



Ohio Practitioners' Network for Fathers and Families

Quarterly News
June 2005
First Edition

A special thanks to the Center for Families and Children of Cleveland for their continued support of the OPNFF and fathers and families in all communities.

The mission of the network is to enhance the outcomes of children, families and communities by providing trainings, support and strength to the

2005 OPNFF Officers

Muqit Sabur, Cleveland, President
Calvin Williams, Cincinnati, Vice President
Steve Killpack, Cleveland, Sec/Treas

OPNFF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Children, families and communities will experience optimum outcomes when men and fathers are connected to trained, supported and strengthened practitioners
- Fathers are essential in the lives of their children.
- A positively engaged father leads by example and strengthens his family and community.
- A healthy community values and celebrates fathers

OPNFF is recognized as the one-stop organization for fatherhood advocacy, information, resources and opportunities among public and private stakeholders

Fathers Represent Best Chance for Society's Future

Calvin L. Williams, Vice-President

The conversation about fatherhood is often thought to be a conversation about men. An "us vs. them" or "either – or" context usually develops as women seek their place in the thought and analysis of men and fatherhood. Few would argue that without women and motherhood, there could be no fatherhood. Yet the question, in various forms or degrees, that seems to persist is: to what extent is the father necessary?

COMMITMENT

Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality.

It is the words that speak boldly of your intentions. And the actions which speak louder than the words.

It is making

the time when there is none. Coming through time

after time after time,

year after year after year.

Commitment is the stuff

character is made of;

the power to change

the face of things.



Photo provided by University Settlement, Cleveland

OPNFF 2005 Regional Father's Day Public Awareness Events

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Save the Date:

Michael Meade in
Akron, Ohio
Wednesday
October 12,th 2005

Sponsored by the OPNFF
and supported by the
Center for Families and
Children, Cleveland, Ohio

The Ohio Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families is sponsoring Fathers Day events to promote public awareness for the importance of fatherhood in four of our five regions: North-west, West, East and South. No event will be sponsored in the Northeast Region as it would conflict with the Cuyahoga County Fatherhood Initiatives "Celebration of Fatherhood". An organizational member of OPNFF is the lead agency in each region.

- **Northwest Region:** The Lima Allen Council on Community Affairs (LACCA), a Head Start agency, is sponsoring a Father/Child Tee Ball event on June 18. The event targets families participating in LACCA and Help Me Grow programs and is also open to the community-at-large.
- **East Region:** Muskingum County DadsCount is sponsoring an essay contest about fathers and hosting a community-wide Fathers Day celebration. The Zanesville Times Recorder is co-host for the essay contest. There are six essay categories, targeting the various roles played by fathers: outdoorsmen, servicemen,

coaches, educators, businessmen, and spiritual leaders. Fathers in each category will receive prizes by drawing. All essays and fathers will be acknowledged. The community-wide event will honor fathers, promote healthy fatherhood and local resources at Zanesville Family Y on June 18.

- **South Region** Services United for Mothers and Adolescents (SUMA) is sponsor of the first annual city-wide 2005 Celebration of Fatherhood and Father of the Year event in Cincinnati. The goal of the event is to debunk the myth that low income fathers are not actively involved with children. The event will engage the business community and the general population in the nomination of Fathers of the Year and Father-Friendly businesses. There will be four categories of awards, targeting different sectors of the community. The Celebration of Fatherhood is being held at Old St. George Church and will become an annual event.

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ODRC FAMILY PROGRAM IS UP AND RUNNING

The Children of Incarcerated Parents Program builds on Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's commitment to reentry by encouraging family members to participate in prison-based programming with their incarcerated loved one, while accessing additional resources and wrap-around services in partnership with community agencies.

The primary goal of this initiative is to assist the offender and his family in strengthening family relationships in an effort to keep their children from taking the same path in life.

The three pilot sites, Dayton, London and Richland Correctional Facilities are partnering with three lead Agencies.

The agencies, Talbert House, Alvis House and the Center for Families and Children of Cleveland provide family case planning and coordinate services for families struggling with an incarcerated father.

For more information about the Children of Incarcerated Parents Program contact

Julie Halyama

Project Manager

1050 Freeway Drive N.

Columbus, Ohio 43229

614.752.1797

Julie.Halyama@ODRC.state.oh.us



"There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things, because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions, and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new."

-Nicolo Machiavelli "The Prince and Discourses"



Continued from page 2 Regional Events



West Region: The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) is sponsor of two days of Father's Day events at two separate facilities, the Ross Correctional Institution and the Corrections Medical Center. One day features fatherhood workshops and motivational speakers for inmates and the second day features a variety of special visitation activities for incarcerated fathers and their children.

Father's Day is rarely celebrated by father's in prison and budgets do not allow for specific programming. Inmate's often experience the day in sober silence. Like their fathers, kids often spend fathers day away from their Dads and in silence. It is anticipated that approximately 50 to 100 kids will be involved in the two programs.

Continued from page. 1 Fathers Represent

I was a co-presenter at an Ohio Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families (OPNFF) training in Columbus for community-based professionals who worked with children and families. The day was spent discussing fatherhood and parenting, the fatherhood movement, introducing the Nurturing Father curriculum and sampling two of the sessions from the curriculum. Clearly, the discussion of fatherhood touched all participants in a variety of meaningful ways and for many different reasons. One participant was greatly moved by exploring the experience with her father, and the impact that it has on her life today. To what extent is the father necessary? The following is an excerpt from an e-mail that I received from that participant on the next day:

"...I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the Nurturing Fathers workshop. What an awesome insight you have on parenting and relationships. I have come to realize that not only are fathers essential to our young women, but also are crucial to our young men's development in becoming great husbands and fathers. When dealing with my own hurt as well as other young women who are hurting from the absence of their father, the revelation came to me that not only is this relationship imperative to a young women's emotional stability and growth into a healthy functional adult...but this relationship is symbolic in the fact that our (women's) wedding day represents everything that as children we are supposed to receive from our father: all of the protection, love, security, guidance...even being provided for is now given from our father to our husband. We are given to this man by our father with his

blessing, trusting that this man will now take over his responsibility of loving, protecting and providing for us. In turn, we honor, respect and look to our husbands for stability and strength to make crucial decisions concerning our families in the same way that we would look to our fathers. I was amazed at how important this relationship is and how it can affect people's self esteem and their ability to love, trust, and even become stable adults. I wish that there were more men doing what you do, it is absolutely phenomenal and I honor you and pray for your success in doing this on a national level. It will ultimately benefit our families".

The Ohio Practitioners Network for Fathers & Families does the important work of strengthening practitioners and organizations that facilitate the development of men into responsible, committed and nurturing fathers. The hard fact is that our families, communities and society depend on the outcomes of this effort. It's not just about men - it's about us.



The little things?

The Little Moments?

They aren't little!!

Jon Kabat-Zinn

OPNFF is a membership organization representing the entire state of Ohio. Our mission, *to enhance the outcomes for children, families and communities by providing training, support and strength to the professionalism of fatherhood practitioners*, is advanced by a unique collection of professionals from both the public and private sectors throughout Ohio that make up the leadership of the organization.

CONTACT US:

info@neofathering.net

OPNFF Membership Application

As an OPNFF member, you will receive priority registration for training events, have opportunities to network with other practitioners and you will have representation in a state-wide fatherhood network.

Name: (Print) _____

Organization: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

_____ Individual Membership

_____ Organizational Membership includes agency vote plus four individual votes

(list four names, including an email address for each.

Type of agency/organization, please circle all that apply: government—faith based—non profit—social service—education—other: _____

List any Fatherhood programs your agency/organization offers: _____

What interest do you have in OPNFF involvement? Presenter -- Public Relations—

Marketing—Program Committee Participation—Other _____

Please list any other fatherhood initiatives you are involved with: _____

Request for Articles and News

Do you have a special story, picture or event planned for a Dad with his kids? Is your agency planning a special event to celebrate or support fatherhood and the family? OPNFF would like to know and spread the word by including it in our Newsletter and/or website. Please submit your stories, events and or pictures to OPNFF News, P.O. Box 94078, Cleveland, Ohio 44101 or e-mail the same to info@opnff.net

Please mail this form to: OPNFF, P.O. Box 94078, Cleveland, Ohio 44101 (216)214-1556

OPNFF

P.O. Box 94078

Cleveland, Ohio 44101

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