

**RAPID RESPONSE
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT**

Final Report

**ACF West-Central Hub Family Stabilization Workshop
September 26-27, 2001
Denver, CO**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Submitted in accordance with:
IDIQ No. 105-98-8403
Task Order 49
November 2001

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This report summarizes the key findings of the ACF West-Central Hub Family Stabilization Workshop held September 26 and 27 in Denver, CO. The Administration for Children and Families West-Central Hub includes Region VI (New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas) and Region VIII (Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming).

I. BACKGROUND

I. BACKGROUND

The ACF West-Central Hub Family Stabilization Workshop, held September 26 and 27 in Denver, had three primary themes: Responsible Fatherhood, Faith-based and Community Initiatives, and Marriage and Family Stabilization. This section presents **background** information on each of these three issue areas. This background information summarizes the materials presented in the workshop participant resource binder. Details on workshop presentations and findings are presented on pages 6-31 of the report.

1. RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

The fourth objective of TANF, “the maintenance and support of two-parent families,” offers many opportunities for engaging and supporting fathers. Specifically, ACF/OFA considers this objective as an opportunity to overcome “limited employment opportunities, and welfare rules [that] have worked to discourage family formation and fuller involvement of...fathers in the lives of their children.”¹ PRWORA refocused efforts at supporting families to include fathers as well as mothers, recognizing that both parents have a responsibility to provide for their children, both financially and emotionally. With the passage of PRWORA, State and local efforts are underway to establish, expand, and improve services for fathers using Federal TANF and State MOE dollars.

Nearly 12 million mothers are raising children in single parent families.² Approximately 79 percent of these mothers work either full time (47%) or part-time (32%). Despite this work effort, more than 32 percent of their families are officially poor, and most of the rest have incomes below 200 percent of poverty (near poor). Regular, timely child support payments could be of great help to these families and reduce their need for public assistance. However, too few low- and moderate-income custodial mothers receive such support payments: 81 percent of poor children and 60 percent of near poor children with a non-custodial parent receive *no* child support.³

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, *Helping Families Achieve Self-Sufficiency: A Guide for Funding Services for Children and Families through the TANF Program*. <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa/funds2.htm>. (October 3, 2001).

² U.S. Census Bureau, Child Support for Custodial Mothers and Fathers, P60-212. October 2000. Available: <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/custody.html>. Accessed: June 27, 2001. Cited in Roberts, Paula AN ounce of prevention and a pound of cure: *Developing State policy on the payment of child support arrears by low income parents*.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, Child Support for Custodial Mothers and Fathers, p. 60-212. October 2000. Available: <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/custody.html>. Accessed: June 27, 2001. Cited in Roberts, Paula. *An ounce of prevention and a pound of cure: Developing State policy on the payment of child support arrears by low income parents*.

In 1999, almost a quarter (23%) of children lived with only their mothers, four percent lived with only their fathers, and four percent lived with neither of their parents.⁴ Approximately 38 percent of children living in single mother-headed households receive TANF benefits. “The median income available to children in two-parent families is two and one half times greater than the median income of children in one-parent families.”⁵ “Children growing up without fathers in the home are five times as likely to be poor than those growing up in married homes. Seventy-five percent of all children growing up in single-mother homes will experience poverty before the age of eleven.”⁶

Both financial and emotional support from fathers is essential for healthy child development. Research conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Fatherhood Initiative shows:

- Father involvement is important even for very young children. Good fathering during infancy and early childhood contributes to the development of emotional security, curiosity, and math and verbal skills.
- Higher levels of involvement by fathers in activities with their children, such as eating meals together, going on outings, and helping with homework, are associated with fewer behavioral problems, higher levels of sociability, and higher levels of school performance among children and adolescents.
- Involvement by fathers in children’s schooling, such as volunteering at school and attending school meetings, parent-teacher conferences and class events, is associated with higher grades, greater school enjoyment, and lower chances of suspension or expulsion from school.
- The father-child relationship affects daughters as well as sons. Girls who live with both their mother and their father do better academically. In addition, they are less likely to engage in early sexual involvement and in the use of alcohol or drugs.

These risk factors can be reduced if children have strong family bonds. In particular, research suggests that children benefit from positive relationships not only with their mothers, but also with their fathers, even if they do not share the same residence.⁷

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, *March Current Population Survey*

⁵ Gallagher, M. & Zedlewski, S. (1999). *Income and hardship: Poverty among children: Snapshots of America’s families*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

⁶ Streeter, Ryan (2001). *Welfare reform and a more civil society: Fathers and faith as community building blocks*. Indianapolis, IN: Welfare Policy Center of the Hudson Institute.

⁷ Reichert, Dana. (2000). “Connecting low-income fathers and families: A guide to practical policies.” National Conference of State Legislatures. Washington, DC: NCSL.

2. FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Section 104 of the welfare reform law, *Services Provided by Charitable, Religious, or Private Organizations*, is commonly known as the provision establishing “Charitable Choice.” §104 applies when governments choose to contract with non-governmental organizations for the provision of social services. §104 prohibits a State from using Federal monies to purchase services for clients of such programs as TANF, Medicaid, SSI, and Food Stamps⁸ from discriminating against religious or faith-based organizations (FBOs), or other community-based organizations (CBOs), in the contract competition, or procurement, process.

Careful protection of both beneficiary and provider rights exist in the legislation. No Federal money can be used for “worship, instruction, or proselytization.” Therefore, a faith-based organization may not require participation in a religious service by a service recipient, nor use Federal dollars to promote its particular religious position in any way. Any client objecting to receiving services in a faith-based environment must be provided with an alternative of comparable quality. Providers retain their rights to religious expression and exemption under certain higher practices.

Under Charitable Choice, public sector partnerships with faith- and community-based organizations have flourished. Many service providers, in many diverse areas, offer support services informed by a faith-based perspective to TANF clients. Clients receiving services from faith-based providers report high levels of satisfaction and more personal attention. They often report feeling more comfortable in a community setting than in a governmental one.⁹

3. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STABILIZATION

“Today nearly 4 out of 10 first marriages end in divorce, 60 percent of divorcing couples have children, and over one million children each year experience the divorce of their parents. One out of every six children is a stepchild.”¹⁰

⁸ Charitable Choice applicability to Medicaid, SSI, and Food Stamps is limited to the extent to which these programs can be effectively managed by the States contract vehicles or voucher systems with nonprofit organizations.

⁹ Archambault, C. Kakuska, C. & Munford, R., *Faith-based Partnerships: Charitable Choice and State TANF programs*.

¹⁰ Horn, W. (1998). *Father Facts 3rd Edition*. National Fatherhood Initiative, Gaithersburg, MD.

Three of the four goals of TANF are directed at marriage and family formation. The second: “To end dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage,” the third: “To decrease the incidence of out-of-wedlock births,” and the fourth: “To encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.” In line with these goals, research on marriage and family formation/stabilization has proliferated in the recent past. Among the findings of that research are:

“The American divorce rate today is twice that of 1960, but has declined slightly since hitting the highest point in our history in the early 1980s.” Meanwhile, “The number of unmarried couples [living together] has increased dramatically over the past four decades. Most young Americans now spend some time living together outside of marriage.”¹¹

In surveying never-married men and women between the ages of 20 and 29 years (young adults), the National Marriage Project found:

- Eighty-six percent agree that marriage is hard work and a full-time job
- Seventy-eight percent agree that two people should not get married unless they are willing to stay together for life, and only 6 percent describe it as “unlikely” that they will stay married to the same person for life.

Not all the survey results were so encouraging. Sixty-eight percent of young adults agree that it is more difficult to have a good marriage today than in their parents’ generation, and 52 percent agree that one sees so few good or happy marriages that one questions it as a way of life.¹²

America’s younger people have developed a significantly less optimistic set of ideas about marriage. When high school seniors who expected to marry were asked whether it was “very likely they would stay married to the same person for life,” only 63.8 percent of girls and 58.4 percent of boys answered in the affirmative.¹³ The same population was asked whether they agreed or mostly agreed that “most people will have fuller and happier lives if they choose legal marriage rather than staying single or just living with someone.” The results are 37.4 percent of girls and 28.5 percent for boys. Not surprising, then, is a concurrent increase in the acceptability of bearing children out wedlock as “experimenting with a worthwhile lifestyle not affecting anyone else.” Beginning in the period 1986-1990, the percentage of girls affirming this

¹¹ *The state of our unions 2001: The social health of marriage in America.* The National Marriage Project: Piscataway, NJ.

¹² *The state of our unions 2001: The social health of marriage in America.* The National Marriage Project: Piscataway, NJ.

¹³ *The state of our unions 2001: The social health of marriage in America.* The National Marriage Project: Piscataway, NJ.

statement outpaced boys for the first time. For the period 1996-1999, the respective percentages are 56.4 and 51.0.

Young adults today are not associating marriage with economic security or child bearing. They are looking for a “soul mate” (94%) and expect to find one (87%) when they are ready to get married. They consider premarital cohabiting as “a good way to avoid an eventual divorce” (62%) and 43 percent of them won’t marry someone who would not agree to live with them first, “so that [they] could find out whether [they] really get along.”

II. WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

II. WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Beverly Turnbo, Regional Administrator, ACF Region VIII & National Lead in Head Start and Financial Management.

Leon McCowan, Director, ACF West-Central Hub & National Lead in Child Support Enforcement, Technology, and Youth Development.

To begin the workshop, Beverly Turnbo and Leon McCowan offered participants their vision for the future of family stabilization under welfare reform. New perceptions about marriage, child rearing, fatherhood, and divorce require new responses and programs. The ACF West-Central Hub (WC Hub) is interested in exploring programs and practices that achieve positive results for families. While encouraged by caseload reductions, the WC Hub is not satisfied with moving former recipients to employment without supporting their retention, advancement, and wage progression. Poverty and a lack of job stability affect both parents and children. Overcoming these barriers leads to an increase in the happiness and well-being of parents, which, in turn, translates into increased happiness for their children.

The objectives of the workshop were to introduce participants to successful programs in the three key areas, to encourage networking, and to serve vulnerable children and families by focusing on making lasting connections. Speakers from various programs and perspectives shared promising practices, challenges, and lessons learned in the area of family stabilization.

The remainder of this report describes the workshop sessions and speakers. The report concludes with references for further information on the link between family stability and self-sufficiency.

III. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Chris Gersten, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, DHHS. Mr. Gersten focused a part of his address on each theme of the workshop.

1. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STABILIZATION

Historically, not enough attention has been paid to the second and third goals of TANF and their emphasis on family stabilization as a legitimate and appropriate means to end poverty. While “all available research indicates that the best situation in which to raise children is a two-parent, married family,” a significant number of children are born out of wedlock each year. Data indicate the following rates of out of wedlock births:

- Seventy percent of African-American births
- Thirty percent of White births
- Forty percent of Hispanic births
- Ninety-six percent of African-American teen births.

To many, the idea of the government supporting marriage has seemed incongruous. It was claimed that the government had no place attempting to mitigate divorce rates or stabilize families. In reality, however, government policies were at least partly responsible for the previous shifting in family structure. In the 1950s, people seeking public housing were required to be married, but by the 1960s, marriage was prohibited for all AFDC recipients. A concurrent change in divorce laws—also a public policy issue—significantly eased the process of filing for, and obtaining, a divorce. By 1990, 6 in 10 marriages entered into ended in divorce. The lesson of history is that the government was significantly involved in the creation of policies that led to an increase in divorce rates and the failing of marriages. Today, it is appropriate for the government to support the development and execution of policies that will encourage and support strong, healthy marriages.

A program to support fragile families and to encourage the development of healthy marriages need not begin without any real chance of success. On the contrary, 70 percent of young mothers are romantically involved with their baby’s father at the time of birth. While 60 to 70 percent of these women say it is likely¹⁴ they will marry the father, only 10 percent actually do so. The government is in a position to offer counseling and support to this fragile family if

¹⁴ “Likely” defined as better than a 50/50 chance.

the relationship is positive. A healthy marriage between mother and father will lead to security for the entire family and to the best chance of success for the child. Without marriage, the likelihood of the family remaining intact after two years is very slim.

Prevention of early births is also a successful strategy for reducing the number of children born out of wedlock. Such prevention programs also need not begin absent a model for success. There are effective programs in place to help educate young people and help them to understand the importance of delaying children until they are married. One example is abstinence education for boys and girls. One program for young women, *Best Friends*, is being adapted into a program for young males entitled *Best Men*. Despite these models, the District of Columbia is the only State receiving high performance bonus money for an appreciable decrease in the number of out-of-wedlock births. The other recipients of the bonus have reductions of less than one-tenth of one percent.¹⁵ The critical difference is that DC is committed to abstinence-only education. Such programming, along with marriage education, is both appropriate and essential for children in the 6th through 12th grades.

Education alone will not, however, reach all families in need. Intensive case management and pre- and post-natal support for young unmarried couples are essential. Mr. Gersten emphasized the importance of delivering a consistent, specific message to these young couples. This message must include the reality of the end of entitlements, the need for marriage as a means to individual and family stability, and the benefits of marriage for both children and adults.

2. RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

Fathers play an essential role in the lives of their children. Children without a father involved in their lives face significantly elevated chances for development and socialization difficulties in later life. Women raising their children alone are often faced with the harsh reality that their children spend increasing amounts of time without any parental supervision. It is necessary to help young people understand that completing high school and getting married are appropriate prerequisites to having children.

Marriage, not low-wage jobs and single parenthood, Mr. Gersten argues, is sufficient to lift everyone out of poverty. While 60 percent of single-headed African-American families live

¹⁵ High performance award program rules require at least three recipients for this bonus, provided at least three States make application.

in poverty, only 5 percent of African-American families headed by a married couple are in poverty. Marriage is a long-term solution and effective at addressing intergenerational poverty.

As a promising practice, Mr. Gersten tapped a jointly funded program run through ACF that provides young people with pre- and post-natal home visitation by a nurse every week for three months. The nurse supports the young couple and, by asking questions and staying involved in their lives, encourages them to look into, and plan for, the future. The program, which does not have a specific marriage component, has increased marriage 50 percent after five years (in New York and Memphis). The program is being redesigned to include a marriage component. The goal is to encourage healthy marriages without twisting arms or forcing people into bad or abusive relationships.

3. FAITH-BASED PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering with the faith-based community is a priority. In order to do this, certain roadblocks must be overcome. Among these is a behind-the-scenes anti-religious bigotry. The White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI) released a report entitled *Unlevel Playing Field: Barriers to Participation by Faith-based and Community Organizations in Federal Social Service Programs*. In this report, the Centers for Faith-based & Community Initiatives in five cabinet departments—Health and Human Services (HHS), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Education (ED), Labor (DOL), and Justice (DOJ)—report on the results of internal audits regarding barriers to the participation of faith- and community-based organizations in the delivery of social services. This report, mandated by President George W. Bush’s Executive Order 13198, is available from the OFBCI.

IV. RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

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The morning of the first day of working sessions included three presentations on fatherhood issues. Though slightly different in their approaches and client bases, the three presenters shared the common theme that fathers are essential to the healthy development of children and to the overall stability of families.

1. DEADBEAT OR DEAD BROKE DADS? WORKING WITH LOW-INCOME FATHERS

Joe Jones, Director, Center for Fathers, Families and Workforce Development, Baltimore, MD.

According to Mr. Jones, there is a difference between a deadbeat dad and a dead broke dad. The former could pay child support, but won't. The latter lacks the financial capacity to pay, even if he wants to.

1.1 The Program

Mr. Jones runs a program serving low-income fathers in a very poor section of Baltimore. His program aims to help men escape poverty, avoid fathering children out of wedlock, stabilize their families, eradicate domestic violence, and support their children. They focus on fatherhood, workforce development, and the concept of 50/50 parenting.

Not surprisingly, though, some men are hesitant to get involved in these programs. At least in part, this is a result of a negative association men have with public welfare agencies. The two public welfare funding streams dedicated to addressing men are criminal justice and child support enforcement. Men recognize these agencies as punitive, not supportive. Many of these men belong to a low-income subculture, which often supports significantly different values than mainstream culture. Outreach and retention efforts, therefore, become increasingly critical. One retention strategy is to recognize men in the program with quarterly milestones (along the path of the yearlong curriculum). An initial assessment dictates the point in the curriculum at which each man begins. Those with the most significant barriers begin at the beginning, while others might qualify for a type of advanced placement.

The curriculum includes parenting skills, prenatal training, conflict prevention, and peer support. Mr. Jones' Center serves approximately 200 Baltimore men in a year. The average age of the clients is 24, but the range is 16 years to 40. The average educational attainment is the 9th grade. At enrollment, 80 percent are unemployed, 65 percent have had interactions with the

criminal justice system, and 33 percent are involved with substance abuse. The vast majority of the clients have unresolved issues with their own fathers. By focusing on positive feedback from peers, clients are able to develop new strategies for overcoming obstacles.

1.2 The Challenges

Mr. Jones identified four issues currently impacting the fatherhood field:

- Lack of resources and infrastructure (the money is currently coming from foundations and public support will become critical as foundations move on)
- Child support arrearages
- Domestic violence
- Marriage and family formation.

Many men owe State arrears in child support. Some of these men are in prison or on the street. Others work but earn only about \$5,000 yearly. A man earning \$5,000 yearly with 6 percent interest and a \$20 monthly payment could never pay off his debt. Even with zero interest, it would take him 70 years to pay back the debt. Rather than attempting to collect these debts, a more logical approach is a debt leveraging system where arrearages are gradually erased over two years if the father gets work, stays involved in the child's life, and pays consistently on the current order. This approach provides for positive interaction between children and their fathers and allows the father to successfully reduce his debt, which, under any other circumstance, would not be collectable.

Mr. Jones argues that marriage programs are working too hard and not strategically enough. At the time of the child's birth, 80 percent of parents are together. A year later, the figure drops to 10 percent. Offering services to both parents at first contact with TANF workers makes the couple welcome as a unit rather than alienating the man with child support assumptions. Mr. Jones' organization teaches men about "50/50 parenting." This co-parenting concept, aimed at fragile families, helps parents to understand that even when people divorce, plans must be in place for the child's education, financial support, and access to both parents. The curriculum develops negotiating skills to keep both parents actively involved in the lives of the children. "To change behavior," Jones says, "we have to go deeper than we normally go."

A transcript of the question and answer session that followed Mr. Jones' presentation can be found in Appendix A.

2. FATHERHOOD INITIATIVES

Jason Sabo, Texas Fragile Families Initiative, Center for Public Policy Priorities, Austin, Texas.
Chris Brown, Texas Fatherhood Initiative, Austin, Texas.

2.1 Texas Fragile Families Initiative

Father Involvement

Fathers play a critical role in the lives of their children. Children growing up without fathers are 5 times more likely to be poor, 10 times more likely to be extremely poor, and twice as likely to drop out of high school. When growing up without a father, males are 3 times more likely to be placed in juvenile detention and females are 164 percent more likely to be unmarried teen mothers. The single most strongly predictive factor for continued male involvement with the mother is adequate prenatal care.

Between 70 and 80 percent of fathers are involved with their baby's mother at the time of birth. Seventy-two percent of fathers contributed financially during the pregnancy. The majority of fathers see *young* (0-3 years) children at least once a week. However, this figure drops dramatically as the children age. Therefore, intervention at these early stages of involvement is critical.

The Challenges

This early participation in the lives of their children indicates fathers want to be involved with their children, but they face significant barriers. These barriers might include:

- Lack of economic capability
- Limited and discounted parenting skills
- Low educational attainment
- Absence of a fathering role model
- Involvement with the criminal justice system (which makes them harder to employ)
- Substance abuse issues

- Discrimination based on both race and gender
 - Perpetrated myth that fathers are absent and/or uninterested in their children
 - Mother-focused interventions
 - Inadequate connections with community resources
 - Lack of consistent funding streams
- Unresponsive public policies
 - Child support enforcement is designed based on the image of the deadbeat dad
 - Funds are used to collect support, not to build self-sufficiency and promote responsibility
 - Welfare-to-Work is inadequate for noncustodial parents
 - Disincentives for father contact.

The Program

The Texas Fragile Families Initiative (TFFI) is dedicated to developing the capacity of community-based organizations to support young, never-married fathers in meeting the emotional and material needs of their children. TFFI receives financial support from 27 different foundations, totaling \$5.3 million. They partner with public agencies such as the Attorney General’s Community Services Division, the Department of Health, the Texas Youth Commission, Protective and Regulatory Services, and the Texas Workforce Commission. Demonstration sites are operating across the State.

Several key components are necessary to build successful programs to support young fathers. Among these are: peer support groups; skilled training (“earn while you learn”); substance abuse counseling; transportation, private employer participation; and follow-up case management.

<u>TFFI Core Activities</u>	<u>TFFI Goals</u>
Capacity building	Build capacity of local service providers
Training and Technical Assistance	Develop collaborations between employers, community-based organizations, and public agencies
Public policy education and evaluation	Develop education, job skills, and long-term wage growth
Recruitment of funding partners	Use integrated services to maximize the impact of each dollar
Community awareness development	
Workforce program development	

Success Stories

The TEEX Heavy Machinery Operator Training Program focuses on high-demand, targeted occupations. A 5-week cost-effective training schedule prepares participants for immediate work at approximately \$8.00/hour to start. Wages can increase to \$15.00/hour.

The *Dads on 'Dozers* program operates at three TFFI sites (Waco, Lufkin, San Angelo) via direct contract with the local workforce development boards. “TFFI staff work to ensure that funds are spent to provide the support and job training services young fathers need most.” Substance abuse screening, job readiness/life-skills training and wrap-around services support the young fathers. A version of the “Dozers” Program for women, *Moms on Machines*, is in development.

Fatherhood and TANF Funding

Money for fatherhood programs must come from additional funding streams and/or new grants. Congress must examine State spending patterns and avoid supplanting valuable programs during reauthorization. Public money will become increasingly important as foundation support sunsets.

2.2 Texas Fatherhood Initiative

Mr. Brown’s presentation focused on the effects of father absence and both the national and Texas fatherhood initiatives.

Father Absence

According to Mr. Brown, the experience of father absence is about more than just physical absence. “Absence” can also be emotional, intellectual, and/or spiritual. Thirty-four percent of children in the United States grow up without their biological father. Twenty-two percent grow up without a biological, step, or adoptive father. Coupled with our knowledge of the potential developmental effects on children of father absence, this becomes a serious concern.

The National Fatherhood Initiative

Founded in 1994, the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) is a nonprofit, non-sectarian, non-partisan organization dedicated to the goal of enhancing children’s health and well-being. NFI achieves these goals by connecting fathers with children and encouraging fathers to become involved with, and committed to, their children. NFI casts a vision for creating culture change in which society values fathers as much as mothers. NFI sends a clear, consistent message: “A father is the most important thing a man can be.”

NFI uses public education (\$200 million in donated airtime for PSAs), builds community capacity through national and local collaborations (government task forces), and develops, equips, and supports State and community fatherhood initiatives in order to mobilize communities in all sectors to respond to their key message: *Fathers are Irreplaceable*. The Texas Fatherhood Initiative, discussed below, is an example of a State fatherhood initiative supported by NFI.

NFI believes that “communities must change the cultural institutions that form the different sectors of society.” This message creates the need to support broad-based fatherhood initiatives mobilizing an array of resources that benefit families. NFI focuses on both assets and needs in a community to achieve this end. Fathers in different situations often require different supports. Contrast for example, Joe Jones’ program in Baltimore with the Boot Camp for New Dads program. Each of these has been cited as a best practice and both are effective, at least in part, because they are tailored to the individual needs of the client fathers. For this reason, NFI advocates for programming to be culturally competent.

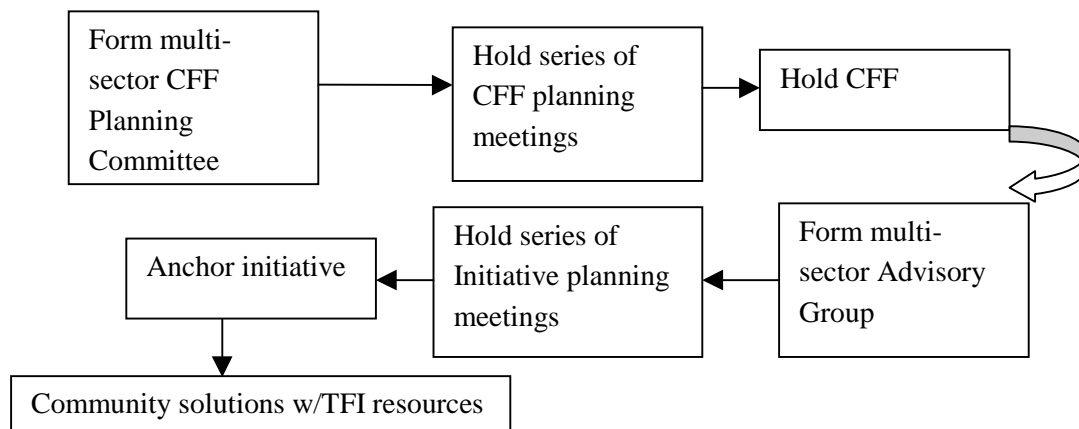
The National Fatherhood Initiative believes that marriage and fatherhood go hand-in-hand because marriage is the primary social construction for fatherhood. Strategies focused on fragile families can raise awareness about benefits of healthy, happy marriages.

The Texas Fatherhood Initiative

The Texas Fatherhood Initiative (TFI) began in December 1999 when then-Governor Bush began the *Right Choices for Youth Initiative*. Since the office opened in May 2000, more than \$550,000 in TV airtime has been donated. Public service announcements from the national campaigns are re-tagged for the Texas audience. Thus far, TFI has trained more than 100 organizations to develop, manage, and market fatherhood programs; distributed more than 16,000 pieces of fatherhood related literature; and provided technical assistance and information to more than 1,000 Texans.

TFI responded to a lack of community-wide, multi-sector efforts to promote responsible, committed fatherhood. With the goal of developing a process to begin such initiatives, TFI drafted a community mobilization model, represented in Exhibit IV-1.

EXHIBIT IV-1



The Community Fatherhood Forum (CFF) “kick starts” excitement and support for promoting responsible fatherhood. It targets community leaders from all sectors, and casts a vision for conducting a community-wide initiative. The CFF lays the foundation for strategic planning to promote responsible fatherhood. The CFF is intended to help leaders understand the crisis of father absence and the importance of fathers in child well-being. Further, the CFF aims to empower leaders, and to educate them on the resources available to them for promoting responsible fatherhood.

The Advisory Board members may include forum planners and/or forum attendees. They should be diverse in race, gender, and sector. Coordinators should use facilitated discussion in

developing strategic plan for the initiative. TFI focuses on seven components to build a capacity for serving fathers. These seven components are:

- Agency audits on father-inclusive practices
- Best practices in fatherhood programs
- Social marketing for fatherhood programs
- Outcome-based measurement
- Fatherhood curricula
- Technical assistance
- Partnerships to secure funds.

Together, these components allow TFI to conduct a holistic examination of current resources and needs, develop a culturally relevant approach, address recruitment and retention issues, and evaluate program success effectively. To date, two initiatives have launched—Big Country (Abilene) and Tarrant County (Ft. Worth) and four additional initiatives are planned—Houston, African (Houston area), Hidalgo County (Rio Grand Border), and High Plains (Panhandle). Community Fatherhood Forums for 2002 are slated to occur in El Paso, Lubbock, San Antonio, and Hays County (north of Austin).

3. WORKING WITH HISPANIC FATHERS

Jerry Tello, President, Hispanic Fatherhood Initiative, Los Angeles, CA

The goal of Mr. Tello's program is to teach men what his family has been teaching him all his life. According to Mr. Tello, the issue is not about fathers, nor about mothers. It is about family.

3.1 Historical Perspective

In Mr. Tello's program, emphasis is placed on understanding the history of how fathers got where they are. From an early age, messages regarding the role of fathers are presented to children. "Work is love. If you love your kids, you work." This is the lesson taught to young men so that, when they become fathers, their work ethos requires them to go away, to be separated from their children. This disconnect is the only means of survival, but little, if any, guidance is offered to fathers about ways to reconnect meaningfully with their children. This

dynamic is reinforced in fathers as they remember hearing such lessons as, “You just wait until your dad gets home!” when they had done something to upset their mother.

Further exacerbating the plight of fathers in the Hispanic community is the loss of the meanings of many of its words. For example, *macho* meaning simply “male” has taken on significantly negative connotations in the common vernacular. Along with their words, the Hispanic community has lost its lessons of manhood, which translate to respect for women, especially for mothers, and into being a man of one’s word. For these reasons, it is not enough to translate material. Sometimes, linguistically understandable material(s) magnify confusion because the words are being used in an unfamiliar or nebulous way. According to Mr. Tello, if the lessons are lost or are not culturally relevant, there is no point in understanding the words.

3.2 Respect, Honor, and Tradition

Along with cultural competence and understanding, programs must be respectful of fathers, families, and traditions. Regulations and data will not achieve results in the absence of respect. Mr. Tello’s organization works with “men with broken spirits.” Mending the spirit of the man must precede any effort to help the man work with his children. Part of the lesson we all need to learn is to preserve the place of men. Without role models, finding this appropriate place can be difficult and uncomfortable. However, in order for a man to heal his spirit and become whole, he must establish his place in his family and his world.

The programs must, therefore, be responsive to the individual needs of the fathers. Program administration is not as important to Mr. Tello and his organization as results. That is, the men do not need a strategic plan to help them understand fatherhood. These men have internalized an entire lifetime of father absence and they know what they wish they had had. Helping fathers to provide their own children with the things they themselves once wished for is the essence of developing strong fatherhood programs.

3.3 Training

According to Mr. Tello, fatherhood is different than manhood. In the lessons of childhood, these men see that women are teachers, men are parole officers. What does this say to our young men? To our young women? We must endeavor to reconstruct community capacity and ensure that these communities are strong enough to survive when the funding streams are cut off. These communities need help with all types of relationships as they attempt to recover from “generations of anger.” Building relationships fosters responsibility.

4. PROMOTION OF FATHERHOOD: A VIEW FROM STATE LEGISLATURES

The Honorable Ken Svedjan, North Dakota State Representative and Co-Chairman of the Fatherhood Advisory Committee for the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Mr. Svedjan, in his role with the Fatherhood Advisory Committee for the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) has spent considerable time becoming familiar with the issue of fatherhood and father absence and in developing ways to educate others on the importance of fatherhood initiatives.

4.1 Challenges

In Mr. Svedjan's experience, many people, before being presented with data on the importance of fatherhood, believe the commonly heard myths. Many consider marriage and dual parenting ideal, but are suspicious about government programs. The reality is that of men involved in fragile families, one-third earn less than \$8,000 annually; only 25 percent work full-time for an entire year; and, while 90 percent have some work history, it usually includes temporary, seasonal, and/or low-wage jobs with no benefits. These men can find, but usually can not keep, work. As a result, 44 percent of them live in poverty. For their children, these trends lead to lower academic achievement, increased juvenile delinquency, increased substance abuse levels, more teen pregnancy, and a repeating cycle of welfare.

4.2 Opportunities

Mr. Svedjan argues that fatherhood programs can lead to a familial bonding. A strong family bond, with support systems in place, can increase the presence of fathers, thereby ameliorating risk factors for youth. Fatherhood programs should capitalize on the early involvement of fathers in their children's lives. If programs, especially TANF, only focus on mothers, they are addressing only half of the equation. Fathers face the same barriers. Programs must focus, too, on understanding the true makeup of absent fathers. By using cross-agency considerations and combined funding streams, agencies can effectively work together to better serve fathers. Agency personnel possess expertise on funding strategies.

4.3 Next Steps

In order to serve fathers effectively, States must develop a statewide strategy and facilitate programmatic support for fathers. A statewide strategy can be supported by an advisory group or task force located outside of government (e.g., Florida), or inside (e.g.,

Connecticut). Facilitation of programmatic support for fatherhood programs must include a paradigm shift in child support enforcement. States must stop thinking about the punitive aspects and, instead, focus on building skills that will allow fathers to support their children. Further, States should consider providing wraparound services to connect fathers to supportive programs. In order for programs to be successful, they must include employment provisions.

Lastly, it is important for State agencies to involve their Legislators and to share information. This relationship should not be adversarial, but collaborative and supportive.

V. FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

V. FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The afternoon of the first day included two presentations on successful partnerships with faith-based organizations.

1. FAITHWORKS

Stephen Grimm, CalWorks Program Manager, Shasta County Department of Social Services, Redding, California.

Skip Tyler, Chief Executive Officer, FaithWorks Community Coalition, Inc., Redding, California.

1.1 Background

Shasta County, California is a mid-sized county in Northern California (a county-administered TANF State). The desire to join with community partners and offer TANF clients a more personal touch led to the establishment of partnerships with faith-based organizations. In order to develop effective partnerships, the faith community must be present at all levels of discussion. The county and the faith-based organizations consider themselves “partners on a journey.”

1.2 The Partnership

Shasta County contracted with FaithWorks to provide faith-based mentoring services to CalWorks clients (eventually, alternative funding streams would be developed to serve non-TANF mentees as well). FaithWorks continues to explore the interests and capacities of other faith-based organizations in serving clients. They maintain relationships with other providers to ensure coordination and avoid duplication of services. FaithWorks first screens the mentoring volunteers, and then trains them to ensure quality service delivery. FaithWorks also recruits ministerial resources for faith-based counseling as requested by CalWorks participants. This recruitment allows participants to receive counseling in the faith of their choice. FaithWorks serves to educate faith-based organizations on the need for employment services, information, and referral for CalWorks clients.

FaithWorks continues to explore and encourage potential future partners’ capacity for sustainable funding streams. They have identified between 50 and 60 local churches interested in providing transportation services. FaithWorks endeavors to maintain a professional relationship with providers in order to ensure coordination and avoid duplications of services.

FaithWorks conducts a survey of local churches to gauge capacity and willingness to participate in service delivery. They maintain a database of all faith-based resources in the county, and offer training and mentoring programs to the faith-based providers.

Shasta County's role in the partnership includes the screening and referral of participants, attendance at monthly meetings, the provision of client background information deemed necessary to effective service delivery, and funding.

2. CONNECTING FAMILIES AND RESOURCES: FAMILY STABILIZATION, FATHERHOOD, FAITH-BASED AND ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGIES UTILIZING TANF

Barbara Drake, Deputy Director, El Paso County Department of Human Services, Colorado Springs, CO.

Rebecca Jacobs, Family Independence Manager, El Paso County Department of Human Services, Colorado Springs, CO.

Jackie Jaramillo, Executive Director, Faith Partners, Colorado Springs, CO.

Ken Sanders, Manager, The Center on Fathering, El Paso County Department of Human Services, Colorado Springs, CO.

2.1 Background

Colorado Springs is a city of approximately 500,000 people in the county-administered State of Colorado. The staff of the El Paso County Department of Human Services believe that partnering with the faith community is a powerful prevention strategy for low-income families. The County particularly targets low-income families for prevention programs because families earning less than \$15,000 annually are 22 times more likely to enter the welfare system than families earning at least \$30,000.

2.2 System of Care

The vision of the El Paso County Department of Human Services is to “eliminate poverty and family violence in El Paso County;” while their mission is to “strengthen families, assure safety, promote self-sufficiency, eliminate poverty, and improve quality of life in community.”

El Paso County's standards include a system of care that is family-driven and effectively integrated. This system should protect the rights of the family, allow the family to make smooth transitions between programs, emphasize prevention and early intervention, and build the capacity of the community to support families. Services provided to families must be

coordinated, individualized, accessible, and culturally respectful. Programs should focus on strengths and be evaluated based on outcomes.

El Paso County views welfare reform as an opportunity, not a potential victimization. It is essential to engage staff in program and policy development and to train them to develop relationships with families. A strategy for promoting this level of commitment is to offer the family all necessary services in one location (combined case). The family is the primary partner in their service design and delivery. They should be involved in comprehensive, strength-based assessment and an interview addressing all life domains. The community partners (domestic violence service providers, mental health service providers, community services, Human Services, Health, Vocation Rehabilitation, Workforce Development, etc.) should be collocated and accessible.

By engaging the business community as a collaborative partner, El Paso County was able to establish a job-sharing program. Under this program, a two-parent family can share one job. That is, as long as 40 hours per week are worked, the employer allows either of the adult family members to complete them.

The comprehensive case management model includes a “sanction prevention team.” This team uses family role-play and home visitation to solve problems before sanctions are imposed. The curriculum includes strength-based communication and poverty prevention training.

2.3 About El Paso County

El Paso County has the highest concentration of children aged 0 to 5 years in the nation. This demographic feature, coupled with staggering rates of divorce, (72%), children living in single-parent homes (60%), and noncustodial father disengagement (90%) motivated the County to examine new and creative ways to meet the needs of fragile families and to address father absence.

El Paso County recognized that TANF clients had needs the County was ill equipped to serve. The partnership with FaithPartners to provide faith-based mentoring has reached out to individuals and families desiring to move to self-sufficiency. The multi-church initiative contracts with the county to “provide mentoring teams who lend encouragement, support, and life skills coaching to families desiring to get off welfare.” FaithPartners teams are composed of between three and five adults, each committing to a minimum of one year of service to an individual family. The program serves an average of 20 families each year.

VI. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STABILIZATION

VI. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STABILIZATION

The workshop's second day included two presentations on marriage and family stabilization efforts.

1. THE OKLAHOMA GOVERNOR'S STATEWIDE MARRIAGE INITIATIVE

Facilitator: *Mack Storrs*, Senior Policy Analyst Office of Family Assistance, ACF/DHHS
Washington, DC.

Jerry Regier, Secretary of Health and Human Services, State of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK.

Mary Myrick, Project Manager, Oklahoma Marriage Initiative & President, Public Strategies,
Oklahoma City, OK.

Dr. Scott Stanley, Co-Director, PREP, University of Denver, Denver, CO.

Dr. Don Hebbard, Director of Couples & Marriage Education, Oklahoma, Marriage Initiative.

1.1 Why A Marriage Initiative?

The Oklahoma Marriage Initiative (OMI) was motivated by the social and economic consequences of divorce for children. Oklahoma ranked second in the nation in divorce and almost half of the counties in Oklahoma reported divorce petitions filed exceeded the number of marriage licenses issued. Associated increases in premarital cohabitation, single mother households, and births of out of wedlock, along with decreasing per capita income, were all cause for concern. Oklahoma's Governor commissioned an economic study conducted by the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University to determine the cause of the low per capita income. The resultant data indicated that negative social factors were depressing the economy.

1.2 The Plan

In response to the study findings, Governor Frank Keating decided to focus his marriage initiative on achieving reductions in four areas: divorce rate; out-of-wedlock births; alcohol and drug addiction; and child abuse and neglect. Governor Keating undertook a large-scale effort to effect policy change by using TANF mandates and funding creatively, demonstrating broad based inclusion of systems, providers, and targeted populations, and evaluating multiple modalities of effect.

By establishing measurable goals (e.g., reduce divorce rate by one-third by 2010), communicating a balanced approach (e.g., strengthen marriage; not bash divorce), committing to key principles (e.g., leadership at the top, multi-sector approach), and providing funding (10

percent of the \$100 million TANF “surplus” created by an 80 percent reduction in Oklahoma’s TANF caseload) the OMI has been very successful.

OMI uses graduates as mentors and offers county-based directories for TANF information and referral services. By encouraging couples to sign marriage covenants and offering pre-divorce mediation, the OMI expects to drastically reduce the divorce rate in Oklahoma, as well as to prevent entrance into marriages with little likelihood of success.

1.3 The Clients

The OMI serves low-income, disadvantaged, single mothers and encourages the development of relationships with the father of the child, the new boyfriend/fiancé and the child’s maternal grandfather, where appropriate. Low-income, high-risk new parents needing support are also assisted. OMI also works with premarital and unmarried (though potentially marriageable) couples in significant relationships and with other married couples.

1.4 Outcomes

Four benefits and outcomes are expected from the OMI. These are:

- Better tracking of marriage, divorce, and family trends in the State of Oklahoma (this would include a social survey for tracking macro level trends)
- Changing attitudes toward marriage and family stability, and increasing the knowledge of the role of healthy marriages in the lives of adults and children
- Development of statewide systems to promote and strengthen stable, healthy marriages and family relationships, which should lead to increased knowledge of the important role marriage plays in society
- Increased capacity for service delivery in both the public and private sectors (services will be aimed at lowering risk factors and strengthening and protective factors concerning marital and/or parental functioning).

1.5 Implementation

Two tracks, religious and secular, are used in the OMI. In the religious track, leaders of several denominations and faith groups are committed to the tenets of premarital counseling and preparation. More than 600 religious leaders have committed to a “marriage covenant,” requiring the provision of four to six months of pre-marital preparation and an adequate

engagement period. A total of 600 religious and lay people have been trained in the components of a marriage-mentoring program.

The secular track is a training and service delivery system utilizing the existing government and community infrastructure to build a statewide delivery system. The goal is to use the Department of Health and Human Services, along with the Cooperative Extension Services, to develop marriage and relationship skills. The curriculum, Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP), was designed by Dr. Scott Stanely and Dr. Howard Markman of the University of Denver

The secular training uses a three-tier model. The tiers are:

- **Orientation and consultation for agency administrators and State leaders.** This tier includes a 1-day review and orientation, hosted in Oklahoma City, for representatives of the various sectors involved with the OMI.
- **Orientation and training for gatekeepers.** This second tier totals three days of training. The first day is a orientation session for the front-line staff (currently operating in seven pilot counties). The other two days consist of an orientation and skills development institute for staff members in the Department of Health and Human Services. The focus is on information and referral.
- **Full, multi-day training in core curricula (PREP).** This third tier is a full-day training, which includes didactic education, skills training and practice, and discussion of implementation issues.

1.6 The Curriculum

The Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP) is a research-based approach to helping couples prevent divorce and preserve a lasting love. Empirically informed by 20 years of research at the University of Denver, PREP is the only educational program for couples that has been studied in long-term, controlled follow-ups.

Five of the seven outcome studies on PREP show promising results. Anticipated results of participation in a couples' education program like PREP include:

- Prevention of marital distress for happy couples
- An opportunity for couples in distress to recover

- Affirmation of the idea that marriage matters
- Resources for addressing future needs.

By including the PREP curriculum, long-term results anticipated by the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative include:

- Lower divorce rates
- Higher marriage rates
- Reduced recidivism of out-of-wedlock births
- Increased father involvement
- Decreased domestic violence.

At the conclusion of the presentation, workshop participants were invited to ask questions of the panelists. A transcript of the question and answer session can be found in Appendix B.

2. A TRIBAL PERSPECTIVE ON NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Facilitator: *Sergio Lugo*, TANF Program Specialist, ACF Region VIII, Denver, CO.
Gary Neumann, Project Services Manager for Welfare-to-Work, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Pablo, MT.
Willie Wolf, Consultant, WC Consulting, Longmont, CO.
Kurt Nastacio, Department Head, Pueblo of Zuni, NM.

Mr. Neumann focused on his tribe's issues around workforce development.

Mr. Nastacio primarily addressed community healing in his tribe.

Mr. Wolf addressed the cross-cutting issues of marriage, faith-based partnerships, and community development.

2.1 Workforce Development

Family stabilization is the key to workforce development. Without this stability, Native American families can not advance to self-sufficiency. Flexibility and self-governance is also essential. Tribes must be allowed to decide where limited resources are most needed.

In the absence of a qualified workforce, well-intentioned tribal laws requiring internal hiring are merely good ideas. Overly stringent requirements regarding substance abuse (currently a 5-year period of sobriety) removes even more otherwise qualified workers from the labor pool. In order to improve the quality of internal hiring, more reasonable accommodations must be made (a 3-year sobriety requirement). People need hope for a better future and first-time offenders must be given a chance to improve.

2.2 Community Healing

The two value systems (TANF and Native Americans) are in conflict. Native American people are not looking for more money, they are looking for peace and community healing. Native American people look to the elders in their community for direction. Following this wisdom is what makes cultures successful. Tribes can ask grandparents, “If there was one thing you could pass on to your grandchildren, what would it be?” and use the answers to direct policies.

In the Native American community, there is also a disconnect in the area of child support. Native American fathers must be credited for in-kind child support. Often, they lack employment and, with it, the means to provide cash support. However, they can, and do, provide food, training, and other items of monetary value to their children. This contribution must be recognized and credited.

2.3 Fatherhood and *Tryospaye*

Tryospaye is the Native American ceremony among Plains Indians of making someone a relative. It is, in some ways, a more powerful way to become a father than a biological birth. Such a philosophical connection to the value of family is a precious resource that must be cultivated and encouraged. To that end, there must be mentoring programs and father support groups to help fathers become successful parents. Limiting the focus to child support enforcement is insufficient because it does not help fathers connect spiritually to their children. Cultural realities further complicate the issue of child support enforcement in the Native American community. That is, child support can be challenging because parents are often related to officials, there are significant cultural issues not adequately addressed, and the focus is on a financial obligation, which is less motivating than the moral/cultural/religious obligation of fathers.

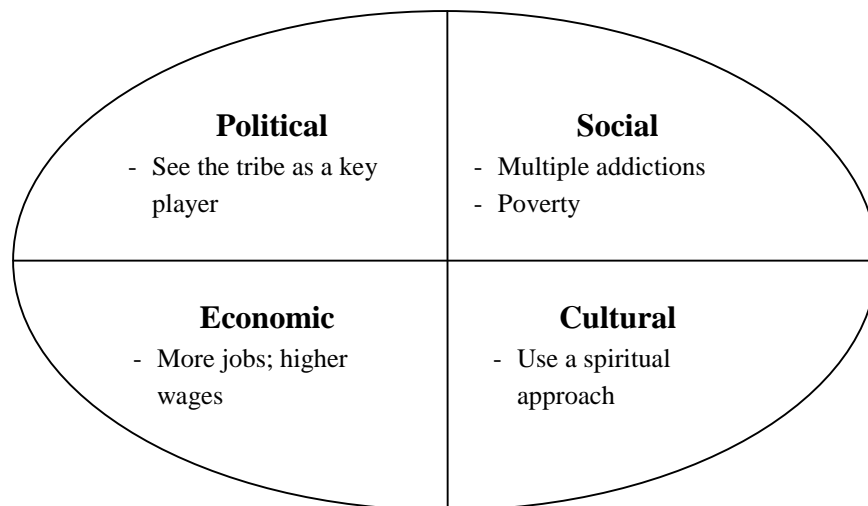
2.4 Marriage

The Way of the Eagle (AIM Philosophy) consists of: financial incentives, marriage counseling, and other supportive services as the best ways to encourage strong and healthy marriages in the Native American community. Two-parent families best serve the well-being of children. In order to raise children successfully and stabilize families, support must be made available to families before desperation sets in. Financial stability leads to family stability. Families need a tool kit (premarital education, coping skills) for communication in order to be successful and stable.

2.5 Faith-based Initiatives

The medicine wheel is the Native American paradigm for wellness. For Native Americans, the honor of one is the honor of all. The wheel shown in Exhibit VI-1 is useful in understanding the issues of welfare reform.

EXHIBIT VI-1



In order for any of the provisions or programs to work, cultural sensitivity is imperative. In the Native American community, the issue of culture is the issue of spirituality. Using a spiritually based approach will significantly increase the likelihood of successfully improving economic and social conditions. The political section of the wheel is critical because it calls for the inclusion of the tribe in all matters affecting tribal well-being.

2.6 Community Development

Employers should work with the whole family. Ideally, either spouse can work the hours necessary to satisfy the employer. That is, if one spouse is hired to work 40 hours a week, the employer can disregard which spouse comes to work, as long as one does. One reservation, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, SD, without a casino has made extraordinary progress. They have reduced their unemployment rate from 75 to 25 percent and, in 1991, they pledged to be alcohol and drug free by 2000. They began recycling old, dilapidated automobiles, used a grant from the Department of Commerce to develop a computer skills training course, and established a 4-year university on the reservation.

VII. A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON FAMILY STABILIZATION ISSUES

VII. A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON FAMILY STABILIZATION ISSUES

Facilitator: *Eddie Lazo*, Deputy Regional Administrator, ACF/Region VIII, DHHS, Denver, CO.
Jack Tweedie, Program Director, National Conference of State Legislatures, Denver, CO.

1. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY STABILIZATION

Marriage and family structure is a new topic for welfare reform, but it is not new to family law and divorce. Because programmatic history exists, the present situation requires adaptation, not creation, of the knowledge base. Teen pregnancy recidivism prevention and the reinforcement of fragile families can be achieved with education, parenting skills, employment and financial support, counseling, cash assistance and work. The concept of job-sharing, or considering the two adults as a unit, has great potential to achieve stability for families.

2. FATHERHOOD

The myths surrounding fatherhood must be overcome. These myths, that the child is the result of a casual relationship, that the father wants neither marriage nor involvement with his children, or that the mother doesn't want the father around, are all invalidated empirically.

The three steps to successful fatherhood programs are: development of a statewide strategy; facilitation of programmatic support for fathers; and provision of funding.

3. REMAINING ISSUES

Several issues still require careful consideration and resolution:

- What is the range of policies? Do child support and fatherhood programs belong at the Federal agency level or are they in the purview of the State?
- To what extent should the focus be on low-income individuals when considering marriage and teen pregnancy prevention?
- What impact does the existence of domestic violence have on attempts to keep people married?
- If these initiatives do work, what outcomes can reasonably be expected for child welfare (e.g., biological parents vs. step or adoptive parents)?
- What are our family structure goals?
- What are the most effective ways to improve child welfare?

VIII. CONCLUSION

VIII. CONCLUSION

The ACF West-Central Hub hosted this conference as an opportunity for stakeholders to come together and share ideas about responsible fatherhood, marriage and family stabilization, and the role of faith-based organizations in serving TANF clients. Through a series of dynamic presentations, informal networking opportunities, and comprehensive resource materials, participants left the 2-day workshop armed with new strategies for stabilizing families and engaging faith- and community-based partners.

APPENDIX A:
TRANSCRIPT OF THE QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FROM JOE JONES'
PRESENTATION

APPENDIX A:
TRANSCRIPT OF THE QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FROM JOE JONES’
PRESENTATION

The following is a transcript of the questions and responses from Joe Jones’ presentation.

Q: Do you ever bring moms in to the group sessions you run?

A: No. There are separate programs to support women and mothers. Men are not as real, as honest [when women are in the room]. The focus changes to male-female issues instead of being on kids. Facilitators need different methods for the different dynamics.

Q: Do you provide [prevention] education for kids?

A: Yes. There are several requests to speak nationally. Mostly, though, it is a capacity issue. We can each only do so much before we begin to dilute our effectiveness. We must focus. Still, it is extremely important to understand that teen pregnancy is not a girls’ issue. It is everyone’s issue.

Q: How do you motivate the men to attend?

A: We get creative. We do everything. For example, a man’s girlfriend gave us his name and number, but every time we’d knock, he’d hide. We knew he was inside but he wouldn’t come out. So, we got one of his friends, who was involved with our program, to yell up that they should go to the movies. When the man got in the car, we took him to the Center. It was sneaky, but it worked. He stayed.

APPENDIX B:
TRANSCRIPT OF THE QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FROM
PRESENTATION ON THE OKLAHOMA MARRIAGE INITIATIVE

APPENDIX B:
TRANSCRIPT OF THE QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FROM
PRESENTATION ON THE OKLAHOMA MARRIAGE INITIATIVE

The following is a transcript of the questions and responses from presentation on the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative.

Q: You mentioned leadership at the top? Do you mean the Governor's office?

A: Yes. It is absolutely invaluable in terms of priority setting. It is also essential to get bipartisan support at levels just below the Governor.

Q: How do you handle the public relations issues? Don't people react negatively to this idea of government incentivizing marriage?

A: You listen to their concerns and always frame the issue in positive language. From a project management standpoint, the PR folks are the eyes and ears of the operation.

Q: Do you involve the employer community?

A: To some extent, yes. They are a valuable partner especially for family-based incentives and for enrichment activities.

Q: Are the PREP trainers certified?

A: No. They are presented as qualified trainers. The county teams include access to LPC and MCFT as resources. We are in the process of adding a professional liaison for domestic violence cases.

Q: Do you use TANF funds for hiring psychiatric personnel?

A: No.

APPENDIX C:
PRINT RESOURCES

APPENDIX C: PRINT RESOURCES

Partnering with the Faith-based Community

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APPENDIX D:
ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

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National Conference of State Legislatures

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Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program

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APPENDIX E:
AGENDA

Thursday, September 27, 2001

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

The Oklahoma Governor's Statewide Marriage Initiative

Facilitator: Mack Storrs, Senior Policy Analyst, Office of Family Assistance, ACF, DHHS

The Honorable Jerry Regier, Secretary, Health and Human Services Cabinet, State of Oklahoma

Mary Myrick, Project Manager, Oklahoma Marriage Initiative (OMI)

Scott Stanley, Ph.D., Co-Director, PREP, University of Denver

Don Hebbard, Ed.D., Director of Couples and Marriage Education, OMI

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Break

10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

A Tribal Perspective on National Initiatives

Facilitator: Sergio Lugo, TANF Program Specialist, ACF/Region VIII, DHHS

Kurt Nastacio, Department Head, Labor and Training, Pueblo of Zuni, NM

Gary Neumann, Project Services Manager – Welfare-to-Work, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, MT

Don Shircel, Director, Family Services, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc., AK

Willie Wolf, Consultant, WC Consulting

11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

A National Perspective on Family Stabilization Issues

Facilitator: Eddie Lazo, Deputy Regional Administrator, ACF/Region VIII, DHHS

Jack Tweedie, Program Director, National Conference of State Legislatures

12:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Working Lunch

Where Do We Go From Here?

Facilitator: Ed LaPedis, TANF Program Manager, ACF/Region VIII, DHHS

Peggy Butcher, Program Manager, Family Support Service Division, Oklahoma Department of Human Services

Irma Davila, Supervisor for TANF and Food Stamp Policy, Texas Works Program, Texas Department of Human Services

John Hougen, Director, Office of Public Assistance, North Dakota Department of Human Services

Helen Thatcher, Employment Services Support Manager, Employment Development Division, Utah Department of Workforce Services

Closing Remarks

ACF West-Central Hub Family Stabilization *workshop*

September 26 - 27, 2001

Denver, Colorado



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ACF West-Central Hub Family Stabilization workshop

September 26 - 27, 2001

Denver, Colorado



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