Introduction to the Alameda County Fathers Corps & Father Friendly Principles
Agenda

- Icebreaker
- Daddy’s Soothing Voice
- Fathers Impact
- Overview of the Alameda County Fathers Corps
- Fathers Corps Father Friendly Principles
- Strategies to Introduce and Implement
- Evaluation
Icebreaker

- One word that best describes fatherhood for you
Daddy’s Voice Soothes

Daddy's Voice Calms Newborn Daughter
Fathers Make a Difference

• Father involvement is related to positive cognitive, developmental, and socio-behavioral child outcomes, such as improved weight gain in preterm infants, improved breastfeeding rates, higher receptive language skills, and higher academic achievement. Source: Garfield, C. F., & Isacco, A. (2006). Fathers and the well-child visit, Pediatrics, 117, 637-645.

Fathers Make a Difference


For more statistics on father involvement/absence visit [http://www.fatherhood.org/father-absence-statistics](http://www.fatherhood.org/father-absence-statistics)
Mission

The Alameda County Fathers Corps promotes and supports fathers and father figures to be meaningfully engaged with their children and families, and advocates for family service providers to provide father friendly services and assist fathers in strengthening their parenting skills.
Fathers Corps Goals

• Increase knowledge of the healthy development of children birth to 5 and increase awareness of father specific services

• Support the adoption and implementation of Fathers Corps Father Friendly Principles into family service programs so that programs/agencies are more father friendly

• Create a trained pool of male Father Engagement Specialists
What we do

• Capacity Building
• Research and Assessment
• Systems Change
Systems Change

• Fatherhood strategy included in First 5 Alameda County 2018-2021 Strategic Plan

• Alameda County Board of Supervisors adopted Father Friendly Principles and strongly encouraged implementation throughout Alameda County

• Social Services Agency established Fatherhood Advisory Council
Systems Change

• Department of Child Support strategizing on how to be more father-friendly

• Fathers Corps working to engage Family Court to discuss father-friendly approach to serving families

• Fathers Corps, Health Care Services Agency, and Social Services Agency exploring opportunities to continue and expand collaboration
  — Increase number of father-specific services
  — Build capacity of staff to offer father-friendly services
Research and Assessment

• Focus Groups and One-on-One Interviews with Fathers who are not in the lives of their children
  — Barriers: conflict with mom; perceived bias towards Mom in Family Court; prior felony convictions; unpaid child support; inability to afford legal representation in Family Court

• Provider Survey
  — Barriers: conflict with mom; work schedules; limited access to services and supports

• Social Services Agency Fatherhood/Male Focus Groups

• Father Friendly Organizational Self-Assessment Tool
Capacity Building

• Fathers Corps Learning Community

• County-wide Father Friendly Principles adoption and implementation campaign

• Fathers Corps Ambassadors workgroup

• Fatherhood Training Series
  Open to all providers
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<td>Father Friendly Principles; Members’ Role as Agents of Change</td>
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<td>10/21/2016</td>
<td>A Father’s Role in Child Development &amp; Understanding Temperament</td>
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<td>11/18/2016</td>
<td>Trauma and its Impact on Brain Development / Handling your Emotions as a Father (Affect Co-Regulation)</td>
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<td>Expulsion/Suspension of Children of Color / Advocating for your Child at School</td>
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<td>Coming of Age – The Importance of Culture, Ritual, &amp; Community Acknowledgement</td>
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<td>Retreat – The Mask you Live In (Masculinity Development &amp; Respect for Women)</td>
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<td>2/17/2017</td>
<td>Understanding Gang Culture &amp; Strategies to Keep Youth Safe</td>
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<td>5/19/2017</td>
<td>Rebuilding the Village: Community Resilience, Cultural Competence and Nutrition</td>
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Questions?
Fathers Corps Video

Fathers Corps Digital Story
Successful Fatherhood Programs

• Father specific
• Program names speak to fathers
• Male facilitators
• Meet fathers where they are
  — Reliable referral process
• Trust and authenticity between provider and dad
• Leadership and staff are patient
• Non-traditional hours of service
• Incentives
Out of the Box Outreach

- Other fathers
- Male staff
- Authentic
- Go where they are: barbershops, schools, L&D recovery, GameStop
- Partner with other agencies
  - Workforce development programs
  - AC Probation and reentry programs
  - Manhood development programs
  - AC Child Support
Father Friendly Principles

**Principle 1:** That fathers and the needs of fathers, be included in the structure and delivery model of all family services in Alameda County agencies and organizations
Father Friendly Principles

Principle 2: That Alameda County programs, agencies and organizations be open, supportive, helpful, and inclusive towards the needs of fathers and provide father-specific services and/or programs, all of which further the goal of increasing fathers’ involvement in their children’s lives.
Father Friendly Principles

Principle 3: That outreach materials, illustrations, posters, brochures and other collateral materials include positive and diverse images of fathers being fathers, and that facilities provide father-friendly environments with materials consistent with the needs and interests of men and fathers.
Father Friendly Principles

**Principle 4:** That Alameda County family service programs, agencies and organizations create positions that serve fathers, and actively recruit men to fill those positions in order to better address the needs of fathers. To facilitate recruitment, we recommend development of a career track for father services, e.g. active recruitment of young men into social services with scholarships, internships and explicit advertising that “men are strongly urged to apply.”
Father Friendly Principles

Principle 5: That Alameda County programs, agencies and organizations working with families strive to provide training for all staff on working with men and on fatherhood issues
Father Friendly Principles

**Principle 6**: That Alameda County programs, agencies and organizations develop program policies that include a clear expectation that fathers should and will participate.
Father Friendly Principles

Principle 7: That Alameda County agencies and organizations make every effort to create the image that its programs are designed for fathers, as well as for mothers and children.
Incorporating Father Friendly Principles

1. If you and your program fully embraced these principles, what would your services look like?
Short Term & Long Term Action

• One or two actions you will take within the next 60 days to introduce your agency to the father friendly principles

• One or two steps you will take within the next 6 months to move your agency towards the implementation of the Father Friendly Principles
Father Friendly Tips

- Collect contact information from fathers
- Make good faith effort ensure fathers receive information
- Invite fathers to activities and celebrations
- Host father-specific parent/child activities
- Ensure that staff are consistently and effectively engaging fathers
- Reflect on what baggage and/or bias you bring
- Remain neutral — you are on the child’s side not mom’s or dad’s
- Identify strategies for staff to engage fathers — be intentional, it’s not just going to happen
## Father Friendly Principles Campaign

### Introducing
- Post FFP posters
- Present to agency leadership
- Present at staff meeting
- Adopt
- Staff participate in FFP training

### Implementing
- Increase outreach to fathers
- Provide training to staff on working with fathers
- Make changes to physical environment
- Hire male staff
- Apply/secure funding for father-specific programs
Please complete the Evaluation

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