Healthy Marriage and Domestic Violence." Presenters were Andrew Lyke, the Arusi Network; Annette Santella, Family Communications (Safe Havens); Carol VanderWal, Healthy Marriages/Healthy Relationships; and Wanda DeCwikiel Avila, La Familia Unida.

A prior call, on July 18, 2006, focused on "Bridging Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage." The presenters on the call included: Joyce A. Thomas, Region V ACF Administrator; Sharon Pierce, President and CEO Villages of Indiana; Dianna Durham-McLoud, President and CEO for the Illiana Coalition for Family and Community Restoration; and Shelley Hawver and Bob Pletcher, the Early Head Start Manager and Head Start Male Involvement Educator for the Community Action Agency of Jackson Michigan. For more information about the Collaboration Network Calls and for notes from these calls, please contact Mike Vicars at (312) 886-5339 or at mvicars@acf.hhs.gov.



At the Eighth Annual International Fatherhood Conference (NPCL) in Atlanta, Georgia, at Morehouse College, June 13-15, 2006, Region V ACF organized a workshop entitled, "The Good, The Bad and the Possible: Partnerships and Collaborations to Bridge Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage." Approximately 80 people heard the workshop speakers discuss the WinShape Report, "Framing the Future", provide information from Illinois and Michigan Fatherhood, Faith-based and Healthy Marriage initiatives.

A fatherhood and healthy marriage collaborative faith-based community event, "Strengthening Family Ties through Networking: Father Focus" was held on May 4, 2006, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Region V ACF Administrator Joyce A. Thomas served as a keynote speaker at the event. Workshops Included: "Fathers and the Justice System;" "Father Friendly Systems, Effective Parenting – In the Best Interest of the Child;" and an "Overview of the Healthy Marriage Initiative."

Region V organized a workshop for the National Council on Educating Black Children, held in Chicago on April 21, 2006, entitled, "Building Bridges for Fathers and Families to Help Children Succeed." Speakers presented information on the Healthy Marriage Initiative as well as on Head Start efforts to strengthen families and enhance involvement of fathers in their children's lives. The speakers from ACF Region V, Illinois Child Support Program, the Midwest Center on Workforce and Family Development, Inc. (MCWFD), and the Community Economic

Development Association (CEDA) Head Start highlighted the impact of family and healthy marriage on the well being and educational success of children. For more information, please contact Geneva Bishop at gbishop@acf.hhs.gov.

On October 27, 2005, ACF Region V organized a Healthy Marriage Initiative Workshop and presented it at the 2005 Region V Head Start and MidAmerica Community Action Association's Conference in Columbus, Ohio. In addition to the moderator from Region V, other presenters included speakers from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the Family Life Department at Ohio State University, and the Children's Services Administration at the Michigan Department of Human Services.

Region V Materials

The Region V Fatherhood brochures are available in English and Spanish ([click here](#)).

Region V Child Support has developed and disseminated fatherhood brochures in English ([click here](#)) and Spanish ([click here](#)) entitled, "Child Support: From the Father's Side."

Region V has developed and shared a report entitled, "The Region V Review and Analysis, Region V Fatherhood Special Initiatives and Early Head Start Demonstration Grants, Programs that Promote Fatherhood Involvement and Children's Early Literacy and Language Development." ([click here](#))

State Fatherhood Activities in Region V

Illinois



The Black Star Project Father's Club, Chicago, organized an international *Men in Schools Volunteer Day* on February 27, 2007, to effectively involve men in the lives of school children. The organization holds many father and child events and programs. The mission of the Father's Club is to educate Black children successfully, with the involvement, investment, support and advocacy of their fathers, grandfathers, foster fathers, stepfathers, uncles, cousins, big brothers and other significant male caregivers. For more information about the Black Star Project, please view the website at www.blackstarproject.org.

The Child Abuse Council, in the Quad-Cities / Rock Island area, organized a "Boot Camp for New Dads" program. The program takes place five to six times a year at Trinity Medical Center in Moline and at Genesis Medical Center, Davenport, Iowa. Volunteer "coaches," who are experienced fathers, teach ideas for ongoing and caring relationships between fathers and their children. The Child Abuse Council partners with the Medical Centers' Child Birth Education Programs in presenting this on-going program. For more information about the Council, please visit www.childabuseqc.org or contact Shonda Rummel at 309-764-7017, ext. 216 or at shondar@childabuseqc.org.

The City of Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services sponsored a "Fatherhood / Healthy Relationships" conference November 2-3, 2006, in Chicago. Workshops included: "The Role Fathers Play Today", "ABC's of Fatherhood," "Building Healthy Relationships through Co-Parenting," and "Federal Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage Priorities." Several panels and group discussions took place with topics such as "What's the Problem with Boys?"

and “Baby Mama Drama.” The Fatherhood Conference Steering Committee defined their Mission Statement as, “To increase the role and visibility of males and father involvement in the lives of Chicago children and to encourage healthy relationships.” For more information about the Chicago Department of Children and Youth Services on-going Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage committee and plans, please contact, Paulette Mercurius at CY00330@cityofchicago.org or Victor Santiago at Victor.Santiago@cityofchicago.org.

The Community and Economic Development Association, Inc., of Cook County (CEDA) held its annual Male Involvement Conference, entitled, “Responsible Fatherhood: Do it with PASSION” on March 9, 2007. Region V Head Start TA Network Program Governance Specialist presented a workshop entitled, “Daddy, Read Me a Story.” CEDA’s 2006 annual fatherhood / male involvement conference was held in Oak Lawn with over 200 attendees. The theme was, “Men of Destiny: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow.” Some of the topical workshops included: “Fathers and Child Welfare – Enhancing Father Involvement,” and “Strengthening Family Support.” Child Development Specialist Gerald Hall was recognized with ten fellow Head Start parents as part of the National Head Start Program’s 40th Anniversary Celebration. Mr. Hall represented CEDA’s Blue Island / Calumet Park Center.

For more information on these CEDA events and activities, please contact Chris Frederick at cfredrick@cedaorg.net.

The Illinois Council on Responsible Fatherhood sponsored a Fatherhood Symposium in Champaign on November 10, 2006, and future regional forums are planned. On June 3, 2006, along with U.S. Congressman Danny K. Davis, the Council co-sponsored a free conference held at Malcolm X College, Chicago, on “Paving a Pathway to Parenthood: Investing in Fathering.” The passing of Public Act 93-0437 provided Illinois with legislative authorization for the Fatherhood Initiative, which led to the formation of the Illinois Council. On June 30, 2006, the Governor of Illinois signed an executive order to continue the Council. For information on the mission, enabling legislation, and composition of the Council, please call (312) 296-8656, contact Jeffery Leving at mail@dadsrights.com, or visit the website at www.responsiblefatherhood.com.

The Illinois Head Start Association held its annual training conference February 28 - March 2, 2007 in Springfield. The theme was “Charting the Course.” A Parent Leadership Conference was held on December 6-8, 2006, in Rock Falls. One of the workshops was “Co-Parenting: A Survival Guide” with interactive strategies to help both parents through the day-to-day parenting challenges.

For more information, please view the website at www.ilheadstart.org/conferences.html or contact the Illinois Head Start Association at: lfrichtl@ilheadstart.org or phone (217) 241-3511.

The Illinois Fatherhood Initiative (IFI) states that its mission is, “*connecting children and fathers by promoting responsible fathering and helping equip men to become better fathers and father figures.*” To carry out this mission, one of IFI’s major initiatives is the annual IFI / Chicago White Sox Illinois Fatherhood Essay Contest. The 2007 Fatherhood Essay contest readings were held March 20 to April 20 and the winners for 2007 will be announced June 16.

IFI announced the 2006 essay winners at their Fatherhood Celebration Dinner on June 5, 2006, as well as the recipients of the 2006 Father of the Year Award. The Fatherhood Essay

Contest Finalists were selected for the categories of Father Figure of the Year, Grandfathers of the Year, Stepfather of the Year and Father of the Year. Approximately 30,000 children wrote essays to the theme, "What My Father Means to Me." The 2006 contest was held in partnership with the National Center for Fathering, Chicago Public Schools, Illinois State Board of Education, and the Office of Catholic Education. For more information on IFI activities, please call (312) 920-9590, visit www.4fathers.org or send an e-mail to info@4fathers.org.

Project Oz in Bloomington is addressing Fatherhood in their Transitional Living Program. Project Oz uses the Parenting and Paternity Awareness (PAPA) curriculum. There is a significant amount of information showing that mothers, as well as staff, believe that the activities and information are helpful for their youth. The PAPA Program is a public education project for youth sponsored by the Office of the Texas Attorney General and its goal is "to promote responsible parenthood and encourages the formation of strong, stable families." For more information e-mail lisat@projectoz.org.

Rockford MELD, in Rockford, encourages "independent families by providing access to resources, life skills, parenting information, program-based housing, and prevention education." The organization serves a population of expectant and parenting teens as well as "at-risk" youth and families. For example, the Career Corps Program provides pre-employment training and job placement services for fathers between the ages of 21 to 25 who are or were offenders and are on probation or parole. The program provides support groups, case management, and access to employment leads. Through its Employment Assistance and Workforce Development Programs, MELD partners with local employers by providing job opportunities for young fathers. "Marriage First" is a demonstration project for Rockford MELD's locally based Healthy Marriage Initiative with the United Way. The target population consists of unmarried families living together in the community, with a special emphasis placed on African American and Hispanic families. Low-income, married couples are also eligible for services. For more information, please contact Dawn Stanley, Program and Compliance Director at (815) 965-8336, extension 23 or e-mail her at: dstanley@rockfordmeld.org. You can also visit via the web site at www.rockfordmeld.org.

Southern Illinois University (SIU) Carbondale Head Start has integrated its year round male involvement program as part of their regular Early Childhood program. The initiative is incorporated as another part of parent involvement. SIU Carbondale's program makes a special effort to gather information about fathers not living in the home with the child(ren). Its newsletter, "Family Connections," includes articles on activities such as "A Book in Every Home" campaign and recognition of parents and volunteers. The Male Advisory Panel (MAP) meets quarterly and provides valuable input and ideas for male involvement programming. Examples are MALE (Men Are Lasting Educators) Week and the MUSCLE program (Men Understanding Small Children's Learning Experiences). This program focuses on fathers / father figures reading or telling stories to children. During 2006, the agency held focus groups with parents about the federal Healthy Marriage Initiative and the program sponsored MALE Week and staff training in February 2006. Family Fun Fairs focus on promoting health and literacy education with the parents and the agency invites student athletes to the Carbondale center for activities with the children. For more information, please go to <http://www.siu.edu/~headstart/>.

Indiana



The Fathers and Families Resource / Research Center, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana, is now doing business as "Fathers and Families Center." The Center served more than 400 fathers during 2006. The agency's mission is to *"build a noble legacy of fatherhood - improving the life chances of children by assisting young fathers in achieving self-sufficiency and in strengthening parental involvement."*

Fathers and Families Center held its second annual signature fundraising event, the "Faces of Fatherhood" Luncheon, on June 16, 2006. The annual luncheon recognizes involved fathers throughout the Indianapolis community by presenting winning candidates with the "Heart of a Father Award." Candidates are nominated by United Way sponsored agencies and include staff members, clients, or volunteers. The third annual luncheon will be held on the Friday before Father's Day, June 15, 2007. Fathers and Families Center provides services to Head start and Early Head start fathers through a special partnership with Family Development Services, the area's Head Start / Early Head Start provider. Through the partnership, a Center representative visits each Head Start every month to provide outreach and service information.

The Indiana Department of Child Services contracted with the Center to provide training to child welfare workers throughout the State during 2007. Center trainers stress the importance of "father friendliness" and father involvement in decisions that pertain to family stability and child placements. The Center will use the National Family Preservation Network's Fatherhood Curriculum. The Department of Child Services awarded the Center a one year grant through Indiana Fathers and Families to continue programming that includes parenting education, promotion of paternity and child support establishment, promotion of education and the development of work maturity skills.

Fathers and Families Center received five year Federal funding to start a new Healthy Marriage Initiative called, "It Takes Two." The project, launched in January 2007, is recruiting 250 low-income, unmarried, new and expectant parents who wish to strengthen their relationships and explore marriage possibilities.

Fathers and Families Center continues its partnership with the Indianapolis Private Industry Council via the Youth Employment Services (YES). YES offers creative and flexible ways for young people ages 14-25 to overcome the obstacles that prevent them from pursuing careers. Services include basic skills training, GED preparation / testing, job placement, post-secondary education assistance, job-readiness training, and supportive services. Through a grant from the Indiana Department of Education, the Center provides a high school class called "Adult Roles and Responsibilities" to the young, adjudicating men residing at the Indiana Juvenile Correctional Facility. Many of the young men served are fathers. For more information, contact Bob Ripperger, Director of Operations and Resource Development, Fathers and Families Center, at (317) 921-5951 or robert.ripperger@wishard.edu. The agency's Web site is www.fatherresource.org.

Since 2005, the Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males has been working to decrease the problems that Black males face in the areas such as criminal justice, education, employment, health and social challenges by working in partnership with elected officials, community leaders, policy makers and the faith-based community. For more information please view the website at <http://www.in.gov/fssa/family/icssbm/>

Indiana held an Annual Child Support Training Conference on June 14, 2006, sponsored by the Indiana Child Support Alliance and the Indiana Bureau of Child Support, "Working with Incarcerated Parents." The workshop focused on "exploring issues involved in obtaining support from incarcerated fathers / ex-offenders." The discussion included examples of ways in which the timing and severity of Child Support Enforcement actions impact the ability of the ex-offender to get and keep a job. Speakers included the Indiana Corrections Commissioner, the President of the Indiana Head Start Association, the Grants and Community Outreach manager from the Indiana Child Support Bureau and a representative from Workforce, Inc, a community agency that helps ex- offenders to find employment.

The Department of Child Services held its Child Support Training Conference on June 15-17, 2005, in Merrillville. On June 16, ACF Region V Administrator, Joyce A. Thomas, served as the Luncheon Speaker and presented information about the Fatherhood Initiative as an ACF Priority. On the same day, Region V Child Support staff presented a Federal update in a workshop that referenced the importance of collaboration in an effective Fatherhood Initiative. The workshop, entitled "The Partnership Game: Head Start and Child Support - Solutions to Problems in Common," included speakers from Indiana Child Support Grants and Community Outreach, Indiana Head Start Association, Workforce, Inc., Public Action in Correctional Effort, Inc., and the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) Region V. Five Hundred State and County Child Support workers attended the conference.

The Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) awarded Access and Visitation Child Support Enforcement grants for the State of Indiana for the State Fiscal Year of 2007. The programs that received grants:

- Family Services, Inc: The "Dads Make a Difference" program, which has been in place since 1996, and has continued to provide services to non-active, non-custodial parents or who are not paying court ordered child support. The program offers an alternative to incarceration for fathers, provides a supportive environment for the father to receive encouragement, attempts to establish relations with the custodial parent and allows the father access to new parenting information and community resources.
- The Fathers and Families Resource / Research Center: The Fatherhood Development program, with partners Wishard Health Services and United Way, emphasizes the importance of fatherhood in Marion County through workshops, small group sessions, and individual counseling. Counseling topics include areas such as parenting education, paternity establishment, visitation rights, job services, GED attainment, anger management, financial management, and even some post-secondary educational or vocational school training services. Through these services, the program increases the father's involvement, parenting skills, and child support collections.
- Legal Aid – District Eleven, Inc: The "Advocates for Involved Fathers" program educates non-custodial parents on their legal rights, responsibilities, and allows access to the court system for enforcement of their rights. The program offers counseling services regarding legal rights, discussions pertaining to pro se filings, discussions with IV-D prosecutors and private attorneys, referrals to local attorneys regarding court proceedings, and referrals to non-legal services when deemed necessary. The program hopes to increase paternity establishment, consistency of child support collection, and involvement with children.
- The Brown County Circuit Court: The Family Access Program is now in its eighth year of providing services to counties in southern Indiana. The program provides supervised visitation services, therapeutic visitation services, jail visitation services, and transfer of custody services to non-custodial parents. The program hopes to continue to increase

involvement of fathers with their children, establish or improve the relationship with the custodial parent, improve parenting skills, and provide the most recent and accurate information for fathers.

Access and Visitation Funds were awarded through the Indiana Fathers and Families Program for July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006 to:

- Brown County Circuit Court – Brown County Access Program
- Fathers and Families Resource/Research Center, Inc.
- Marion County Superior Courts – Marion County Access Program
- Miami County Young Men’s Christian Association – Y-Works for Dad

For more information, please contact Thelzeda Moore at (317) 232-4874 or e-mail her at thelzeda.moore@dcs.in.gov.

Kokomo Center Schools Head Start has a brochure for its fatherhood program, “A Father is a Terrible Thing to Waste.” The goals of their Fatherhood Center are to promote “*responsible fatherhood within our community and provide children with emotional, social and educational strength to be successful in life.*” The Head Start Fatherhood Center is open to all men who are involved in the lives of children and/or families. Kokomo Center Schools Head Start has Dad’s Night Out activities, parental mediation, classroom participation, and volunteer activities for fathers. In 2007, Kokomo Head Start held “Powerhouse Wednesdays” to bring male role models and fathers in to the Head Start Classroom, Doctor Dads First Aid Workshop, an “exploring effective discipline techniques” workshop, and a very successful Dad’s Celebration Night. On April 17, 2006, Kokomo Head Start held an innovative night of storytelling and paper plane building at the public library to encourage Head Start children and fathers. The Center has a “Doctor Dad” program in which the school nurse provides First Aid and CPR training to the fathers. For more information, please contact Guy Lovell at glovell@kokomo.k12.in.us or call (765) 454-7082.

A fatherhood and healthy marriage collaborative faith - based community event, “Strengthening Family Ties through Networking: Father Focus” was held on May 4, 2006, at Martin University, Indianapolis, Indiana. ACF Region V Administrator Joyce Thomas was a keynote speaker at the event. Workshops Included:

- Fathers and the Justice System;
- Father Friendly Systems;
- Effective Parenting – In the Best Interest of the Child; and
- Overview of the Healthy Marriage Initiative.

For more information about this event, please e- mail ihmfc@sbcglobal.net.

The Indiana Head Start Annual Training Conference was held April 3-5, 2007 at Swan Lake Resort in Plymouth. One workshop on Fatherhood was entitled, “Welcoming Males into Your Program.” For more information about the Indiana Head Start Association, please view the website at <http://www.ihsassoc.org/index.htm>

Michigan



Bendle / Carman-Ainsworth's, the Learning Community Fenton Lawn Education Center, in Flint, holds monthly "Father and Child Evenings." The center also offers the "Men at WORK (Working on Relationships with Kids)" organization, which encourages men to improve communication skills that will create stronger bonds between fathers and children. Men at WORK meet monthly to plan events and programming to involve more fathers in their children's education. At the monthly meetings, the group invites a guest speaker to share information that will help men to be more supportive of their children and family. Professionals speak about employment, housing, men's health issues, legal services and child development. The partnerships of Men at WORK have not only provided an additional resource for the men but they have given these fathers the opportunity to have "ownership" of Men at WORK. Fathers involved with Men at WORK mature not only as fathers but also as active members in their community. In 2006, the agency held its 5th Annual Men at WORK Christmas tree project that provided fresh cut Christmas Trees for 30 families in need of holiday assistance. Men at WORK has a partnership with a local Christmas Tree Farm who offer the program's families a hay ride into the woods to select a tree and cut it down themselves, followed by a visit with Santa and his reindeer. Refreshments are also provided.

Men at WORK takes part in many other community partnerships. For example, the Genesee County Community Action Resource Department (GCCARD Head Start) has a partnership with Men at WORK. They hosted a "Legal Forum for Fathers" together in the spring of 2005. This forum gave fathers the opportunity to speak with representatives from the Department of Human Services (DHS) and a Family Court Judge to have their questions answered about child support, child custody, paternity, visitation and other legal issues regarding children, fathers and families. The agency offers a bi-monthly Dad's Night with a literacy component. For example, Dinosaur Night, Construction Night, Campfire Night and Kite Night are a few of the themes. Agendas throughout the year for "Dad's Night" feature fun, hands-on activities for fathers and children. There is a "Turn the Page" monthly class offered at two different convenient times to teach fathers how to read to their children. For more information, please contact Mike Kildee at mkildee@carman.k12.mi.us.

Baraga, Houghton and Keweenaw (BHK) Child Development Board's fatherhood program uses the Internet as one of the ways to develop its fatherhood program and actively recruits and engages fathers in this rural, remote three-county area. Visitors to <http://www.bhkresources.org/> are greeted with "Hey Dads" and asked to complete a survey about their interests and what they'd like in a Fatherhood program. BHK's fatherhood program includes opportunities for discussions about increasing involvement with children and family relationships. The program offers activities such as a Mobile Toy Library that travels monthly to remote areas and the BHK Father Groups. To learn more, view the above website. For more information please contact Jeremy Moore, Father to Dads Project Coordinator, BHK Child Development Board, 700 Park Avenue, Houghton, MI, 49931, email address jrmoores@bhkfirst.org or call: 906-487-6600.

EightCAP Community Action Agency, Inc. Head Start and Early Head Start has been offering a four week Nurturing Father's program to engage men in dealing with the pain from their relationship with their own fathers, as well as introducing a new event called the Family Safety Fair, in Montcalm and Ionia counties. Four fathers took part in the March 2007 Michigan Head Start Association Conference in Kalamazoo. EightCAP held the second annual "Men's

Healing Retreat” on June 9 -10, 2006 at Higgins’ Lake. One of the fathers gave a fly-tying demonstration. Men shared their experiences with their own fathers and how they are growing in their capacity to be good fathers to their children. In June 2005, the first retreat for fathers of Head Start children gave instruction regarding the importance of fathers providing leadership in their families, schools, and communities. Partners in this retreat were the Head Start Male Involvement Advisory Council, Dieology, Inc. and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. EightCAP also has a Fatherhood Advisory Council that recruits fathers from each site and has community members. The agency offers “Father’s Night Out” events, and held a “Father’s Nature Walk.” In addition, the program has a Head Start male involvement brochure and a monthly newsletter, “The Fishing Dock”. The name was suggested by a Head Start father, who thought this is a good place for fathers to share information and learn about being good dads. The newsletter gives tips and information on the importance of reading to a child as early as possible. In 2006, EightCAP held two “Dad’s Day” two week periods, one in the fall and the second in the spring, when any man important in the life of a Head Start child was invited to come to spend a day with the child. Ninety men participated in the fall session and seventy men in the spring session. For more information, please contact Brian DeKraker at (616) 754-2660 Ext. 3370 or at briand@8cap.org.

The Learning Institute of Family Education (LIFE) sponsored a 2005 Father’s Day Breakfast and “Best Dad Ever Essay” contest on June 18, 2005, at the Redford United Methodist Church, Detroit. The contest helped raise awareness about the importance of fathering, encouraged the writing skills of students, and stimulated children’s thinking about their father, stepfather, grandfather, or father figure. A panel discussion focused on current issues such as marriage, divorce, single and step-parenting, long distance parenting, and other topics of interest. For more information about LIFE, visit www.lifefam.org.

The Michigan Family Support Council is making plans for the next training conference that will be held October 10 - 12, 2007, in Boyne Highlands. The Council held its 24th Annual Training Conference in Boyne Highlands, October 11-13, 2006 with over 45 workshops. The Michigan IV-D Child Support Director and other speakers addressed the group and the new Tribal IV-D Director conducted a workshop on Tribal issues and challenges of establishing a Tribal Child Support Program. Workshops included "Partnering with Fathers" and "Dads from Day One." For more information please view the Council’s website www.mifsc.org or contact Ellen Durnan at durnane@michigan.gov or phone 517-241-8051.

The Michigan Fatherhood Coalition is a resource network for approximately 40 practitioners who work with fathers in Michigan. The mission of the Michigan Fatherhood Coalition is to:

- *Provide a network for those who promote healthy families;*
- *Function as an information source for Fatherhood Initiatives in Michigan;*
- *Enhance positive male parenting; and*
- *Collaborate on efforts for the common good of all children.*

On February 9, 2007, The Michigan Fatherhood Coalition partnered with the Michigan Head Start Association to hold the 5th Annual Fatherhood Conference at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Detroit. For more information, visit michiganfatherhood.org or e-mail at info@michiganfatherhood.org.

The Michigan Head Start Association’s (MHSA) 2007 conference was held in Kalamazoo, March 14 -16, 2007. The conference offered educational workshops and opportunities to learn

about the most current educational, legislative, and program trends in Head Start. The conference provided many educational and discussion sessions addressing the issues that fathers and fatherhood practitioners face. Mac Bledsoe, author and parent (of football player Drew Bledsoe) provided the opening keynote. Daniel Andrews provided another keynote about the impact of father absence. In 2006, the joint conference took place in Grand Rapids for both fathers and fatherhood practitioners, and was highlighted with the keynote by D. J. Eagle Bear Vanas. The sessions examined fatherhood curriculum, funding, best practices, full time fatherhood, legal rights, and behavioral management.

The Michigan Head Start Association has a new address: 530 W. Ioniz, Suite F, Lansing, 48933. You may also call MHSA at 517-374-6471 or view information on the web at mhsa.ws/aboutus.asp.

Child Development Services of Ottawa County is planning a Fatherhood Spring Event in 2007. Plans are in the works for fathers / male role models and their child(ren) who are enrolled in Child Development Services to visit Craig's Cruisers in Holland for a pizza buffet lunch and free three hour access to Craig's Cruisers activities on Saturday, May 5, 2007. Staff planned this celebration as a father and child picnic in partnership with the local eatery and entertainment center. For more information, please contact Melanie DeFeyter (mdefeyter@cdsoc.org) or at (616) 786-0736.

Minnesota



The Minneapolis Council on Crime and Justice sponsors parenting classes for fathers at four state prisons. The program also offers classes for ex-offenders in Minneapolis. The Council provides holistic family support for incarcerated fathers and their families through their Family Strengthening Project. The program works with families from the time a father enters prison through the year after his release. The Council on Crime and Justice also does research and public policy advocacy related to families involved with the criminal justice system. For more information, please contact Michael Bischoff, Director of Projects, Council on Crime and Justice, at bischoffm@crimeandjustice.org or at (612) 596-7622.

Dads Make a Difference (DMAD) is a collaborative fathering and youth development program founded in 1993 by four Minnesota agencies. The mission of DMAD is to promote the positive involvement of fathers and to educate youth about responsible parenting. Dads Make a Difference became an independent 501c3 nonprofit in June 2006 after almost 14 years. DMAD affirms, strengthens, and celebrates the role of parents, especially fathers. The program simultaneously helps young people to become successful adults by teaching them critical thinking and life skills based on significant research findings regarding the consequences of too-early sexual activity and too-early parenting on teens, their children, and their families.

The original Dads Make a Difference program is a four-lesson, activity-based curriculum taught by trained male and female high school teens. The teens work with middle school-age youth in schools and other settings. The curriculum helps youth to examine risky behavior, explore the legal issues of fatherhood, discover how involved fathers make a difference in the well-being of children, and learn the importance of making responsible decisions about when to have a child. From October 1994 through December 2006, Dads Make a Difference trained 2,691 Minnesota teens from 162 schools / agencies. These teens have taught an estimated

53,000 middle school age youth. Over 200 teens from eight other states have also been trained. In 1998, a second curriculum was added, "The R Factor: Building Resiliency in Young Adults". The curriculum engages 16 to 20 year olds in discussions of relationships and life planning. Students investigate risk and protective factors, family case studies, father absence, and gender socialization, challenging them to plan for a healthy future as a partner and parent. Both curricula have been purchased for use in a variety of settings. Check the web at <http://www.dadsmakeadifference.org/> for information about training dates or product purchase or contact Jan Hayne.

Dads Make a Difference
Jan Hayne, Executive Director
161 St. Anthony Ave. Suite 840
Saint Paul, MN 55103
651-222-1622 (phone)
jan@dadsmakeadifference.org
651-222-7532 (fax)

The Department of Human Services, Office of Child Support Enforcement, is managing two Federal Access and Visitation Grants, administered by OCSE, effective April 2005. The grantees were selected through a competitive process. The two grantees are the Children's Safety Center, St. Paul, and Central Minnesota Legal Services (CMLS), Minneapolis. The Children's Safety Center is addressing the critical needs of children and non-custodial parents to maintain safe and positive access to one another during times of temporary or permanent separation. Central Minnesota Legal Services in collaboration with Goodwill and Easter Seals Minnesota and its Father Project, is supporting and facilitating non-custodial parents' access to visitation of their children. The primary objectives are to educate low-income non-custodial parents about how to increase the time they spend with their children, and to provide direct legal assistance, advice, and representation to non-custodial parents to overcome legal barriers. For more information, contact jill.c.roberts@state.mn.us or call her at (651) 431-4464.

The Minnesota Fathers and Families Network (MFFN) is a professional development and networking organization for human service practitioners and fatherhood advocates. The Network provides a "one-stop spot" for fatherhood information and resources. Plans are in the works for a MFFN Father's Rally to promote Healthy Fatherhood on June 9, 2007, with the theme, "Fatherhood for the Future: Building Bridges", which will seek to promote a positive public view of fathers as caring men and involved parents. The planning meeting for the 2007 Minnesota Festival for Fathers & Families will take place August 11, 2007.

The MFFN's 2007 4th Annual Winter Conference, the Minnesota Fatherhood and Family Services Summit, was held January 22-23, 2007, at the St. Cloud Civic Center. The conference featured the release of a new publication, "Do We Count Fathers in Minnesota?" which is a compendium of facts and figures about the well being of Minnesota fathers. The workshop sessions for the conference included the topics of Women Working with Fathers, Fathers and Early Childhood Development, Child Support and the New Laws, Helping Fathers with Special Needs Children, Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System, Fathers and Domestic Violence prevention and many others.

The MFFN's 2006 Annual Winter Conference took place in St. Cloud on January 23-24, 2006. Topics included: changes in Minnesota's child support guidelines; domestic violence issues;

the psychology of men; methamphetamine use in families; teen fathers; ethics in fatherhood programs; protecting children from online hazards; a discussion with Latino fathers; the child protection system; faith and fatherhood; an American Indian perspective of fathering; the role of fathers in infant health and childbirth; transitions from corrections; and bullying in schools. The MFFN sponsors and facilitates informal group networking breakfast meetings with professionals who work with men every first Friday to discuss fatherhood and men's services topics. The meetings are open to the public and no reservations are necessary. For details, call the Fathers Program at (612) 752-8800.

The Minnesota Fathers and Families Network moved to St. Paul in 2006. The address and phone numbers is:

Minnesota Fathers & Families Network
161 Saint Anthony Avenue, Suite 845
Saint Paul, MN 55103
Phone: 651-222-7432
Fax: 651-222-7532

To learn about Minnesota's statewide counseling hotline for men, online networking opportunities for fatherhood advocates, and recent research on fatherhood activities, please view www.mnfathers.org. For more information on Network activities, please e-mail Paul Masiarchin at pmasiarchin@mnfathers.org.

The 2007 Minnesota Head Start Association (MHSA) conference will be held October 25-27, 2007, at the Crowne Plaza, St. Paul. This is the Region V Training Institute and the theme is "Charting a Course: High Impact Strategies for Success." In October 2006, the MHSA annual Parent Training Conference included important workshops for fathers and parents such as, "What does the law say about child custody and parent involvement," "Working with fathers for the benefit of kids, dads, moms and community"; and "Financial Self-Sufficiency." MHSA also sponsored a training event for staff and parents on May 10, 2006, in St. Cloud at which Region V organized and presented a fatherhood workshop with the Minnesota Fathers and Families Network (MFFN) with the title, "Keep Our Eyes on the Child: Fatherhood Best Practices and Lessons Learned." You can find more information about MHSA by contacting hstart@mnheadstart.org or going to <http://www.mnheadstart.org/training.html>.

On May 24, 2005, the Minnesota Humanities Commission sponsored a Dads and Early Literacy Workshop that involved two new programs: Fathers Reading Every Day (FRED) and "Dads and Kids Book Clubs." Participants gained information on research on fathers, their role in the literacy development of their children, resources for professionals working with fathers, and information about "The Reading with Dad Book List." For more information, please view the Commission's website at www.minnesotahumanities.org.

Ohio



Ohio Head Start Association (OHSAI) held the Ohio Head Start Association Social Work Conference in Columbus on March 7, 2007. The Region V Family Life and Healthy Marriage Specialist, Dianna Durham-McLoud was keynote speaker. Her presentation entitled, "Because the Kids Do Better," encouraged the integration of the federal Healthy Marriage Initiative (HMI) into the Head Start program as a very natural step in helping parents who want this information move forward to a brighter future.

The Ohio Head Start Association, working with committee members from throughout the region, facilitated the 2005 Region V Head Start and MidAmerica Community Action Association Conference in Columbus on October 24-28, 2005. Fatherhood workshop topics included:

- Men Are Fathers Too;
- Putting the Child First;
- Fatherhood/Male Involvement Best Practices;
- The Father Factor in Children's Health; and
- The Role of Women in Male Involvement.

Joyce A. Thomas, ACF Region V Administrator, the keynote speaker at the October 26 luncheon, highlighted the importance of father involvement and the efforts of Region V to support this Federal priority in her remarks. For more information on OHSAI's training conferences, fatherhood and parent involvement activities, contact Julie Stone at (973) 435-1113 or by email at stone@ohsai.org. You may view the OHSAI website at www.ohsai.org/aboutus.html.

The Ohio Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families (OPNFF) released its Public Policy agenda in its fall 2006 Newsletter. The network also encouraged comments for the Governor's Transition report which was delivered to Governor Ted Strickland in January 2007 calling for the re-engagement of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, \$20 million in TANF dollars to fund fatherhood programming and a series of fathers and family friendly policy forums. The Governor had appointed an Agency Review committee charged with reviewing the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood and providing recommendations for a fatherhood agenda in the new Governor's administration. For more information please contact info@OPNFF.net. To view the OPNFF link to the transition report view <http://www.opnff.net/id28.htm>. For more information, email Steve Killpack at communityendeavors@earthlink.net, call (216) 432-7200 (x322) or visit the Ohio Practitioners' Network for Fathers and Families (OPNFF) website, www.opnff.net for details.

The Ohio Domestic Violence Network presented a conference on "Advocacy in Prevention: A Call to Men" on May 5, 2006. Speakers represented the National Association of Men and Women Committed to Ending Violence against Women and the University of Ontario, Criminology and Justice Studies. For more information, please see the network's website <http://www.odvn.org/>

Clermont County Child Focus, Inc., Early Childhood Division in Cincinnati has published "Men in the Kitchen: Our Cookbook" for several years, and Head Start "Cook Offs" have been held at each Head Start center of Child Focus for four years. The sale proceeds from the cookbook, with fathers' recipes and father/child photos, helps Child Focus fund other fatherhood activities. These activities include the annual "Fish-a-thon," which brings together over 350 participants,

and “Career Exploration” days. Child Focus is very proud that a suggestion from a group of Early Head Start fathers to produce a cookbook is now a yearly event. For more information, contact Pat Pack at (513) 528-7224, or by e-mail at PPack@child-focus.org.

The Healthy Fathering Collaborative is a network of public and private agencies dedicated to serving fathers and families in Greater Cleveland. You may view their website and then click on diverse programs and services for fathers and families. Services include Boot Camp for New Dads, Case Management and Family Visitation and programs range from the Aids Taskforce to the Urban League of Greater Cleveland. Please view the website at the following address: www.neofathering.net/id36.htm

Wisconsin



The Milwaukee Fatherhood Collaborative helped facilitate the 2007 bi-annual State Fatherhood Conference held March 16-17, in Madison. The Collaborative sponsored a “Dad at the Park” event as their annual pre-Father’s Day celebration, on June 11, 2006. In addition to food, games for youth, essay writing, and social service vendors, two special tug of war contests took place that involved police officers, fire fighters, county transit bus drivers and county sheriff departments. The Collaborative also co-sponsored the Wisconsin Fatherhood Conference, which took place March 10-12, 2005 in Milwaukee. Other sponsors were the Children’s Hospital and Health System, Community Relations Development Commission and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Extension. The conference sessions included “Fathering Skills” and “Father and Families Focus.”

For more information, please contact Al Holmes at aholmes285@aol.com, phone (414) 418-4788, or you can write to:

Al Holmes
Milwaukee Fatherhood Collaborative
P.O. Box 090973
Milwaukee, WI 53205

The Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative, in partnership with the Office of the Mayor, hosted a countywide Fatherhood Summit in Milwaukee, October 13-14, 2006. The summit brought together more than 400 fathers, social service providers and community leaders in an all day, citywide event aimed at identifying ways to get men to proactively embrace their role as fathers. During the summit a variety of breakout sessions were held with topics ranging from mental health and depression, to reconnecting to families after incarceration, to the issues and resources related to non-custodial dads. For more information, please contact Terence Ray, Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative, at 414-286-5653 or please send an e-mail to the following address: Terence.Ray@hacm.org.

The Rock Walworth Comprehensive Family Services, Inc. sponsors three special book distributions a year to heighten awareness of fathers and child literacy. The first distribution event topic is “Creating a Personal Library Family Night.” The child and parents create a personal library that will hold the books they receive. The second distribution is entitled, “Everyday Heroes.” Dads are invited to come to the classroom and read. The agency also invites policemen, firemen, dentists and others in the community. Mothers are also welcome. The third distribution takes place at the “Fatherhood Family Night.” Fathers, grandfathers, and

other males involved in the child's life are invited with the child to a family night meal and a father/child activity focused around the book distribution.

At the beginning of the program year, each classroom teacher is asked to submit a Fatherhood Plan for the year. Fathers then perform a building survey to assess the "male-friendliness" of the site. In addition, Rock Walworth has planned fatherhood activities from dance nights to making bookshelves. Rock Walworth has also held events such as "Donuts with Dad" when fathers attend breakfast with their children and then stay for the day. Each of the 10 centers does something special with fathers. For more information, please contact, Cheryl Hutchison, at chutchison@cfsheadstart.org.

Sheboygan County Head Start in 2007 planned a Men, Kids, and the YMCA event. During this time, YMCA instructors do tumbling activities with the dads and children. Sheboygan County Head Start recommends an activity that has proven very successful: "Men, Kids, and Bowling." On January 11, 2006, children and their dads (or grandfathers or uncles) went bowling and ate pizza. The children were also able to select a book about fathers and children. Each child received a framed picture of their dad and themselves at the bowling activity. The agency had a very successful Men, Kids, and Home Depot Night in 2006 with 25 fathers and children attending. A new series of events is Pancakes with Pop when the agency invites dads in to have breakfast/snack with their child. For more information, please contact Brenda Zastrow at bzastrow@hsshebco.org or phone (920) 458-1154.

The Wisconsin Head Start Association's (WHSA) 2008 Conference will be held February 11-13. The 2007 WHSA conference, "Believe in the Dream," had several workshops for fathers and father practitioners, including, "Fast and Fun Fatherhood Program Ideas", "Building a Successful Program for Latino Fathers", and "Building a Learning Community of Father Programs". At the 2006 Conference, themed "Shaping Outcomes – Building Futures," the conference offered a Father Involvement track of workshops including a Region V sponsored workshop entitled, "No Man Is an Island: Supporting Fathers through Collaboration and Partnerships." For more information, please send an e-mail to cousin@WHSAonline.org, or contact WHSA at (608) 442-6879 or visit their website at www.whsaonline.org