AS I ventured into the Montgomery County Administration Building’s lower levels to vote I thought about a recent conversation I had with someone about using his voice. As I was voting, I realized one of the most important elements of me using my voice is the safe space I have to do so. No one was looking over my shoulder; I was free to vote for whomever/whatever I chose. We all have a voice, often the challenge is finding a space in which we feel safe enough to use it.

Such is the case with many fathers. Dads take considerable criticism for not being involved in their children’s lives, and if they are they may not be doing enough. A contributing factor to the lack of parental engagement by men is the lack of a safe space to say what is on our minds. Some of us who are fortunate enough to live with our children get our chances and need to take advantage of them. On the other hand, fathers with a different address from their sons and daughters have limited opportunities to use their voice as it pertains to their children’s upbringing.

A safe space for men to use their voices is important in general, but it becomes vital when we are attempting to address toxic masculinity and other negative behavior assigned to men. Among the many great nuggets that have come from Judge Walter H. Rice is “helping returning citizens successfully return to society is the best public safety policy there is.” What he is saying, is if we do not help offenders improve, their potential future victims are in greater peril. An important aspect of that help is hearing them say what they need to keep from committing crimes again.

The same holds true for men who are offenders of societal rules that are not necessarily laws. If we do not give them the chance to speak freely, we will not understand how to address their behavior. That is why when I speak to clients I say, “Tell me what has been going on” or “How can I help you?” and listen. Do I hear some cringe-worthy things? Sure, but without hearing those things, I cannot possibly attempt to gain an appreciation of the client’s state of mind.

The Montgomery County Fatherhood Initiative wants to hear ALL voices and will do our best to provide the safe space necessary. If you want to be part of the solution, I strongly encourage you to do the same.
Father’s Day Picnic

Montgomery County JFS on the move helping to educate the Public. Left to Right: Jessica Valentine, Sheryl Zawatsky, Corie Marko, and Alisha Webb.

Montgomery County CSEA Director: Sarah Fields

Montgomery County Business Services: Marvene Mitchell

Brentaye Alexander, Robert Jones, and Brittany Daniel
Father’s Day Picnic

L to R: James Clay, Anita Oliver, Mike Newsom, Angie Roberts, Quinn Howard

Cissy Conyers and Sherry Thompson

Montgomery County CSEA: Megan Carroll and Daughter.
We the Fathers of Montgomery County
We the Fathers of Montgomery County

Dayton Public School Students Presented Art Projects about their Dads and were awarded tablets for their efforts.

COURTESY OF CARESOURCE
We the Fathers of Montgomery County

The Washington Township Fire Department did a great job educating and entertaining those that attended “Celebrate Fatherhood-Montgomery County”
We the Fathers of Montgomery County

LeRoy Pirtle and Da Band Kicked “Celebrate Fatherhood” off...

...and Flash and Top Secret brought it home, like always!

Event Planning Committee - Standing L to R: Donna McGhee • 5 Rivers Health CARS; Joni Watson • Horace Mann Elementary; Robert Jones • Rescare Workforce Services; Janice Williams (retired) • Job & Family Services; Matt Berger • Community Dad. Kneeling - L to R: Mike Newsom • Montgomery County Office of Strategic Initiatives; Quinn Howard • Montgomery County Office of Reentry. Not pictured: William Bailey • United Against Violence of Greater Dayton; Kristin Keyer • U.S. Probation.
We the Fathers of Montgomery County

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CareSource
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Dayton Dragons
Dayton Food Bank
Family Engagement Council (Univ. of Dayton)
For the Love of Children (FLOC)
Gordon Food Service
Montgomery County Department of Job & Family Services
Public Health - Dayton & Montgomery County
Screenabiltees
United Against Violence of Greater Dayton

Celebrate Fatherhood Montgomery County
2019 Planning Committee

It took a tremendous group effort to pull off our 8th Annual Celebrate Fatherhood Montgomery County event. The following team did a little bit of everything to make sure the event was a success:

Michael Newsom
Fatherhood Coordinator
Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services

Robert A. Jones
Director Rescare Workforce Services

Donna McGhee
Community Health
Five Rivers Health Center

Quinn Howard
Program Coordinator
Montgomery County Office of Ex-Offender Reentry

Kristin Keyer
U.S. Probation Officer
Southern District of Ohio, Dayton Office

William Bailey
United Against Violence of Greater Dayton
Samaritan Behavioral Health

Joni Watson
Teacher
Dayton Public Schools

Mathew Berger
Tangible Solutions
Community Dad
Don’t Forget to Join Us at the...

“We the Fathers...” Banquet

Friday
January 24, 2020

Sinclair Conference Center
444 West Third Street • Building 12 • Dayton, Ohio 45402

Food and Entertainment
Men’s Fashion Show
Great Speakers

For Information Contact
Michael Newsom
Fatherhood Coordinator
Montgomery County JFS

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