

## NYC Dads - 2013 Fatherhood Initiative Progress Report

## NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS)

### Progress during 2012 - 2013

| 2012  | 2013   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established Fatherhood Support Groups at ten Family Services shelters. Approximately 1,000 men participated between January and April 2012.</li> <li>• Identified MDRC’s nationally-recognized, evidence-based responsible fatherhood curriculum to be used to support fathers’ growth in their roles as parents, partners and workers.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Co-author of the MDRC curriculum trained approximately 50 shelter staff.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recruited Social Work student interns from various schools of Social Work. These students were trained to facilitate the Fatherhood Support Groups.</li> <li>• The DHS Fatherhood Initiative provided fathers the opportunity to participate in various community programs where men were given an discussed the issues they face as fathers (i.e. an invitation from the Bronx Borough President to a town hall meeting where men discussed the topic of fatherhood).</li> <li>• DHS/Family Services celebrated the first DHS Fatherhood Initiative graduation ceremony, which honored fathers in shelters who participated in the agency’s 15- week program.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded Fatherhood Support Groups from 10 to 13 Family Services shelters and from 3 to 7 for the Adult division. Approximately 1,500 men participated between Adult and Family divisions in 2013.</li> <li>• Encouraged fathers to seek and maintain employment. DHS/Employment Unit also visited the Fatherhood Support Groups, presented on job readiness techniques, and submitted 21 resumes for job interviews. 7 dads became gainfully employed through this effort.</li> <li>• At many of the Fatherhood Support Groups, HRA’s Office of Child Support &amp; Enforcement presented on employment resources and setting right orders for child support payments and debts fathers may owe.</li> <li>• DHS held its first focus group forum where participating fathers and their site’s Facilitators were invited to discuss the effectiveness of the Fatherhood Support Groups. Some suggestions include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DHS providing all fathers with Support Group information during intake and making attendance to the first support group mandatory.</li> <li>○ Staff providing in-reach and door-to-door solicitation to reach all fathers.</li> <li>○ Facility staff involvement and support of the Support Group at their facility.</li> <li>○ Using participating fathers as motivators/messengers to reach out to other fathers.</li> <li>○ Providing attendance incentives (e.g. movie tickets for fathers and families).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conducted a survey to identify fathers with minor children in the Single Adult system.</li> </ul> |

### Additional Successes & Best Practices

- For FY '13, DHS collaborated with Carnegie Hall to provide concerts for members of the Fatherhood Support Groups and their families. These concerts were diverse, educational and designed to give families the opportunity to attend interactive live music experiences and create “memorable moments.” The project included targeted engagement strategies specifically for fathers in the DHS system, and the goals aligned with topics covered in the Fatherhood Support Group discussions, including developing fathers’ self-esteem and their role as dedicated dads. Approximately 100 fathers attended with their children.
- On May 9, 2013, DHS/Family Services held the second DHS Fatherhood Initiative recognition ceremony to honor fathers who completed the program. Completion certificates and apparel were given to all fathers and various high level agency staff, and the fathers were invited to speak about the impact of the program. Elected officials and guests from City agencies, including City Hall, were on hand to congratulate the graduates.
- The DHS Fatherhood Initiative has provided the opportunity for fathers and their children to participate in various community events together, including two movie screenings, “The Croods “and “Life After Earth”. Tickets for these movies were donated by the [National Fatherhood Initiative](#).

Please see the [NYC Young Men's Initiative](#) and [NYC DADS](#) websites for additional information on the progress of NYC Dads.