

Policy Matters to Fathers and Families

A Tool for Community Foundations



Coalition of
Community
Foundations
for Youth

Policy Matters to Fathers and Families: A Tool for Community Foundations was developed by the Social Policy Action Network (SPAN) for meetings sponsored by Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth (CCFY) and community foundations in four states in 2004. At these meetings, SPAN presented its research on how well each state was doing based on the policy checklist included in this publication. Community foundation leaders identified policies that they wanted to address and discussed how to take action to improve outcomes for children and fathers in their communities.

Three state meetings were hosted by community foundations, and one was hosted by the Council of Michigan Foundations for its community foundation members. If you wish to know more about their work, you may contact them directly.

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A Tool for Community Foundations 2004

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Introduction

In 2001, 24 million — or 34 percent — of U.S. children younger than 18 lived in households without their biological fathers. Only 35 percent of children with noncustodial parents received child support in 2000.

As a response to this changing demographic, the past three decades have seen an upsurge in foundation, government, and public support of programs designed to strengthen father involvement and promote responsible fatherhood. And both research and practical experience demonstrate the value of policies that encourage and promote father involvement with their children. They lead to good outcomes for children and their fathers.

Since the 1970s, the federal government has launched a number of efforts to promote responsible fatherhood. These include locating absent parents; establishing paternity; determining and enforcing child support for welfare families; and improving access and visitation for noncustodial parents. The federal government has also provided states funding that could be used to help low-income noncustodial parents.

Many states have used federal funding sources, including federal welfare funds and Workforce Investment Act funds, to pay for programs targeted to noncustodial parents. Many states and communities have also created fatherhood commissions or initiatives to address negative perceptions of “deadbeat dads.”

A number of national fatherhood organizations, as well as hundreds of local efforts rooted in community and religious institutions, are working to encourage closer interactions between fathers and their children.

CCFY’s Role in Fatherhood Initiatives

Since 1996, the Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth (CCFY) has been helping community foundations adopt effective strategies for including responsible fatherhood in their

agendas. The goals of CCFY’s Fathers Matter initiative are simple and straightforward:

- Increase philanthropic investment in responsible fatherhood;
- Contribute to the knowledge base of best practices and policies;
- Increase collaboration among programs serving fathers;
- Stimulate conversations among a more diverse group of stakeholders about strategies to increase father involvement; and
- Connect fatherhood practitioners to CCFY grantees and CCFY grantees to each other.

For the last eight years, CCFY has seeded and supported the work of 86 community foundations and their local partners on responsible fatherhood

program and policy issues. Their experiences and lessons learned, as well as leading research and best practices, have been shared with the community foundation field through two editions of *Fathers Matter: What Community Foundations Can Do*, a listserv, a web site, newsletters, forums, institutes, conferences, peer-to-peer learning, and cross-site visits. CCFY publications have been disseminated to the more than 650 community foundations in the United States.

Among the specific activities CCFY has undertaken in recent years are:

- the design and delivery of a workshop and toolkit “*Tools, Strategies and Action to Improve Programs and Policies Affecting*

FATHERS FACT:
Children growing up without fathers involved in their lives are five times more likely to live in poverty compared to children living with both parents.

Introduction (continued)

Fathers, Families, and Communities” to help community foundations develop concrete action plans with their community partners based on local opportunities and needs. Supporting “just in time learning,” CCFY provided support for peer-to-peer and cross-site visits.

- the development of a listserv to disseminate information on research, policy, best practices and innovations that impact fragile families.
- technical assistance conference calls to inform community foundations about proposed public policies and new research. The calls featured information about research such as the Princeton University Fragile Families Study and federal government initiatives such as the Marriage Promotion Act.

With this publication CCFY is responding to another request by community foundations —

FATHERS FACT:
Children perform better in school, both academically and socially, when their fathers are involved with their schooling, including attending meetings and volunteering.

that they learn what they can do to influence policymakers to develop more rational approaches to help fathers contribute to the emotional, social, intellectual and financial well being of their children.

Many community foundations are already working to meet the challenges of the fatherhood field. Some are educating their communities about

fathers’ needs; others are funding services to help fathers and their families. A few are

venturing into the public policy arena, and it is our hope that this publication makes that option more attractive and more intelligible.

It is important to understand that public policy activity is not limited to the legislative process. Public officials have considerable discretionary authority — areas in which the law is silent. In those instances, officials have flexibility as long as they do not abuse their authority. In other instances, the law itself permits specific alternatives in a given situation. In both cases, public policy action simply consists of convincing public officials to exercise existing authority in a different way.

This guide includes five sections to help you think about how to work effectively on policies that can improve outcomes for fathers and fragile families:

- A checklist of state and local policies that can help fathers become more engaged with and responsible for their children. Some involve state level action; others fall within the purview of local government.
- Stories of community foundations that have successfully influenced public policy at all levels. While six of the stories relate to fatherhood policy, they all illustrate effective strategies for influencing policymakers. We hope you find them illustrative and inspirational.
- A brief definition of lobbying and an explanation of what the federal laws allow.
- An annotated list of organizations that can help communities learn more about fathers and effective fatherhood policies.
- A list of suggested readings on fatherhood issues.

State Policy Checklist

This checklist is a tool to help determine whether the policies of your state are effectively supporting fathers and their families.

If you want to know where your state stands, you might support a current grantee to do the research, make a small grant to a university or policy group to do an assessment, or convene a group of public and nonprofit leaders to tap their knowledge and determine their interest in using the checklist.

But most importantly, don't let the policy checklist overwhelm you. You do not have to know the details of programs such as child support enforcement, Head Start, or the Workforce Investment Act to take effective

action in your community. And you do not have to take action on every item on the list. You can make a difference by identifying one or two of the policies that could improve outcomes for children and fathers in your community. Talk with grantees, families, public officials and agency staff to identify issues ripe for action. Together you can develop strategies for policy reform.

You may use the checklist to identify policy opportunities at the state level, but it also may be used to identify local opportunities for action. To provoke your thinking, some examples of local action are offered below a few of the state policy items.

- Does your state invest in expansions of federally funded programs such as Healthy Start, Head Start, and Early Head Start? If so, does it require that programs work actively to include opportunities for fathers to be involved? This approach gives fathers opportunities and skills to engage in their children's development at a young age.
 - Whether your state has such a requirement or not, local Head Start, Healthy Start, and Early Head Start programs can include fathers in their work. Talk to your local programs to see if they reach out to fathers. Connect them to data and research about the benefits of father involvement and best practices for including fathers in their work. (Hutchinson Community Foundation, page 11; and Community Foundation for Greater New Haven page 17)

- Does your state have a child support pass-through for families on welfare? The pass-through, which allows families to receive some of the child support that fathers pay to states, encourages noncustodial fathers to earn more, pay more, and engage in their children's lives. Research shows that families do better when they receive child support directly. And while the pass-through may cost states initially, it can reduce future welfare and incarceration costs. (The Minneapolis Foundation, page 15)
 - Talk with low-income fathers and your local child support enforcement agency staff about whether the pass-through is available in your state. If not, consider funding or advocating for a pilot project establishing a local pass-through.

State Policy Checklist (continued)

- Does your state have a commission to examine child support policies related to charging interest on arrearages, establishing accurate child support orders based upon ability to pay, modifying orders, and accumulating arrearages? If such a commission has made recommendations, encourage the legislature to adopt the reforms to make child support policies more realistic and flexible. (Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, page 17)

- Does your state have a statewide fatherhood initiative to link fatherhood practitioners with state and local officials? Fathers are eligible for many services that they rarely receive because many public agencies are inexperienced or reluctant to work with them.
 - Convene a local fatherhood network that includes practitioners and local public and agency officials to learn from each other and address policy reforms together. (Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, page 8; Marin Community Foundation, page 13; and Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, page 17.)

- Does your state child support office have a formal process to connect fathers with parenting and employment services when they establish paternity at birth? Research shows that at the time of their children’s birth both fathers and mothers overwhelmingly want the fathers to be involved in their children’s lives, which can motivate fathers to improve their capacity as caregivers and providers.
 - Your local child support office can do this, even if the state has no formal process. Talk with them about the possibilities.

- Has your state child support office funded a collectability study, which provides data on how much child support is owed and how long it has been owed? Collectability studies can also be designed to provide characteristics of the people who owe and specific strategies for states to increase collections — benefiting both families and state budgets. Studies can be funded by using waivers under Section 1115 of the Social Security Act.

- Does your state child support office have a policy of forgiving some or all of child support debt that low-income fathers owe to the state when these fathers participate in job training programs, begin working, or start paying back child support? Removing massive child support debt can motivate low-income fathers to work more, earn more, and pay more child support. (Marin Community Foundation, page 13 and Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, page 17)

State Policy Checklist (continued)

- Does your state child support office have a public awareness campaign to inform fathers and practitioners of child support policies and fathers' rights? Although most fathers want to be involved in their children's lives, many are too confused — or angered — by child support agencies to take action.

- Does your state child support office have a formal program to educate judges about the reality of low-income, noncustodial fathers' lives to dispel the stereotype that fathers don't care about their children and deliberately try to avoid paying child support?
 - Do you know judges who would be interested in convening their colleagues in your city or county to learn about the research showing that most low-income noncustodial fathers are not “deadbeat” but rather “deadbroke” and to discuss how the courts can change policies to promote responsible father involvement?

- Does your state allow alternatives to incarceration for fathers who are delinquent in child support payments if they agree to participate in job training or drug and alcohol treatment? By helping low-income fathers address barriers to stable employment and higher incomes, states can collect more child support and help fathers avoid prison.

- Do your courts establish visitation arrangements when establishing child support orders? Children benefit in many ways from interaction with their fathers and fathers, in turn, are more motivated to pay support when they see their children often.

- Do your courts and child support offices ensure that parents have access to supervised visitation centers? Parents in relationships frayed by divorce, breakup, or domestic violence often require a third party to facilitate visitation.

- Do your courts minimize the number of child support orders established by default (without reference to ability to pay) and try to accurately determine fathers' earnings and assets before setting orders? Orders established by default often result in unreasonable order amounts — leading some fathers to avoid payment altogether.

State Policy Checklist (continued)

- Does your state workforce development agency create employment and training programs targeted to fathers who are unable to pay child support? Research shows that many low-income fathers do not pay because they lack the education, work experience, and soft skills needed to get and keep employment.
 - Talk with your local workforce development programs about whether they target training programs to fathers unable to pay child support. If not, try to link them with local fatherhood advocates, who can explain why serving fathers is so important. (East Bay Community Foundation, page 9)

- Does your state workforce development agency encourage local workforce investment boards and Private Industry Councils to recruit low-income, noncustodial fathers in existing programs? By specifically targeting fathers, job programs can improve the lives of entire families.

- Does your state workforce development office partner with businesses to encourage them to hire low-income, noncustodial fathers?

- Does your corrections department help inmates apply to modify child support when they enter prison? Maintaining little or no child support debt while incarcerated provides an incentive for fathers to resume payments when they leave prison because their debt is not insurmountable.

- Does your corrections department offer fatherhood programs to encourage active parenting for incarcerated fathers and allow contact visits for children and their fathers? (Marin Community Foundation, page 13; Hutchinson Community Foundation, page 11)

- Does your state health department extend outreach efforts for health services to men? Not only do fathers play a unique and critical role in promoting good health for their children, they can also contribute to the prenatal care of expectant mothers. (Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, page 17)

Policy Stories

These are the stories of ten community foundations and the strategies they used to influence policymakers. Six of them changed policies around fathers and fragile families; the others worked on policies such as their local economy, child welfare, health care for low-income families, and to increase philanthropy. Some of these efforts were focused on influencing local officials, some sought to change state policies, and one could lead to a decision by the U.S. Congress to change the federal tax code. All provide lessons about how community foundations can use their credibility, the knowledge of the communities they serve, and their considerable influence to change the way that government does business.

There are common strategies that you will see among their work. They talk with, learn from and convene public officials and public agency staff. Building relationships with elected and appointed public officials has had long-term benefits to the work of these foundations and their communities. Taking time to serve on public commissions and advisory groups is another way

that they are learning about and having an impact on public policy. Some are supporting the collection and dissemination of good data and research to leaders in the public and private sector who make policies that impact on fathers and their children. Some are opening doors, using their influence to help groups/grantees doing good work gain access to policy makers. They have found that policy work frequently costs little but can have a big impact. All of these strategies have

helped community foundations leverage, protect, and maximize their investments — and helped their communities make significant changes and sustain them.

FATHERS FACT:

In addition to suffering from poverty, children who live absent their biological fathers are, on average, at least three times more likely to use drugs; to experience educational, emotional, and behavioral problems; to be victims of child abuse; and to engage in criminal behavior than their peers who live with married biological or adoptive parents.

Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta Bringing Partners Together to Change Fathers' Lives

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta had kept its eye on fatherhood for a long time before interest and opportunity converged. The foundation's staff knew that helping low-income noncustodial fathers meant helping children — they just needed the right opportunity to get involved.

The opportunity came in 1997. In response to the passage of federal welfare reform in 1996, the state's Department of Human Resources created the Georgia Fatherhood Program (GFP). While the program was funded with state and federal dollars, it needed partners in local communities where fathers in need of services lived.

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta was able to provide that access. The foundation sponsored a number of planning sessions with the GFP for businesses, community-based organizations, and state agencies. Robert Johnson, a consultant who works for the GFP, says the first goal of the sessions was simply to raise public awareness about why fathers are so important in the lives of their children. The sessions were the genesis of the Georgia Planning and Community Network which includes 41 nonprofit organizations, businesses, and state agencies.

Without the foundation's significant influence in the community and skill at brokering interactions, this broad-based partnership could not have been formed. As Lesley Grady, the foundation's vice president of community programs and initiatives says, "Folks tend to come when foundations ask."

The GFP and the foundation then partnered with the Georgia Office of Child Support Enforcement and the Annie E. Casey Foundation to identify the needs of low-income noncustodial fathers in communities, to

identify local resources to meet those needs, and to create services to fill in the gaps.

To do this work, the GFP spun off several local collaboratives across the state. In each of nine service areas in Georgia, fatherhood needs assessments were commissioned. The needs assessments revealed information that pleasantly surprised the GFP. The results showed that while fathers need many services such as health care, job training, and parenting classes, about 70 percent of these were already available in communities. As Grady explains, the next challenge is to connect fathers with existing services and find resources to provide missing services.

The foundation also funded the development of the Georgia Fatherhood Services Network Best Practices Model which helps communities look at child well being in terms of outcomes that are affected by father involvement. These include child support (which provides economic stability) and access and visitation (which improve children's mental health). Representatives of the Network then joined the commissioner of the state's Department of Human Resources in briefing other state agencies to convince them to use the Best Practices Model.

In 2004, the foundation and GFP plan to hold four community forums and one policy forum to gather information and build consensus in communities about how to help fathers. Grady said that the foundation also hopes to more fully engage community foundations around the state in this work.

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FATHERS FACT:
About 2.5 million
noncustodial
fathers are poor
themselves.

East Bay Community Foundation Expansion and Sustainability in Tough Economic Times

For the last several years, the East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF) in Oakland, CA has worked with an outstanding organization, Rubicon Programs, that takes a holistic approach to the complicated lives of low-income noncustodial fathers. Many Rubicon clients have no educational degrees, felony convictions, incomes of less than \$10,000 per year, and large child support arrearages that result in drivers' license suspensions and wage garnishments should they seek "above ground" employment. Rubicon has an extraordinary track record in Contra Costa County, one of the two counties served by EBCF. Not surprisingly, Rubicon clients move freely between both Contra Costa and Alameda counties, and Alameda County officials became interested in its model.

Through a series of grants beginning in 2000, CCFY provided the impetus and the resources, both intellectual and financial, for EBCF to become more conversant with the population Rubicon serves and the many-layered impact these typically young men have on child, family, and community well being. In 2003, CCFY awarded a small grant to the community foundation to explore replication of Rubicon in Alameda County. EBCF began hosting meetings with high-level public officials in Alameda County, usually department heads. Then the bottom fell out of the California state budget.

Although the CCFY grant provided for two convenings, EBCF decided in light of the shifting economic environment to meet individually with public officials and held more than a dozen meetings. These one-on-one conversations made possible a more nuanced look at Rubicon's array of services: what worked well, what could be improved, and how Rubicon's services fit into that particular official's mandate. These individual conversations yielded a higher degree of interest and commitment than would have

obtained had EBCF adhered to its original proposal to CCFY.

"A small open-ended grant that allows people to shift tactics when circumstances change, and actually encourages it by making the process simple and flexible, often accomplishes more than a large prescriptive grant," says EBCF Program Officer Diane Sanchez. "As a result of CCFY's technical assistance and connection to national level research and resources, we've assumed a more prominent role in responsible fatherhood and have been able to keep this particular train on the track despite our derailed state budget," she said.

"CCFY does more than build community foundation capacity," Sanchez said. "CCFY's vantage point gives it a much broader perspective on best practices, whatever issue is being addressed. One interesting side note in this instance is that Rubicon itself came to appreciate how unique and how critical its social enterprises are in terms of providing transitional employment opportunities for its clientele."

One role the community foundation has been able to play, as a financially disinterested party, is to facilitate thinking beyond the binary "yes/no" on replication. Rubicon has generously offered whatever pieces of its model can be absorbed within existing programs. For their part, public officials have been examining their individual funding streams to see where flexibility exists and what opportunities their particular agencies have to access other sources of public funds. A particularly strong partnership has been built with the Alameda County Department of Public Health, which recently added the term "paternal" to describe a cluster of programs formerly named "Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health." The health department and several other county agencies joined together with Rubicon to submit an application to the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement for a "Special Improvement Project" (SIP) grant that would allow a pilot of Rubicon's services in

East Bay Community Foundation (continued)

three Alameda County zip codes with a 49 percent concentration of noncustodial parents. EBCF and Rubicon are also exploring private foundation funding for this demonstration.

“Through our relationship with CCFY, we’ve come to view pilot projects as a vehicle to get to the larger systems issues,” Sanchez says. “They’re a means, not an end. The addition of ‘paternal’ to the health department’s programs is more than symbolic: it represents an evolution in thinking. There are now people throughout county government who understand

the importance of fathers and we want to partner with them. Although currently constrained by lack of resources, we will still find ways to advance the issue.”

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Hutchinson Community Foundation “Infusion” Sustains Progress

The Hutchinson Community Foundation, serving a community of 43,000 in Reno County, Kansas, was one of CCFY’s first fatherhood grantees, taking advantage of \$1,000 “Father’s Day Event” grants that were designed to raise awareness about the importance of engaged fathers to child well-being. In the ensuing eight years, the community foundation has built an impressive collaboration that involves civic leaders, local businesses, the faith community, nonprofits, and the public sector.

The community foundation used early grants to inform the community through many vehicles, such as:

- the Boys and Girls Club took fathers and their children on an annual trip to a Wichita Rangers’ baseball game, with “fatherhood education” a part of the trip, and later the Club developed four sessions on “Common Sense Parenting”;
- workplace seminars on responsible fatherhood were held at various businesses;
- a pediatrician met with fathers and their children at an elementary school;
- a monthly newsletter informed area clergy about events dealing with fatherhood or parenting; and
- an annual Fatherhood Picnic, originally funded by the community foundation and CCFY, is now supported by local donors and businesses.

The community foundation was strategic in its efforts to imbed responsible fatherhood in existing organizations and structures, while at the same time creating a fatherhood collaborative to keep responsible fatherhood on the civic agenda. As the community foundation’s efforts to elevate responsible fatherhood began to have the desired impact, a subsequent grant from CCFY was used to engage the National Center for Fathering to “train the trainers.” In addition to training eight

men, three of whom continue to this day to conduct local programs on fatherhood and parenting, the trainer educated many local audiences during his stay about the importance of fathers. The community foundation recently provided additional funding to enable other trainers to be trained using this nationally-acclaimed curriculum.

With yet another grant from CCFY, the community foundation brought in an innovative judge from Fort Wayne, Indiana, Charles Pratt, who has developed a family-centered, strength-based approach to youth appearing in his court. One outcome of Judge Pratt’s presentations to other judges, law enforcement and probation officers, mental health professionals, educators, and the general public was the formation of a task force composed of the community foundation, a regional chief administrator for child protective services for the State of Kansas, and community representatives.

This public-private partnership has made significant inroads. The state has accessed federal funds (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or TANF dollars) to make family-centered practice a part of public sector interventions as well as community life in Reno County. The state has used TANF dollars to train approximately 30 individuals, both professionals and volunteers, to use the strength-based family-centered approach when dealing with families and children. As a result of the state’s investment, there is now a program that provides mentors to fathers searching for jobs and dealing with other life issues. A fatherhood program, conducted by men trained under a community foundation grant, has been established at the Hutchinson correctional facility. Yet another fatherhood program has been established at the local Head Start Program.

This imbedding process, permeating both public and private organizations and agencies, is

Hutchinson Community Foundation (continued)

a promising approach to sustainable change.
It is also a testament to what a community
foundation can achieve when it is both nimble
and focused.

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Marin Community Foundation Linking Fathers to Their Families

As part of its Thriving Families Initiative, the Marin Community Foundation has helped create an integrated set of programs to help low-income fathers with a variety of the problems they face. These programs include job counseling, job placement, substance abuse treatment, financial literacy, and parenting classes. But once fathers completed the program, many still spent little time with their children.

The foundation convened a group of social service providers and asked them for ideas to encourage fathers to be more involved with their children. The providers cited as a barrier a policy of the Marin County Housing Authority, which manages a public housing complex where many of the fathers' families live.

The Housing Authority creates escrow accounts to help men or women living in the units build financial assets. But the Housing Authority also required adults who shared apartment leases to be joint custodians of these accounts, even if they weren't married. This created a disincentive for women living in the complex to allow the fathers of their children to move in because it required them to cede exclusive control over their accounts.

Some fathers moved in informally or visited occasionally, but without being official partners on the leases, many struggled to maintain connections with their families. Marin Community Foundation's Chantel Walker said fathers "felt like they couldn't legitimately be a parent in their children's households."

In 2000, the foundation sought to modify the Housing Authority's policy so that fathers who completed fatherhood programs could join leases without gaining access to the mother's escrow account. It began a long process of explaining to managers of the Housing Authority how fathers benefited from the fatherhood program.

Housing Authority officials worried that removing the barrier to unmarried fathers would lead to domestic violence — something many of the families experienced previously. But the

foundation staff pointed to the anger management and conflict resolution skills fathers learned in the program. These fathers were on the road to self-sufficiency, they argued; they just needed to see their families.

After seeing the benefits of fatherhood programs, the Housing Authority agreed to a one-year pilot project allowing building leases to include graduates without affecting the mothers' escrow accounts.

Previous warnings about allowing men to stay in their apartments made it difficult to convince some of the women that fathers were allowed to move in with them; they worried they would be evicted for trying to add fathers' names to leases. The foundation helped local practitioners assure them that adding fathers was encouraged, and at the end of the project, the Housing Authority permanently changed the policy to allow fatherhood program graduates to share leases in the public housing building.

Another extension of the foundation's support to graduates of fatherhood programs, grew from relationships the foundation built with two public officials. First, the foundation paid to bring the county's child support director to a 2001 policy forum in Denver sponsored by the Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth to discuss ways that the local child support office could increase father involvement. The foundation then had similar discussions with the county's family court facilitator, who assists low-income families in court.

Eventually, the child support and court officials recognized that enormous child support

FATHERS FACT:
In 1999, more than 41 percent of low-income, noncustodial fathers had been unemployed for at least one year. That same year, only six percent of them received job training or job search assistance compared to 20 percent of poor custodial mothers.

Marin Community Foundation (continued)

arrearages owed to the state were hampering fathers' involvement with their children. In many cases, arrearages had grown while fathers were unemployed or in prison and some became so discouraged by their seemingly insurmountable debt that they quit paying child

support and spending time with their children altogether.

After a site visit to see a model debt-reduction program in Baltimore, staff members from the foundation and the county child support office crafted a policy allowing fathers who

were active in parenting classes, job training, or other support programs to have first priority among all fathers seeking arrearage reduction. Fathers who have their arrearages reduced must stay current with child support payments. By 2003,

over \$400,000 had been forgiven, most of which accumulated while fathers were incarcerated.

In 2003, the foundation once again asked fathers and practitioners for other ideas about helping fathers stay involved with their children and began another effort to change policy. After learning that young children were upset when they visited parents in jail and were separated by glass windows or bars, the foundation helped county jail officials arrange contact visits for children in appropriate cases. Now, says Walker, children are less frightened and look forward to visiting their parents and being able to touch them. The practice, she says, promotes bonding and increased contact between fathers and children.

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FATHERS FACT:
Girls from father-absent families are more likely to become sexually active at a younger age and to have children outside of marriage.

The Minneapolis Foundation

Strengthening the Role of Noncustodial Fathers Via Child Support Systems Change

The Minneapolis Foundation undertook an initiative to help reform child support enforcement policy in 1998 after attending a meeting on father-focused programs convened by the Ford Foundation and then being contacted by local nonprofit leaders and judicial court representatives starting to work in this arena. Program staff met with members of a public, private and nonprofit coalition already assembled and working together to secure both federal and Ford Foundation funding for the Minneapolis-based FATHER Project. Created in 1998, this project's goal is to help noncustodial fathers overcome barriers that prevent them from supporting and nurturing their children.

The Minneapolis Foundation was instrumental in securing a small grant from the Coalition for Community Foundations for Youth to help the FATHER Project conduct research on a unique mechanism within the child support enforcement process called "pass-throughs."

Since federal welfare reform in 1996, most states have kept all of the child support that they collect on behalf of welfare families in a general fund as compensation for the state's welfare expenses on those families. The result is that low-income fathers have little incentive to make child support payments because they know that little or none of the money they pay actually reaches their children. Some states, however, addressed this problem by allowing fathers' payments to be paid directly to their families, not the state.

The FATHER Project decided to try to gradually implement such a policy change in Minnesota. The goal was to use public and private funds to test a limited demonstration with FATHER Project participants. If the demonstration proved successful, there eventually would be legislative endorsement to build 'pass-throughs' into state child support enforcement policy.

Using the CCYF grant funds, the FATHER Coalition contracted with the Minnesota

Children's Defense Fund and the Minnesota Legal Aid Society to design a lobbying strategy. Both organizations were well-versed in child support enforcement policies, and worked closely with government officials on previous reforms. Dianne Lev, program officer at the foundation, and other members of the group met frequently with individual legislators to educate them on pass-throughs and the need for a legislative waiver for FATHER Project participants so that pass-through payments would not negatively impact mothers' welfare eligibility. Many of the legislators agreed to be sponsors or co-sponsors, and the waiver was eventually enacted.

Unfortunately, the legislature failed to allocate funds for the pass-through demonstration, and the FATHER Project was unable to raise enough money from private or corporate sources to set the pilot in motion. Even though the overarching goal was not achieved, CCFY's support of this project had lasting effects. Lev emphasizes that the effort increased awareness among members of the Minnesota legislature about fathers' personal and financial responsibilities — and the barriers they face to fulfilling those responsibilities.

Further, she suggests that there are lessons for community foundations interested in public policy efforts. First, says Lev, community foundations should not hesitate to embrace their public charity status and use it to engage in public education, advocacy, and lobbying efforts. However, before launching a policy change initiative, she advises, "Discern your

FATHERS FACT:
In 2000, 1.4 million American children had fathers in state or federal prison. About 40 percent of fathers in state prisons have weekly contact with their children, and 57 percent of fathers in state prisons reported that their children had never visited them since entering prison.

The Minneapolis Foundation (continued)

community foundation’s style and comfort zone, consider the broad range of public policy influencing activities you could engage in, and pick the right situation.”

Lev, now a consultant to the foundation, also points out that policy reform is a demanding and time-consuming process and that it is important

to understand what is involved to undertake the efforts you select—the time and the knowledge required. “During the craziness of a

legislative session, it is challenging to be responsive on short notice to meet with legislators or testify at committee hearings. This kind of commitment might not fit easily into most program officers’ normal work day.”

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FATHERS FACT:
Fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school, and boys who grow up without their fathers are more likely to have trouble finding and keeping jobs in young adulthood.

Community Foundation for Greater New Haven Making Systems Work Better for Fathers

In the late 1990s, New Haven had one of the highest percentages of low birth weight babies in the United States — a high risk factor for later healthy development. While discussing how they might reduce the incidence of low birth weight through a federal Healthy Start grant, staff members at the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven decided to try to involve fathers as a way of influencing pregnant women’s behavior — and consequently the health of their children.

The foundation staff learned that, contrary to public perception, noncustodial fathers want to support and help raise their children. The foundation also learned that fathers’ physical, mental, economic and social health could positively influence the health of their children — and the community. Because of eligibility standards for public assistance and the punitive nature of the child support system, however, many fathers were reticent to interact with social service providers.

Amos Smith, director of health, and Sarah Fabish, senior program officer at the foundation, began addressing these issues. Together with New Haven Healthy Start and the New Haven Family Alliance, they formed the Male Involvement Network (MIN), a group of local and state direct service providers, administrators, consumers, and funders. The Male Involvement Network aims to improve child outcomes and strengthen fragile families by providing resources and services to fathers. The Network concentrates on building trust among the fathers while working with providers to make service delivery more father-friendly.

Discovering the benefits of including fathers in family services led the foundation and MIN to take two approaches to share what

they learned with the rest of the state. They simultaneously worked to improve service delivery at the neighborhood level and to influence state policy.

In April 2003, the American Journal of Public Health published Smith’s article “Health Policy and The Coloring of An American Male Crisis.” The article gave credibility to the idea of including fathers when addressing maternal and child health — particularly when serving pregnant and parenting teens. “Pointing to local experiences alone does not raise the issue to a higher level, looking at the data and having a publication validated our work,” Smith said. With the article in hand, Smith approached the state’s Department of Public Health (DPH) with the goal of helping them do a better job of including fathers when serving families.

State officials at the Department of Public Health invited Germano Kimbro, coordinator, and Dr. Derrick Gordon, MIN member and consultant, to assist with identifying changes in procedures that would help community-based subcontractors include men in existing services. In 2004, DPH was preparing to use the MIN model for helping local Title V agencies throughout the state work better with fathers. The state also began changes as simple as revising the female-specific language on its forms and changing décor in local offices to be more welcoming to men.

As a result of the foundation’s involvement, Connecticut’s 82 local public health departments will be changing the way they approach their work to be explicit about the importance of fathers when talking about families. “These inexpensive changes help people on the ground,” said Smith.

In addition to improving local practices that directly affect fathers and families, Smith serves

FATHERS FACT:
Children with involved, loving fathers are significantly more likely to avoid high risk behaviors such as drug use, truancy, and criminal activity compared to children who have uninvolved fathers.

Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (continued)

on the state's Fatherhood Council, created by the legislature in 1999 to develop a state agenda for fathers. In that capacity, he works with 39 representatives from state agencies, advocacy groups, social services, and foundations to

introduce legislation and improve laws and policies affecting low-income noncustodial fathers in Connecticut. Among the group's top priorities has been revisiting child support policies so that fathers can negotiate manageable arrearages

and pay off back debt more easily. The Council was successful in convincing the legislature to give the state commissioner of child support discretion to modify child support arrears, and in early 2004, the commissioner was developing a pilot to test its effectiveness.

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FATHERS FACT:
Even after controlling for closeness to mothers, the closer the relationships between teens and their fathers, the less likely the teen was to use drugs.

Greater Des Moines Community Foundation Building Wealth in the State's Communities

Inspired by Montana and Nebraska community foundations' success working with their state governments on endowment tax credits, Johnny Danos was convinced that Iowa could follow their lead to build wealth in local communities. Danos, president of the Greater Des Moines Community Foundation, persuaded the State of Iowa to endorse philanthropy as a way to improve community well being

First, Danos appealed to the Iowa Council of Foundations' (ICF) members across the state and enlisted their support for the initiative. One of these was the Iowa West Foundation, funded by proceeds from gambling casinos, which provided matching grants to groups of individuals in their county to begin community affiliate funds. Danos and the ICF capitalized on this idea by suggesting to senior state legislators and the governor's office that the state match grants for the same purpose. They also suggested that Iowa provide tax credits to those starting permanent endowments with community foundations.

Then, Danos and his colleagues engaged Proz Group, a marketing firm, to help draft legislation. The existing network of Iowa Council of Foundations' members helped begin a grass-roots movement to contact state legislators and write op-eds in local papers. With a lobbying firm, ICF staff worked with a bipartisan group of state legislators to spread the word. In a politically savvy move, the ICF drafted the legislation to provide that any one county can only receive three grants, broadening the appeal of their proposal to legislators across the state. In rural areas, even small grants can make a large difference. Says Danos of the experience, "You can lobby — but you're limited. As long as you stay within those limits, you're okay."

Embedded in an economic development package, the proposal passed in only six

months — and the first time it was introduced. Danos was pleasantly surprised. During Iowa's 2003 legislative session, the state was operating under a \$200 million deficit. Danos says, "Even though there were horrible budget cuts, our timing wasn't that bad — the legislature had few other positive things it could do that were relatively low-cost." The State of Iowa will provide \$1 million over three years to foundations that will then provide seed grants to other organizations, following the model of the Iowa West Foundation.

The ICF is working with the Iowa Department of Economic Development to write the rules governing grant-making under this legislation. Groups of five or more people may apply for the funds to create a permanent endowment. An affiliate fund can help small town grantees create a community foundation to sustain giving and promote community development without the need to create a separate entity, making it easier for community foundations to begin and flourish. The maximum matching grant is \$25,000. The legislature also provided \$2 million of tax credits for the creation of permanent endowments in community foundations.

And so far, community leaders are eager to take advantage of this opportunity to build and change. In early 2004, Danos was already receiving many phone calls from Iowans seeking to establish or advance community foundations.

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Humboldt Area Foundation

Seeking Federal Tax Law Reform to Rebuild a Failing Economy

The goal of the Humboldt Area Foundation is helping its residents, individually and in concert, to bring social, economic, and environmental prosperity to California's North Coast.

For a number of years, the foundation has sought to meet that goal by actively engaging in the development of public policy. In 1996, for example, the foundation created an entity called the Institute of the North Coast as a vehicle to unify the region's various interests and communities on strategies for dealing with its declining economy. Says foundation President Peter Pennekamp, "We went from polite grant making to dealing with the economy." Affecting local policy was a challenge, but some solutions required affecting policy at the state and federal levels — by lobbying.

Trying to positively affect the economy in the isolated northwestern corner of California is no easy task. Proximity to timber, fish, and rich agricultural lands is their competitive advantage both in terms of industry and for the amenities they provide to visitors. The economy of California's four most northern counties — Humboldt, Mendocino, Trinity, and Del Norte — is too small to adequately support the region's residents. While the timber industry provided 40 percent of the region's jobs in 1965, that number dropped to 4 percent by 2004. In some communities in the region, says Pennekamp, unemployment levels have reached between 60 and 80 percent.

At the same time, affluent urban and suburban dwellers began moving to the region, buying up timber and ranchlands for large country estates — driving up the cost of living, particularly real estate. As Pennekamp notes, "This migration threatens the affordability of housing for long-term and traditionally blue-collar residents — the very families who built our region and have preserved its rural heritage."

Part of the solution for those families is to keep the region's working forests intact. "We

need working forest lands," says Pennekamp. "Sustainably managed forestlands could be the answer — both economically and environmentally." While much of the land in the four counties is publicly owned in state and federal parks, about half of the region's land is privately held by large ranches or logging companies.

In 2001, the Humboldt Area Foundation was approached by regional community leaders to support the efforts of a fledgling non-profit called the Redwood Forest Foundation to purchase industrial timberland for long-term community benefit. The foundation viewed Redwood Forest Foundation's proposal as one that held promise for economic stability for forest-based communities by assuring the long-term existence of large tracts of industrial timberlands.

This novel approach involves using tax-exempt bond financing in concert with philanthropic money to finance timberland purchases. Use of tax-exempt bond financing requires a clarification of the federal tax code, allowing for the long-term sale of timber from the property to repay the bonds.

To change the tax code requires an act of Congress. Partnering with U.S. Forest Capital as well as Bear Sterns, legislation was introduced and the foundation's staff participated in lobbying efforts. By mid 2003, the needed code changes had been included in legislation governing taxes and charitable giving and had passed both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. In early 2004, the bills were awaiting joint committee action.

Pennekamp says that the decision to engage in public policy has changed the foundation significantly in terms of priorities, mission, board makeup and staff structure. For example, he says, "Three years ago we were trying to influence policy by working through the back door. Now, we have a policy portfolio, and the

president of the local junior college is head of the board's policy group.”

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Greater Milwaukee Foundation

Tackling the Complex Problems of Child Welfare

The donor of an advised fund at the Greater Milwaukee Foundation organized a meeting of local foundations to discuss how they were each helping families involved with the child welfare system. They soon realized that they were funding similar programs and using similar strategies but that programs alone couldn't solve the fundamental problems with the system. Unless the system changed, children and families would not receive the support they needed to thrive. The foundations formed a committee that continues to meet to discuss these issues and to develop new ways to achieve much-needed systems reform.

The committee members knew they first had to educate themselves. They met with state child welfare officials, district attorneys, and children's court judges. The judges, in key positions to make change, were inspired by the momentum surrounding the issue. Members of the Children's Court Judiciary appealed to the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and their local funding partners to hold a conference with national experts to identify more effective and streamlined procedures for handling children's cases.

After this conference, the judges made sweeping changes in the way they handled cases. Innovations included reducing case processing times by more than 50 days and screening all parents to determine if they needed substance abuse treatment. Also, child welfare officers and parents — sometimes joined by ministers, family members, and probation officers — began meeting to develop family plans for children within two weeks of their removal.

The Children's Court also uses in-house facilities to conduct paternity tests, allowing the court to receive test results in only a week rather than a month or more under the previous system. According to the former Chief Judge of the Milwaukee County Courts, these were the first changes the family court had made in over

30 years, a tribute to the impetus provided by the foundation and committee.

Another strategic investment by this group of foundations was a grant to the Wisconsin Association of Children and Family Agencies to write a policy paper on possible improvements to the entire child welfare system. The association recommended adapting a successful Colorado model, one that combined workforce development and child welfare funding to provide a broad set of services to families involved in the child welfare system, including substance abuse and mental health treatment.

In the next stage of their work, the foundation and its funder colleagues met with the secretaries of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, which oversees Welfare-to-Work, and the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, which oversees the child welfare system. There is great overlap in the families involved with both systems. In the fall of 2003, the foundations helped set up a joint meeting between the two departments to talk about how they could work together. According to Marks, "The timing was great — we had just had a change in governors and a new administration," which he hoped would facilitate taking a look at child welfare in a new way. Now, these two state departments are talking about developing a neighborhood model where their programs can be integrated and they, along with some of the funders, made a visit to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to learn about that community's use of family team meetings.

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Rhode Island Foundation

Ensuring Better Health Care for Children

Between 1994 and 2000, the Rhode Island Foundation evolved from a supporter of community health providers to a key player in reforming the state's Medicaid program. An interest in improving public health insurance prompted the foundation's interest in public policy reform.

In 1994 the foundation partnered with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to found Rhode Island KIDSCOUNT, a project collecting and disseminating data on the well-being of the state's children. With KIDSCOUNT, the foundation took on a new role tracking legislation and providing information to the state's General Assembly. The project inspired the foundation to consider how state policies — like Medicaid — could be improved to help children.

Next, the foundation decided to expand a small project providing dental services to children through elementary schools in Providence, Rhode Island. It secured matching funds from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's nationwide Covering Kids & Families initiative, and additional funding from the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS). Suddenly, the Rhode Island Foundation had a new public policy component and an active role in public health programs.

Expansion of the dental health project marked the foundation's first formal relationship with DHS and led the two organizations to recognize a mutual goal: expansion of health care to as many low-income families as possible. The state's Medicaid director, Christine Ferguson, began considering the foundation as a partner in her efforts to pass legislation to cover more families. It helped that Rhode Island is a small state. The director of the state Medicaid's managed care program and Karen Voci, a vice president at the foundation, frequently

strategized on the sidelines of their children's soccer games.

To help DHS influence Medicaid reform legislation, the foundation hosted discussion groups for the governor and introduced DHS officials to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which subsequently awarded DHS a grant to support its efforts to insure more families. The Rhode Island Foundation also brought in public health policy experts from national foundations, other states' Medicaid agencies, and congressional staffs. Additionally, the foundation made a \$2 million loan to a network of neighborhood health centers so the network could better reach Medicaid-eligible children. "People in the state government began asking us about Medicaid," Voci said. "We became a go-to place."

With the foundation's help, Rhode Island passed Medicaid legislation that allows the state to insure many more low-income children by partnering with private employers. Voci emphasized the importance of trusting Ferguson with the specifics of the legislation. Although staff may have disagreed with Ferguson on certain points, Voci realized that the foundation could best help insure more families by supporting and assisting Ferguson. "It was clear that she was moving in the direction of expanding coverage for low-income families — especially working people," Voci said.

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What Federal Laws Allow

- Under federal tax law, efforts to influence regulations, enforcement policies, and other executive branch actions do not count as lobbying. Lobbying is defined strictly as efforts to influence pending legislation. So when community foundations urge child support enforcement offices to offer job training opportunities to men who fall behind on child support payments, this activity is not considered lobbying.
- Non-partisan analysis, study, or research does not count as lobbying.
- Only “direct” or “grassroots” communications are considered as lobbying. These are communications directly to legislators or the public urging them to support specific legislative proposals. Foundations may fund public education messages that discuss — and even take clear positions on — public policy issues, as long as these messages do not refer to specific legislative proposals.
- Charities and community foundations that qualify as public charities under federal tax laws may — depending on their level of grantmaking — spend up to \$1 million per year on lobbying activities.
- Private foundations may make general support grants to public charities that lobby, as long as that funding is not earmarked for lobbying.

Adapted from the Council on Foundations’ publication Community Foundations on Public Policy. (Janis Foster, October 2000.)

Selected Research and Policy Organizations

Center for Law and Social Policy

The Center for Law and Social Policy is a national nonprofit policy organization that seeks to improve the economic conditions of low-income families with children. CLASP analyzes a number of state and federal policy areas affecting noncustodial parents including child support, marriage, workforce development, and welfare reform.

Center for Law and Social Policy
1015 15th Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 906-8000
www.clasp.org

Center for Policy Research

The Center for Policy Research conducts studies to help improve the effectiveness of human services. The center publishes reports about child support strategies for incarcerated parents, local child support offices, and access and visitation programs.

Center for Policy Research
1570 Emerson Street
Denver, CO 80218
Phone: (303) 837-1555
www.centerpolicyresearch.org

Center on Fathers, Families, and Public Policy

The Center on Fathers, Families, and Public Policy provides training and technical assistance to practitioners. Its mission is to help create a society in which both mothers and fathers can support their children emotionally, financially, and physically. CFFPP also seeks to challenge the negative public perception of low-income fathers. Much of CFFPP's work focuses on reforming the child support enforcement system and bridging the gap between fatherhood organizations and women's organizations.

Center on Fathers, Families, and Public Policy
23 N. Pinckney Street, Suite 210
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: (608) 257-3148
www.cffpp.org

Child Trends

Child Trends is a nonprofit research organization that provides science-based information to help improve programs and policies affecting children. Child Trends collects and analyzes data and also helps to design and evaluate programs. Child Trends prepares fact sheets and research briefs about fatherhood and child well-being.

Child Trends
4301 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20008
Phone: (202) 362-5580
www.childtrends.org

Children's Rights Council

Children's Rights Council is a national nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC. The Council works to assure children meaningful and continuing contact with both their parents and extended family regardless of the parents' marital status. They also operate 12 Child Access Transfer Centers across the country, allowing children to stay close to both parents during the stressful time of family breakup.

Children's Rights Council
6200 Editors Park Drive, Suite 103
Hyattsville, MD 20782
Phone: (301) 559-3120
www.gocrc.com

The Fatherhood Initiative

Based on the premise that all fathers are important contributors to the well-being of their children, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Fatherhood Initiative aims to support and strengthen the roles of fathers in families. The initiative funds research about

Selected Research and Policy Organizations (continued)

best practices and innovative father involvement programs.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,
Fatherhood Initiative
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (202) 619-0257
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www.fatherhood.hhs.gov

The Fatherhood Project® Families and Work Institute

The Fatherhood Project® is a research and education organization that develops ways for communities to support men's involvement in child rearing, as well as practical strategies to support fathers and mothers in their parenting roles. The Fatherhood Project consults with businesses and social services organizations to adopt policies that support fathers as well as mothers.

Fatherhood Project®
Families and Work Institute
267 Fifth Avenue, Floor 2
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Phone: (212) 465-2044
www.familiesandwork.org

Fragile Families and Child Well-being Study

The Fragile Families Child Well-being Study, a research project funded by the federal government and foundations, examines interviews conducted with unwed parents over a five-year span beginning with their children's birth. The study collects data in 20 U.S. cities with populations over 200,000 and measures the effects of policies on families and children.

Fragile Families and Well-being Study
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<http://crcw.princeton.edu/fragilefamilies>

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation is a nonprofit social policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve the well-being of low-income people. In 1994 MDRC designed and implemented a national demonstration of Parents' Fair Share, a program that aimed to help low-income, noncustodial fathers secure good jobs, consistently pay child support, and better engage in their children's lives. MDRC has since published a thorough evaluation of the demonstration, available online.

Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation
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Phone: (212) 532-3200
www.mdrc.org

National Center for Children in Poverty

Based at Columbia's Mailman School for Public Health, the National Center for Children in Poverty identifies and promotes strategies that reduce the number of young children living in poverty and improves the lives of children growing up in poverty. NCCP researches child poverty and finds innovative solutions. One such example is the center's Map and Track: State Initiatives to Encourage Responsible Fatherhood.

National Center for Children in Poverty
Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University
215 W. 125th Street, 3rd floor
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email: info@nccp.org
www.nccp.org

National Center on Fathers and Families

The National Center on Fathers and Families is a leading research organization on fathers and the source of the Fatherlit database, which contains

Selected Research and Policy Organizations (continued)

over 8,000 abstracts related to fathers and families. NCOFF also aims to tighten the connection between research and practice by fostering relationships between state officials, researchers, and practitioners by hosting forums on topics such as providing father-specific services and working with children of prisoners.

National Center on Fathers and Families
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www.ncoff.gse.upenn.edu

National Conference of State Legislatures

The National Conference of State Legislatures is a bipartisan forum in which state lawmakers may share ideas and information about every issue of state policy. NCSL's Nurturing Responsible Families Project provides research, best practices, and policy suggestions to help states support fathers and their families.

National Conference of State Legislatures
Denver Office:
7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230
Phone: (303) 364-7700
Washington Office:
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 515
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 624-5400
www.ncsl.org

Social Policy Action Network

The Social Policy Action Network promotes practical policy ideas to help support low-income families and build strong communities. SPAN transforms research findings and the insights of practitioners into specific recommendations for policymakers in the areas of fatherhood and welfare reform. Its publications focusing on fatherhood include a history of the responsible

fatherhood field entitled Making Fathers Count and a fatherhood guide for state policymakers.

Social Policy Action Network
444 North Capitol Street, Suite 309
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 434-4770
www.span-online.org

Urban Institute

The Urban Institute is an economic and social policy research organization, established to examine the social, economic, and governance problems facing the nation. It provides information and analysis to public and private decision-makers to help them address these challenges. The institute's research includes state efforts in welfare reform, juvenile justice, housing, and child welfare. In addition, the Urban Institute has produced many valuable analyses of the economic and social status of low-income, noncustodial fathers.

Urban Institute
2100 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: (202) 833-7200
www.urban.org

Welfare Information Network

The Welfare Information Network is a research clearinghouse to help state and local policymakers, organizations, and individuals obtain the policy analysis and technical assistance they need to implement welfare reform. WIN provides more than 9,000 links to 400 welfare-related websites.

Welfare Information Network
1401 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005.
Phone: (202) 587-1000
www.financeprojectinfo.org/win

Selected References

Broke But Not Deadbeat: Reconnecting Low-Income Fathers and Children, by Dana Reichert. National Conference of State Legislatures, July 1999.

Reichert's guide is one of the best available in terms of giving detailed advice to states, communities, and nonprofits that want to start programs for low-income fathers. She offers advice on program design, target service populations, and funding.

Connecting Low-Income Fathers and Families: A Guide to Practical Policies, by Dana Reichert. Denver: National Conference of State Legislatures, June 2000. This guide offers state policymakers specific ideas about their options for helping low-income, noncustodial fathers.

Expanding the Goals of "Responsible Fatherhood" Policy, by Juliane Baron and Kathleen Sylvester. Washington, DC: Social Policy Action Network, December 2002. Using interviews of fathers and front-line practitioners, this report identifies deeply rooted attitudinal and cultural barriers that prevent fathers from seeking help — and prevent social services agencies from serving fathers effectively.

Face to Face With Fathers: A Report on Low-Income Fathers and Their Experience with Child Support Enforcement, by Daniel O. Ash. Madison, WI: Center for Fathers, Families, and Public Policy, 1997. Based on father focus groups, this report describes the primary issues low-income, never-married families experience as they interface with the welfare and child support enforcement systems. It also includes a case study of one low-income working father voluntarily trying to establish paternity and secure child support and visitation orders.

Father Facts, Fourth Edition, by Dr. Wade F. Horn and Tom Sylvester. Gaithersburg, MD: The National Fatherhood Initiative, 2002. The book offers a synthesis of research and statistics about fathers and fatherlessness in the United States.

Fatherless America: Confronting Our Most Urgent Social Problem, by David Blankenhorn. New York: Basic Books, 1995. This book examines the ways in which fatherhood has been deconstructed and makes

proposals for a cultural shift in the way that society sees fathers.

The FatherLit Database, maintained by the National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF), includes abstracts more than 8,000 papers, books, and articles about fathers. The database can be accessed free of charge from the NCOFF web site at www.ncoff.gse.upenn.edu.

Growing Up With a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps, by Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994. Based on four national surveys and drawing on more than a decade of research, *Growing Up with a Single Parent* discusses the connection between family structure and a child's prospects for success.

Guiding Principles for Child Support Enforcement in Working with Fragile Families, by Barbara Cleveland. Washington, DC: National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership, 2001.

The Heart of a Father: How Dads Can Shape the Destiny of America, by Dr. Ken Canfield. Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 1996. Ken Canfield provides advice to fathers about being involved in their children's lives at all points of their development.

Involving Males in Preventing Teen Pregnancy: A Guide for Program Planners, by Freya Sonenstein, Kellie Stewart, Laura Duberstein Lindberg, Marta Pernas, and Sean Williams. Washington DC: The Urban Institute, 1997. The Urban Institute's book profiles more than 20 programs nationwide that work with boys and young men to prevent teen pregnancies and repeat pregnancies. The book includes practical advice about program design.

Making Fathers Count: Reviewing 25 Years of Fatherhood Efforts, by Kathleen Sylvester and Kathy Reich. Baltimore: Annie. E. Casey Foundation, 2001. This publication provides an overview of father involvement efforts over the past quarter century and explains current challenges facing practitioners and advocates in the fatherhood field.

Selected References (continued)

Managing Arrears: Child Support Enforcement and Fragile Families, by Janet K. Atkinson and Barbara Cleveland. Washington, DC: National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership, 2001. This report summarizes the findings of the NPCL Peer Learning College exercise related to child support arrears management, offering explanation, analysis, and recommendations for future action.

Marriage Promotion: Risk of Family Violence, by Ronald B. Mincy and Chien-Chung Huang. Atlanta, August 2002. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America. This paper examines the level of family violence in fragile families and the effect of previous abusive relationships on subsequent relationships.

New Expectations: Community Strategies for Responsible Fatherhood, by James A. Levine and Edward W. Pitt. New York: Families and Work Institute, 1995. This book highlights dozens of programs nationwide that focus on teaching men of different ages, income levels, and ethnic backgrounds how to be good fathers.

“Noncustodial Fathers: What We Know and What’s Left to Learn” by Elaine Sorensen, in *Nurturing Fatherhood: Improving Data and Research on Male Fertility, Family Formation and Fatherhood*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, June 1998. Sorensen uses data from the 1990 Survey of Income and Program Participation to paint a statistical picture of low-income, noncustodial fathers.

OCSE Responsible Fatherhood Programs: Early Implementation Lessons, by Jessica Pearson and Nancy Thoennes. Denver, CO: Center for Policy Research, 2000. This report provides historical context and a demographic profile of OSCE programs. It includes program profiles, information about program recruitment, and lessons learned about fatherhood program development.

Reaching Common Ground - Dollars and Sense: Improving the Determination of Child Support Obligations for Low-Income Mothers, Fathers, and Children. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Father Families and Public Policy and National Women’s Law Center, 2002. This joint publication discusses the legal and policy issues surrounding child support awards and adjustments.

Reaching Common Ground - Family Ties: Improving Paternity Establishment Practices and Procedures for Low-Income Mothers, Fathers and Children. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Fathers, Families, and Public Policy, 2000. This edition of the Common Ground series looks at paternity establishment from both mothers’ and fathers’ perspectives and makes public policy recommendations.

Restoring Fathers to Families and Communities: Six Steps for Policymakers, by Kathleen Sylvester and Kathy Reich. Washington, DC: Social Policy Action Network, 2000. This policy guide offers state and local policymakers concrete ideas for encouraging fathers to support their children, both financially and emotionally. The guide includes profiles of promising programs, as well as resources for communities.

Turning the Corner on Father Absence in Black America: A Statement from the Morehouse Conference on African American Fathers, Morehouse Research Institute and Institute for American Values. Atlanta: Morehouse Research Institute, 1999. This paper makes recommendations about policies and funding to help fathers and the best ways to support the growing fatherhood movement in the African-American community.

About SPAN

The Social Policy Action Network develops effective social policy by transforming the findings of research and the insights of front-line practitioners into concrete action agendas for policymakers.

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About CCFY

The Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth strengthens the leadership capacity of community foundations to improve the lives of children, youth, and families. CCFY's work is unified around the themes of linking, learning and leveraging. More than 225 Community Foundations are members.

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