

T H E L E G A C Y

mission

"To build a noble legacy of fatherhood - improving the life chances of children by assisting young fathers in achieving self-sufficiency and in strengthening parental involvement."



Fatherhood Development Workshop graduates and GED recipients pose for photo at November recognition ceremony.

Fathers and Families Center completed its 100th Fatherhood Development Workshop on October 15th. This marks a significant milestone in our efforts to strengthen parental involvement and reduce father absenteeism in the Indianapolis community. The Fatherhood Development Workshop focuses on teaching vital parenting skills while also addressing the educational and employment needs of young parents.

Since the Center began offering the five-week fatherhood development workshop 17 years ago, more than 3,000 young fathers have completed it. These young men recognized the need to be there for their children, but lacked certain skills necessary to do so. Fathers and Families Center's programs are designed to alleviate barriers to success, giving parents the tools they need to be there for their children physically, emotionally, and financially.

The agency has now served more than 5,000 individuals through its various programs. Fathers and Families Center's accomplishments are made possible by overwhelming support from the community. As the community grows, so does the need for our services. It is our hope to continue serv-

Center Completes 100th Fatherhood Development Workshop

ing the needs of young Indianapolis fathers; however, our success is limited by our resources. Visit our web site www.father-resource.org to see how you can help us continue building a noble legacy of fatherhood.

Growing Success

With our growing success in assisting young parents in obtaining their GED, finding employment, and building healthy relationships, our graduating classes have increased significantly. To accommodate this increase in program graduates and their families, we have doubled the number of recognition ceremonies. We now hold separate ceremonies for our Illinois Street and Mitthoefer Road graduating classes.

Recognition ceremonies are held to honor our program participants for their outstanding accomplishments in receiving their GED, holding a job for 90,-180,-365-days or more, or completing the "It Takes Two!" program.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT, here's the link to the Center's front page article of The Indianapolis Star from Sunday, October 28. www.indystar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=201011280357

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FALL 2010

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Program Participants Giving Back to the Community



Fathers and Families Center participants volunteer to serve strawberry shortcakes at the Annual Strawberry Festival on Monument Circle.

Fathers and Families Center participants gave back to their community by volunteering at this year's Strawberry Festival on the circle. The Strawberry Festival is sponsored by Christ Church Cathedral and held every year in June. The popular event utilizes more than 300 volunteers and serves an estimated six tons of strawberries and 18,000 homemade shortcakes. More than 95% of proceeds from this fundraiser go to community outreach programs at the local, state, national and international levels.

Fathers and Families Center encourages participants to take an active role in programs that benefit the community. As a not-for-profit providing services free of charge, the Center understands the important role volunteers play in the operation of not-for-profit agencies. Many of the young fathers we serve are not able to give financially, so they donate their time in an effort to improve the health of this community.

Center Now Offering Electronic Newsletter

Thank you for believing in our mission to build a noble legacy of fatherhood. Your support has been a crucial element in the fight against father absenteeism in the Indianapolis community. In an effort to use your donation dollars more wisely, we now offer an electronic newsletter which will reduce mailing costs. For those who prefer to receive an electronic version of our newsletter simply visit our website at www.fatherresource.org and sign up.

Agency 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament



Fathers and Families Center participant Jerry Thompson and his family pose for a photo at basketball tournament on October 30th.

Participants and their families enjoyed the Center's 3-on-3 basketball tournament, held October 30 at the Wheeler Boys and Girls Club. The event was made possible by funding from the Cummins Foundation. Participants played 3-on-3 basketball while family members enjoyed food, drinks and live entertainment. The first 25 attendees were entered in a raffle to win a pair of tickets to an Indianapolis Pacers game and a \$25 Wal-Mart gift card. Children were entertained by a clown who painted faces, made balloon animals, and handed out goody bags. First and second place teams were presented with trophies and given tickets to an Indianapolis Pacers basketball game.

Fathers and Families Center takes pride in organizing activities that strengthen family bonds by creating a safe and fun atmosphere that everyone can enjoy.



Happy Holidays

During the Holiday Season more than ever, our thoughts turn to those who have made our progress possible. And in this spirit we say, simply but sincerely,

**Thank You and Best Wishes
for the Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!**

From the Board of Directors,
Staff, and Participants

Healthy Marriage Program Finishes 4th Year



The Center's Healthy Marriage Program, "It Takes Two!" celebrated its 340th couple enrollment and exceeded its fourth year 2010 government goal by 262%. The

ITT Program focuses on low income couples who are unwed, expectant parents or have a child 3 months of age or younger and in a committed relationship with each other. Upon entering the program, the couples learn relationship strengthening skills in the areas of communication, compromise and commitment.

A recent participant had this to say about ITT, ***"Great class and people. I hope to be connected for the rest of my life and child's as well. This class prepared me for really becoming a Dad. Thanks a Thousand!"*** – Tyrone

Another participant stated, ***"Class was great and so were the instructors. It made a big difference in my relationship. They truly care about my family and I (sic). Thanks for everything, Fathers and Families. You helped better my relationship!"*** - Brittney

Some of the popular parts of the program included, "I know my boo," the "Feeling Station," and "ITT Jeopardy."



participants pose with AKA sorors

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sponsors "King for a Day" Celebration

Fathers and Families Center participants participated in the "King for a Day" event on August 23 sponsored by the Alpha Mu Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. The event is held to recognize the extremely important and sometimes difficult job of being an involved father. Fathers were given free haircuts, T-shirts, and gift bags. Participants also had the opportunity to meet with a banker regarding second chance banking for individuals with poor banking histories, and received interviewing and resume-building tips.

Center Partners with DCS to Improve life Chances of Children



Michael Dix and participants speak at the National Fathers Advisory Conference held October 15 - 16 in Seattle WA.

Recent agency initiatives in partnership with the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) align perfectly with the Center's mission "to improve the life chances of children." With new funding from the State, Fathers and Families will continue working with fathers whose children are in the county's child welfare system. Michael Dix, a Center Fatherhood Services Specialist stationed at Keystone Avenue's Marion County DCS offices, advocates for fathers and their families to ensure they are included in child and family team meetings, learn child welfare terms and processes, and receive supportive services.

In a separate effort during 2010 funded by Casey Family Programs, Dix, James Melton, and Bob Ripperger provide technical assistance to fatherhood service providers in three Indiana DCS regions that include the cities of Lafayette, Terre Haute, and Evansville. Technical assistance includes monthly conference calls, periodic site visits, and curriculum materials and tips. The technical assistance work disseminates spadework completed over the past three years in Marion County as part of a grant to the State of Indiana from the American Humane Association.

The DCS Child Support Bureau has awarded a 2011 grant to the Center to continue working with non-custodial fathers. Known as the Indiana Fathers and Families grant, allowable activities include parenting education, support groups, counseling, and advocacy. The Center also encourages fathers to establish paternity, to be consistent with child support payments, and to develop parenting plans. Fathers and Families Center served more than 300 non-custodial fathers through similar grants the agency received in 2009 and 2010.

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