

*Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Collaboration at the Federal Level: Promoting Father Engagement

NAWRS 2019 WORKSHOP



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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An Enterprise Approach to the Essential Father

- Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF)
- ACF Fatherhood IM
- National Fatherhood Stakeholder Meeting
- National Fatherhood Conference



Noncustodial Parent Job Services Funding Options

Paying child support is nearly impossible for fathers without a job.

Employment services are not currently funded as part of the child support enforcement program.

Alternative funding options for noncustodial parent job services:

- State child support agencies can earn incentive payments on several performance measures, which is usually spent on routine operations, but can be used for an initiative not otherwise funded. (IM-18-02)
- OCSE has the authority to waive specific program or funding requirements for a state or tribal child support agency to conduct activities that would not otherwise be allowable. (IM-19-03)
- Child support agencies can form partnerships with TANF programs in their state to fund noncustodial parent employment programs. (ACF-IM-18-01)



State Policies & Practices to Promote Father Involvement

Fatherhood Research and Practice Network

\$10,000 mini-grants to 11 states

Short-term: February 1 to September 30, 2019

ACF recommended requiring applications include partnerships with child support and child welfare agency

Enhance father inclusion in state programs and policies dealing with children and families

Strategic planning, interagency convenings and data collection to produce and measure system change



Fatherhood and Early Childhood— Foundations for School Readiness

Both the quantity and quality of father interactions with young children matter. More frequent and positive father involvement impact children's social and emotional development and cognitive skills (McWayne, Downer, Campos, & Harris, 2013).

Non-resident father involvement has been associated with children's social and emotional well-being, academic achievement, and behavioral adjustment (Adamson & Johnson, 2013).



Supporting Father and Family Wellbeing

Fathers are critical to family stability and positive child and adolescent development (Higgs, Gomez-Vidal, & Austin, 2018).

The quality of fathers' interactions with practitioners make a difference. When fathers feel valued, are included in the program, and receive services to develop parenting skills tailored to their needs and goals, they are more engaged in the program and with their young children (Anderson, Aller, Piercy, & Roggman, 2015).



Head Start Comprehensive Services Supporting Father and Family Wellbeing

Head Start comprehensive services include:

- Family Goal Setting and Family Supports Services
- Referrals and coordination of access to public assistance programs, such as child care subsidies; TANF; SNAP, WIC, Child Support, etc.
- Food and housing; Financial capability, employment and career pathways supports; GED/ESL and other adult education, etc.



Increasing Father Engagement in HS/EHS

Head Start Programs are making gains in including fathers in critical program services.

| Father Engagement Activities | % increase from 2016-2018 |
|---|---------------------------|
| family assessment and goal setting process | 17% to 20% |
| child development experiences, i.e. parent-teacher conferences, home visits | 25% to 28% |



Thank you!

Questions?

