

## Recruitment ideas from Fatherhood Summit

At the second Texas Fatherhood Summit, attendees participated in a Fatherhood Recruitment Challenge. For this activity, attendees brainstormed recruitment strategies with other attendees at their table and created a list. Each table then exchanged lists with a neighboring table and shared the most innovative idea on their neighbors' list with the rest of the Summit attendees. CFRP compiled and organized the 200+ ideas into the list below. You can use this list as a resource for your fatherhood programs!

### Recruitment Strategies:

#### Raffle/incentives

- Provide food at meetings
- Raffle something inexpensive but meaningful at meetings
- Work with local businesses:
  - Fathers can take a certificate of program completion for a discount
  - Businesses can donate food or other goods
- Provide gift cards or stipends
- Use a punch card system to give a reward for attendance
- Offer reward/special meeting for referring friends
- Send out coupon in the mail—if father comes with the coupon, give him an item
- Provide a “Daddy’s Tool Bag”

#### Flyers

- Post flyers in relevant areas
- Program participants can give out flyers at work
- Display/disseminate flyers at:
  - Wal-Mart
  - Reentry programs
  - Probation offices
  - Child support offices
  - Coffee shops
  - Grocery stores
  - Goodwill stores
  - Unique places like inside books
  - Pizza boxes
- Use door hangers
- Provide flyers to partners to distribute, provide them information on how to explain your program:
  - For example: children bring back flyers from Boys and Girls Club
- Provide infographics/data on fatherhood and importance of father involvement (for example: Fatherhood Fact sheet)

## Use social media

- Videos
  - Make a video of moms talking about how the program helped their families
  - Model dads share videos of what they do to be a good dad
  - New dads share aspirations for their kids
  - YouTube channel
  - Ask dads to share recruitment videos on social media, do a contest for most likes
- Engage parents on [program's] Facebook page
- Parents can send in questions
- Use hashtag trends
- Create events and tag people
- Purchase ads on Facebook or Instagram
- Offer apps, toolkit, videos, classes on multimedia platform
- Connect with other providers

## Advertisement

- Radio
- Billboards
  - Emphasizes better fatherhood, not a class
- Movie theaters
  - Ads before movies
- Commercials on Pandora or Spotify
- Put advertisement on organization's vans/murals or posters on buildings
- Celebrity sponsorship
  - Local pro sports team
  - NFL All Pro Dads
  - Actors
- Cultivate relationship with local media
  - Free publicity in exchange for stories
  - Program reps go on morning shows (Wake Up Austin, Great Day San Antonio)
  - Team with local PBS station to get program information out during children's programming
- Sign spinner on corner
- Bus stop ads or ad on buses
  - Send ambassador to talk to people on the bus
- Videos at gas pumps
- Use positive images of fathers
- Show fathers taking on more parenting roles

### **Reduce barriers to participation**

- Host workshops after work hours or on weekends
- Partner with employers
  - Host program at worksites or during lunches
  - Put flyers in breakrooms
- Refer to the program as a “group”, “workshop”, or “talk”
- Provide transportation assistance or vouchers
- Partner with other organizations to provide multiple services for dads at once

### **Get program graduates to promote the program**

- Provide incentives for referrals
- Give them brochures and flyers
- Program graduates can share leaflets at work
- Program graduates can promote the program within their own networks

### **Host an orientation session**

- Host “Lunch and Learn” session where you give a presentation about the program
  - Local business could provide lunch
- Host life-skills presentation to inform dads on topics and advertise additional services
- Host orientation in the neighborhood, provide meals or incentives

### **Organize a community/family event**

- Host an open house at your site with BBQ, face painting, games, etc.
- Host a monthly group connection and provide food
  - People from the community come talk about services and helpful topics
- Offer service projects/activities for moms and kids while dads are at your program
- Host a Father’s Day event to promote your program
- “Make and Take” event—dad and child make something together
- Coordinate with other dad programs for a “Dads’ Day in the Park” near Father’s Day
- Musicians—connect to music that speaks to fathers

### **Encourage your staff**

- Direct, personal contact is most effective
- Build a personal relationship with people
- Word of mouth
- Get out there, be persistent
- Educate funders so they know what to fund
- Outreach/recruitment person should look like/be relatable to clients
- Encourage early commitment—get parents to sign up on the spot
- Wear visible prompts—stickers, t-shirts, etc.

## Recruitment Sources

### Reach out to men/dads directly

- Target advertising to dads
- Host dad-specific events, like “Donuts for Dads”
- Invite dad directly—maybe via advertising campaign like WWE and NFL All Pro Dads
- Offer first few lessons at locations where dads already gather
  - For example: partner with their workplace or a men’s sports league
- Put flyers/share info at places where dads go:
  - Local bars
    - Put dad statistics on coasters
  - Gyms/YMCA
  - Parks, community centers, basketball courts, soccer fields
  - Men’s restrooms
  - Bars
  - Hardware/tool stores
    - Put program information on the back of receipts
  - Barbershops
    - Conscious barbershops—share videos
  - Sports event
    - Recruit coaches to establish a “Dads’ Night”
  - Auto shops, car dealership, car wash
  - Fishing/outdoor supply store
  - Local men’s groups (biker group, fishing club, etc.)
- Buy ads for events hosted by dad-focused organizations

### Recruit teen dads

- Go to a teen pregnancy center
- Work with school district
  - Recruit in schools with teen parenting program
  - Use existing connections between school districts and teen parent programs
  - Partner with schools to provide parenting education
- Fatherhood fact sheet for teen dads
- Juvenile detention centers

### Recruit military and veteran dads

- Go to military bases
- Partner with Veteran’s Administration
- Partner with military base events
- Work with veteran’s groups
- Connect with other programs targeting military families

### **Recruit new dads**

- Recruit at Labor and Delivery (L&D) Units, prenatal clinics, hospitals
- Create “Dads’ Room” in L&D units or prenatal clinics
- Create a video showing the rights and responsibilities of establishing paternity, include information on parenting programs
- Dads can create videos sharing their goals of what kind of father they want to be
- Partner with L&D units to put flyers in new parent packets, display materials, or host workshops

### **Recruit fathers from detention centers/correctional facilities/parole offices**

- Develop relationships with local detention centers and jails to host classes on site
- Recruit through parole officers
- Partner with reentry programs

### **Recruit fathers through the OAG/legal system**

- Provide brochures/flyers
- Host workshop for family judges, lawyers, and child support officers so they refer to you
- Find out if judges, lawyers, child support officers already host meetings so you can attend and present for them
- Partner with Child Support Regional Outreach Coordinators, Domestic Relations Offices, etc.
- Go to OAG office or child support court and talk with dads in waiting room
- Hold seminar on legal rights for fathers

### **Recruit fathers studying at community colleges**

- Work with department chairs to recruit parents
- Go through student union groups

### **Recruit through other family members**

- Presentation/provide materials at pregnancy center
- Presentation/provide materials at OB/GYN or reproductive health services office
- Partner with programs that work with moms—where there’s a mom, there’s a dad
- Austin Moms Blog
- Talk directly to moms about how the program can help their families
- Talk to grandparents

### **Go through other social service programs**

- Build relationships with partners
  - Provide materials (flyers, posters, etc.), explain what your program does so partners can pitch for you or refer to you

- Focus on the win-win
- Coordinate with different programs to promote referrals
- Ask about parenting needs at intake to make appropriate referrals
- Jointly host a recruitment fair to show your services and programs
- Texas Workforce Commission/Career development and workforce skills
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Home Visiting programs
- Pregnancy Centers and health clinics
- WIC
  - Have someone recruit at WIC office
  - WIC package for dads (idea from people who work at WIC)
  - WIC is doing grocery store tours, include fatherhood information in bag of groceries given out at the end
  - Include fatherhood program info in outreach events, refer to programs
- Social Service Offices
- CASA
- Housing Authority
  - Can allow parents to use parenting programs for community service hours
- CPS and PEI programs
  - HOPES
  - CPS can fund some of these programs
  - Partner with CPS programs that work with parents
- Identify partners that serve high numbers of men
- Partner with a batterer intervention programs
- Create a database that has all the resources available for dads

### **Go through doctors' offices/counselors**

- Find partners who can refer fathers to you—counselors, doctors' offices
- Have information and resources available at counselors' or doctors' offices
- Contact/create relationships/hold presentations for professional counseling boards

### **Go through community partners**

- Collaborate with community coalitions
- Reach out to LGBTQ community
- STEP (South Texas Equality Project)
- Chamber of Commerce
  - Give presentation/attend breakfast so they can share the word
- Go to events/organizations where local leaders meet and give presentation/materials so they can spread the word
  - Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs
- Community Resource Coordination (CRC) group—get on their agenda or program

### **Go through the faith community**

- Sunday and Wednesday services
- Get on the church bulletin or give a short presentation at the end of a service
- Ask faith leaders to refer families to your program
- Give presentations at faith organizations
- Young men's mentoring groups

### **Go through schools/day care**

- Head Start & daycares
  - Form partnerships to get referrals
  - Recruit at pick up and drop off
  - Family events—"Donuts with Dads"
- Put flyers in kids' folders at schools
- Give stickers to kids so that parents will see them
- Connect with local Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Pass out information at sports games or school performances
- Host classes at schools/day cares/Head Start centers
- Join forces with currently existing parenting programming, like a middle school support group or family dinner, Donuts for Dad event
- Pre-K round ups or registrations
- Connect with administrators or school boards
- Use ISD resources, school advertising/flyers

### **Go to places families go**

- Housing complexes/housing authorities
- Laundromats
- Grocery stores
- Malls
- Movie theaters
- Host workshops at Educational Service Centers (ESC)
- Library
  - Especially at library events
- Community centers, rec centers, parks, basketball courts, community pools
- YMCAs, Boys and Girls Club
- Children's sporting leagues and events
- Police association/Fire department BBQ
- Community festivals and events
- Community calendar website
- Cultural events/organizations
  - Juneteenth, Cinco de Mayo, Chinese New Year

- \*Important to spend time in different communities to build trust
- Children's museums
- Six Flags, zoos
- Mt. Playmore, Chuck E. Cheese
- Father-daughter dances
- Feasibility of sponsoring community 5k or kids' baseball leagues
- Unplugging at Connected
  - Big event where parents don't use electronic devices
- Partner with local community organizations, like NAACP
- Professional sport events
- Spend time in different communities to build trust