



Inside

Consider what happens inside your program to encourage participation

Make a Positive First Impression

- Greet each father by name.
- Hire program staff members who have backgrounds similar to participants' or who recently graduated from the program.

Create a Comfortable Environment

- Hold father-child services in colorful spaces with children's books and toys.
- Decorate with photos of fathers and children.

Build a Thoughtful Program Structure

- Offer incentives at points when drop-off rates are expected to be highest; for example, after the first session or the first week.
- Structure services in groups to foster relationships, create accountability and friendship, and keep people coming back.

Incorporate Hands-on Learning

- Design services so that participants learn something new, have the opportunity to try it, and reflect on how it went.



Outside

Address outside factors that discourage participation

Provide Additional Support

- Refer fathers to family court resources, housing assistance, and child support services.
- Supply appropriate clothing for job interviews.

Respond to Competing Demands

- Work to satisfy requirements from other systems, such as child welfare visitation and probation, with program participation.
- With the father's permission, provide the child's co-parent and other primary caregivers with information about what he will be learning in the program and how it benefits the child and family.

Address Common Logistical Problems

- Provide bus and subway travel vouchers.
- Conduct one-on-one services in the community where most convenient for participants, when needed.



Round and Round

Support continual cycles of learning over time

Apply Data-Driven Management

- Monitor which partners refer fathers who enroll and participate, and focus recruitment efforts there.
- Change the messages that the program delivers to partners sending fewer fathers.

Use Insights from Behavioral Science

- Use old and new technology such as reminder postcards, visual calendars, and custom phone apps to reinforce attendance.

Make a Priority of Participant Perspectives

- After each session, ask fathers to describe what is going well, what they found most important, and how they can incorporate these concepts into their lives.

Still have questions or other ideas?
Email us at B3@mdrc.org