

7 Steps to Starting a Successful

Fatherhood Program

Learn how to create a successful and sustainable fatherhood program right from the start.



About National Fatherhood Initiative®

Creating a world in which every child has a 24:7 Dad.SM

National Fatherhood Initiative® (NFI) is the nation's leading non-profit organization working to end father absence. Underlying many of society's most pressing challenges is a lack of father involvement in their children's lives.

Our Mission

National Fatherhood Initiative® (NFI) works to increase father involvement by equipping communities and human service organizations with the father-engagement training, programs, and resources they need to be father-inclusive.

Our Vision

NFI's vision is that all communities and human service organizations are proactively father-inclusive so that every child has an involved, responsible, and committed father in their lives.

To see more about our mission, our partners, our impact, and how we can help you engage fathers, please visit www.fatherhood.org

For fatherhood and family resources, including programs, resources, and other helpful materials, please visit www.fathersource.org.

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STEP ONE

MAKE THE CASE For a Fatherhood Program



There is a “father factor” in nearly all societal ills facing America today.

How your organization addresses this issue matters.

There is a crisis in America. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 18.4 million children in America—one in four—live without a biological, step, or adoptive father in the home. That's enough children to fill New York City twice or Los Angeles four times over! Consequently, there is a “father factor” in nearly all of the societal ills facing America today. Research shows that when a child is raised in a father-absent home, he or she is affected in many ways. Children are more likely to have behavioral problems, more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, two times more likely to suffer obesity, and two times more likely to drop out of high school, and more.

Your organization may already be in agreement on the need for fatherhood programs, however it's important to remember that there is still debate about the necessity and irreplaceability of fathers. Our point of view, based on the research, is that good fathers perform functions that cannot be performed by anyone else, even though such others as male teachers and family friends can be partial substitutes for good fathers. Let's look at some research illustrated in the infographic below.

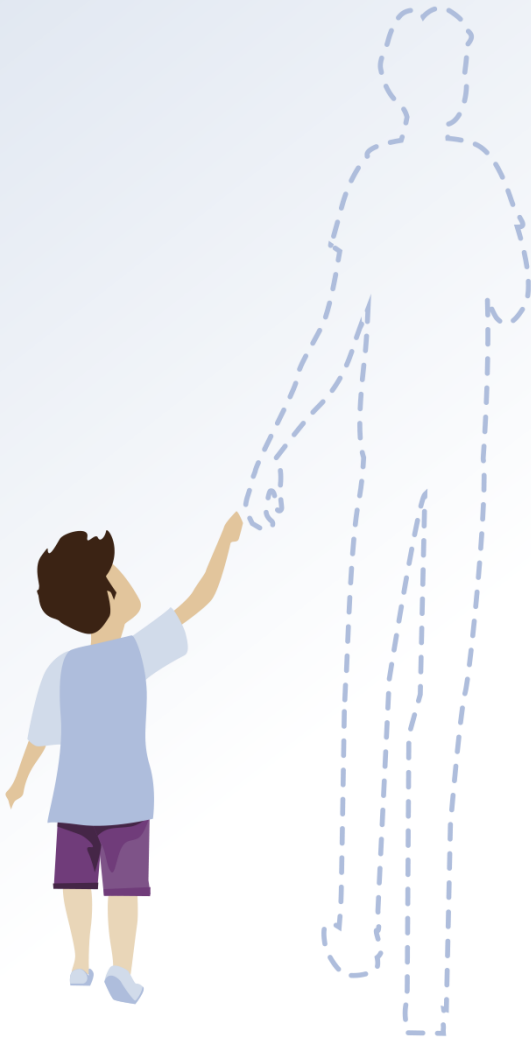


The **Father Absence Crisis** in **America**

Research shows² when a child is raised in a father-absent home, they are affected in the following ways...

17.8

Million Children, Nearly 1 in 4, Without a Biological, Step, or Adoptive Father at Home¹



- ⊖ 4x Greater Risk of Poverty
- ⊖ More Likely to Have Behavioral Problems
- ⊖ 2x Greater Risk of Infant Mortality
- ⊖ More Likely to Go to Prison
- ⊖ More Likely to Commit Crime
- ⊖ 7x More Likely to Become Pregnant as a Teen
- ⊖ More Likely to Face Abuse and Neglect
- ⊖ More Likely to Abuse Drugs and Alcohol
- ⊖ 2x More Likely to Suffer Obesity
- ⊖ 2x more Likely to Drop Out of School

**National
Fatherhood
Initiative[®]**

www.fatherhood.org

¹U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). Living arrangements of children under 18 years old: 1960 to present. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.

²National Fatherhood Initiative[®] 2019. *Father Facts: Eighth Edition*. Germantown, MD: National Fatherhood Initiative[®].



Further:



Father absence data will help you educate others on the importance of father involvement, and how father involvement is at the base of numerous societal issues that community organizations and social service agencies are seeking to combat or solve.



It stands to reason that building the skills of fathers—giving them the specific, targeted tools and skills they need to be involved—will lead to their increased involvement in the lives of their children, and reduce the chance of the ill-effects of father absence for that child.



Father involvement/father absence data can help you write stronger grant proposals and bolster support for your program in your community.

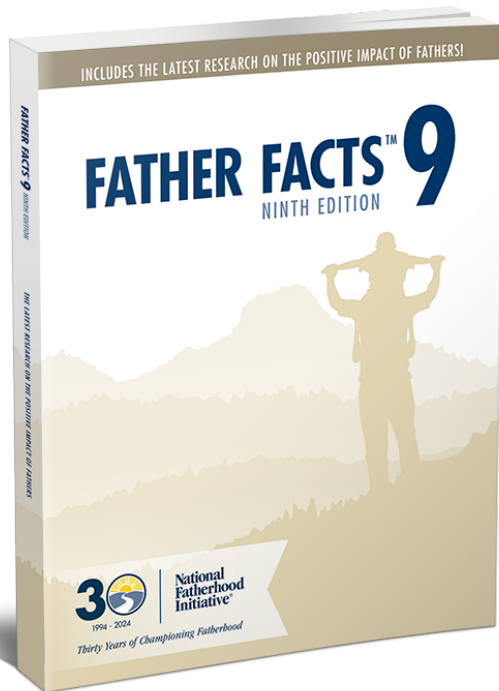


Father involvement/father absence data can also inform your mission, and help establish goals you may want to reach to demonstrate marked improvement in your community as a result of your work.

Get more father absence statistics and data, including the infographic on the previous page, at:
www.fatherhood.org/fatherhood-data-statistics



National and State Level Data on Father Absence



There is a plethora of research and statistics available on the positive effects of father involvement and negative effects of father absence.

National Fatherhood Initiative® (NFI) publishes the nation’s premier research publication called *Father Facts*™, now in its 9th edition. [Father Facts 9™](#) is the reference manual for anyone interested in promoting responsible fatherhood. It includes a comprehensive survey of the most recent Census Bureau data and social science research, giving a clear picture of the causes and consequences of father absence.

“With this tool in your ‘belt,’ you will be equipped to make the case for fatherhood work in your organization.”



Now that you know some of the research (and how to get more), you understand how critical it is for fathers to be involved in their children's lives. There will be hurdles for you as an organization (and for fathers) to overcome, but we urge you to “fight the good fight” with NFI to end father absence.

Depending on your organization's size or budget (more on budget later), you may be able to do something small or something big for fathers in your organization. But whatever you do, please **DO SOMETHING** intentional and proactive for fathers to involve them in their children's lives.

In human service settings, fathers are often a forgotten “piece of the puzzle.” When fathers understand their important role, it transforms their lives and the lives of their children and family! Encouraging responsible fatherhood is one of the best things you can do for our children's future—and **OUR** future—as a nation.

“Do **SOMETHING** intentional and proactive for fathers. They play a key role in a child's overall well-being.”

STEP TWO

ASSESS The Father Friendliness of Your Organization



How father friendly are you? How about your organization?

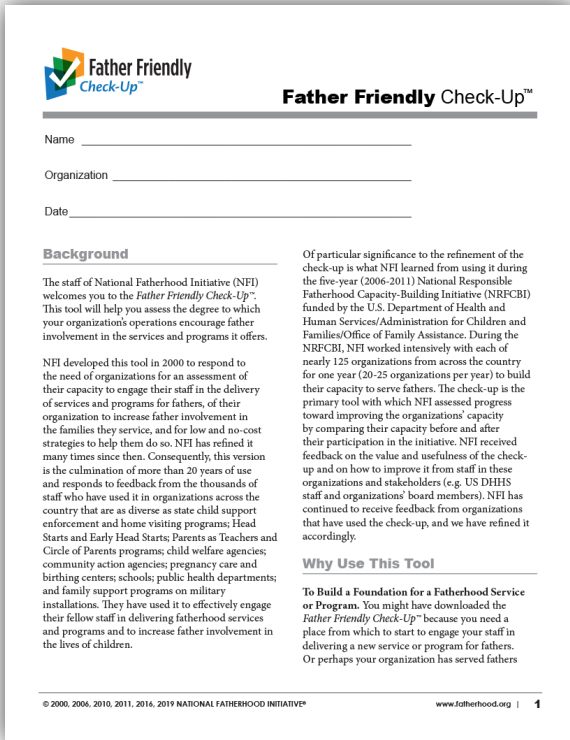
Assessing father friendliness is a vital step to starting a fatherhood program and serving fathers .

Is everyone “in the boat?”

Just because you are passionate about father involvement and think it’s important or is an important aspect of your organization, that doesn’t necessarily mean that every other staff member does, too. Each person carries with them their own understanding of what it means to have or not have a father in their lives, and their own opinion about whether or not having an involved father is even important to children today. Unbeknownst to them, these opinions and attitudes can play into their everyday work with families you serve.

Therefore, assessing the father friendliness of your organization is a vital step to serving fathers and starting a fatherhood program. In order to head in the right direction, you must know where to start.





NFI’s [Father Friendly Check-Up™](#) (FFCU) is a free tool to help you successfully engage dads and strengthen the families in your community.

This assessment allows you to analyze your physical environment, location, organizational philosophies, staff attitudes, and more. Without the full “buy-in” from all of your staff members, your fatherhood program and father-involvement plans may come to a screeching halt.

Further, the FFCU will help you examine the structure of your organization and whether it has the foundation on which to build a successful service or program. Without that foundation, your organization risks failure in its ability to effectively serve fathers.

www.fatherhood.org/ffcu

“Wouldn’t it be terrible to put all this work into starting something and find out later that it didn’t have ‘legs to stand on’ for success?”



The FFCU consists of four parts or “assessment categories” that you will use to assess your organization’s current level of father friendliness.

1. Leadership Development –
The attitudes, beliefs, and values held by the organization’s employees—the culture of the organization—and their impact on the delivery of services and programs.

2. Organizational Development –
The “nuts and bolts” of an organization that carries out its mission through organizational capacity as reflected in areas such as: 1) policies and procedures, 2) processes, and 3) physical environment.

3. Program Development –
The services and programs an organization offers, how it engages staff in offering them, and how it promotes and markets them.

4. Community Engagement –
The ability of an organization to engage its community in the delivery of services and programs.

Once complete, the FFCU will encourage you to examine not only your organization but also your own attitudes, values, and beliefs about this important life-changing and organization-changing work. You will then have a good idea of how to build a solid, long-lasting foundation for a new or existing service or program.



Let's look at an organizational case study highlighting the use of the FFCU to launch a strategic plan using NFI resources.

Clinical Outcomes Group, Inc., Pottstown, PA

Clinical Outcomes Group (COGI) completed a series of meetings with internal stakeholders (e.g., with COGI's Abuse Intervention Services and Prison Re-Entry Program) to identify and pursue fatherhood opportunities and projects. After taking the Father Friendly Check-Up™, COGI implemented several new and revised father-friendly human resource policies that were approved by COGI's board of directors. Once those policies were approved, COGI offered family-friendly support to their staff that were already available to clients, such as weight management, personal finance education, stress management, CPR, and first-aid certification. The COGI staff was then trained on Abuse Intervention Services (AIS), along with two NFI programs, 24:7 Dad® and DoctorDad®. (NFI no longer offers the latter program.)

The trained COGI staff was headed in the right direction. The next step they took was to implement the programs that they are now trained on. They pursued a partnership with Schuylkill Health to provide them with resources and technical assistance to implement DoctorDad® for new fathers, they created a collaborative inter-agency model (currently five agencies participating) offering 24:7 Dad® in the community, and the agencies/departments at COGI scheduled frequent meetings with community partners to discuss father involvement.

Next, it was time for COGI to engage their community. Their first step was to conduct a Father Friendly Check-Up™ with county commissioners. Once that was complete, they created the Schuylkill County Fatherhood Task Force and conducted four meetings over eight months. The initial meeting of the Fatherhood Task Force offered childcare and food that appealed to fathers. A lot of organizations use the food tactic in an effort to keep fathers coming back to sessions. It's a popular tactic that works more often than not. After the second and third meetings, the task force organized a fathering event for all human, social, faith-based, and other community organizations and provided them with NFI's Father Friendly Check-Up™. Throughout this event, COGI was able to identify and recruit 30 leaders and members to create a Fatherhood Advisory Group in Schuylkill County. The advisory group was educated on "8 Pillars of Leadership" in implementing fatherhood efforts (from NFI's Father Friendly Check-Up™).

Download the FFCU and see more case studies at www.fatherhood.org/ffcu.



Interested in a comprehensive online training on creating a father-friendly organization?

If you're interested in a comprehensive online training on how to create a father-friendly organization, visit the Father Engagement Academy™ at academy.fatherhood.org to learn about and enroll in the on-demand [Father-Friendly Organization Workshop™](#). NFI staff facilitate this workshop that uses an automated version of the FFCU. It's well worth your and your organization's time!

STEP THREE

**FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS
on the Type(s) of Fathers
You Will Engage**



Your fatherhood program doesn't exist without dads to serve.

What's the greatest challenge faced by most fatherhood programs?

Marketing a program or service is the greatest challenge of all. Unfortunately, some fatherhood practitioners are very skilled in the business of program operations but do not know the location of their target population or how to get them in the door.

Marketing your fatherhood program not only involves recruitment, it involves retention and creating a positive image of your program or service in the community to generate referrals. That old saying “if you build it, they will come” does not apply here! Just because you are passionate, your staff is ready to work with fathers, and you have a plan in mind, does not mean they will come. It is with careful planning that you must proceed.

You may have heard the old saying, “Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance.” That’s why successful fatherhood practitioners plan ahead by strategizing how they will draw fathers in, what other services they will offer as “hooks,” and lay out the demographics and location of their target population. It is ideal to do this prior to choosing the curriculum for your fatherhood program.



START with these questions:

- What kind of other “wrap-around” services/resources do we offer that have a “draw” for potential participants? What could be the “hook?”
- What kind of fathers are you targeting? Do you want to serve new fathers, teen fathers, single fathers, non-custodial fathers, etc.?
- What are those fathers' demographics (e.g., age, age of children, marital status, and child custody status)?

NEXT, answer questions like these:

- Where can we find the specific type of fathers we want to serve?
- Where are the fathers we want to serve? Where do they hang out?
- Where can we post a flyer? Can we post it on a bulletin board in a community center or grocery store? Could we include a flyer on pizza boxes or packaging of other food delivery services, etc.?
- Do we already serve mothers, and can we get the message about the program to fathers through them?
- What are some other creative things we can offer to attract the fathers to our program? Can we offer food, prizes, credits, child care, etc.?

“Successful fatherhood practitioners plan ahead by strategizing how they will draw fathers in by determining the other services they will offer as “hooks.”



Most fathers enroll in a fatherhood program because it helps them address their immediate needs.

Regarding effective hooks, NFI's own research has found that most fathers enroll in a fatherhood program because it helps them address their immediate needs (e.g., job training and placement, access and visitation with their children, getting a GED, etc.). Often, fathers only realize the benefits of learning fatherhood skills after they've been enrolled in a program for a while.

So from a marketing and recruitment standpoint, it's more important to stress how your program or organization can meet the fathers' immediate needs and then introduce them to the fatherhood program. Ultimately, make the fatherhood program an integral part of a larger set of programs or services fathers receive.

For example, NFI's evidence-based [24:7 Dad®](#) program is an ideal compliment to wrap-around services because the program speaks to why men do what they do. Fatherhood can provide men with a greater context and purpose for life, and when you tap into that, you can make significant in-roads in the other service areas as well.

For tons of great ideas and links to resources to help you recruit fathers, visit NFI's [Recruitment and Retention](#) web page.

Depending on your location and types of fathers you will serve, you may find fathers in different places.

For example:

- If your program is located in a **rural setting**, you may find potential participants in locations like hunting lodges, fire stations, fishing equipment stores, and at sporting events.
- If your setting is **urban**, you might recruit potential participants at shopping malls, libraries, social service buildings, business venues, and sporting events.
- If you're looking to recruit **teen and younger adult fathers**, skateboard parks, shopping malls, computer gaming facilities, and dance clubs could serve as prime locations for recruitment.



Interested in an online training that will help you create a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan?

If you're interested in an online training on how to create a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan for your program, visit the Father Engagement Academy™ at www.fatherhoodpractitioners.org to learn about and enroll in the on-demand [Recruitment and Retention Certificate](#)™. NFI staff facilitate this workshop that includes exclusive access to a tool for a recruitment and retention plan. It's well worth your and your organization's time!

STEP FOUR

**SELECT THE RIGHT
NFI RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS
For Serving Fathers**



Planning to serve fathers, preparing my staff... Oh my!

NFI's FREE Learning Center can help.

Visit www.fatherhood.org/nfi-learning-center

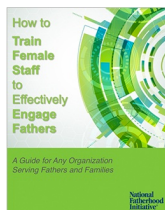
At fatherhood.org you will find a number of free resources to help you with your fatherhood efforts.



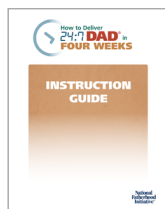
Free on-demand webinars: NFI offers free webinars throughout the year that can help you successfully serve fathers. Listen on-demand to topics that focus on recruitment and retention, fundraising, and running fatherhood programs in specific settings.



Videos of all kinds: Stories of impact from fathers who have gone through NFI programs, how fatherhood is changing fathers in prison, NFI PSAs (commercials with fatherhood themes), and more! Use the videos however you like.



Guides (like this one!) to help you work with fathers: Our guides include: How to Train Female Staff to Effectively Engage Fathers, Creating an Alumni Program for Graduates of a Fatherhood Program, and more.



Program specific resources: We have a slew of resources specific to helping you get the most out of NFI's programs, such as [24:7 Dad®](#), [InsideOut Dad®](#), and [Understanding Dad™](#).

I'm ready to serve dads... but with what resources?

NFI resources offer you the ability to customize a program to engage fathers in a way that is unique to your organization and setting.

After you determine which type of father(s) you will serve, it will be time to select the fatherhood skill-building resources that best fit your needs. To start, NFI uses “intensity levels” to help you understand the amount of staff involvement and monetary investment needed to offer our programs and other resources. Choose the level that's the best fit for your fatherhood program. You can start at the low-intensity level, for example, and increase in intensity over time. You can also start at any level and include resources and programs from any level. It's all up to you! Don't hesitate to contact us to help you customize a program.



Low Intensity Resources: NFI fatherhood skill-building resources that require minimal staff time and monetary investment, and are easily incorporated into your other organizational offerings for fathers, such as brochures, tip cards, pocket guides, and posters.



Medium Intensity Resources: Fatherhood skill-building resources that require moderate staff involvement and monetary investment, such as the 24:7 Dad® Key Behaviors Workshop, the InsideOut Dad® Guide to Family Ties, and FatherTopics™ Booster Sessions.

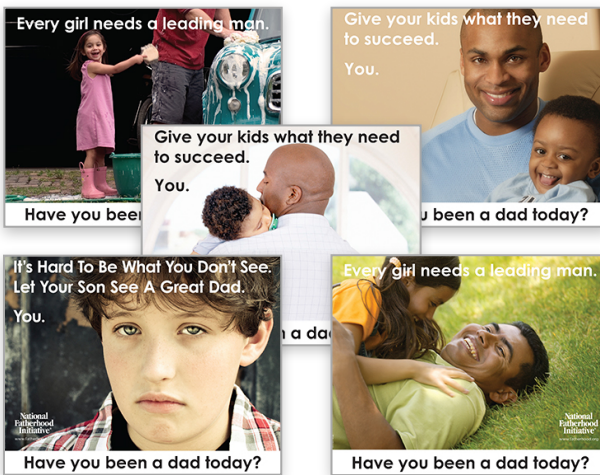


High Intensity Resources: Fatherhood programs that require the highest level of staff time and monetary investment, and that can last for several months such as 24:7 Dad® A.M. and P.M., InsideOut Dad®, and Understanding Dad™.

Low Intensity Resources



NFI offers affordable skill-building materials for dads and moms that you can start using in your day-to-day activities with a small budget and little to no staff time. Many are offered in both English and Spanish.



For example, NFI's brochures and pocket guides with tips for dads and new dads are easy, low intensity ways to begin adding fatherhood materials to your offerings. Adding posters with a fatherhood focus can also enhance your environment. Acquire these and other resources at www.fathersource.org.




Providing father-focused materials to the clients you serve is an easy, budget-friendly way to begin.

Medium Intensity Resources



Another programming alternative could be investing in one of NFI's medium intensity resources.

The [24:7 Dad® Key Behaviors Workshop](#), for example, is an affordable eight-hour workshop you can run for fathers that covers the importance of developing and applying the 12 key behaviors of the 24:7 Dad. These behaviors are associated with the five characteristics, or traits, of the 24:7 Dad. Fathers can complete it in a short amount of time—in a single day, in a week, or over the course of two Saturdays, for example.



HELP DADS UNLOCK THE KEY BEHAVIORS

of being a great dad with our
NEW, short-length workshop!

Take your fatherhood program to the next level with the 24/7 Dad® Key Behaviors Workshop!

This workshop helps fathers develop 12 key behaviors that are associated with the five characteristics, or traits, of the 24/7 Dad from NFI's evidence-based 24/7 Dad® program. They are: Self-Awareness, Caring for Self, Fathering Skills, Parenting Skills, and Relationship Skills.

Please review the 12 key behaviors to the right.

The Ultimate Flexible Workshop!

- ✓ Great for ANY father (whether they've participated in NFI's 24/7 Dad® programs or not!)
- ✓ Can be delivered as a one-day, 8 hour workshop
- ✓ Can be delivered in 7 sections (30 min. - 1 hr. per section)
- ✓ Can be delivered to small or large groups
- ✓ Can be delivered to just one father (e.g. in a home-based setting)

The 12 Key Behaviors

1. Works with an Accountability Partner(s)
2. Reflects on a Weekly Basis
3. Takes Care of Physical Health
4. Takes Care of Emotional/ Mental Health
5. Develops Skills that Reflect His Role in the Family
6. Models Healthy Masculinity
7. Disciplines His Children in Healthy Ways
8. Nurtures His Children
9. Communicates Well with Mom and Their Children
10. Builds and Maintains a Good Relationship with Mom
11. Pays It Forward
12. Engages with His Community


BONUS!

The Workshop Facilitator's Manual contains separate Program Guides for delivering to groups *AND* to dads one-on-one!

**Complete
Program Kit**

\$579⁰⁰

CNA-73



To Order: www.fathersource.org | call 240-912-1263 | fax 301-948-6776

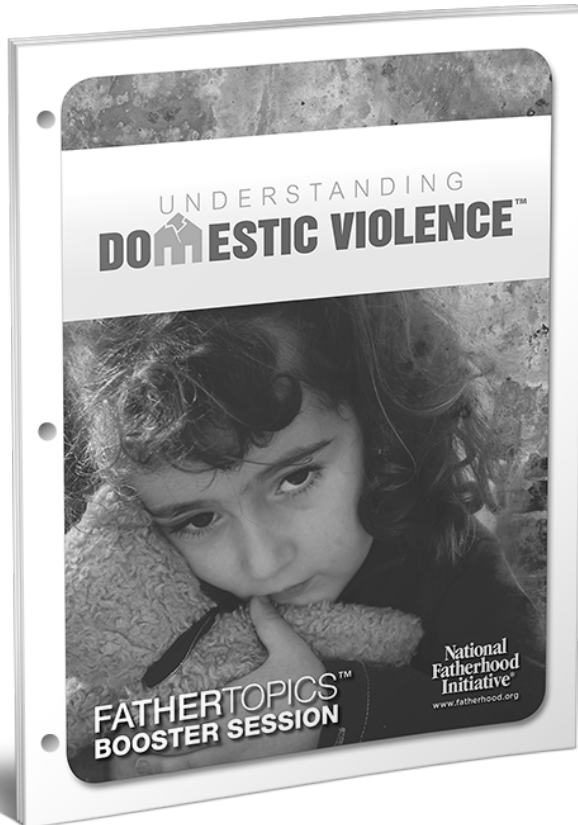
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Medium Intensity Resources



Or consider running one of our affordable, one-day [FatherTopics™ Booster Sessions](#), such as Understanding Domestic Violence™. While useful as an add-on to one of our high intensity programs, you can run any booster session as a stand-alone workshop to help fathers and mothers develop the awareness and skills they need to be good parents and partners. Understanding Domestic Violence™, for example, helps dads understand the many types of domestic violence, the impact it has on fathers and families, and how it can be addressed.

Whichever fatherhood programming level you choose, providing father-specific, skill-building materials at some level is a step in the right direction.

High Intensity Resources



24:7 Dad® A.M. and P.M. (for all fathers)

If you are eager to start a more robust, high intensity fatherhood program, NFI offers complete fatherhood curriculum kits that allow you to begin your fatherhood program at an affordable cost with no formal facilitator training required.



InsideOut Dad® (for incarcerated fathers)

This “out-of-the-box” approach means that NFI’s complete program kits, such as 24:7 Dad®, include a Facilitator’s Manual, USB Flash Drive, and 10 Fathering Handbooks. All you need to budget for is the ongoing handbook costs (around \$12/handbook depending on the program). No formal facilitator training is required because of the easy-to-follow program format and tips within the Facilitator’s Manual. (Note: NFI offers and recommends formal training for facilitators. To learn more about our training options, [click here.](#))



Understanding Dad™ (for mothers)

Think about who in your organization could lead a fatherhood group, or seek volunteers to step into this role.

STEP FIVE

Prepare to SUSTAIN YOUR PROGRAM

Keeping your fatherhood program alive and thriving for the long-term requires sustainability.

It's time to start thinking about how you can create a program or initiative that you can sustain.

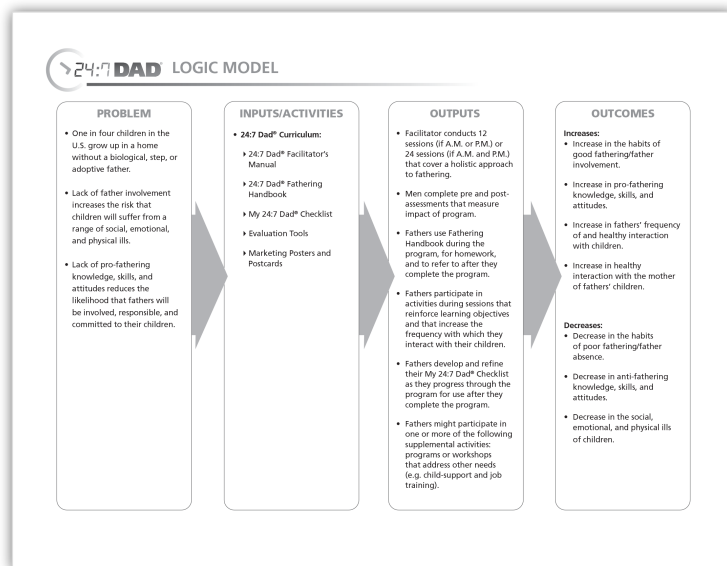
Now that you have completed the Father Friendly Check-Up™ and have determined you are ready to tackle the next steps in starting your fatherhood program, it's time to think about how you can create a program you can sustain. Sustainability refers to the long-term ability to keep your fatherhood program alive and thriving. From the foundation of the program to ensuring long-term funding, a good place to start is with a logic model.*

Developing a program requires a process for planning, implementing, and measuring its success. A logic model is simply a picture of how your program works that leads to the outcome(s) you desire (e.g., more involved fathers). It keeps your goals in view and shows the processes and activities connected to achieving that goal. It is a valuable aid to show potential partners and funders that solid, systematic planning backs your program.

Remember how we spoke in Step 3 about using wrap-around services as a hook for your fatherhood program? Be sure to include these services as "inputs" in your logic model in addition to, for example, the fatherhood curriculum you'll use. See the following page for an example of a logic model from one of NFI's programs, 24:7 Dad®.

*Instead of a logic model, you could consider a theory of change model. For more on the difference between logic and theory of change models, visit <https://cere.olemiss.edu/logic-models-vs-theories-of-change/>.

Components of a Logic Model



- **Inputs** (what we invest)
- **Outputs:**
 - Activities (the actual tasks we do)
 - Participation (who we serve; customers and stakeholders)
 - Engagement (how those we serve engage with the activities)
- **Outcomes/Impacts:**
 - Short-Term (learning: awareness, knowledge, skills, motivations)
 - Medium-Term (action: behavior, practice, decisions, policies)
 - Long-Term (consequences: social, economic, environmental, etc.)

“The goal of a logic model is to help you get started on the right foot with your fatherhood program, *and help everyone involved understand what’s needed, and where you’re headed.*”

STEP SIX

FUND YOUR FATHERHOOD PROGRAM



So you have an awesome logic model for your fatherhood program. Great! Now what?

How are you going to find funding for all this much needed fatherhood work?

NFI understands that you want to do everything you can to promote the well-being of children through father involvement and a fatherhood program. Organizational budgets are often tight, however, and funding can be difficult to secure. The good news is that there are a variety of ways you can fund—or find funding—to work with fathers and take advantage of NFI’s wide range of affordable skill-building resources and out-of-the box fatherhood programs.

Funding from Your Own Budget

The first and best option to consider is how you can find funding within your own organizational budget, which can certainly be difficult. But where there’s a will there’s a way. Consider pulling a small amount of money from a program or two that are not as successful as expected, or from a budget where, with some shrewd planning, you can reduce costs. Then use those savings to invest in fatherhood resources for your program. Of course, when you have the opportunity to plan budgets for the next fiscal year, be sure to include funds for your fatherhood program in your planning, and earmark funds for fatherhood skill-building resources, just as you would for the other programs and resources you provide.



Funding from Outside Sources



Funding from outside sources is an option that your organization may want to pursue. With some planning, hard work, and dedication, you may be able to find an outside funding source that will provide for all aspects of your work with fathers.

From training your fatherhood program facilitators, to providing funding to sustain your program (e.g., staff stipends, and ongoing fatherhood resources), outside funding could open doors for your fatherhood program that you may have never imagined. You may also be able to serve even more fathers than you ever thought possible.

For more information on how to obtain funding for your fatherhood program, particularly from private sources, watch our free ["Fundraising for Fatherhood Programs"](#) on-demand webinar.

Your organization may want to seek outside funding from:

- ✓ Individuals
- ✓ Foundations
- ✓ Corporations
- ✓ Local, State, or Federal Government
- ✓ Special Events/Fundraisers



Funding from Outside Sources

Check out these free and fee-based resources on locating potential funders, acquiring training on fundraising, and more. (Simply enter the name of any of these resources into your favorite search engine.)



Federal Grant Resources

Grants.gov: A federal site that aggregates all federal grant opportunities. You can search for grants currently being offered and access grant writing resources.



Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Grants: This is an ongoing, funding stream provided by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families to provide grants to organizations seeking to run fatherhood and marriage/healthy relationship programs.



Foundation / Grant Funding

Foundation Center: A subscription-based website that offers research on foundations, including family foundations and other tools for grant seekers.



GrantStation: Offers nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and government agencies the opportunity to identify potential funding sources for their programs or projects as well as resources to mentor these organizations through the grant seeking process. Has free and membership-based resources.



The Grantsmanship Center: The center helps private and public nonprofits make better communities via training and publications to help organizations plan solid programs, write logical, compelling grant proposals, and create earned income opportunities.



Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training (GIFT): Provides a range of training programs and webinars to help you raise money from your community. Additionally, they offer articles and subscription-based services to aid in your fundraising efforts.

STEP SEVEN

**LAUNCH YOUR
FATHERHOOD PROGRAM
and
MEASURE THE RESULTS**

**National
Fatherhood
Initiative®**

www.fatherhood.org

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Ready to Launch?

Plan to evaluate your program's success.

Now that you've laid the foundation for a successful fatherhood program by following the first six steps, you're ready for lift off!

Or are you?

Nope. You must take one final, crucial step before launch: laying the foundation to evaluate your program.

Don't create your evaluation plan after you launch your program. You want to avoid a situation, for example, where you have been running your fatherhood program for several weeks or months and your boss knocks on your door wanting to know how it's going, and may ask questions such as:

- Which recruitment and retention strategies are working?
- Are the dads enjoying the program?
- Is the program having a positive impact?





Planning to evaluate your program will allow you to get the best results, and correct your course if something isn't working. (And you won't have that deer-in-the-headlights look when your boss asks you outcomes-related questions.) An evaluation is like a GPS. It tells you if you're headed

in the right direction and helps you to correct your course if necessary.

Moreover, evaluations are critically important for program credibility, accountability, improvement, sharing of best practices, and to prove to funders that their dollars were well spent. You don't need a complicated design to effectively evaluate your program. NFI includes [evaluation tools](#), for example, with many of our fatherhood programs, such as 24:7 Dad® and InsideOut Dad®, that you can easily use, score, and interpret. We also include a number of evaluation tools you can download in the free resources section of our website. You can use them for any kind of fatherhood program that seeks the outcomes they measure (e.g., increased father involvement and better co-parenting).

Create a detailed evaluation plan before launch. Tie it to your logic model. Include the processes, staff, evaluation tools, stakeholders who'll value the results, and how and when you'll report the results.

“Evaluations are critically important for program credibility, accountability, improvement, sharing of better practices, and to prove to funders that their dollars were well spent.”



CONCLUSION

Starting a direct service fatherhood program will be incredibly rewarding for staff AND the dads you serve.

Now that you've read this guide, it's time to go back and start with Step 1. The good news is that NFI is here help you create a fatherhood program that's the best it can be!

Be sure to check out all of our free resources at www.fatherhood.org and browse all of our fatherhood skill-building resources at www.fathersource.org.

Wishing you the best in your endeavors,

**National
Fatherhood
Initiative®**

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