

**Ohio Commission on Fatherhood (OCF)
Executive Director Report
January - April 2015**

Funding:

2015 June Responsible Fatherhood Month Events

In celebration of fathers, OCF plans to fund and co-sponsored fatherhood celebrations and responsible fatherhood campaigns throughout Ohio during the month of June 2015. Thanks to the partnership of many community-based agencies and organizations, these celebrations will reach into urban, suburban and rural areas. Please see the list of six organizations and agencies to be funded:

Passages – Portage County
3rd Development Inc. – Middletown
Richland County Children’s Service
Montgomery County Children’s Service
Urban Light Ministries
Stark County Children’s Service

Moms2B & Columbus Urban League

OCF is in the process with completing a contract with the Columbus Urban League to provide services to fathers connected to the expectant and new mothers attending the Moms2B motherhood/infant mortality education program. The Commission on Fatherhood plans to fund this pilot project \$20,000.00 for SFY 2016 and \$20,000.00 for SFY 2017. Additional information will be provided during future commission meetings.

Request for Grant Application (RFGA) Responsible Fatherhood Grants

The RFGA for the next two year grant cycle will be posted by ODJFS Office of Contracts in the very near future. We hope to have contracts in place no later than the end of July 2015. The selected grantees will be required to provide presentations at upcoming commission meetings.

Activities:

OCF Grantees

Nationwide Children’s Teen Parent Clinic and Action for Children: OCF participated in a meeting to connect Nationwide Children’s Teen Parent Centering staff with Action for Children staff. The goal was to discuss a venue/curriculum and services to provide to teen fathers and their families.

Talbert House Annual Fatherhood Luncheon: OCF staff attended the annual Talbert House Fatherhood luncheon. The luncheon was held to celebrate outstanding fathers who were recognized as community leaders and graduates of the Talbert House Responsible Fatherhood Program.

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FameFathers Fatherhood Graduation: OCF staff attended a FameFathers fatherhood graduation of over 15 fathers. These fathers completed the 24/7 Dads curriculum at Summit County Children Services.

Madison Corrections ULM Fatherhood Graduation: OCF staff attended the Madison Corrections Fatherhood graduation. Urban Light Ministries, an OCF funded program, provides services and curriculum to incarcerated fathers.

Action for Children (Grantee): OCF staff attended Action for Children's orientation for new fatherhood facilitators and presented a brief overview of the commission and data collection forms required to collect data

Trainings, Conferences, Retreats & Fairs

State Fatherhood Summit Debrief: OCF staff participated in a conference call with the Ohio Practitioners' Network for Fathers and Families to discuss the positives as well as the challenges encountered during the May 21st-22nd State Fatherhood Summit. The group agreed that the partnership between the two agencies (OCF and OPNFF) was positive, and that the partnership should continue to explore another state summit in the coming year.

Domestic Violence Training: OCF staff worked with staff from the Center for Family Safety and Healing to provide Part II of Domestic Violence Training to the OCF funded Responsible Fatherhood grantees. OCF and the Center for Family Safety and Healing plan to continue to work together to ensure that all of the grantees are provided the tools to develop and implement a Domestic Violence Plan for their respective organizations.

International Fatherhood Conference: Staff from OCF attended the International Fatherhood Conference, which was hosted in Memphis, TN. The conference focus was on the past 20 years of Responsible Fatherhood Policy. The next International Fatherhood Conference will be held in Philadelphia.

Office of Family Assistance Feature Day – State Fair: OCF staff volunteered at the Ohio State Fair and assisted Ohioans with various inquiries about employment, child care, financial assistance and additional state agency assistance opportunities.

Franklin County Empowerment Day: OCF staff participated in the Franklin County Empowerment Day, which is an event held annually by Franklin County Child Support and Action for Children's OCF funded Responsible Fatherhood Program. OCF staff provided Responsible Fatherhood information to the public during the day event. Empowerment Day is a Child Support Awareness Month activity for Franklin County Child Support Agency.

County Meetings

Meeting with leadership in Delaware County: OCF staff met with Delaware County leadership to discuss their plans to apply for the Ohio County Fatherhood Initiative Mobilization dollars. A representative from Action for Children was also in attendance to provide information on the direct services that are being provided in Delaware County as a result of the funds awarded by OCF.

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Licking County Fatherhood Conversation: OCF staff attended the Licking County Fatherhood Conversation. Licking County is one of three counties that are in the process of receiving County Fatherhood Mobilization training. One of the deliverables is for the leadership team as well as key county stakeholders to spend time discussing their county assessment as well as next steps toward developing an action plan.

Ohio County Fatherhood Initiative-Richland County Community Conversation: OCF staff facilitated the Richland County Community Conversation. The Community Conversation is an opportunity for stakeholders interested in making a difference in the lives of fathers and children learn about the problem and brainstorm what they can do in their local communities to help.

Lorain County Community Agency Phone Call: OCF staff participated in a phone conference with Fatherhood Engagement Specialist from Lorain County Community Action Agency to discuss engaging fathers in Head Start. A planned on-site meeting has been scheduled to explore an action plan.

Clark County Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon: OCF staff attended the Clark County Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon.

On-site Meeting-Lorain County Community Action Head Start Father Engagement Specialist: OCF staff met with the Lorain County Community Action Head Start Father Engagement Specialist, Martin Eggleston. Mr. Eggleston provided updates on the head start fatherhood programming as well as the implementation of the Lorain County Fatherhood Collaborative which emerged from the \$10,000.00 seed funds provided to Lorain County via the County Fatherhood Initiative (2011).

County Fatherhood Initiative Coaches Conference Call: OCF staff facilitated a call with the contracted Fatherhood Initiative Coaches (Ohio Practitioners' Network for Fathers and Families). The call gave the coaches and staff from OCF an opportunity to touch base and discuss successes and challenges.

Building Assets for Fathers & Families (BAFF)

BAFF (Building Assets for Fathers and Families) Advisory Board Meeting: OCF staff participated in the BAFF monthly conference call.

MORPC/OSU Extension Meeting: OCF staff met with Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Committee and The Ohio State University Extension staff. The meeting focused on a pilot project that will assist 15 non-custodial parents in the child support system and have completed the Building Assets for Fathers and Families (BAFF) program in Franklin County transportation (van) to an employer who is ready to hire.

BAFF Advisory Board Meeting: OCF attended the Building Assets for Fathers and Families (BAFF) Advisory Board meeting. The BAFF project is a federal grant that was awarded to seven states in 2010 to assist Non-custodial parents in the child support program with financial education classes and asset building tools such as Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).

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The advisory board discussed the final face-to-face meeting schedules as well as data collection and the final report that will be due this September.

BAFF (Building Assets for Fathers and Families) On-site Meeting (Cuyahoga County): OCF staff participated in the BAFF monthly meeting. The BAFF meeting was held at Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, and the discussion topics were, data collection, recruitment and retention, sustainability and the final project report as well as the final evaluation report. The BAFF grant project is scheduled to end September 30, 2014.

Prison Outreach

Correctional Institutions Child Support and Fatherhood Q & A: OCF staff provided Responsible Fatherhood presentations at a number of Correctional Institutions. The Responsible Fatherhood presentation is provided prior to the Child Support presentation. Staff presented at the following correctional institutions:

1. Grafton Correctional
2. Lebanon Correctional
3. Madison Correctional
4. Pickaway Correctional
5. Warren Correctional

Child Support Meetings

Phone Call with Summit County Child Support Director: OCF staff provided information regarding data collection tools implemented as well as preliminary results of the participants being served by the OCF funded grantees. The Summit County Child Support Director is a member of their local Fatherhood Coalition.

Child Support Consistency Subcommittee Meeting: OCF staff attended a Child Support Consistency subcommittee meeting. The Consistency Subcommittee is part of the Child Support Strategic Workgroup. The Consistency Subcommittee reviewed the survey submitted to the County Child Support Agencies regarding how they serve certain populations, such as the incarcerated parent as well as how the CSEA implements certain enforcement techniques.

Child Support Rebranding Meeting: OCF staff attended a Child Support Rebranding subcommittee Meeting. The Rebranding Subcommittee is part of the Child Support Strategic Workgroup. The members of the subcommittee discussed next steps as well as how three of the subcommittees (Rebranding, Consistency and Communication) could possibly combine efforts based on overlapping projects and results.

Meeting with Child Support BICS (Behavioral Interventions in Child Support) Grant: OCF staff assisted the Office of Child Support with information regarding the processes and procedures to writing a grant to be submitted to the Federal Office of Child Support.

Other Meetings of Note

MORPC (Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission): OCF staff met with staff from MORPC to discuss transportation barriers and solutions for urban fathers and families.

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Columbus Urban League: OCF staff met with Urban League staff to discuss services in the Weiland Park area and ongoing discussions with Pastor Roby and Moms2B.

Moms2B: OCF staff met with staff from Moms2B as set up by the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The Moms2B three program locations are seeking to offer services to the fathers of the families enrolled in the programs. Action for Children is exploring assisting at OSU East and Mt Carmel West. The Urban League is exploring assisting at the Weiland Park location.

Boys and Girls Club: OCF staff met with the executive director from the Girls and Boys Club regarding the resources that can assist Ohio's children and families. Future meetings will be scheduled to continue to discuss collaboration projects.

COTA Mobility Advisory Board: OCF staff attended the COTA Mobility Advisory Board meeting to discuss the planned changes for specific bus routes as a result of the recent surveys, constituent meetings and consultant report. Officer elections were held, and Kim Dent is the secretary for the upcoming year.

Meeting with Starfish Alliance: OCF staff met with staff from Starfish Alliance, place for foster youth and alumni to belong. Starfish Alliance is a mentoring and community resource connection continuum for foster youth, ages 6 to 26 & beyond. OCF forwarded pertinent information to commissioners and grantees in Franklin County to become involved.

Men's Challenge Site-Visit: OCF staff visited staff from Men's Challenge in Canton, OH. OCF staff attended a session as well as visited the job site that employs the men who complete the program. The job site not only employs the men but also houses them as they continue their programming and learning forklift and forestry skills. Men's Challenge focuses on job readiness, job coaching/mentoring and job skills.

Columbus Urban League's Fatherhood Graduation: OCF staff attended the Columbus Urban League's (CUL) Father-to-Father and Choose to Change graduation. The CUL Responsible Fatherhood program continues to assist Franklin County fathers with barriers to becoming responsible parents, partners in providers. The keynote speaker was U.S. District Attorney Carter Steward.

Meeting with Interim ODH Director: OCF staff met with Interim ODH Director Lance Himes regarding a new ODH Fatherhood Commissioner. Thomas "Eddie" Joyce, the past OCF Commissioner from ODH has retired. ODH Director Himes is in the process of naming Mr. Joyce's replacement.

Phone Conference with ULM: OCF staff and OFAM fiscal staff participated in a phone conference with Urban Light Ministry staff regarding father engagement plans as a deliverable of the Strengthening Fathers & Families Pilot Project.

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Urban Light Ministries Visit (ULM): OCF staff visited ULM to discuss the wrap-up of the Strengthening Fathers and Families Pilot Project

Meeting with Families and Children: OCF staff met with Office of Families and Children (OFC) staff regarding the PIP and father engagement. The Commission on Fatherhood will continue to meet with OFC staff and assist with fulfilling the father engagement portion of their five year Child and Family Services Plan.

Phone Conference with Ohio University Dean Leite: OCF staff participated in a phone conference with OU Dean Leite. Dean Leite is also a Governor Appointed Commissioner. OCF and OU are exploring an application for the Fatherhood Research and Practice Network grant, recently released by HHS, Administration for Children and Families.

Neighborhood House: OCF staff participated in a meeting to discuss a grant that the Neighborhood Nest would like to apply for regarding co-parenting services. As a member of the Neighborhood Nest Advisory Board, OCF will assist with the application process by discussing various co-parenting components as well as recommending community resources.

Phone Conference with Toledo Area Ministries-Keeping it Together: OCF staff participated in a phone conference with Mrs. Avis Files from Keeping it Together. Mrs. Files was interested in discussing the history, mission and purpose of OCF. Mrs. Files is interested in becoming more active with the Commission and any future plans to host another State Fatherhood Summit, possibly in the Toledo area.

Fathers and Families Together (Centers for Families and Children): OCF staff participated in a meeting at the Centers for Families and Children in Cleveland Heights, OH. Various staff from the Fathers and Families together program discussed a project that would allow them to provide attorney services to inmates in Grafton and Lorain State Correctional Facilities. The attorney would assist with completing child support paperwork such as IV-D Applications as well as Request for Administrative Review and Adjustment forms and the affidavit packets.

Meeting with DADDS Inc.: OCF staff met with staff from DADDS Inc. The organization is now a non-profit organization that has recently filed for its 501C3. The organization name is Dads United. The topics included how to better serve first time dads as well as dads from age 12-25 in Franklin County.

COTA Mobility Advisory – Cleveland Ave Bus Rapid Transit: As the secretary of the COTA Mobility Advisory Board, OCF Executive Director attended the Cleveland Avenue BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) Project Update Public Meeting at the Columbus Baptist Temple Church. An update will be provided at the next Cota Mobility Advisory Board Meeting. The BRT is a federally funded grant project awarded to COTA to assist with enhancing services to the Cleveland Avenue corridor. COTA received funds in 2011 for planning. They are now in the production phase and will know by March 2015 if they will be awarded the 80% federal funds for implementation. The project timeline anticipates the service beginning Sept. 2017.

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Meeting at the Governor's Office: OCF staff met with staff from the Governor's Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives to discuss concerns with funding and/or promoting faith-based organizations like Men's Challenge. Men's Challenge teaches Responsible Fatherhood through strong Christian-based curriculum. We also discussed connecting with Boards and Commissions regarding the expiring terms (July 30, 2014) of two OCF Commissioners who were appointed by the governor.

Phone Conference with Summit County Children's Service: OCF staff participated in a phone conference with Jeanne Bennett and Ann Ream from Summit County Children's Services regarding clarification as to why Franklin County Children's Services changed their response to being a part of the pilot project. Per Summit County Children's Services, they would like to replace Franklin County with Erie County. An amendment to the Summit County contract will need to be done prior to working with Erie County; however, the Office of Families and Children would like to further explore the decision made by Franklin County Children's Services to drop from the pilot project. Implementing the pilot project in Franklin County would assist with the State Performance Improvement Plan.

Meeting with staff from OFC (Office of Families and Children) Regarding HB 596: OFC and OCF staff joined Legislative Liaison Dan Fitzpatrick at the Interested Party Meeting regarding HB 596. House Bill 596, which is being sponsored by Representative Pelanda, suggests amendments to the Putative Father Registry.

Meeting with Office of Families and Children: OCF staff met with staff from the Office of Families and Children to discuss the State of Ohio Child and Family Services Plan for 2015-2019 as well as the decision for Franklin County Children Services to withdraw from the Summit County Pilot Project.

Safe Schools Healthy Students Grant Meeting: OCF staff participated on the Safe Schools Healthy Students meetings. The purpose of the Safe Schools Healthy Students grant is to create safe and supportive schools and communities through the building of partnerships among educational, behavioral health, and juvenile justice systems. The grant was awarded to OMHAS from Substance Abuse Mental and Health Services Administration. Staff from OCF participates on of the State Management Team, formed to address five elements by determining the goals and strategies for those five elements.

Meeting with The Center for Family Safety and Healing: OCF staff met with staff from the Center for Family Safety and Healing regarding the next steps in the ongoing effort to provide domestic violence training and plan development to the OCF funded grantees.

Meeting with Columbus Urban League: OCF staff met with staff from the CUL regarding their ongoing efforts to provide Responsible Fatherhood services to central Ohio fathers and families. Several initiatives and projects were discussed. Two specific topics of conversation were related to using the CUL data in the Fatherhood Research & Practice Network Grant and providing services for fathers connected with Moms2B Program at OSU East Hospital.

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Phone Conference with Minnesota Fatherhood: OCF staff along with Ohio Practitioners' Network for Fathers and Families (OPNFF) participated in a phone conference with Minnesota Fathers and Families Network MNFF. There is strong interest in Minnesota to develop a state Fatherhood Commission. Various stakeholders from Minnesota were part of the conversation, including the Deputy Director from the Office of Child Support and a TANF direct services provider.