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Parents and Children Together: Design and Implementation of Responsible Fatherhood Programs

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OVERVIEW

The Parents and Children Together (PACT) evaluation, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research for the Office of Research, Planning and Evaluation in the Administration of Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is examining a set of Responsible Fatherhood (RF) and Healthy Marriage (HM) grantees funded by ACF's Office of Family Assistance (OFA). Recognizing that grantees' programs will continue to grow and develop, PACT aims to provide foundational information to guide ongoing and future program design and evaluation efforts, and to build the evidence base for programming.

This report presents early findings from the process study of four OFA RF grantees serving low-income fathers and participating in the PACT evaluation:

1. **Connections to Success** in Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas
2. **Fathers' Support Center St. Louis** in St. Louis, Missouri
3. **Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota** in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and St. Paul, Minnesota
4. **Urban Ventures** in Minneapolis, Minnesota

According to the legislation, RF grantees were required to offer services in three core areas—(1) parenting and fatherhood, (2) economic stability, and (3) healthy relationships—but they had latitude to design programs to meet the needs of their populations. This report describes program design and implementation and presents data on enrollment, initial participation, retention, and the amount of services fathers received from December 2012, the beginning of PACT enrollment, through August 2014. The report also discusses two approaches to service delivery. Key findings include:

- RF programs in PACT offered a broad array of services that went beyond the three core areas of parenting and fatherhood, economic stability, and healthy relationships.
- Programs took one of two approaches to service delivery: a cohort approach that integrates content across core areas into one intensive daily workshop, or an open-entry menu approach with separate workshops for parenting, economic stability, and relationships.
- Employing staff who were role models facilitated RF programs' ability to serve fathers.
- Setting performance targets and using data to support program planning, progress monitoring, and mid-course corrections helped RF programs enroll and engage fathers.
- Integrating staff from organizational partners promoted consistent service delivery.
- All programs partnered with local child support agencies, but involvement ranged from limited to extensive.

Mathematica will produce a final report on program implementation in 2016. Future reports will present findings from a descriptive study of RF programs serving primarily Hispanic men, a process study of HM grantees, impact studies of RF and HM programs, and reports on in-depth interviews with fathers. In 2015, two briefs (Zaveri et al. 2015a; Zaveri et al 2015b) and a report on initial qualitative findings were published (Holcomb et al. 2015) in addition to this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many fathers face obstacles fulfilling their aspirations to be involved in the physical, social, and emotional development of their children, and to provide for them financially. Obstacles may include the lack of father role models in their own lives, estrangement from their children's mother, limited employment and earnings potential, history of involvement with the criminal justice system, and problems related to mental health, substance abuse, or physical health. Today, nearly one of every three children in the United States—about 25 million children—lives in a home without his or her biological father (Payne 2013). Racial and ethnic differences in father absence are large, with substantially higher rates in African American and Hispanic households.

Research suggests that when equipped with the needed skills and capacities, low-income, nonresidential fathers can contribute financially and become positive influences in their children's lives (Howard et al. 2006; Black et al. 1999).

Research on family policy suggests that fathers' presence and involvement with their children have positive consequences for both children and fathers. Many low-income nonresidential fathers, that is, fathers who do not live with their children, long to be more involved in their children's lives (Edin and Nelson 2013). Research suggests that when equipped with the needed skills and capacities, such fathers can contribute financially and become positive influences in their children's lives (Howard et al. 2006; Black et al. 1999). Fathers can build these bonds through regular communication and quality time with their children.

Since 2005, Congress has funded the Responsible Fatherhood (RF) grant program, which supports interventions to alleviate barriers to father involvement. Hundreds of fatherhood programs have been implemented, representing a wide range of philosophies, approaches, structures, and formats. To be eligible for an RF grant in 2011, organizations had to offer programming in three core areas: (1) parenting/fatherhood, (2) economic stability (such as employment services), and (3) healthy relationships and marriage.

Despite the growing number of programs and increasing policy interest, the fatherhood field is still developing and lacks a body of rigorous research evidence to guide it. To address this gap, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is sponsoring an evaluation to examine a subset of RF grantees. The Parents and Children Together (PACT) evaluation will expand knowledge of what works in fatherhood programming and provide a detailed portrait of the fathers who enroll in RF programs.

The PACT evaluation is intended to provide a foundation and an initial building block in the evidence base to guide ongoing and future program design and evaluation. There are three main components to the PACT evaluation of RF programs: a randomized controlled trial that will measure the impact of the RF programs on child and father outcomes; a comprehensive process study that examines program design and operations (including a separate descriptive study of programs for Hispanic populations); and,

a qualitative, longitudinal series of in-depth interviews with a subset of fathers participating in the RF programs in PACT to better understand their lives and experiences, including the complexities and difficulties they face as fathers.

PACT's process study, which is the focus of this report, documents how these RF programs are designed and implemented and describes both the challenges and promising practices encountered by them. By documenting each program's design, operations, and lessons learned, the PACT process study adds to the growing knowledge base of fatherhood program practice and provides context for understanding later impacts. Process study data include two rounds of on-site semi-structured interviews with program staff, focus groups with program participants, telephone interviews with program drop-outs, a web-based survey of program staff, and data from a study management information system (MIS). This initial report on the RF programs participating in PACT describes their progress during the first 21 months that they recruited men into the evaluation. A recent report from PACT presented initial findings from the evaluation's qualitative study; future reports will present process study findings for the remainder of the evaluation period, further findings from the qualitative study, and impact results.

The four programs in the PACT evaluation are:

- Successful STEPS at Connections to Success (Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri)
- The Family Formation Program at Fathers' Support Center St. Louis (St. Louis, Missouri)
- The FATHER Project at Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota (Minneapolis, Minnesota and St. Paul, Minnesota)
- The Center for Fathering at Urban Ventures (Minneapolis, Minnesota)

A. Key process study findings

1. RF programs in PACT offered a broad array of services that went beyond the three core areas of parenting and fatherhood, economic stability, and healthy relationships.

The RF grants required programs to offer services in the specific areas of parenting and fatherhood, healthy relationships, and economic stability. Recognizing that fathers may have additional needs that can undermine improvement in these areas, the programs in PACT also offered (a) case management, (b) services to address fathers' social-emotional and personal development, and (c) assistance with issues related to child support and parenting time. Program staff viewed these additional services as integral to their programs. To provide case management, staff first helped fathers identify their

individual needs and goals through one-on-one meetings, personal assessments and development of life plans. Case managers often provided referrals for individual fathers to outside services for help with health issues, substance abuse, and housing. Most of the group workshops included content that was intended to promote the fathers' socio-emotional well-being, such as how to cope with stress and depression, and the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions. And with the pervasive needs of nonresidential parents related to child support and visitation, all programs partnered with local or state child support agencies to help fathers learn how to access and use the system to address their concerns.

2. Programs took one of two distinct approaches to service delivery.

The four RF programs in PACT took one of two approaches to service delivery. The integrated cohort approach featured intensive daily workshops over a period of weeks, covering topics in multiple content areas; fathers began and proceeded through the workshop sessions as a cohort. The open-entry workshop structure offered separate once-a-week workshops for each content area in a kind of "menu approach." Fathers may begin and attend the workshop sessions at their convenience over several months, and are often expected to complete one workshop series before moving on to the next.

3. Employing staff who were role models facilitated RF programs' ability to connect with and serve fathers.

All programs employed former program graduates and individuals who had firsthand experience overcoming many of the challenges that program participants faced, such as past substance use and estrangement from their children. Program managers felt that these experiences helped staff connect with and serve fathers. These graduates worked at all organizational levels, from frontline staff to supervisors and management to leadership, depending on experience. To ensure that these staff had the relevant preparation and training, two grantees required staff without postsecondary education to be enrolled in relevant classes. Another required professional degrees for social workers and counselors. As a result, nearly all program staff had some level of postsecondary education. Possibly because these programs were relatively more mature than others, most staff also had extensive past experience, averaging over seven years of experience providing parenting, relationship, and employment services.

All programs employed former program graduates and individuals who had firsthand experience overcoming many of the challenges that program participants faced.

4. Setting specific performance targets and using data to support program planning, progress monitoring, and mid-course corrections helped RF programs enroll large numbers of fathers and engage them in services.

All programs developed monthly enrollment targets for PACT, which they generally met. Programs discussed enrollment targets and progress at multiple levels of their organizations; in meetings with program managers and frontline staff, and in meetings with program leadership and the PACT evaluation team. Program managers used enrollment targets to help motivate their staff. The process of tracking progress toward targets also led to various improvements in program strategies. For example, when one

organization's outreach strategy began yielding fewer recruits, it developed a long-term plan to cultivate community agencies as a potential source of interested fathers; another organization reorganized its outreach and recruitment team.

Regular review of program participation data led grantees to implement changes in their strategies for engaging fathers. For example, by reviewing data, programs learned that allowing fathers to begin attending services soon after enrollment capitalized on initial motivation. One integrated cohort program adjusted its enrollment process to ensure the window between enrollment and the start of programming was minimized. Review of participation data also led some organizations to seek alternatives to recruiting from sources such as homeless shelters, which had led to increased enrollment but very low participation. Having a clear understanding of the fathers' participation patterns led some programs to adjust services to better fit fathers' schedules, for example by offering workshops at various times or by offering make-up sessions.

5. Integrating staff from partner organizations into the RF program promoted more seamless and consistent service delivery.

One RF program integrated staff from partner organizations who provide program services, by co-locating them, at least part-time, and by encouraging their involvement in group facilitation, case management, program-wide meetings and training, and discussions about individual fathers. Because programs and partners worked together and shared data, all staff focused on the same objectives. Participants were more likely to encounter continuity in service delivery across multiple locations and staff employed by different organizations.

6. While all RF programs have some partnership with their local child support agencies, the level of involvement ranged from limited to extensive.

Each RF program in PACT developed a partnership with at least one local child support agency, but the type and extent of agency involvement varied across programs. One RF program enjoyed a particularly strong collaboration with two local child support agencies. Child support staff were co-located at the RF program locations and participated in the program's case review meetings. Another RF program developed an agreement with its local child support agency to reduce state-owed child support arrears for program participation, and a third program worked with its child support agency to establish child support courts. The fourth RF program had little direct involvement by local child support staff, but advocated for fathers with child support issues.

7. RF programs enrolled more than 4,700 men in PACT during the evaluation's first 21 months and provided services to a large portion of men eligible to receive program services.

The four RF programs enrolled 4,713 fathers into PACT's evaluation sample between December 2012 and August 2014, 99 percent of their collective goal for this period.

On average, 80 percent of fathers attended at least one program activity in the first four months following study enrollment, ranging from 71 to 91 percent across programs. The vast majority of fathers who engaged in at least one program activity attended a workshop in one of the key content areas. Often, programs viewed workshops as central to their services and structured them so that a workshop was the fathers' first activity. A greater proportion of fathers in open-entry workshop programs than in integrated cohort programs met one-on-one with program staff within four months of enrollment, possibly because these programs prioritized early assessment of fathers' needs during individual meetings.

Attendance at the economic stability workshop was highest when the content was integrated with other material and when a program made employment a central feature of its program.

Retention was higher in the integrated cohort programs than in open-entry workshop programs—a greater proportion of fathers completed more than half of the workshop sessions. Fathers most commonly attended the parenting and employment workshops. Across the programs, 21 to 59 percent of fathers attended at least half of the parenting sessions. Attendance at the economic stability workshop was highest when the content was integrated with other material and when a program made employment a central feature of its program. Attendance at more than half of the economic stability workshops ranged from 7 to 63 percent across programs. Fathers were least likely to participate in stand-alone relationship workshops, which may reflect implementation factors (for example, fathers were expected to complete other workshops first), or fathers' circumstances (for example, some fathers may not have been in romantic relationships or did not perceive the value of attending without a co-parent).

Fathers in these four RF programs—including those who did not participate at all—attended an average of 46 hours during their first four months after enrollment; the average ranged from 11 to 90 hours across programs. Fathers in the two integrated cohort programs spent more time, on average, in program activities (79 hours) compared to fathers in the open-entry workshop programs (13 hours). This difference is at least partly because the integrated cohort programs were more intensive, offering more hours than the other programs. The largest portion of the hours spent in program activities across all programs was in workshops, and nearly half of the content received by fathers across the programs addressed economic stability.

B. Implications for future RF programming

The data suggest that even when RF programs are required to offer the same type of content, how they offer and structure services may influence such outputs as the population(s) reached, fathers' engagement and participation, and the amount and type of information most fathers receive. Differences in program outputs may, in turn, affect fathers' outcomes (a future report will look at impacts of the program on fathers' behavior 12 months after enrollment).

Higher retention in the integrated cohort programs does not provide evidence that these programs were better than the open-entry workshop programs at meeting fathers' needs or at improving their attitudes, behaviors, or outcomes, but these differences should inform program design. Specifically, effective programs require an understanding of the needs and interests of the fathers to be served and should implement a service delivery approach that is aligned with those needs and interests. PACT's process study identified two approaches to service delivery; others may exist or may be developed. When developing an approach, practitioners may want to:

1. Gather data about the target population's needs; then structure service delivery and content based on those needs.

The needs and challenges of target populations may have implications for program structure and intensity. For instance, the two integrated cohort programs attracted fathers with a different level of need than the open-entry workshop programs. Fathers in integrated cohort programs were perhaps more likely to be available and interested in structured, daily services. Fathers with relatively less severe life challenges may have appreciated the flexibility of open-entry workshop programs. Understanding fathers' life experiences can also inform selection of curricula.

2. Collect participation data to monitor achievement of program targets and inform potential refinements to service delivery.

All programs used an MIS to track enrollment and participation. Programs tracked workshop attendance, meetings with caseworkers and other staff, and referrals to outside services. Supervisors used these data to assess the performance of frontline staff and suggest new strategies. The MIS also provided a tool to help frontline staff track and monitor caseloads. Two programs held regular case reviews, in which frontline staff discussed individual fathers as a group, informed by MIS data. Regular review of participation data influenced decisions about program sequence and instigated conversations about, for example, how to reengage fathers, or strategies to keep fathers motivated.

3. To increase receipt of healthy relationship content, increase accessibility by integrating this content into parenting or economic stability services.

Participation in healthy relationship workshops was lower than other workshops, except at one program where the content was integrated into the core workshop. Low participation in the relationship workshop may reflect the workshop's sequence or the program's emphasis on attendance at this workshop. Alternatively, many low-income nonresidential fathers have contentious relationships with the mothers of their children (see Holcomb et al. 2015), and fathers may believe that such services are unable to help them (especially if mothers are unwilling to participate). Indeed, of three common reasons for enrolling in programs—to improve relationships with children, to gain

assistance with employment, and to improve relationships with the mothers of their children—fathers were least likely to enroll for the latter reason.

Healthy relationship services in RF programs may sometimes include content that is intended to improve coparenting relationships (where the parents are no longer a couple but have a child together) and also to strengthen current romantic relationships. Combining these two purposes may have led to confusion or disinterest by the fathers, and fathers who were not in a romantic relationship may have viewed the services as less central to their needs.

Even if fathers do not recognize the utility of healthy relationship services, they may nevertheless benefit from the content. To ensure that more fathers receive this content, programs may want to consider weaving it into other services fathers are more likely to attend, such as parenting classes. Healthy relationship topics relevant to fathers, such as communication and conflict resolution, can build upon related content in parenting and economic stability workshops, such as anger management or workplace communication skills.

4. Encourage program participation by offering cohort-based services, employing staff who have worked through similar challenges, and offering supports or incentives.

Maintaining fathers' motivation and participation throughout the program is a common challenge. The integrated cohort programs have found that fathers who progress through services as a group tend to motivate and support one another to complete services. Across all programs, staff who had overcome problems similar to those of the participants were seen by fathers as powerful role models and motivators. Financial incentives—such as reductions in state-owed child support arrears—can address financial barriers and reduce a source of pressure for fathers. Relieving other immediate needs—such as paying for bus tokens to attend the program or providing a free meal—may also promote participation.

5. Consider how to sequence or integrate services to ensure that fathers receive key content early.

The proportion of fathers attending at least one session of a parenting workshop ranged from 57 to 72 percent across programs, but the proportion of fathers attending more than half of the sessions was lower, ranging from 21 to 59 percent. These figures suggest that many fathers miss parenting topics, even if they attend some sessions. If they do not already, programs may consider sequencing the most relevant topics so that even if fathers do not complete services, they receive the most important content first. Economic stability and healthy relationship workshops were often sequenced after parenting, and participation in these workshops was lower than parenting.

6. Offer services in larger time blocks to promote higher participation and dosage.

Across programs, fathers received roughly half of the planned hours. However, due to their more intensive programming, fathers at the integrated cohort programs received more hours of services than fathers in open-entry programs. Integrated cohort programs offered more hours in larger time blocks, typically full-day workshops. To accommodate schedules of men who are employed and still provide larger blocks of time for services, programs may want to consider weekend programming.

7. Develop partnerships with local child support agencies to potentially facilitate positive outcomes for nonresidential fathers.

Across the programs in PACT, nearly 60 percent of fathers had a child support order at the time of enrollment. Partnerships between local child support agencies and RF programs can support the objectives of both of these organizations and may lead to better outcomes for the fathers they serve. First, although RF programs are voluntary, the local child support agency can be an important source of referrals. Second, local child support agencies may find that they have discretion to design state-owed arrears-reduction programs for fathers who participate in RF programs. And third, partnerships may facilitate quicker resolution of specific issues among RF program participants, such as modifications of child support orders or removal of driver's license suspensions due to non-payment. Although such assistance may be available to any father with a child support order, RF programs that collaborate with the child support agency may be able to facilitate meetings with child support staff. Programs should recognize that the discretion a child support agency has to set up special programs, such as arrears reductions or reinstatement of driver's licenses, varies by locality. Nevertheless, RF programs are likely to benefit from exploring and identifying creative ways to partner and collaborate with their local child support agencies.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



Many fathers face obstacles fulfilling their aspirations to be involved in the physical, social, and emotional development of their children, and to provide for them financially. Obstacles may include the lack of fathers or father role models in their own lives; estrangement from the children's mothers; limited employment and earnings potential; a history of involvement with the criminal justice system; or mental health, substance abuse, or physical health problems. Today, nearly one of every three children in the United States—about 25 million—lives in a home without his or her biological father (Payne 2013). Although father absence is common among all racial and ethnic groups in the U.S., it is highest in African American and Hispanic households. Many nonresidential fathers, that is, fathers who do not live with their children, are unmarried, low-income men who become estranged from their children's mothers within a few years of a child's birth (Carlson and McLanahan 2010). Research suggests that a father's absence and lack of paternal involvement has negative consequences for both children and fathers (Cabrera et al. 2007; Marsiglio et al. 2000; Tamis-LeMonda et al. 2004; Carlson 2006; Hofferth 2006).

Often, low-income nonresidential fathers, even those with multiple life challenges, long to be more involved in their children's lives (Edin and Nelson 2013). When equipped with the needed skills and capacities, research has shown that fathers can contribute financially and become positive influences in their children's lives (Howard et al. 2006; Black et al. 1999). Fathers can build these bonds through regular communication and quality time with their children.

As the number of children growing up without their fathers has increased, so too have programming efforts to help low-income fathers reconnect with and provide emotional and financial support for their children. Hundreds of fatherhood programs have

emerged, representing a wide range of philosophies, approaches, structures, and formats. Despite the growing number of programs and increasing policy interest, the field of fatherhood programming is still developing and, therefore, lacks a body of rigorous research evidence that could support identification of evidence-based program models.

The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is currently sponsoring several evaluation efforts that will expand understanding of what works in fatherhood programming. One effort, the Parents and Children Together (PACT) evaluation, is examining a set of Responsible Fatherhood (RF) and Healthy Marriage (HM) grantees funded by ACF's Office of Family Assistance (OFA). Recognizing that grantees' programs are still growing and developing, PACT is intended to provide a foundation and an initial building block in the evidence base to guide ongoing and future program design and evaluation. PACT approaches research questions from several angles to tell a more complete story about the programs and participants, including impact (using a rigorous random assignment design), process, and qualitative components. Ultimately, PACT's results will provide information about who enrolls in voluntary services, the design and operation of these programs, and how the programs affect the fathers and couples who enroll. This report presents early findings from the process study of the four RF grantees participating in the PACT evaluation, including a description of grantees' service delivery approaches and initial findings on their enrollment and program participation. The remainder of this chapter describes the research and policy context for RF programs, discusses PACT's evaluation framework, and introduces the four RF programs.

This report presents early findings from the process study of the four RF grantees participating in the PACT evaluation.

A. The research and policy context for RF programs

Policies and programs to promote fathers' support of and involvement with their children have evolved since the first programs and studies were developed in the 1980s. Although initial fatherhood programs focused on enforcing fathers' compliance with child support orders, often through court-mandated participation (Miller and Knox 2001), current programs offer a holistic package of voluntary services to nonresidential fathers. As policies and programs evolved, so did the focus and emphasis of research on low-income fathers.

Providing financially for children is important, but research now recognizes the broader ways in which fathers contribute to their children's development. A previously narrow view of the father role has expanded as research has confirmed that all fathers—even those who do not live with their children—have a role beyond providing economic support. Among nonresident fathers, involvement and positive father-child relationships are associated with fewer child and adolescent behavior problems (Amato and Gilbreth 1999; King and Sobolewski 2006; Amato and Rivera 1999).

Overview of the PACT evaluation

The Parents and Children Together (PACT) evaluation examines the effectiveness of programs offered by a subset of Responsible Fatherhood (RF) and Healthy Marriage (HM) grantees. Recognizing that grantees' programs are still growing and developing, PACT is intended to provide a foundation and an initial building block in the evidence base to guide ongoing and future program design and evaluation. PACT approaches research questions from several angles to tell a more complete story about the programs and participants. PACT's goals include (1) measuring the impact of RF and HM programs on fathers' involvement, economic stability, and partner relationships; (2) documenting the services received by participants in these programs; (3) describing how the RF and HM programs deliver services; and (4) understanding the experiences and needs of fathers who participate in RF programs. To do this, PACT uses three interrelated evaluation strategies:

IMPACT STUDY. The impact study is addressing whether the grantee programs improve outcomes for the fathers, couples, and families served. It is a randomized controlled trial (RCT) that is developing rigorous evidence on the causal effects of the RF and HM programs on key outcomes, such as fathers' engagement with their children, employment and economic self-sufficiency, and coparenting and romantic relationships. Eligible program applicants are randomly assigned to either a program group that can participate in the RF or HM program or a control group that is not eligible to participate in the RF or HM program for 12 months. (However, fathers and couples in this latter group can access other services available in the community.) Telephone surveys of all study participants—in both the program and control groups—are conducted at baseline (that is, when fathers or couples first enroll) and at follow-up, about 12 months after random assignment.

PROCESS STUDY. The process study documents how the RF and HM programs are designed and implemented and identifies both the challenges and promising practices of program implementation. Process study data include two rounds of semi-structured interviews with program staff, focus groups with participants, telephone interviews with program dropouts, a web-based survey of program staff, and data from a study management information system (MIS). A separate descriptive study of four additional RF grantees that serve predominantly Hispanic fathers is exploring how RF programs serving Hispanic populations develop, adapt, and implement culturally relevant services. Data for this descriptive study were collected via semi-structured interviews with program staff and through focus groups and questionnaires with participants.

QUALITATIVE STUDY. The qualitative study focuses specifically on a subset of participants in the RF programs, utilizing ethnographic techniques to shed light on the lives of these fathers, including their roles as parents, partners, and providers; the factors that may affect their ability to benefit from the RF programs; and how this may inform RF program design and implementation. The primary method for collecting data on fathers is three rounds of in-depth, in-person interviews conducted annually that are supplemented by brief telephone check-in calls.

Some research suggests that frequency of contact and amount of visitation do not predict positive child outcomes, but the quality of interactions between father and children does matter (Stewart 2003; Marsiglio et al. 2000). A recent meta-analysis of nonresident fathering and child well-being confirmed this finding and showed that involvement in specific child-related activities is associated with positive social, emotional, and behavioral adjustment in children (Adamsons and Johnson 2013). The quality of the coparenting relationship between father and mother may also affect children. Recent research shows that positive effects on child well-being through father involvement are most likely when parents have a low-conflict coparenting relationship (Carlson et al. 2008). Recognition of the value of father involvement is important, especially for low-income men who have to reinvent their family role as they struggle to provide financially for their children (Edin and Nelson 2013).

Grantees must offer programming in three core areas: (1) parenting and fatherhood, (2) economic stability (such as employment services), and (3) healthy relationships and marriage.

Since 2005, federal legislation has authorized grants for fatherhood programs. A dedicated funding stream for responsible fatherhood programming first began as part of the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) grant program under the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, which included \$50 million in annual funding for fatherhood programs. The grant program funded 90 organizations to operate or support fatherhood programs and 13 to implement services specifically for incarcerated and re-entering fathers. The Claims Resolution Act of 2010 reauthorized the HMRF grant program and increased funding for RF programs to \$75 million annually. Fifty-five organizations were awarded three-year RF grants in 2011; five additional organizations received RF re-entry program grants. In 2014, these grants were extended with a fourth year of funding. Reflecting the research on low-income fathers, grantees must offer programming in three core areas: (1) parenting and fatherhood, (2) economic stability (such as employment services), and (3) healthy relationships and marriage.



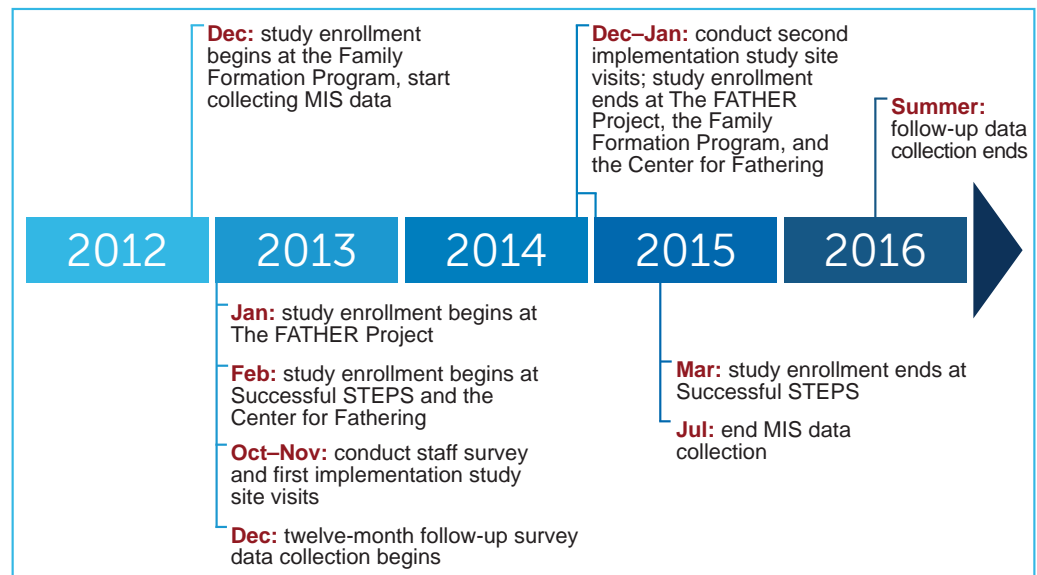
B. PACT: A foundation to understand low-income fathers and RF programs

PACT began in 2011 with the goal of expanding knowledge of program structure, implementation, and effects of a subset of HMRF grantees, as well as building in-depth understanding of the men who participate in the RF programs. PACT has a wide range of components that address several research questions (see the box, “Overview of PACT evaluation activities”).

In total, 10 grantees from the 2011 HMRF grantee cohort are participating in PACT. Four RF grantees are participating in process, qualitative, and impact studies. Two HM grantees are participating in process and impact studies.¹ A separate set of four RF grantees, which were purposefully selected for their target population, participated in a separate descriptive study on the implementation of programs for Hispanic fathers.

Data collection for PACT began in December 2012 and will continue through mid-2016 (Figure I.1). RF programs began study enrollment between December 2012 and February 2013. Enrollment ended between December 2014 and March 2015, depending upon the program, and the 12-month follow-up survey data collection began in January 2013.

Figure I.1. Timeline of key dates in PACT evaluation

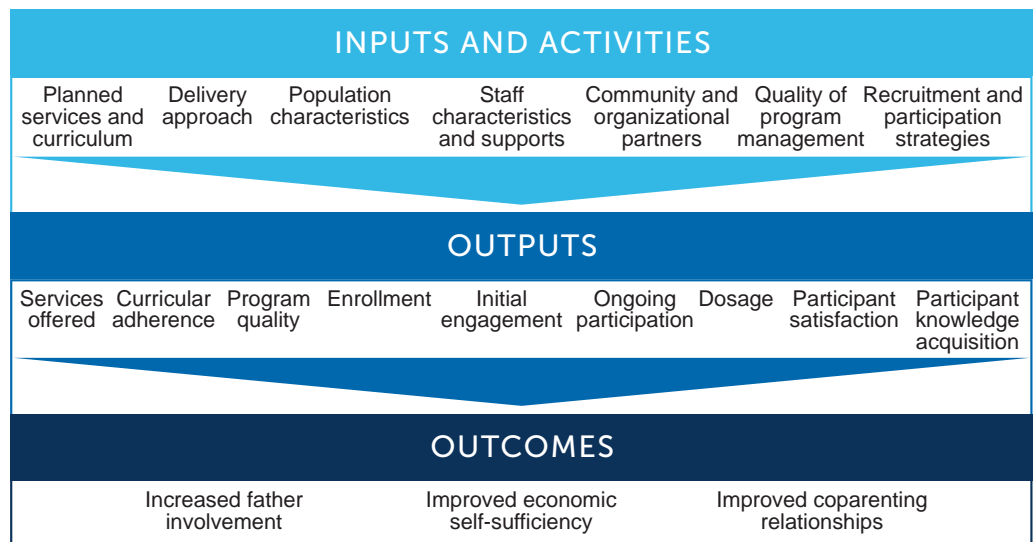


An evaluation framework guides PACT’s process and impact study components in RF programs and hypothesizes links between a set of inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes (Figure I.2). The inputs and activities include the following:

- Services to be offered by each program, planned curriculum, and service delivery approach

- Characteristics of the population served
- Characteristics of the staff employed by the program and the program's approach to training and supervising them
- Integration of partners to support and assist with service delivery
- Quality of program oversight and administration
- Strategies for recruiting and retaining participants

Figure I.2. PACT evaluation framework



Outputs demonstrate what programs offered and achieved as a result of their inputs and activities. For PACT, we are focusing on outputs related to what programs did and what participants received. For programs, we are looking at the services provided, whether programs adhered to the curriculum they planned to offer, and the quality of these services. Related to what participants received, we examine the number of fathers enrolled in each program; the percentage of participants that received program services; the amount of services received by participants, both overall and by content area; and participant satisfaction with program services. Outcomes represent the changes that occur to study participants' attitudes, knowledge, or behaviors 12 months after study enrollment. For the RF programs in PACT, outcomes of interest include (1) increased father involvement, (2) improved economic self-sufficiency, and (3) better coparenting relationships.

PACT's process study of RF programs focuses on describing the inputs, activities, and outputs articulated in the evaluation framework and on exploring the relationships among these components. By documenting each program's design, operations, and lessons learned, the PACT process study adds to the growing knowledge base of fatherhood program practice. This first process study report on the RF programs

participating in PACT describes their progress during the first 21 months that they recruited men into the evaluation. We focus on documenting the inputs and activities for each program and assessing a limited set of outputs—including, fathers' enrollment, initial participation, retention, dosage of services, and the various program factors that may influence those outputs. By exploring and describing these relationships, the PACT process study provides context for understanding later impacts. Subsequent reports from the PACT evaluation will present impact findings for these RF programs, as well as process and impact findings for two Healthy Marriage programs participating in PACT, and findings from the qualitative study.

C. Random assignment

Randomly assigning individuals is a fair and unbiased way to determine whether the programs involved in PACT improve outcomes for individuals who receive the services compared to those who do not.

PACT's impact study uses a research design known as "random assignment," which works much like the flip of a coin. Randomly assigning individuals is a fair and unbiased way to determine whether the programs involved in PACT improve outcomes for individuals who receive the services compared to those who do not. The process develops two groups of individuals who are, on average, identical in their background characteristics. Because nothing else differs between the groups except exposure to the program, comparing their outcomes 12 months after study enrollment provides an unbiased assessment of the impacts of the program.

The PACT team worked with grantees participating in the impact evaluation to insert random assignment into their programs' enrollment processes. Staff at each RF program identified potentially interested fathers and met with them to describe both the program and the PACT study. Fathers were informed that the program was participating in an evaluation designed to learn more about how RF programs work, and that if interested they would have a 50-50 chance of either being eligible to participate in the program now (the program group), or of having to wait 12 months to be eligible for the program (the non-program, or control group). Fathers who agreed were connected to telephone interviewers who obtained the applicant's formal consent to be in the study and administered a baseline survey. Following the survey, random assignment was performed and program staff informed the father of the result. Fathers who were assigned to the non-program group could participate in other services either offered by the organization or else available in the community. At some programs, staff provided limited assistance to individuals in the non-program group to help them identify other community resources. Fathers assigned to the non-program group were informed that they could return to the program after 12 months to seek services.

Random assignment is widely recognized as both ethical and justified. Programs rarely if ever have enough program slots to serve every interested person in their communities, so "flipping a coin" to decide who can receive services now versus later is a fair way to allocate resources. The method provides strong evidence for how programs

impact individuals' behavior, and supports program improvement by identifying strengths and weaknesses so that the next generation of programs can incorporate further refinements.

D. Data sources and collection methods for the process study

PACT's process study uses multiple sources and methods to collect quantitative and qualitative data on RF program implementation. Data sources for this report include:

- **Staff interviews during site visits.** The PACT process study team conducted a round of site visits between October and December 2013 to the four RF programs participating in PACT. During visits, we interviewed staff from all grantee and partner agencies about (1) their roles in providing services to fathers, (2) their program design, (3) the goals of the organization, (4) recruitment and engagement strategies, (5) staffing, (6) supervision and training, (7) monitoring program quality, and (8) community context. In total, we conducted 46 interviews with 84 staff members.
- **Observations of program activities.** During site visits, the PACT process study team observed parenting, relationship, and employment workshops at each program using a tool developed by the PACT team. The observations helped to contextualize the content and delivery of workshops. The team observed 17 workshops during site visits.
- **Document reviews.** We reviewed documents that described program activities and structures, including grant applications and performance reports, notes from regular monitoring calls between members of the PACT evaluation team and lead staff at the RF programs, organizational charts, curricula and workshop handouts, recruitment materials, and documents used by programs to monitor program operations.
- **Web-based staff survey.** We administered a web-based survey in October 2013 to RF program staff members employed by the HMRF grantees participating in PACT. We excluded staff employed by the grantees who did not work for the RF program as well as staff from partner agencies who may have been involved in RF program delivery. The survey included questions on staff background and characteristics; responsibilities; training, supervision, mentoring, and support; program challenges; workplace safety; compensation; work satisfaction; and perceptions of program quality. Across the four RF grantees, 66 of 74 program staff completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 89 percent.
- **Management Information System (MIS) data.** The PACT evaluation team developed a web-based MIS, the PACT Information System (PACTIS), to perform random assignment and track program participation. Staff at the grantees entered information about all services provided to participants who were assigned to receive the RF program, including attendance at group workshops and individual contacts, receipt of incentives and work supports, and referrals to other community service

providers. Staff also entered information about the content and duration of each service. Three of the four RF grantees used PACTIS; the fourth grantee used its own MIS but regularly delivered comparable data on service receipt to the PACT team. In this report, we include data for 1,854 fathers who were randomly assigned to receive the program and had at least four months to participate in program services after study enrollment. This 4-month window does not include the entire period when fathers may have attended services, but captures the period of most active participation.² The final report on program implementation will use a longer participation window.³

- **Initial interviews with program applicants.** A baseline survey was administered to all program applicants prior to study enrollment using computer-assisted telephone interviewing. For this report, we analyzed the survey data to describe the characteristics of men enrolled in the PACT evaluation, including men assigned to receive the RF program and men who were assigned to the non-program group. We report data from 4,734 interviews completed between December 9, 2012, and August 22, 2014.

E. RF grantees in PACT

Four RF grantees in the 2011 grantee cohort are participating in PACT's impact, process, and qualitative studies. A review of all 2011 RF grant applications culminated in the selection of these grantees because they planned to offer at least a minimum level of services related to parenting, relationship skills, and economic stability and they were the most suitable for random assignment of fathers to either a program or control condition. Additionally, the selected programs were located in communities with a clear counterfactual—in other words, the same package of services was not available in the community, allowing for a clear contrast between program and control group fathers.⁴ The four programs are described briefly here; fuller profiles are included in appendices to this report.

- **Successful STEPS program at Connections to Success (CtS).** CtS operates the Successful STEPS program in Kansas City, Kansas, and in Kansas City, Missouri. CtS has a 10-year history of providing personal development and employment services to prison re-entry populations. Low-income fathers who are interested in getting a job or improving their employment situation, who do not face debilitating or untreated substance abuse or mental health disorders, and who have no convictions for sex offenses are eligible for services. Successful STEPS includes a cohort-based, daily workshop that lasts two-and-a-half weeks. The workshop's content includes personal development, employment, and parenting. A separate, open-entry workshop offered weekly delivers relationship content for graduates of the integrated workshop. CtS partners with a domestic violence organization and Kansas and Missouri child support agencies to provide services.

- **Family Formation Program at Fathers' Support Center St. Louis (FSC).** FSC operates the Family Formation Program in St. Louis, Missouri. FSC has serviced low-income fathers for over 17 years, with the goal of helping them become self-sufficient, responsible, and committed to strong family relationships. Fathers with substance abuse problems must participate in treatment and pass drug screenings while in the program. The Family Formation Program consists of a six-week, cohort-based, daily workshop that integrates personal development, parenting, employment, and healthy relationship content. FSC partners with a domestic violence organization, the Missouri child support agency, and two local employment agencies to provide services.
- **The FATHER Project at Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota.** Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota is the parent organization for the FATHER Project, which operates in St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota. For more than 15 years, the FATHER Project has provided employment and parenting services to fathers who are unemployed or who are having trouble paying child support. Low-income fathers between the ages of 17 and 40 who do not have a criminal history related to sexual misconduct or domestic violence are eligible. The program includes three open-entry workshops: weekly parenting and healthy relationship workshops and a single-day employment workshop. All participants must first attend a two-day orientation. The FATHER Project partners with a number of organizations for service delivery, including county child support agencies, an organization that provides culturally sensitive services to Spanish-speaking parents, an organization providing legal services, and an early childhood education and home visiting program.
- **The Center for Fathering at Urban Ventures (UV).** UV serves as the parent organization for the Center for Fathering, which operates in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The Center for Fathering has a two-decade history of providing parenting services to low-income fathers, with a focus on African American men. Any low-income father over 18 is eligible for program services. The program consists of three separate, weekly, open-entry workshops in parenting, relationship skills, and employment services. The Center for Fathering partners with a street outreach program, the county child support agency, and a domestic violence organization.

F. Road map to the rest of the report

The remaining chapters in this report present process findings from the first 21 months of PACT for the four RF programs. Chapter II describes the services, content, population served, staff, and strategies for program management, engagement, and participation at each of the four programs. Chapter III reports on programs' progress on measures of enrollment, participation, and dosage. Chapter IV discusses patterns and comparisons across the four programs. In Chapter V, we summarize our findings from the report and provide implications for practice.

II. PROGRAMMATIC INPUTS AND ACTIVITIES



Programmatic inputs and activities: Key findings

To execute programs, the RF grantees in PACT defined their core and supplementary services and an approach to deliver these services; identified a target population and staff; and developed a strategy to support service delivery through staff training and supervision, program monitoring, and a recruitment and retention plan. These inputs and activities are the ingredients and steps needed to support attainment of program outputs and outcomes.

- Group workshops are a central component of the RF programs in PACT. Programs draw on published parenting and healthy relationship curricula, but develop their own curricula for group economic stability services.
- Although not a grant requirement, the RF programs in PACT emphasize personal development during workshops and case management. They also partner with local child support enforcement agencies.
- The RF programs in PACT take one of two approaches to service delivery: (1) an integrated cohort approach that provides integrated services to groups of fathers who proceed through the program together or (2) an open-entry workshop approach that offers an open-entry format with a menu of lower-intensity services that fathers can enter at any time.
- The RF programs employ staff with backgrounds similar to participants. Average employment tenure ranged from one-and-a-half years to almost four years. Organizations with the shortest average tenure had the fewest staff and expanded the most for PACT.
- To promote program quality, RF program management teams provide regular supervision and training to staff, review data on enrollment and participation, observe workshop sessions, and conduct case reviews. RF programs integrate staff from partner agencies through case reviews and training.
- Combining broad and targeted outreach strategies helped ensure a steady stream of interested fathers. Programs have partnerships with multiple referral sources and some screen men prior to enrollment to ensure fit and interest.
- Programs use an array of strategies to promote participation. Minimizing the time between enrollment and the start of services maximizes fathers' engagement. Program flexibility, intensive staff efforts, and use of financial incentives were associated with greater participation.

Successful program implementation requires definition of the services to be provided, the approach to their delivery, and the types of organizations and staff best qualified to deliver them. Programs also need to define whom they will serve and strategies to enroll and engage the target population. A plan that describes these program inputs and activities provides instructions for program staff and can facilitate program monitoring and inform decision making about program improvement. Definition of inputs and activities also supports future replication.

This chapter describes each type of input and activity specified in PACT's evaluation framework. It describes the programs' services and approaches to delivery and the characteristics of enrolled fathers and of staff employed by the programs. Finally, the chapter highlights how programs support service delivery through staff training and supervision, program monitoring, and strategies to recruit and retain participants. The information in this chapter is based on in-person interviews with staff members, observations of workshops during site visits, reviews of program documents, a survey of staff members, and baseline interviews with fathers at the time of enrollment.

A. Services offered in RF programs

Each RF grantee participating in PACT offers a package of services to fathers. Core services are required by the OFA RF grant; supplementary services are all other services and supports available to participants based on need or interest.

1. Core services

RF grantees must offer voluntary services in three areas: (1) parenting and fatherhood skills, (2) economic stability, and (3) relationship skills. The grantees provide core services in group and one-on-one settings. For group services, programs use different curriculum (Table II.1).

Parenting content draws on published curricula on the role of fathers, child development, and parenting and coparenting skills. Parenting and fatherhood services aim to help fathers become a positive presence in the lives of their children and are typically provided in a curriculum-based group workshop. Despite using different curricula, each parenting and fatherhood workshop covers content on the meaning of fatherhood, child development, and parenting and coparenting skills (Box II.1). All programs offer content intended to help participants understand what it means for them to be a father. Facilitators lead fathers in discussions about the qualities, roles, and responsibilities of fathers and how parenting fits into their personal conceptions of manhood and masculinity. Another common topic is child development and children's needs at different ages. Programs also teach effective parenting skills, such as nurturing, positive reinforcement, and how to reconnect with their children. Parenting and fatherhood workshops also discuss the importance of meeting child support obligations and how to navigate the child support system. Other topics include challenges to

All programs offer content intended to help participants understand what it means for them to be a father.

Table II.1. Curricula for core program services

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project
Curriculum for parenting and fatherhood group service	<i>Effective Black Parenting</i> ^a <i>HighScope Early Childhood Curriculum for Preschool, Infants, Toddlers, and Early Elementary Children</i> ^b	<i>Father Development: A Curriculum for Young Fathers</i> ^c	<i>Quenching the Father Thirst</i> ^d	<i>Young Dads/ Young Moms</i> ^e <i>Nueva Familia</i> ^f
Curriculum for economic stability group service	<i>Program developed economic stability curriculum</i>	<i>Program developed economic stability curriculum</i>	<i>Program developed economic stability curriculum</i>	<i>Program developed economic stability curriculum</i>
Curriculum for relationships and marriage group service	<i>Nurturing Skills for Families</i> ^g	<i>Within My Reach</i> ^h	<i>Ready for Love</i> ⁱ	<i>Within My Reach</i> ^j

Source: Site visits and program documents.

^a See <http://www.ciccparenting.org/EffBlackParentingDesc.aspx>.

^b See <http://www.highscope.org/Content.asp?ContentId=223>.

^c See <http://www.npclstrongfamilies.org>.

^d See <http://hmr curriculum.acf.hhs.gov/Curricula/Details/108>.

^e See <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies/about>.

^f *Nueva Familia* is a Spanish-language version of *Young Dads/Young Moms*, and is used in the FATHER Project’s programming for Latino fathers.

^g See <http://nurturingparenting.com/ecommerce/category/1:2:1/>.

^h See <https://www.prepinc.com/Content/CURRICULA/Within-My-Reach.htm>

ⁱ See <http://hmr curriculum.acf.hhs.gov/Curricula/Details/73>.

^j The FATHER Project also uses *Within Our Reach*, designed for couples, in a supplemental couples’ workshop.

Box II.1. Example lessons from parenting workshops

<p><i>Quenching the Father Thirst</i></p> <p>Used by Successful STEPS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The needs of children 2. Manhood as the foundation for fatherhood 3. The challenges of being a father 4. The effects of stress on parenting 5. Strategies to reconnect with children 6. A father’s family history 7. The co-parent relationship 	<p><i>Effective Black Parenting and HighScope Early Childhood Curriculum for Preschool, Infants, Toddlers, and Early Elementary Children</i></p> <p>Adapted by the Center for Fathering</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The role of the father 2. Nurturing parenting 3. Parenting without violence or fear 4. Communication 5. Coparenting 6. Growth and child development 7. Domestic abuse 8. Understanding discipline
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Source: Site visits and program documents.



effective parenting, such as how to handle stress or unexpected life events, and skills for successful coparenting, such as nonconfrontational communication.

Programs assist fathers with economic stability through group and individual

support. Each RF program in PACT offers a group-based workshop that covers economic stability topics (Table II.2). In two programs, the Center for Fathering and The FATHER Project, the workshop focuses only on topics related to economic stability. The Center for Fathering’s workshop includes seven, 1-hour sessions with each session focused on a different topic. The FATHER Project’s workshop is a one-time, full-day event. At the Family Formation Project and Successful STEPS, the economic stability content is included in each program’s daily, multi-week workshop which integrates content on parenting and, for one program, relationships.

Each RF program in PACT developed its own curriculum for the economic stability workshop.

Across programs, workshops cover similar economic stability topics intended to help fathers develop skills for finding and retaining employment. All workshops cover such topics as conducting a job search, creating cover letters and resumes, and successfully interviewing for positions. Staff at the Family Formation Program, Successful STEPS, and Center for Fathering also discuss appropriate work attitudes, such as responding constructively to criticism and having a positive outlook. Staff at the FATHER Project cover professionalism in their workshop. Each RF program in PACT developed its own curriculum for the economic stability workshop. Box II.2 describes the topics presented in standalone economic stability workshops for two programs.

To complement the economic stability workshop, dedicated employment staff members offer fathers individual employment support (Table II.2). The Family Formation Program, Successful STEPS, and the FATHER Project employ staff who specialize in employment services and maintain a caseload of fathers. Their primary

Table II.2. Core economic stability services

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project
Group-based services				
Stand-alone employment workshop	✓			✓
Employment content in daily workshop that also covers other topics		✓	✓	
Individual services				
Skills and interest assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Individualized employment plan		✓	✓	✓
Resource room with Internet access for job search	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employment-focused case management to assist with job placement	✓	✓	✓	✓
Job development		✓	✓	✓
Program-supervised job practicum		✓		
Peer discussion and support groups on employment topics		✓	✓	✓

Source: Site visits and program documents.

responsibilities are to help fathers identify skills and interests, apply for jobs, and obtain employment. Employment staff may administer workforce assessments, provide referrals to training opportunities, or arrange transportation to job interviews. These programs also have staff who work with community employers to develop positions for program participants. Fathers in the Family Formation Program participate in a “job practicum,” akin to an unpaid internship or community service, to develop marketable skills; employment staff monitor fathers’ performance in these placements. Dedicated employment staff at the Center for Fathering serve in a similar capacity as the employment staff at the other programs, but instead of carrying a caseload, they staff the program’s employment resource room, where men can learn computer and job search skills and use computers and phones to facilitate job searching. Employment staff only work with fathers who visit this facility.

All programs expect fathers to show signs of employment readiness before they provide individual assistance with job placement. Signs of readiness include having a social security number and identification to obtain employment and having developed a resume. For example, the first two weeks of the Successful STEPS’ core workshop

Box II.2. Example topics from standalone economic stability workshops

Twice monthly, the FATHER Project offers a one-day workshop to introduce participants to available economic stability services and help fathers acquire initial skills to support a job search. The workshop covers five topics:

1. **Creating your personal brand:** how to identify and understand individual skills, personal traits, and professionalism
2. **Marketing your brand:** how to write cover letters and resumes and develop an “elevator pitch”
3. **Interviewing:** strategies for conducting a job search and skills for networking and interviewing
4. **Cold feet/happy feet:** overcoming fear of success or failure in the workplace
5. **Sustaining success:** skills for retaining a job and resolving conflict on the job

The Center for Fathering holds its Ready! Set! Work! workshop two morning per week, during which program staff present on seven topics on a rotating basis:

1. Realistic expectations
2. Skill identification
3. Job applications
4. Resumes and cover letters
5. Job search
6. Interview techniques
7. Positive work attitudes

Source: Site visits and program documents.

cover economic stability and workforce development. Despite introducing economic stability content early, fathers must demonstrate employment readiness before working with a job developer. In contrast, employment services such as job search and placement are not introduced at the Family Formation Program until the final two weeks of the integrated workshop, at which point they become the primary focus. This stems from the organization’s belief that fathers who have not completed content on personal development, parenting, and relationship skills are not ready to look for employment because they may lack the sense of accountability and social skills needed for workplace success. The FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering recommend that fathers attend parenting and relationship workshops before attending the economic stability workshop.

Relationship services are skills based. Group-based relationship skills workshops aim to help fathers develop communication, conflict management, and related skills that are needed for a healthy partner relationship or marriage and for coparenting with the mothers of their children. Although the programs use different curricula, they cover similar content. Box II.3 provides an illustration of the topics covered in two of the four RF programs in PACT.

Box II.3. Example topics from relationship workshop: *Within My Reach*

Within My Reach is a healthy relationship curriculum developed by PREP Inc. for low-income, single parents. At the FATHER Project, the stand-alone relationship workshop, Relationship Empowerment, follows this curriculum. The Family Formation Program also incorporates elements of this curriculum into its integrated workshop. *Within My Reach* covers four topics:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Characteristics of healthy relationships and how participants can have them | 3. Impact of parents' intimate relationships, co-parenting, communication patterns, and family structure on children |
| 2. Assessing and improving communication | 4. Goal setting and attainment |

Source: Sparks (2008).

Workshops first challenge fathers to define a healthy relationship, including relationship roles and expectations. Facilitators then introduce communication, anger management, conflict resolution, and financial management skills, all of which contribute to healthy relationships. Three programs—(1) the Center for Fathering, (2) the Family Formation Program, and (3) Successful STEPS—partner with domestic violence agencies. Staff from these partners discuss domestic violence with program participants. Three programs—(1) the Center for Fathering, (2) Successful STEPS, and (3) the FATHER Project—also encourage women to participate in the relationship workshops, either by attending with the father or by participating in a separate workshop for female partners.

2. Supplementary services

All programs offer supplementary services in addition to the core services required by the RF grant (parenting, relationships, and economic stability). These services address content not required by the grant, such as personal development or child support, which may complement, reinforce, or extend the core services offered. For example, each program provides programming to help fathers develop as individuals and to assist them in navigating the child support system. Other supplementary services that support or build from the core services include, for example, (1) supervised activities with children, (2) opportunities to develop leadership skills, (3) relationship skills workshops for couples, (4) vocational training or subsidized employment, and (5) transportation assistance (Table II.3).

Programs emphasize personal development during workshops and case management. Although not required by the OFA RF grant, all RF programs in PACT cover a group of topics that are related to what might be considered “personal development.” This includes such topics as stress and coping, responding to discrimination, problem solving and decision making, what it means to be a man, interpersonal skills, self-sufficiency, and goal planning. These services are thought to

enhance fathers’ sense of personal responsibility and accountability, characteristics that are foundational to success in the workplace and to providing consistent support for their children. The RF programs in PACT considered this content essential to their services, and thus wove it into the core workshops that all fathers were expected to receive.

Table II.3. Supplementary services

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project
Personal development				
Social-emotional skills development and taking responsibility	✓	✓	✓	✓
Child support and legal services				
Assistance navigating the child support system	✓	✓	✓	✓
Legal advice and advocacy		✓		✓
Parenting and fatherhood skills				
Advanced parenting workshops	✓	✓		✓
Supervised activities with children		✓	✓	✓
Relationship skills				
Individual-level meetings to discuss couple or family relationship issues		✓		
Relationship skills for couples				✓
Economic stability services				
GED assistance or tutoring			✓	✓
Access to vocational training		✓		
Subsidized employment			✓	
Unpaid internships or job shadowing	✓	✓		✓
Job fairs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Personal health, work supports, and advanced personal development				
Free health services			✓	
Transportation assistance	✓	✓	✓	
Professional clothing closet		✓	✓	
Workshop facilitator training				✓
Leadership opportunities		✓		✓

Source: Site visits and program documents.

Three of the four programs (the FATHER Project, the Family Formation Program, and Successful STEPS) begin services by focusing on this type of content. At the FATHER Project and the Family Formation Program, an initial orientation asks fathers to reflect on their life, how they got to where they are, and what they want to change. All fathers at the FATHER Project must attend a 2-day orientation before attending other activities. The Family Formation Program's orientation occurs throughout the first week of the core workshop and emphasizes personal responsibility and accountability. Personal development is a key focus of the economic stability services at Successful STEPS. Fathers complete exercises to boost self-confidence, develop a positive mindset, and reflect on their personalities and actions.

To guide personal development, the Family Formation Program, Successful STEPS, and the FATHER Project help fathers develop foundational plans that articulate goals and values (see example in Box II.4). For example, at the FATHER Project, the fatherhood plan lists the father's goals and the services he will receive. At the Family Formation Program, fathers outline their personal and professional goals to understand how participation in the program is a step towards achieving these goals.

Box II.4. Example of a foundational plan: Successful STEPS

All fathers participating in the Successful STEPS program complete a life plan at the end of the integrated economic stability and parenting workshop. After the workshop, life transformation coaches (case managers) use the plan to assess goal progress and make updates every 90 days. All staff members have access to the life plans, which are uploaded into the program's MIS.

Life plans identify goals and action steps in eight domains:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. Transportation | 5. Spiritual* |
| 2. Education | 6. Employment |
| 3. Family | 7. Housing |
| 4. Social | 8. Health |

*Although they may address spirituality, RF grantees must be neutral with respect to religion. They cannot promote, endorse, or favor religious beliefs over nonreligious beliefs, nor disparage religious beliefs in any way.

Source: Site visits and program documents.

Partnerships with local child support agencies address a central need. Help understanding and navigating the child support system is a major area of need for many nonresidential, low-income fathers. In PACT, nearly 60 percent of fathers had a child support order at study enrollment (Table II.6).

Child support agencies can offer a range of services for any father with a child support order, but may be more amenable to doing so when the father is participating in an RF program and seeking to improve his ability to contribute financially for his children.

Depending on local and state laws, child support agencies may have the discretion to offer services that help address the child support issues of fathers participating in RF programs. Child support agencies can offer a range of services for any father with a child support order, but may be more amenable to doing so when the father is participating in an RF program and seeking to improve his ability to contribute financially for his children. These services may include, for example: reductions in state-owed child support arrears, reinstatement of suspended driver's licenses, review of child support orders for possible modification, and keeping fathers out of court for contempt.

In PACT, all four RF programs established relationships with their local child support offices. These partnerships facilitate the provision of services such as those described above, however the extent of involvement by the child support agencies ranged from limited to extensive across the programs (Table II.4).

In three of the four programs, information on how to navigate the child support system is provided by staff from the program's local child support agency, most often within a core workshop or program orientation. Three programs also reported that their local child support office views program participation as part of a father's good-faith effort to provide financial support for their children by paying child support. These child support offices are amenable to advocacy efforts by RF program staff to reinstate program participants' driver's licenses and to modify child support orders and reduce garnishments from fathers' take-home pay, when appropriate. Although most of the local child support agencies also provide referrals to the PACT RF programs, and are receptive to requests for meetings with individual fathers, one program stands out for its high level of child support agency involvement.

Of the four programs, the FATHER Project has the most engagement of its local child support agencies. The Divisions of Child Support in Hennepin and Ramsey counties assign dedicated case managers to fathers participating in the FATHER Project, and co-locate these workers at the RF program's Minneapolis and St. Paul offices, respectively. These co-located child support staff manage the cases of participants in the FATHER Project, allowing father participants to more conveniently access them. Co-location also enhances child support staff's understanding of each father's unique circumstances and progress. Co-located staff participate in regular case review meetings with FATHER Project staff, which may put them in a better position to manage such issues as reviews of child support orders, requests for modifications, and reinstatement of driver's licenses suspended due to nonpayment.

Another RF program in PACT, Successful STEPS, also enjoys the support of its local child support agencies, albeit in different ways. Among PACT programs, Successful STEPS is unique in its agreement with a local child support agency to reduce state-owed child support arrears for RF program participation. For fathers with child

Table II.4. Role of child support in supporting RF program services

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project		
	Hennepin County Division of Child Support	Missouri State Dept. of Social Services	Missouri State Dept. of Social Services	Kansas Dept. for Children and Families	Hennepin County Division of Child Support	Ramsey County Division of Child Support
Provide referrals		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide an orientation about the child support system		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hold individual meetings with fathers		✓		✓	✓	✓
Allow program to advocate for fathers in child support matters	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Participate in program case review meetings					✓	✓
Assign dedicated child support case managers to participants					✓	✓
Co-locate staff with RF program				✓ ^a	✓	✓
Reduce state-owed arrears based on program participation				✓		✓
Review and modify child support orders as appropriate; reinstate drivers' licenses as appropriate ^b		✓	✓		✓	✓

Source: Site visits and program documents.

^a Successful STEPS holds workshops and information sessions at the office of the Kansas Department for Children and Families.

^b Services are available to any father in the state or county, not only RF program participants; however, advocacy by program staff and co-location of child support staff may facilitate the resolution of such matters.

support cases in Kansas, the Kansas Department for Children and Families reduces up to \$1,625 of fathers' state-owed child support arrears based on the number of hours of participation in Successful STEPS. Successful STEPS also has a partnership with its local child support office in Missouri, through which program participants may request to have child support orders modified, develop temporary lower payment agreements while a father looks for work, and have non-payment penalties, such as a driver's license suspension, lifted for program participation and small, good-faith child support payments.

In some cases, the involvement of a local child support agency can be limited by local or state child support policies or legislation. A third PACT RF program, the Family Formation Program, has long worked with its local child support office to improve opportunities for fathers. It was responsible for helping to establish child support courts in the St. Louis area, and assisted with getting legislation signed in 2008 to establish these courts statewide.

To further assist fathers with child support, custody, visitation, and paternity concerns, the Family Formation Program and the FATHER Project offer supplementary legal services. At the Family Formation Program, fathers can access an in-house legal clinic for free advice and advocacy related to paternity establishment, visitation, and child support order modification. Through partnership with Central Minnesota Legal Services, fathers attending the FATHER Project can receive pro bono legal advice. The partner also provides free legal representation to a small number of fathers and discusses fathers' rights during workshops.

Other supplementary services are tailored to fathers' specific needs. The Family Formation Program, Successful STEPS, and the FATHER Project assign each father a case manager to help address specific needs related to parenting, relationships, and personal development. Case managers are expected to help fathers develop and revise goals. At the Family Formation Program, case managers are social workers who offer fathers referrals to legal services, mental and physical health services, and other social services, according to each father's needs. They meet with fathers in the second week of the program and monthly thereafter. At Successful STEPS, case managers help fathers obtain stable housing and proper government identification, address physical and mental health needs, including drug treatment, and address other needs that may impede employment. Case managers are assigned to fathers during the FATHER Project's orientation to assess needs, arrange core services, and provide referrals. Fathers at the Center for Fathering are not assigned a case manager; rather, the best-suited staff member assists the father as needs arise.

B. Two approaches to service delivery

Each of the four RF programs in PACT take one of two distinct approaches to deliver services (Table II.5). In one approach, programs provide intensive services to groups of fathers who proceed through the program together. We refer to this approach as the "integrated cohort." It is used by Successful STEPS and the Family Formation Program. The second approach offers an open-entry format with a menu of lower-intensity services that fathers can join at any time. The FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering use this approach, which we refer to as "open-entry workshop."

Integrated cohort programs combine content into a single core workshop that fathers are expected to attend. The Family Formation Program wraps parenting,

Table II.5. Two approaches to service delivery

	Integrated cohort	Open-entry workshop
Core services	Workshops with integrated content and prescribed sequence	Separate content area workshops, which the fathers have flexibility to choose
Emphasis and sequence of content	Early content emphasizes personal development as essential foundation for building employment, parenting, and relationship skills	Fathers encouraged to complete parenting workshop first, then relationship workshop or employment services
Intensity and duration	High intensity, daily participation 84–240 total hours 22–32 sessions 2.5–6 weeks	Lower intensity, weekly participation 24–72 total hours 20–28 sessions 20–28 weeks
Attendance	Fathers progress as a cohort at a set pace	Self-paced, open-entry, open-exit workshops

Source: Site visits and program documents.

relationship, and economic stability content into a six-week daily workshop, whereas Successful STEPS integrates economic stability and parenting into a two-and-a-half week, daily workshop (with relationship education offered separately following the integrated workshop). Groups of fathers proceed through the programs' core workshop together, providing the opportunity for men to form bonds based on shared experiences. Both the Family Formation Program and Successful STEPS are designed to provide fathers with considerable support and expect a significant commitment from the fathers. Men are expected to attend daily, unless they have an excused absence (such as for a job interview or parole meeting). At the Family Formation Program, fathers who are not attending regularly in the first week must restart with the next group.

The structure and sequence of integrated cohort workshops emphasize the importance of personal growth to build the skills needed for stable employment; responsible, nurturing parenting; and healthy adult relationships. At the outset, staff at the Family Formation Program challenge fathers to confront and take responsibility for their problems, while providing support from staff and peers who have overcome similar challenges. After this step, workshop leaders begin engaging them in content on parenting, relationships, and workforce preparation, only adding active job search in the final two weeks of the workshop (see Box II.5). At Successful STEPS, staff begin by addressing fathers' social-emotional development, for example, by focusing on topics such as emotion regulation. Job readiness topics, such as resume development, are covered after fathers have had an opportunity to explore and understand personality traits and work and communication styles, and to build self-efficacy.

Staff at both the Family Formation Program and Successful STEPS view the cohort as a defining feature of their program. Fathers in the cohorts typically form a peer

Box II.5. Example of an integrated workshop: Family Formation Program

The core of the Family Formation Program is a six-week workshop that fathers are expected to attend all day, Monday through Friday. The workshop's weekly structure is as follows:

Week 1: Orientation and personal responsibility. Fathers learn about goals and values, what it means to be a father and a provider, and personal health. Fathers attend workshop for the full day.

Week 2: Communication. Fathers learn about active listening, understanding stress, coping strategies, and anger management. Fathers attend morning workshops and begin individualized activities in the afternoon. Fathers meet their case manager and job developer.

Week 3: Manhood and relationships. Fathers discuss what it means to be a man, the roadblocks to successful relationships, domestic violence, and self-sufficiency. Fathers attend morning workshops and continue individualized activities in the afternoon.

Week 4: Fatherhood. Fathers learn about becoming involved in their children's lives, child development, navigating the child support system, and overcoming challenges related to being a nonresidential father. Fathers attend morning workshops and continue individualized activities in the afternoon.

Week 5: Job readiness. Fathers learn about work culture and work ethic; what employers expect of employees; how to write a resume, complete a job application, and look for a job; and interview techniques. Fathers attend morning workshops and continue individualized activities in the afternoon. Fathers dress in business attire so they are ready for job interviews at any time.

Week 6: Employment and putting it all together. Fathers learn about declaring paternity and asking for support. They review relationship skills, arrange for future training and program support, and create a list of personal and job goals to accomplish within a year. Fathers attend morning workshops and continue individualized activities in the afternoon. Fathers dress in business attire so they are ready for job interviews at any time.

Source: Site visits and program documents.

group that encourages participation and self-improvement. Family Formation Program facilitators refer to the cohort as a "band of brothers." The facilitators suggest that significant learning for fathers happens during breaks, when they help each other to internalize the workshops' lessons.

Fathers must receive all of the integrated workshop content to graduate. Fathers at Successful STEPS must make up missed classes one-on-one with a case manager to receive employment assistance. The Family Formation Program removes fathers from the workshop if they are absent more than three times, although they can restart the workshop with a new cohort.

Open-entry workshop programs offer a menu of separate workshops. The programs offer fathers support in the three required content areas through workshops that meet less frequently than the integrated programs. Both the Center for Fathering and the FATHER Project offer stand-alone workshops in weekly one- to two-hour sessions. The Center for Fathering offers each of its three workshops in an eight-topic sequence, whereas the FATHER Project’s parenting and relationship workshops are offered in 12-week cycles. Workshop sessions do not build on one another, so fathers may begin attending a workshop at any point and take as long as they need to complete the series. Although fathers may choose to participate in any or all of the services, program staff generally encourage fathers to complete the parenting workshop first. These programs also prioritize the assessment of fathers’ needs. The FATHER Project, for example, assesses fathers and develops a “fatherhood plan” with each participant, which specifies the sequence and type of services he should receive.

C. Men served in RF programs

Fathers enrolled in PACT at RF programs face multiple challenges. Men enrolling in the PACT evaluation sample at the four RF programs are mostly nonresidential fathers with more than one child (Table II.6). On average, fathers had two to three children. Nearly half of fathers had children with multiple women. Although almost all fathers had at one point lived with at least one of their children, only about one in five were living with one of their children at the time they entered the program. About two-thirds of fathers were no longer romantically involved with any mother of a child they had fathered.

Sample members were primarily low-income men of color. An overwhelming proportion—81 percent—were African American. Hispanic fathers made up about 5



Table II.6. Baseline characteristics of fathers enrolled in PACT

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	Total PACT RF sample
Demographics					
Average age (years)	38	34	36	32	35
Race and ethnicity (%)					
Hispanic	4	1	4	16	5
Black, non-Hispanic	80	93	78	62	81
White, non-Hispanic	7	4	13	13	8
Other	9	3	5	8	6
Foreign born (%)	4	1	1	11	4
Socioeconomic status					
Have high school diploma or GED (%)	73	64	68	71	69
Earnings in last 30 days (%)					
No earnings	58	49	52	40	50
\$1–\$500	20	31	34	25	27
\$501–\$1,000	10	13	9	16	12
More than \$1,001	11	7	4	20	11
Housing stability					
Stable housing (%)					
Own home	1	2	3	3	2
Rent home	27	24	21	32	26
Contribute to rent	14	21	10	21	18
Unstable housing (%)					
Halfway or group house, treatment facility	14	6	14	7	10
Homeless	17	7	10	8	10
Live rent-free in someone's home	22	35	38	26	30
Other unstable housing	4	4	4	3	4
Criminal justice system involvement					
Ever been convicted of a crime (%)	80	65	80	71	73
Longest time in adult correc- tional institution among fathers convicted of a crime (years)	2.3	2.7	3.0	1.1	2.3
Currently on parole (%)	30	35	43	30	34

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	Total PACT RF sample
Father involvement and parenting behavior					
Number of children	2.4	2.8	2.5	2.6	2.6
Have children from multiple mothers (%)	39	52	48	49	47
Ever lived with any child (%)	88	86	83	89	87
Lives currently with at least one child (%)	21	23	20	22	22
Spent recent time with at least one child (%)	73	85	78	83	80
Have child support order (%)	41	67	60	66	58
Amount paid in last 30 days ^a	\$163	\$142	\$88	\$182	\$149
Paid informal child support in last 30 days (%)	30	31	27	34	31
Romantic relationships					
Ever married to mother of at least one child (%)	28	27	30	23	27
In romantic relationship (%)	48	58	49	56	53
In romantic relationship with mother of at least one child (%)	32	36	30	34	34
Motivation for program enrollment					
Improve relationship with children (%)	62	60	39	70	60
Improve job situation (%)	32	36	58	22	35
Improve relationship with children's mother (%)	6	4	3	7	5
Psychological well-being					
At risk for moderate to severe depression (%)	30	30	19	25	28
Sample size	1,431	1,728	605	970	4,734

Source: PACT baseline survey.

Note: Sites began PACT intake between December 9, 2012, and February 13, 2013. All fathers randomly assigned through August 22, 2014 were included.

^a Includes all fathers with a child support order, whether or not they paid child support in the month prior to enrollment.

percent of the total sample (most enrolled at the FATHER Project, where Hispanic men made up 16 percent of the sample). Half of all fathers had not worked for pay in the 30 days prior to enrollment of services; of those who had worked, most earned \$500 or less in that time.

In addition to being low income, many fathers had low educational attainment and unstable living situations. More than 3 in 10 fathers lacked a high school diploma. The same proportion were living rent-free in someone's home, such as a friend, co-parent, or relative. The proportion of fathers living rent-free outnumbered the proportion who rented or owned homes. Ten percent of the sample was homeless at the time of enrollment in PACT, and another 10 percent was living in a halfway house, group house, treatment center, or another transitional arrangement.

Many fathers also had incarceration histories or were in the process of re-entering society after incarceration when they enrolled in the study. Nearly three-quarters of the fathers had previously been convicted of a crime. The longest average prison term (for fathers convicted of a crime) ranged from a little more than a year to three years across the four programs. About a third of fathers were on parole at the time of enrollment in PACT.

Involvement with the child support system was common. Nearly 60 percent of fathers had a legal arrangement or child support order. On average, fathers with child support orders paid \$149 in the month prior to program enrollment; this includes fathers who paid nothing. Limiting the sample to fathers who paid some child support in the month prior to enrollment, 43 percent reported paying an average of \$343; the amount paid ranged from \$1 to \$3,036. About a third of all fathers in the PACT sample paid informal child support during the month prior to enrollment.

D. Staff in RF programs and the support they receive

RF programs must hire and retain staff with the right mix of skills and experience to provide high quality services to populations with multiple needs. Staff must have a clear understanding of their roles and receive adequate training and supervision. RF programs typically employ a program director or manager, staff to facilitate the workshops, case managers to address fathers' needs, and employment services staff. This section describes the characteristics of staff employed by RF programs, staffing structures, and supervision and training supports using data from a staff survey conducted in fall 2013 and staff interviews during site visits.⁵

1. Staff background and experience

RF programs employed staff with backgrounds similar to those of participants.

According to staff surveys, RF staff in the programs in PACT were of similar racial and ethnic makeup as fathers and about half were male (Table II.7). The Family Formation Program had the highest proportion of staff and participants who were African

**Table II.7. Staff characteristics and education**

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	All RF grantees in PACT
Gender (%)					
Male	40	42	46	65	48
Female	60	58	46	29	48
Not reported	0	0	8	6	4
Race and ethnicity (%)					
Hispanic	10	0	18	12	8
Black, non-Hispanic	70	71	64	59	66
White, non-Hispanic	10	4	0	18	8
Other	10	25	18	12	18
Education (%)					
High school diploma or equivalency	10	0	0	6	3
Some college	30	21	27	6	19
Associate's degree or vocational certificate	20	25	9	41	26
Bachelor's degree	30	21	27	29	26
Some graduate school	10	13	18	12	13
Master's or professional degree	0	21	18	6	13
Sample size	10	24	11	17	62

Source: PACT Staff Survey, fall 2013.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding and respondents' ability to choose multiple responses. Respondents exclude organizational leaders.

American. The two programs with the largest proportion of Hispanic staff, Successful STEPS and the FATHER Project, also had the highest proportions of Hispanic fathers. The number of male and female staff was equal when combining staff for the four RF programs in PACT. The greatest proportion of male staff was at the FATHER Project, where more than two-thirds of the staff were men.

Completion of postsecondary education was common among program staff, and was required in two programs. More than half of the staff members in these programs had a bachelor's degree or higher. The Family Formation Program, which had the most educated staff of the four programs, required facilitators without a bachelor's degree to be enrolled in a postsecondary education program and required social workers to have a bachelor or master's degree in social work. The FATHER Project required case managers to have at least an associate's degree. The Center for Fathering and Successful STEPS prioritized life experience and personality, respectively, over academic experience. These programs had the highest proportion of staff without a college degree, but the majority of staff at the Center for Fathering and Successful STEPS had completed a postsecondary degree.

Managers at all of the programs valued staff who could connect and empathize with participants. The Family Formation Program, the FATHER Project, and Center for Fathering explicitly hired staff with similar experiences as fathers. As of fall 2013, program graduates served in key service delivery roles at all four programs. All of the workshop facilitators for the Family Formation Program were program graduates who were formerly incarcerated. The director of the Center for Fathering was a program graduate. Program graduates facilitated workshops at the FATHER Project. One Successful STEPS graduate worked as a case manager.

Employment tenure reflected program size and leadership continuity. The average length of employment for staff across the four RF programs in PACT varied from one-and-a-half years to almost four years (Table II.8). The two programs with the shortest average tenure, Successful STEPS and the Center for Fathering, had the smallest number of staff and needed to expand the most to meet the needs of participating in the PACT evaluation. The Center for Fathering increased its frontline staff capacity by 40 percent after joining the evaluation. Successful STEPS reassigned several staff to serve as managers and hired new frontline staff, but staff turnover also contributed to their lower average tenure. Both the Family Formation Program and the FATHER Project expanded their staff capacities, but the organizational structure and managerial staff at the two programs have remained consistent. Managers with the Family Formation Program and the FATHER Project were either involved in the development and startup of their program or have worked for the program's host organization for a decade or more.

Table II.8. Staff employment and experience

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	All RF grantees in PACT
Average length of employment (years)	1.5	3.4	2.7	3.7	3.1
Involvement in RF program activities					
Outreach and intake (%)	100	88	100	94	94
Facilitation (%)	70	63	46	88	67
Employment services (%)	90	67	82	53	69
Case management (%)	100	75	73	94	94
Staff supervision and training (%)	50	71	55	50	59
Program support or other (%)	30	8	0	6	10
Prior experience					
Parenting or fatherhood education experience (%)	70	67	36	82	66
Average length of experience (years)	8.9	6.9	7.3	8.0	7.6
Relationship skills education experience (%)	60	50	36	47	48
Average length of experience (years)	8.2	7.4	7.3	6.1	7.2
Employment services experience (%)	90	88	73	82	84
Average length of experience (years)	8.0	7.7	8.3	7.4	7.8
Sample size	10	24	11	17	62

Source: PACT Staff Survey, fall 2013.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding and respondents' ability to choose multiple responses. Respondents exclude organizational leaders.

Many program staff had prior experience in core areas of service delivery. Prior experience in employment services was most common. Overall, staff had nearly eight years of experience on average. Two-thirds of staff members also had substantial experience providing fatherhood or parenting education. Of the three core areas required by the OFA RF grant, program staff members had the least experience providing relationship skills education. Fewer than half of program staff members had experience providing relationship skills education.

Staff members tend to play multiple roles within their organizations. Across all programs, almost all staff members participate in outreach and recruitment. The proportion of staff participating in facilitation and case management is equal at both the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering, where the facilitators are also responsible for case management. At Successful STEPS and the Family Formation Program, different staff members fill these roles. The Family Formation Program involves more staff in supervision and training than other programs. Staff with the Center for Fathering have the most overlap in responsibilities, due to the program's small size and desire to match a father's need with the best-positioned staff member.

2. Staff training, supervision, mentoring, and support

At each organization, new staff orientation involves a formal review of procedures, content, and responsibilities. Programs incorporate some combination of presentations by supervisors, work observations, structured interactions with colleagues, and training. At Successful STEPS and the FATHER Project, staff receive orientation to the broader organization and the RF program. All new Successful STEPS staff receive an overview of program operations, background on Connections to Success, and grant requirements before receiving training from their supervisors on their specific roles. The FATHER Project tailors the initial staff training to each staff member's needs and may include up to five training modules that collectively last two weeks. New staff at the Family Formation Program learn the organizational culture at the Fathers' Support Center St. Louis through interviewing staff members. The Center for Fathering mostly provides on-the-job training. Three programs—(1) the Family Formation Program, (2) Successful STEPS, and (3) the Center for Fathering—require staff to observe workshops before providing services to fathers. The FATHER Project requires staff to complete facilitation training before leading a parenting workshop.

All programs require ongoing professional development. Overall, 9 in 10 staff reported attending training in the 12 months prior to completing the staff survey (Table II.9). In most programs, ongoing professional development is a job requirement, which may involve regularly scheduled training or ad hoc opportunities. The Family Formation Program reserves two weeks between its six-week workshop for staff training to review policies, procedures, curriculum, and pacing—all staff, including partners, participate. The other three programs provide training as needed. For example, these programs may convene training if managers feel frontline staff need to enhance their skills. Partner organizations provide trainings on topics such as how to identify mental health issues or how to appropriately address domestic violence (including referrals for services outside of the agency). At least two programs, Successful STEPS and the Family Formation Program, have hosted trainings by curriculum developers. Also, Successful STEPS and the FATHER Project provide opportunities for staff to attend outside trainings. Past topics include leadership and assisting participants with employment.

Staff received regular supervision and mentoring. Staff in all programs received regular supervision (Table II.9). Almost all staff members could identify a supervisor (not shown in table). More than three-quarters of staff identified a mentor or coach in addition to a supervisor. More than 70 percent of staff reported receiving supervision at least monthly, whether in a group or individually.

Staff reported that individual supervision—one-on-one meetings between a staff member and his or her supervisor—largely occurred weekly; however, meetings are not necessarily scheduled. In interviews, all program supervisors described “open door” support, in which staff work closely with their supervisors and receive regular supervision. At Successful STEPS, the practice of “open door” support is a function of the small staff size and collaborative work environment among staff in similar roles. At the Family Formation Program, supervisors report that they signal to staff that they are available, as needed; regularly scheduled supervision meetings are unnecessary because staff rely on each other to resolve many of their issues.

Table II.9. Staff training and support

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	All RF grantees in PACT
Participated in training in past 12 months (%)	100	96	82	82	90
Have mentor or coach (%)	90	79	46	82	76
Frequency of individual supervision (%)					
Weekly or more	70	54	36	31	48
Biweekly	0	25	18	38	23
Monthly	30	17	27	19	21
Less than monthly	0	0	0	13	3
Never	0	4	0	0	2
Frequency of group supervision (%)					
Weekly or more	90	29	0	50	39
Biweekly	0	50	18	31	31
Monthly	0	13	64	0	16
Less than monthly	0	0	9	0	2
Never	10	8	0	19	10
Sample size	10	24	11	17	62

Source: PACT Staff Survey, fall 2013.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding, respondents' ability to choose multiple responses, and the number of non-responses. Respondents exclude organizational leaders.

According to the staff survey, group supervision—meetings between a supervisor and multiple staff members, such as a department meeting—was less frequent than individual supervision. This was the case at all programs except for the Center for Fathering, where group supervision was weekly. At the Family Formation Program and the FATHER Project, group supervision often was biweekly. In interviews at Successful STEPS, the lead case manager indicated that she held biweekly meetings with the staff she supervised, while the manager of the workshop facilitators reported holding staff meetings before each new program cohort.

E. Strategies to manage programs and promote high quality service delivery

Data, workshop observations, and case reviews help grantees monitor program quality. Reviewing data entered into an MIS allows managers to track enrollment and service delivery. Managers use this data to monitor and assess an array of program activities, including the time spent with participants, whether fathers' needs are met, attendance at program activities, and the length of time it takes to engage fathers in services. Three of the four RF programs use PACTIS, the MIS developed specifically for PACT. Connections to Success had recently adopted Efforts to Outcomes, a different MIS, before entering the PACT evaluation. The organization continued to use this system for Successful STEPS during the evaluation.

All managers review data elements such as enrollment, participation, and job placement to inform program adjustments.

All managers review data elements such as enrollment, participation, and job placement to inform program adjustments. For example, a review of MIS data (conducted with Mathematica technical assistance staff) alerted managers at the Center for Fathering to low participation, spurring the development of a condensed workshop to engage inactive fathers. Also, several programs eased recruiting from homeless shelters upon seeing in their data that these fathers rarely participated. Programs also upload unique items into their MIS to support monitoring. Workshop facilitators for the Family Formation Program, for example, upload pre- and post-session participant surveys that measure changes in fathers' behaviors. They also document the daily workshop topics to ensure that concurrent cohorts follow the same pace and schedule. Staff at Successful STEPS upload life plans and quizzes that fathers complete during the employment portion of the integrated workshop.

Although data help the programs monitor operations, program managers at the Family Formation Program, the Center for Fathering, and Successful STEPS also observe workshop sessions to evaluate curriculum adherence and presentation quality. At the Family Formation Program, multiple staff members, including organizational leadership, directly observe facilitators to monitor curriculum adherence. At the Center for Fathering, the director attends a portion of many workshop sessions, which helps him observe whether the facilitator is on topic and presents material in an



engaging manner. Managers at Successful STEPS (and occasionally the organization's leadership) observe facilitators. In addition to observing workshops, supervisors at all programs facilitate workshops, both to fill in for absent staff and to set an example of proper facilitation technique.

Following observations, managers provide feedback to individual staff or use results to identify training needs. Managers at the Center for Fathering often follow up with the individual facilitator, while managers at the Family Formation Program use observations to identify training needs for the two weeks between cohorts. At Successful STEPS, workshop observations led to an intensive, two-day staff training session to improve facilitation skills—such as the use of adult-learning principles and experiential activities—and align staff with leadership's expectations.

Regular technical assistance from PACT team supports focus on data-driven decisions. Leaders from each RF program in PACT have participated in regular meetings with PACT technical assistance staff throughout the evaluation staff. The meetings focus on data that show progress toward meeting agreed-upon targets for enrollment and participation, challenges encountered with program implementation, and potential strategies for addressing the challenges. Most meetings occur by telephone and are held twice monthly; during the early part of the evaluation, the PACT team visited programs and held telephone meetings each week until staff became comfortable with procedures. This technical assistance was supported by several cross-program meetings, by phone and in person, to share information across programs about common areas of focus.

Case file reviews provide a structured opportunity for staff serving in multiple capacities to discuss progress and next steps for specific clients.

Partners participate in case file reviews and training to promote integration. Case file reviews provide a structured opportunity for staff serving in multiple capacities to discuss progress and next steps for specific clients. This strategy is used by the Family Formation Program, Successful STEPS, and the FATHER Project to ensure that direct service staff, including those employed by partner organizations, address fathers' needs. Meetings generally happen twice per month and bring together staff in different capacities, including case manager and employment staff.

Case reviews and ongoing training provide an opportunity to integrate staff from partner agencies and promote program quality. The Family Formation Program includes staff from partner agencies in its twice monthly case reviews. At the FATHER Project, child support caseworkers participate in case reviews twice monthly. At the Family Formation Program, the Center for Fathering, and Successful STEPS, partners also participate in formal staff trainings and program data reviews. Involving partner agency staff in these activities promotes shared understanding of program goals and joint commitment to high quality service delivery.

Staff at most programs felt positive about their work environment. Staff agreed that their programs were led by individuals who served as role models, listened to staff concerns, set well-defined program objectives, and shared authority by empowering staff in decision making. These qualities were captured in measures of program leadership, shared authority, work satisfaction, and shared mission (Table II.10). Staff also generally felt safe in their work environment and felt that they were compensated fairly for their work.

F. Strategies to recruit and enroll participants

Generating a consistent stream of fathers who are eligible and interested in attending an RF program requires substantial time and effort by program staff. The four RF programs in PACT receive referrals from multiple partner agencies and conduct active outreach in their communities.

Combining broad and targeted outreach was associated with a stream of interested fathers. Referral sources for the RF programs in PACT most often include government agencies and community-based organizations (Table II.11). Three programs—(1) Successful STEPS, (2) the Family Formation Program, and (3) the FATHER Project—receive referrals from local child support agencies. Successful STEPS, in particular, has a referral partnership with Kansas Department for Children and Families, which sends promotional flyers to fathers on the state's caseload who owe child support. Parole officers, court systems, and community-based employment agencies are also common referral sources.⁶ At several programs, relationships with employment agencies are reciprocal; the fatherhood program refers men to the employment agency for training or other workforce development activities and the

Table II.10. Staff perceptions of organization and program quality

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	All RF grantees in PACT
Quality of program leadership (scale 1–4)	3.1	2.9	2.6	3.0	2.9
Shared mission at organization (scale 1–6)	5.7	5.6	5.1	5.4	5.5
Satisfaction with compensation (scale 1–6)	2.9	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.7
Safety (scale 1–6)	5.3	5.1	5.0	5.5	5.2
Shared authority (scale 1–6)	5.3	4.8	4.4	5.1	4.9
Work satisfaction (scale 1–6)	5.1	4.8	4.8	5.2	4.9
Program challenges					
Resources (number of challenges, 0–4)	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.2
Staff (number of challenges, 0–4)	0.7	0.7	2.0	0.9	1.0
Sample size	10	24	11	17	62

Source: PACT Staff Survey, fall 2013.

Note: The table reports the mean scale score across respondents. Respondents exclude organizational leaders. For each scale, a higher number signals a greater level.

employment agency refers men to the RF program. Churches and other community-based organizations also provide referrals.

Programs incorporate multiple active recruitment strategies and leverage their relationships with service and referral partners. For example, Successful STEPS staff recruit at courthouses where fathers are also referred to the program. The Center for Fathering has a contract with Men against Destruction—Defending Against Drugs and Social Disorder (MAD DADS), a community-based organization, to recruit men from the community. All programs use street outreach to recruit fathers in public places. In some cases, volunteers also help programs recruit from public venues, increasing the program’s capacity for outreach. Staff at the FATHER Project, the Family Formation Program, and Successful STEPS recruit from barbershops, bars, and other places where men congregate. The Family Formation Program incentivizes program graduates to conduct recruitment and spread awareness of the program through word of mouth. The FATHER Project’s father leadership group, Citizen Father, assists with outreach and recruitment for the program.

Table II.11. Referral sources and outreach and recruitment strategies

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project
Types of referral sources				
Child support agency		✓	✓	✓
Community-based employment providers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other community-based organizations	✓	✓		✓
Parole officers or the courts system	✓	✓	✓	
Outreach strategies				
Partners provide referrals to grantee organization	✓	✓	✓	✓
Partners or volunteers conduct active outreach for the RF program	✓	✓		✓
Grantee staff conduct active outreach	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grantee advertises on radio, TV, in other public arenas, and through social media		✓	✓	✓
Strategies to maximize enrollment of appropriate fathers				
Screen potential fathers prior to enrollment		✓	✓	
Schedule individual enrollment appointments	✓	✓		✓
Conduct group enrollment sessions			✓	

Source: Site visits and program documents.

Some programs also value passive recruitment. For example, they rely on the program's location and community visibility as a supplement to the program's active methods. Urban Ventures' prominent nine-building campus in South Minneapolis, which houses the Center for Fathering, attracts men familiar with the organization's other services and facilities. The Family Formation Program's locations throughout St. Louis attract foot traffic, especially at the program's headquarters, which shares space with a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families office and other government offices.

Partnering with multiple referral sources promotes enrollment, while screening men prior to enrollment ensures fit and interest. Ensuring a steady stream of men into a program requires a balance between engaging multiple referral sources and casting too wide a net. Programs need partnerships with multiple referral sources to sustain identification of new enrollees over time. In the long-term, relying too heavily on one source may not sustain a high number of referrals. For example, in spring 2014 enrollment at Successful STEPS slowed, which led staff to be concerned that reliance on the Kansas Department for Children and Families may not sustain the intended



pace of enrollment—because the same fathers were receiving repeat promotional flyers. To help bolster enrollment at Successful STEPS, they began to place more emphasis on street outreach, including regularly visiting new community locations (such as the courthouse), and increasing the program’s visibility by improving signage outside the location near public transit and the courthouse.

However, programs also exercise caution in casting too wide a net, as not all fathers are motivated to participate. For example, initially, Successful STEPS and the Center for Fathering recruited from sources where fathers were particularly unstable, such as homeless shelters. Although this boosted enrollment numbers, few enrolled fathers actually participated in services. One approach that the Family Formation Program and Successful STEPS, use to more strategically identify fathers who are more likely to participate is to screen men prior to enrollment to ensure they are appropriate for and interested in the program. For these programs, screening focuses on identifying substance use disorders and mental health concerns that may require treatment.

Individualized recruitment messages encourage men to enroll. Prior to enrollment, staff work to build interest among potential participants through use of recruitment pitches that explain the RF program and how it can benefit fathers. Programs do not use a standardized message, instead they develop messages that emphasize key program features, resonate with the men in their community, and fit with the staff member delivering the message. For example, at Successful STEPS, outreach staff vary the message depending on the location of recruitment. In Missouri, staff emphasize employment; in Kansas, they emphasize both the opportunity to reduce back-owed child support through program participation and available employment assistance. At both the FATHER Project and the Family Formation Program, which use program

graduates for outreach, individuals personalize the recruitment message based on their own program experiences. Men may highlight how the program helped them find a job or reconnect with their children. At the Center for Fathering, staff share personal stories to convey how they are similar to the potential participants and explain how the program may help address needs.

G. Practices to promote participation

Minimizing time between enrollment and the start of services helped maximize engagement. A key strategy to maximize initial participation is to limit the time between enrollment and the start of program services; doing so can reduce the chance that fathers will lose interest or become unavailable (Table II.12). The Family Formation Program reduced its enrollment window from any time to the two weeks between workshop cohorts, which was useful, given that new workshop cohorts begin every eight weeks. The Successful STEPS program also altered its approach to maximize engagement. Instead of scheduling regular sessions for enrollment, it shifted to holding enrollment sessions only once enough fathers were identified and invited, thereby reducing time between identification and enrollment. At the Center for Fathering and the FATHER Project, fathers could walk in to the office and be enrolled immediately, even just prior to the beginning of a workshop session because of their open-entry approach.

Programs also offer fathers immediate opportunities to participate in the program to encourage program engagement. As open-entry workshop programs, the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering allow fathers to begin attending a workshop at any time. As cohort-based programs, the Family Formation Program and Successful STEPS schedule a group of fathers to begin the workshop series together at a set time; however, both programs strive to engage fathers between enrollment and the beginning of services. The Family Formation Program allows fathers to participate in a peer support group before beginning the integrated workshop. Successful STEPS allows newly enrolled fathers to sit in on Connect, its open-entry relationship workshop, while waiting for a new cohort to start its integrated workshop. Both the Family Formation Program and Successful STEPS also have case managers available at enrollment to identify pressing needs and provide referrals. The FATHER Project's orientation introduces fathers to available program resources and matches fathers with a case manager, who helps address service needs.

Programs work to accommodate fathers' schedules and address participation barriers.

Program flexibility and focused staff efforts were associated with greater program participation. Enrolled fathers often have difficulty staying committed to the program (as do many other groups of participants in other types of programs), often due to life challenges (see participant characteristics, above). To work around these challenges, programs work to accommodate fathers' schedules and address participation barriers.

Table II.12. Strategies to promote participation

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project
Promoting initial participation				
Limit time between enrollment and program start	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use orientation session to introduce program resources and build excitement				✓
Develop a plan to guide program participation	✓			✓
Offer multiple opportunities to begin participation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide financial incentive after limited participation		✓		
Offer reductions in state-owed child support arrears			✓	
Offer immediate support services, if needed	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promoting retention and completion				
Offer multiple opportunities to participate	✓	✓	✓	✓
Encourage staff to serve as role models	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide reductions in child support arrears:				
For participation			✓	
For completion				✓
For sustained employment	✓			✓
Provide financial incentives:				
For attendance or completion	✓	✓		
For sustained employment		✓	✓	✓
Call participants to remind them of program activities		✓	✓	✓
Reach out to fathers who miss sessions	✓	✓	✓	✓
When contact with a father is lost, reach out to other agencies that father attends (for example, child support enforcement, parole offices, treatment centers)			✓	✓
Host events and outings for program participants and their families to facilitate bonding		✓	✓	✓
Provide condensed programming or opportunities to make up missed sessions	✓		✓	

Source: Site visits and program documents.

Programs offer services in multiple locations, at multiple times of day, and in different formats. The FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering offer weekly workshops on different days; the Center for Fathering and the Family Formation Program offer workshops at different times of day; and the FATHER Project, the Family Formation Program, and Successful STEPS offer workshops in multiple locations. The Center for Fathering and Successful STEPS also offer fathers the opportunity to make up material missed when they are unable to attend workshop sessions. For fathers at Successful STEPS, making material up is required to receive help finding a job.

Encouraging fathers' continued participation and program completion requires diligence and persistence by staff. Staff at all programs contact fathers who miss workshop sessions either by telephone or with home visits. Staff at Successful STEPS, the Family Formation Program, and the Center for Fathering make reminder calls ahead of activities. Reaching fathers can be difficult because they may change phone numbers and housing arrangements frequently. In an effort to locate fathers (and with fathers' prior permission), Successful STEPS and the FATHER Project sometimes contact agencies that may know the father's whereabouts, such as child support enforcement or a parole office.

Programs use financial incentives to promote participation and job retention. The Family Formation Program offered a \$100 financial incentive for each week of perfect attendance, up to \$600. This was a practice that was introduced with participation in the PACT evaluation. To receive the incentive, fathers had to have not only have perfect attendance but also compliance with program rules, such as punctuality. Ultimately, however, program staff felt that the participation incentive offered during the PACT evaluation was not useful in promoting the attendance of fathers who were already motivated to attend, and planned to discontinue this strategy once enrollment for PACT ended.

Successful STEPS and the FATHER Project offer financial incentives for program participation that are related to child support arrears. Through its partner child support agency, Successful STEPS offers significant reductions in state-owed child support arrears for participation. Kansas fathers earn a \$50 reduction per hour for the first 15 hours of attendance, and a \$25 reduction per hour for an additional 35 hours, up to a total of \$1,625. Fathers with state-owed child support arrears in Ramsey County who attend the FATHER Project may receive reductions for participation, completion, and for making consistent child support payments. Fathers have 35 percent of their state-owed child support arrears forgiven for completing the parenting workshop, an additional 50 percent of arrears forgiven for making child support payments in at least 6 of the 12 months following completion of the parenting workshop, and dollar-for-dollar reductions in arrears thereafter, until the balance reaches zero.

To promote job retention, the Family Formation Program, Successful STEPS, and the Center for Fathering provide financial incentives for fathers who maintain their employment for 30, 60, and 90 days. Fathers may receive these job retention incentives after core program services have ended, but all of the programs promote long-term engagement with program staff and services. For example, fathers may receive case management for a year or longer.

III. PROGRAMMATIC OUTPUTS



Programmatic outputs: Key findings

Outputs describe what RF programs produced as a result of their activities. We examined outputs related to enrollment, program engagement and retention, and dosage during 21 months of enrollment of participants.

- In the first 21 months of the PACT evaluation enrolling participants, RF programs enrolled 4,713 men, 99 percent of their collective enrollment target.
- On average, across the four RF programs in PACT, 80 percent of fathers attended at least one activity in the first four months after enrollment; this initial engagement ranged from 71 to 91 percent. More than two-thirds of fathers attended at least one session of a core workshop; a similar proportion of fathers had at least one individual contact with a staff member.
- At three of the programs, fathers were most likely to attend a parenting session; at Successful STEPS fathers were more likely to attend an economic stability session.
- We looked at retention by measuring the percentage of participants who attended at least half of the sessions planned for workshops. Retention at workshops varied and was sometimes low, particularly among programs that took an open-entry approach to service delivery. The percentage of fathers who attended more than half of the parenting workshop sessions ranged from 21 to 59 percent.
- Attendance at more than half of the economic stability workshop sessions ranged from 7 to 63 percent. Programs with higher attendance for these workshops integrate content with other material and make employment a central program feature.
- Fathers were least likely to participate in relationship workshops; initial engagement was low and retention ranged from 2 to 15 percent. Consistently low retention may reflect a lack of programmatic emphasis, characteristics of fathers, or workshop scheduling and structure.
- Averaged across programs, enrolled fathers received an average of 46 hours of services during their first four months of enrollment. The average number of hours attended varied by program, from 11 to 90. Across programs, fathers spent most of their hours attending core workshops. On average, nearly half of the content received by fathers across programs addressed economic stability topics, although this ranged across programs from 11 to 58 percent.

Outputs describe what RF programs produced as a result of their activities. For this report, we examined four outputs:

1. The number of participants that enroll
2. The percentage of enrollees assigned to receive the program who engage in program services (program engagement)
3. The percentage of enrollees assigned to receive the program who continue to participate in the program over time (retention)
4. The amount of services participants receive (dosage)

Using data from each program's MIS, in this chapter we explore these RF program achievements and describe the factors that may have facilitated or hindered these achievements.

A. Programs in PACT made steady enrollment progress

All programs used PACTIS to enroll and randomly assign fathers,⁷ allowing staff to track enrollment against their targets each month and make adjustments as needed. Over the first 21 months of enrolling participants in PACT, programs met or came close to meeting their targets.

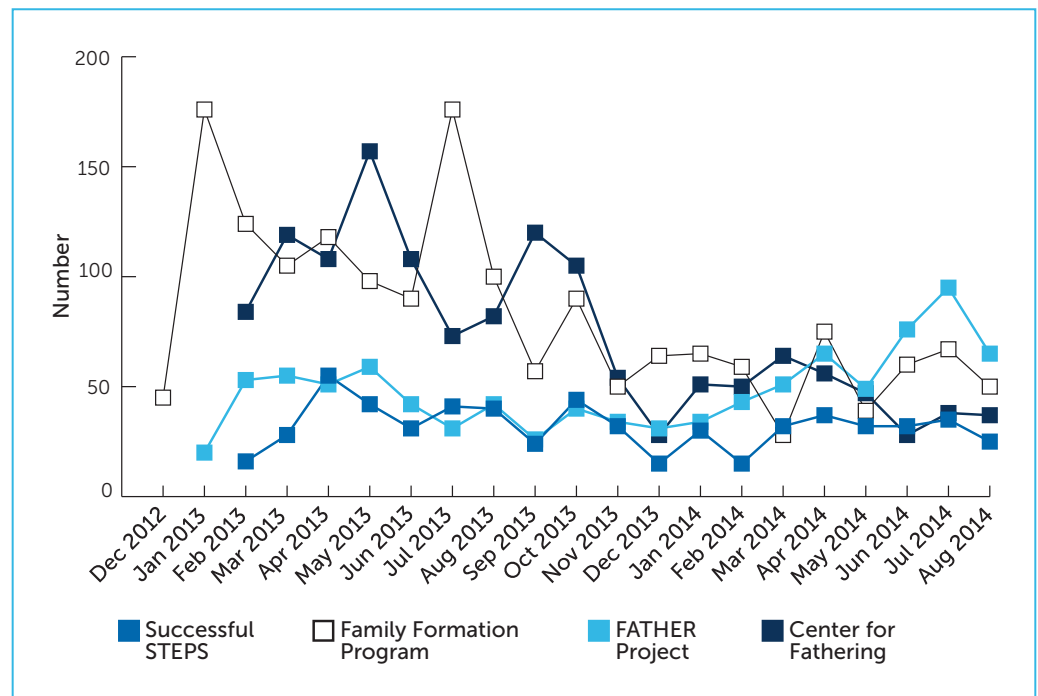
Programs established monthly enrollment targets based on capacity and service delivery approach. Across the programs, monthly enrollment targets for PACT ranged from 25 to 180 fathers. Depending on the program's enrollment and service delivery approach, the monthly target was consistent or variable from month to month. For example, the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering conducted enrollment on a rolling basis and fathers were able to start at any time. This allowed the programs to have relatively consistent targets for enrollment each month. In contrast, the Family Formation Program only conducted enrollment during the two weeks prior to the start of their integrated workshop. A new workshop session began every eight weeks; therefore, their monthly enrollment target varied based on the number of weeks of active enrollment in a month. Across the grantees, expected monthly variations also reflected seasonal fluctuations. Enrollment tended to be lower in the winter, when weather conditions impeded street outreach and forced some offices to close temporarily.

Several programs revised their enrollment strategies over time, which affected monthly enrollment numbers.

Between December 2012 and August 2014, RF programs enrolled 4,713 fathers into the PACT evaluation, 99 percent of their collective enrollment target for this period (Figure III.1). Each month, individual programs enrolled between 15 and 176 participants into PACT's evaluation sample. Several programs revised their enrollment strategies over time, which affected monthly enrollment numbers. For example, in an effort to increase participation, the Center for Fathering intentionally scaled back

outreach efforts in later months by being more selective and targeted in recruitment, resulting in lower enrollment numbers. More specifically, in the early period of PACT, the Center for Fathering employed strategies that yielded a large number of enrollees, many of whom did not engage in services. The Center for Fathering gradually became more selective in whom they recruited, partly by no longer enrolling fathers living in unstable housing situations. The Family Formation Program also increased its selectivity by limiting enrollment to the two weeks prior to the start of a workshop. Originally, it had a broader enrollment window, but learned that fathers who enrolled several weeks before the start of a workshop were less likely to attend services than fathers who enrolled closer to the workshop’s start. Monthly enrollment in the program decreased from a high of 176 men in January 2013 to around 50 to 60 men in May through August 2014. Conversely, enrollment at the FATHER Project increased throughout the period, as shown in Figure III.1, especially after developing and implementing a successful outreach plan in early 2014.

Figure III.1. Monthly enrollment in PACT



Source: PACTIS.

Notes: See Section III.A for a discussion of why numbers varied throughout this period. The Family Formation Program began enrollment in December 2012, the Center for Fathering in January 2013, and the last two programs in February 2013. Total number enrolled at each program from when each began enrollment through August 2014: 606 at Successful STEPS, 1,736 at the Family Formation Program, 962 at the FATHER Project, and 1,409 at the Center for Fathering.

Fathers enrolled in RF programs most often for the sake of their children, but also for employment. According to their responses on PACT’s baseline survey, the most common reason fathers gave for enrolling in the RF program was to improve their relationship with their children (Table III.1). The next most common reason cited was

to improve their job situation. Successful STEPS was the only program where a larger percentage of fathers reported that improving their job situation was their primary reason for enrolling. In the other three programs, children were the most common reason for enrolling. Improving their relationship with their children’s mother was rarely the primary motivation for program enrollment.

Table III.1. Fathers’ primary motivation to participate in an RF program

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	Total PACT RF sample
Improve relationship with children (%)	62	60	39	70	60
Improve job situation (%)	32	36	58	22	35
Improve relationship with children’s mother (%)	6	4	3	7	5
Sample size	1,431	1,728	605	970	4,734

Source: PACT baseline survey.

Note: Sites began PACT intake between December 9, 2012, and February 13, 2013. Data include all fathers who were randomly assigned to PACT through August 22, 2014.

B. Initial engagement in program activities

To measure program participation, we first considered initial program involvement. We examined participation within the first four months after each father enrolled in the PACT evaluation. This window does not include the entire period when fathers may have attended services, but captures the period of most active participation.⁸ To conduct the participation analysis, we examined data for all fathers who enrolled by March 31, 2014, and were assigned to participate in the program.⁹ The last possible date of participation was four months later, July 31, 2014. To assess which fathers attended any program activities, we identified the percentage of fathers that attended at least one program activity after enrolling in the evaluation, including core or supplementary workshops and substantive individual contacts.¹⁰

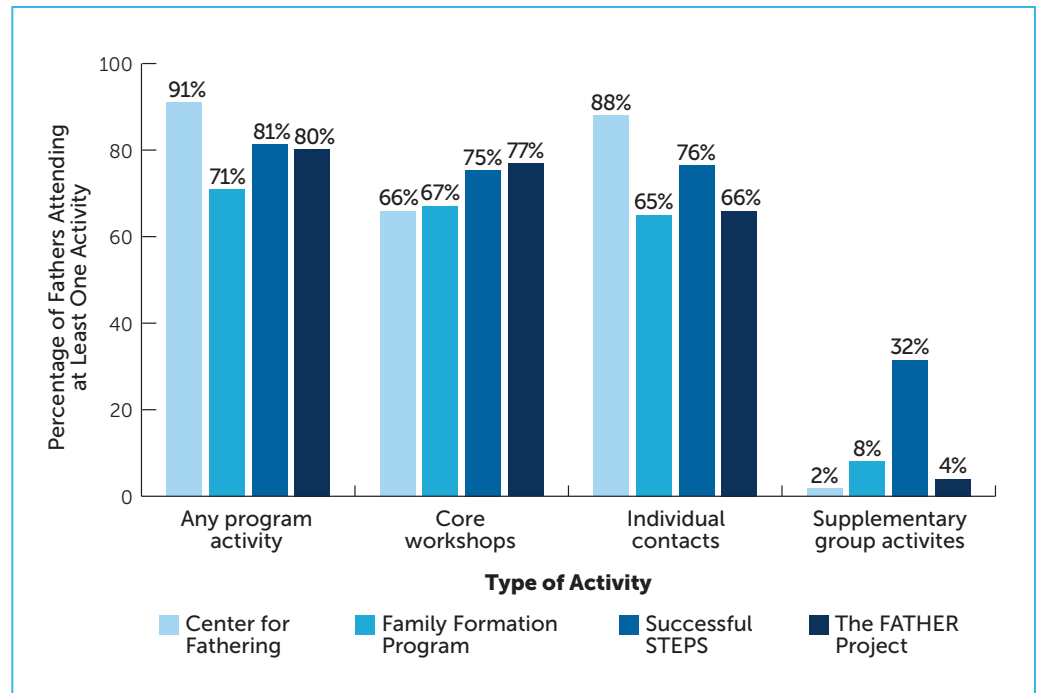
More than two-thirds of fathers attended at least one session of a core workshop.

Across the four RF grantees in PACT, 80 percent of fathers engaged in at least one program activity. Initial engagement ranged from 71 to 91 percent across the programs in the first four months following random assignment (Figure III.2). More than two-thirds of fathers attended at least one session of a core workshop. Programs see these workshops as central to their services, and structure services so that a core workshop is a father’s first group activity.

Engagement in supplementary group activities was low in the first four months after random assignment. Successful STEPS, the Family Formation Program, and the FATHER Project regularly offer supplementary activities, but they are generally

for fathers who have completed the core workshop, which may explain why few fathers attended in their first four months. Successful STEPS had the highest level of engagement in supplementary workshops: nearly one-third of fathers attended a supplementary activity in their first four months after enrollment. The program’s primary supplementary activity is a weekly job club for unemployed fathers. The Center for Fathering offers only sporadic supplementary activities—primarily job fairs or occasional events—and the observed low engagement was expected.

Figure III.2. Initial program engagement



Source: PACTIS/Site MIS Data.

More than two-thirds of fathers had at least one individual contact in the first four months after random assignment. Between December 2012 and July 2014, programs completed nearly 10,000 individual contacts (Table III.2). Fathers received about five individual contacts, on average. Fathers at Successful STEPS and the Family Formation Program typically had more individual contact with program staff than did fathers at the FATHER Project or the Center for Fathering. At Successful STEPS and the Family Formation Program, fathers received six or seven contacts in the first four months compared to an average of four contacts at the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering. Contacts were not evenly distributed across the first four months. On average, fathers had four program contacts in their first two months and then one contact in either month three or four.

In all programs, the program office was the most common venue for completing contacts. Only Successful STEPS used telephone calls as frequently as face-to-face contacts. The Center for Fathering completed the largest percent of contacts through

Table III.2. Individual contacts and referrals

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	Total PACT RF sample
Referrals and individual contacts with fathers					
Number of fathers	601	719	222	312	1,854
Total contacts (average per father)	4.1	6.4	7.2	4.0	5.3
Monthly contacts (average per father)	1.0	1.6	1.8	1.0	1.3
Monthly contacts, first two months	1.7	2.8	2.1	1.2	2.1
Monthly contacts, third and fourth months	0.3	0.4	1.5	0.8	0.6
Fathers receiving at least one support service referral (%)	18	15	76	2	21
Mode of individual contact					
Number of individual contacts	2,441	4,582	1,601	1,261	9,885
Percentage of service contacts by					
Telephone	10	2	47	18	13
Program office visit	89	83	49	77	78
Other	1	16	4	6	9

Source: PACTIS/Site MIS data.

Notes: The data show fathers enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. Analysis includes individual contacts that lasted five or more minutes and did not occur by mail or leaving a message.

in-person meetings, which may reflect its emphasis on individual meetings to provide economic stability services. In general, programs reported providing outside referrals to relatively few fathers, with the exception of Successful STEPS, which referred three-quarters of men to an external support service, such as a referral to a community organization that helps men obtain birth certificates or other documents necessary for employment.

C. Program retention was challenging

To look at whether fathers continued to participate in the program, we assessed the proportion of fathers who attended each core workshop during the first four months following enrollment in the study. Programs offered core workshops of varying types and lengths, from 8 to 32 sessions.¹¹ To look across these workshops, we calculated the

percentages of fathers who never attended the workshop, attended the workshop at least once, and attended more than half of the workshop's sessions.¹²

The most commonly attended workshops were on parenting and employment, but retention varied. Fathers were most likely to participate at least once in the parenting workshop at most programs (Table III.3). The exception was Successful STEPS, where fathers were more likely to engage in the economic stability workshop compared to other workshops. This pattern makes sense given that Successful STEPS emphasized economic stability, whereas most other programs emphasized the parenting workshop.

Table III.3. Attendance and retention at core workshops

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project
Percentage of fathers attending integrated workshop				
No sessions	N/A	35	N/A	N/A
At least one session	N/A	65	N/A	N/A
More than half of the sessions	N/A	41	N/A	N/A
Percentage of fathers attending parenting workshop				
No sessions	43	N/A	28	42
At least one session	57	N/A	72	58
More than half of the sessions	38	N/A	59	21
Percentage of fathers attending relationship workshop				
No sessions	78	N/A	63	83
At least one session	22	N/A	37	17
More than half of the sessions	14	N/A	15	2
Percentage of fathers attending economic stability workshop				
No sessions	68	N/A	26	79
At least one session	31	N/A	74	22
More than half of the sessions	7	N/A	63	21
Number of fathers	601	719	222	312

Source: PACTIS/Site MIS data.

Notes: The data show fathers enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding. N/A = not applicable.

Retention at workshops varied and was sometimes low, particularly among programs that took an open-entry approach to service delivery. At the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering, attendance at more than half of the parenting workshop sessions was 21 and 38 percent of fathers, respectively. Fifty-nine percent of fathers attended more than half of the parenting-focused sessions at Successful STEPS, where parenting was integrated into the core economic stability workshop. (At the Family Formation Program's fully integrated workshop, 41 percent attended more than half of all sessions; these would have included parenting content.)

Retention at the economic stability workshop was highest when employment was a central feature of the program and the content was integrated with other material. Attendance at more than half of the economic stability workshops ranged widely, from 7 to 63 percent across programs. Successful STEPS had the highest employment workshop retention rate, which was consistent with its emphasis on workforce readiness. Less than one-quarter of participants at the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering attended more than half of the employment workshop. The FATHER Project's employment workshop was a single session and repeat attendance was not expected, so fathers either received the full workshop or did not participate. Compared to other programs, the Center for Fathering's employment workshop was the least formal; it occurred in the program's employment resource room where a variety of employment-related activities could take place concurrently. (At the Family Formation Program's integrated workshop, economic stability content was emphasized in the last third of the workshop; 41 percent of fathers attended more than half of the integrated workshop and thus likely received at least some of this content.)

Fathers were least likely to participate in relationship workshops; initial engagement was low and retention ranged from 2 to 15 percent across the three programs offering a separate relationship workshop. Consistently low retention may reflect lack of programmatic emphasis or the scheduling and structure of the workshops. The relationship workshop at Successful STEPS, for example, was provided separately from the integrated workshop; fathers were expected to complete the integrated workshop first. At the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering, fathers were typically guided to complete the parenting workshop before the relationship workshop. This meant that they would have had to remain engaged for two or three months before participating in the relationship workshop.¹³ At the Family Formation Program, 41 percent of participants attended half or more of the fully integrated workshop. Relationship content was provided before the mid-point of the program; therefore, fathers were likely to receive this content.



D. On average, fathers received a sizeable number of programming hours

In this section, we present the average number of hours that fathers attended the programs (dosage) during their first four months after enrollment in the study, by the type of content received. We performed the analyses two ways: (1) for all fathers who were enrolled in the study and eligible to immediately participate in the RF programs and (2) for fathers who engaged in at least one activity. This allowed us to compare differences in programming between all fathers and those who engaged in at least some services.

Across the four programs, enrolled fathers received an average of 46 hours of program services during their first four months.

Dosage varied widely across programs and groups of fathers, but averaged 46

hours. Across the four programs, enrolled fathers received an average of 46 hours of program services during their first four months (Table III.4). The largest portion of these services was attributed to participation in core workshops (43 hours). Fathers met individually with program staff for a total of about three hours, on average.

Limiting the analysis to those fathers who participated in at least one activity increases the average amount of programming to 58 total hours, with 53 hours spent in core workshops, 4 hours in individual contacts, and one hour in supplemental services.

Averages across the four programs obscure wide program variation. Among fathers who attended services at least once, average hours of programming received ranged from 12 hours at the Center for Fathering to 128 hours at the Family Formation Program. Part of this variation is due to program length: measured by hours of programming offered, the Family Formation Program is 10 times as long as the Center for Fathering's program. In general, the average dosage received at each

Table III.4. Hours attending RF program activities

	Center for Fathering	Family Formation Program	Successful STEPS	The FATHER Project	All RF grantees in PACT
Number of all enrolled fathers	601	719	222	312	1,854
Hours spent in all program activities	11	90	41	17	46
Percentage of hours spent in program activities by type of activity					
Core workshop	73	95	88	85	92
Individual contact	26	5	8	14	7
Supplementary group activities	1	1	4	1	1
Number of fathers who attended at least one activity	546	508	179	251	1,484
Hours spent in all program activities	12	128	51	21	58
Percentage of hours spent in program activities by type of activity					
Core workshop	73	95	88	85	92
Individual contact	26	5	8	14	7
Supplementary group activities	1	1	4	1	1

Source: PACTIS/Site MIS data.

Notes: The data show fathers enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. Analysis includes individual contacts that lasted five or more minutes and did not occur by mail or leaving a message.

program was roughly half of the potential hours that fathers could receive. Despite program variation in dosage, patterns remained consistent across the three types of programming (core workshops, individual contacts, and supplementary activities). In all programs, core workshops contributed the largest share of hours of participation.

Fathers at the Center for Fathering received a quarter of their programming in the first four months through individual contacts, and fathers at the FATHER Project spent an average of 14 percent of their time meeting individually with staff. The proportion of time fathers spent meeting individually with staff at the Family Formation Program and Successful STEPS was lower. Successful STEPS does not schedule one-on-one meetings between staff members and participants until later in their program, whereas the Center for Fathering and the FATHER Project encourage staff members to

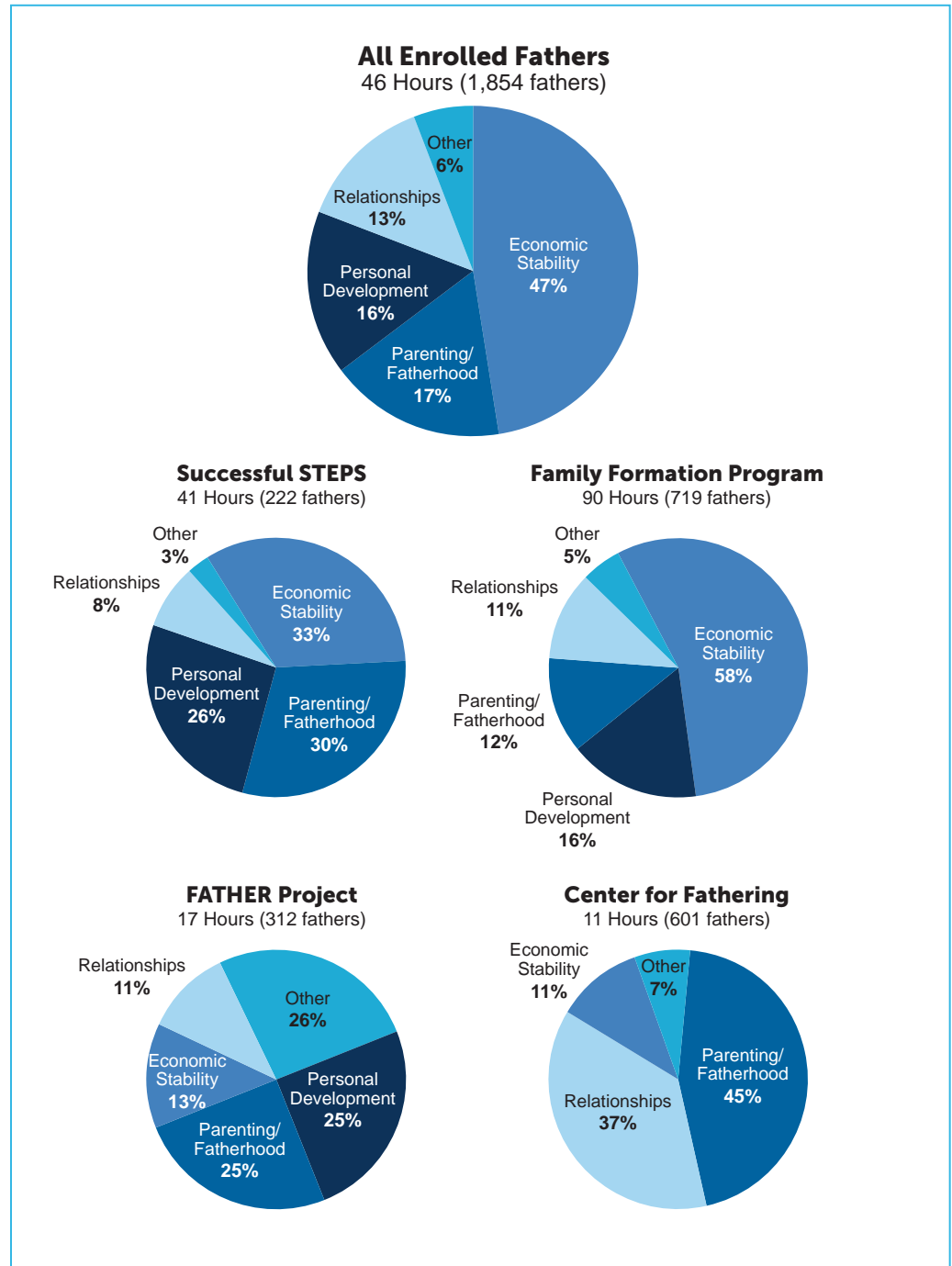
meet individually with participants soon after enrollment. At the Family Formation Program, fathers are scheduled to meet individually with staff at two points during the integrated workshop; additional one-on-one meetings may occur while the father attends the workshop as well as after it is completed.

Averaged across programs, the largest share of content fathers received was on economic stability. To extend our analysis of dosage, we examined the focus of content received by fathers during programming. To do this, we combined all programming the father received across the types of activities and then coded each activity a father attended as either parenting, economic stability, relationships, personal development, or “other.” We coded workshop sessions by the topic covered in the session, not by the overarching focus of the workshop. For example, a session on how to communicate with co-parents could be included in either a parenting or a relationship workshop; for this analysis, we coded such a session as covering relationship content. Programming coded as personal development included workshops or individual contacts that addressed such issues as culture and values, knowing yourself, and self-esteem. Workshops and individual contacts coded as “other” included needs assessments and issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and/or transportation.

Each program's structure, sequence and amount of services, and delivery approach likely affected the type of content fathers received.

On average, nearly half of the content received by fathers across the programs addressed economic stability (Figure III.3), although this obscures substantial variation across programs ranging from 11 to 58 percent. Within programs, the type of content most likely to be received by fathers varied. At the Family Formation Program, fathers were most likely to receive content on economic stability, whereas fathers at Successful STEPS were almost equally likely to participate in sessions on economic stability and on parenting. Fathers at the Center for Fathering were most likely to receive content related to parenting, whereas fathers at the FATHER Project were about equally likely to receive content in parenting, personal development, and other services. Each program's structure, sequence and amount of services, and delivery approach likely affected the type of content fathers received.

Figure III.3. Topics of content received by fathers enrolled in PACT



Source: PACTIS/Site MIS data.

Notes: The data show fathers enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. The analysis includes fathers' participation in core workshops, individual contacts that lasted five or more minutes and did not occur by mail or leaving a message, and any other program services. Each attended activity was coded into one content area. Personal development includes such topics as values and roles as "real men," fathers, partners, and providers; problem solving and decision making; stress and coping; discrimination; interpersonal skills; self-sufficiency; and goal planning. "Other" includes needs assessments and addressing such issues as substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and transportation. Fathers at the Center for Fathering did not participate in personal development programming.

IV. PATTERNS ACROSS TWO APPROACHES TO SERVICE DELIVERY



Two approaches to service delivery: Key findings

The four RF programs in PACT take one of two main approaches to service delivery. The *integrated cohort* approach, used by Successful STEPS and the Family Formation Program, features workshops that cover multiple content areas and services that require fathers to attend daily for several weeks; fathers attend these workshops as a group. The *open-entry workshop* approach, used by the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering, focuses on providing a menu of services to fathers. Open-entry workshop programs offer separate workshops for each content area and fathers are expected to complete workshops at their own pace, generally attending once per week over a period of several months. Consistent differences between the integrated cohort programs and open-entry workshop programs and the populations they serve may inform how practitioners design programs.

- The two integrated cohort programs attracted fathers who had more life challenges, on average—such as low levels of education, incarceration history, and family complexity—than fathers in the two open-entry workshop programs.
- Open-entry workshop programs engaged fathers more rapidly, but integrated cohort programs had higher retention levels and provided a higher dosage of services.

In Chapter II, we identified two approaches to service delivery taken by the four RF programs in PACT. The *integrated cohort* approach, represented by Successful STEPS and the Family Formation Program, features workshops that cover multiple content areas and services that require fathers to attend daily for several weeks; fathers attend these workshops as a group. The *open-entry workshop* approach, represented by the FATHER Project and the Center for Fathering, focuses on providing a menu of services to fathers. Open-entry workshop programs offer separate workshops for each content area and fathers complete workshops at their own pace, generally attending once per week over a period of several months. In this chapter, we explore differences between these two approaches to examine how they may inform the types of fathers attracted to the programs, program engagement, and dosage of services received.

A. Service delivery approach linked to fathers' characteristics

Fathers in the integrated cohort programs, on average, reported more challenges than those in the open-entry workshop programs.

Fathers in the two integrated cohort programs generally faced more challenges than those in the two open-entry workshop programs. Despite the similarity of challenges among fathers in the four RF programs in PACT (discussed in Chapter II), fathers in the integrated cohort programs, on average, reported more challenges than those in the open-entry workshop programs (Table IV.1). More than one-third of fathers in the integrated cohort programs lacked a high school diploma or GED, compared with only about one-quarter of fathers in the open-entry workshop programs. Although a larger share of fathers in the open-entry workshop programs had been convicted of a crime, fathers in the two integrated cohort programs who had been convicted of a crime had served more time in prison. Among all men, fathers in the two integrated programs were more likely to be on parole, suggesting that they had been incarcerated more recently. In all four programs, about half of fathers were unemployed, but fathers in the integrated cohort programs had notably lower earnings. They were also much more likely to have fathered children with multiple women, and less likely to have an open child support case.

Program approach may reflect the population's circumstances, characteristics, or motivation. For example, the daily structure embedded in the integrated cohort model may be beneficial to men who are reentering society after incarceration. In contrast, fathers with relatively more earnings and somewhat fewer life challenges may have already assumed roles and responsibilities that make participation in an intensive daily program difficult or impossible; for example, those who work may be unable to attend daily classes. These fathers may prefer the less-intensive services of the open-entry workshop programs as well as the flexibility to receive only the program content they believe they need.

Our analysis of data collected at baseline shows that fathers' primary motivation to enroll generally matched the program aspects emphasized during recruitment. A greater proportion of fathers at integrated cohort programs enrolled to become

Table IV.1. Baseline characteristics of enrolled fathers by approach

	Integrated cohort grantees	Open-entry workshop grantees	Total PACT RF sample
Average age (years)*	35	36	35
Black, non-Hispanic (%)*	89	73	81
Hispanic (%)*	2	9	5
Have high school diploma or GED (%)*	65	72	69
Earnings in last 30 days (%)			
Did not work for pay in last 30 days	50	51	50
\$1–\$500*	32	22	27
More than \$500*	18	27	23
Unstable housing (%)*	56	52	54
Ever convicted of a crime (%)*	69	76	73
Longest time in an adult correctional institution among fathers convicted of a crime (years)*	12.8	11.9	2.3
On parole (%)*	37	30	34
Number of children*	2.7	2.5	2.6
Have children with multiple mothers (%)*	51	43	47
Live with at least one child (%)	22	22	22
Have legal child support arrangement (%)*	65	52	58
Amount paid in last 30 days*	\$129	\$173	\$149
Paid informal child support in last 30 days (%)	30	32	31
Ever married to mother of at least one child (%)	28	26	27
In romantic relationship (%)*	56	51	53
In romantic relationship with mother of at least one child (%)	35	33	34
Motivation to participate in RF program (%)			
Improve relationship with children*	54	65	60
Improve job situation*	42	28	35
Improve relationship with children’s mother*	4	7	5
Sample size	2,333	2,401	4,734

Source: PACT baseline survey.

Notes: Sites began PACT intake between December 9, 2012, and February 13, 2013. Data include all fathers randomly assigned through August 22, 2014.

*Differences between fathers in integrated cohort programs versus open-entry workshop programs are significant at .01 p-value.

employed or get a better job (42 percent) than fathers at open-entry workshop programs (28 percent). Both integrated cohort programs emphasized workforce development and economic self-sufficiency; however, of the two programs, the motivation to become employed was more prevalent among fathers at Successful STEPS compared to the Family Formation Program (58 percent compared to 36 percent). Almost two-thirds of fathers at open-entry workshop programs cited improving their relationships with their children as their primary motivation for enrolling. At these two programs, the parenting workshop was the longest-running, most developed, and best-attended service.



B. Service delivery approach linked to participation and retention

More fathers in open-entry workshop programs than integrated cohort programs had at least one individual contact with program staff.

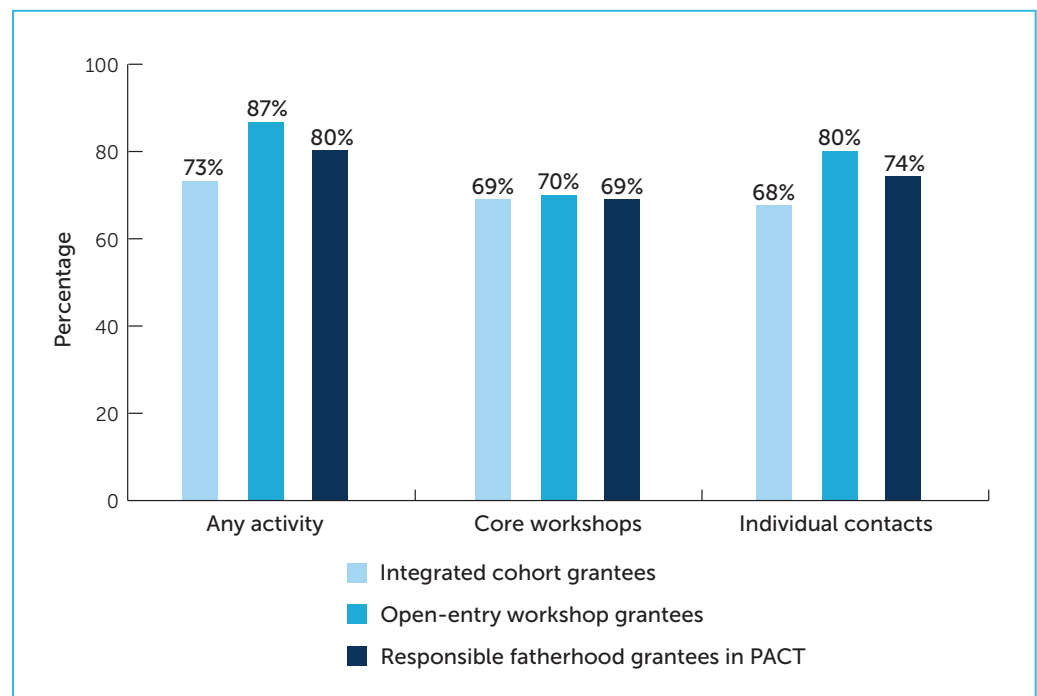
Initial engagement in services was higher at programs in which fathers could begin participating at any time, but high-intensity, integrated services minimized attrition. Fathers' initial program participation is important because it indicates how successfully programs engaged enrolled fathers in their core workshops and connected them to program staff. Across all four programs, about 70 percent of fathers attended a workshop one or more times (Figure IV.1). With regard to staff contacts, more fathers in open-entry workshop programs than integrated cohort programs had at least one individual contact with program staff; these programs emphasized the early assessment of fathers' needs, which was usually completed during an individual meeting with staff (that is, via an individual contact).

Retention is an indicator of the extent to which fathers stayed in the program; we measured retention as the percentage of fathers who attended at least half of a workshop's sessions within four months of enrollment. Retention was higher in the

Having men progress through the workshop in a group, as in the integrated cohort programs, may have enabled them to develop and build close relationships with staff and peers that motivated them to attend.

integrated cohort programs than in the programs with open-entry workshops (see Table III.2). Three features of the integrated cohort programs may explain their greater rates of retention. First, fathers in integrated cohort programs were more likely to be on parole. Although not mandated to attend an RF program, these fathers may have been strongly encouraged to look for employment in some way as a condition of their parole—and the integrated cohort programs emphasized job readiness and supported job searches more strongly than the programs using open-entry workshops. Second, having men progress through the workshop in a group, as in the integrated cohort programs, may have enabled them to develop and build close relationships with staff and peers that motivated them to attend. Third, the two integrated cohort programs offered fathers substantial financial incentives for participation, whereas grantees using open-entry workshops offered either no incentives or incentives that were available only to a portion of their participants, based on both completion of the parenting workshop and location.

Figure IV.1. Initial program engagement by service delivery approach



Source: PACTIS/Site MIS data.

Notes: The data show fathers who enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014, and were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after beginning the program was included. The sample size was 941 fathers from integrated cohort grantees and 913 fathers from open-entry workshop grantees. Analysis included individual contacts that lasted five or more minutes and did not occur by mail or leaving a message.

C. Fathers in integrated cohort programs spent more time participating

Fathers attending integrated cohort programs received more hours of content than fathers in open-entry workshop programs; just over half of that content focused on economic stability. Fathers in the two integrated cohort programs spent more time in program activities, largely due to these programs offering more hours of service. On average, participants at the integrated cohort programs spent 79 hours in core workshops, individual meetings with program staff, and other program activities, compared with an average of 13 hours for participants at open-entry workshop programs (Table IV.2).

Table IV.2. Hours of participation by content area

	Integrated cohort grantees	Open-entry workshop grantees	Total PACT RF sample
Average hours of participation	79	13	46
Percentage of average hours spent in content areas (%):			
Parenting	15	36	17
Economic stability	53	11	47
Relationships	11	26	13
Personal development	17	11	16
Other	5	15	6
Number of fathers	941	913	1,854

Source: PACTIS/Site MIS data.

Notes: The data are for fathers who enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014 and were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after program enrollment was included. The analysis includes fathers' participation in core workshops, individual contacts that lasted five or more minutes and did not occur by mail or leaving a message, and any other program services. Each attended activity was coded into one content area. Personal development includes such topics as values and roles as "real men," fathers, partners, and providers; problem solving and decision making; stress and coping; discrimination; interpersonal skills; self-sufficiency; and goal planning. "Other" includes needs assessments and addressing such issues as substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and transportation.

Fathers in integrated cohort programs received most of the content through workshops rather than through individual contacts. These programs emphasized employment and just over half of the content received at them—the largest share—focused on economic stability. At open-entry workshop programs, parenting made up the largest share of content, about one-third.

D. Staffing and management strategies varied by program approach

Staff at the two open-entry workshop programs contributed to multiple service delivery activities, whereas staff at the two integrated cohort programs had specialized responsibilities. Integrated cohort and open-entry workshop programs

differed in the responsibilities they asked their staff to assume. At the two open-entry workshop programs, staff tended to be generalists. According to the staff survey, the proportion of staff that facilitated workshops was almost 24 percentage points higher at open-entry workshop programs than at integrated cohort programs (Table IV.3). The proportion of staff at open-entry workshop programs participating in outreach and case management was also higher than at integrated cohort programs. Staff at open-entry workshop programs may have needed to help with multiple areas of service delivery because they had fewer staff members, on average, and more concurrent workshops and service offerings than integrated cohort programs.

Staff at the two integrated cohort programs tended to have more specialized training than those at open-entry workshop programs. A smaller percentage of the open-entry workshop program staff had attended graduate school or earned a professional degree compared to staff at integrated cohort programs. The open-entry workshop programs did not typically require staff to have specialized degrees, whereas the Family Formation Program, one of the integrated cohort programs, required specialized degrees for social workers and family therapists.

Staff in open-entry workshop programs often identified mentors or coaches, in addition to supervisors, and frequently attended group supervision. Across the two approaches to services, similar proportions of staff reported attending training in the last 12 months and receiving regular individual and group supervision (Table IV.4). Compared to the integrated cohort programs, at the open-entry workshop programs a greater percentage of staff members could identify a mentor or coach other than their direct supervisor. A larger proportion of staff at the open-entry workshop programs also reported receiving group supervision at least once per week, suggesting that supervision and coaching was provided frequently.

Table IV.3. Staff characteristics and experience

	Integrated cohort grantees	Open-entry workshop grantees	All RF grantees in PACT
Characteristics			
Staff are male (%)	43	56	48
Race and ethnicity (%)			
Hispanic	6	11	8
Black, non-Hispanic	69	63	66
White, non-Hispanic	3	15	8
Other	23	11	18
Average length of employment (years)	3.3	2.9	3.1
Involvement in work activities (%)			
Outreach and intake	91	96	94
Facilitation	57	81	67
Employment services	71	67	69
Case management	74	96	94
Staff supervision and training	66	50	59
Other/program support	100	100	10
Experience			
Education (%)			
High school diploma or equivalency	0	7	3
Some college	23	15	19
Associate's degree or vocational certificate	20	33	26
Bachelor's degree	23	30	26
Some graduate school	14	11	13
Master's or professional degree	20	4	13
Parenting/fatherhood education experience (%)	57	78	66
Average length of experience (years)	7.0	8.3	7.7
Relationship skills education experience (%)	46	52	48
Average length of experience (years)	7.3	7.0	7.2
Employment services experience (%)	83	85	84
Average length of experience (years)	7.9	7.7	7.8
Sample size	35	27	62

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Notes: Percentages may not sum to 100, due to rounding, respondents' ability to choose multiple responses, and respondent nonresponse. Respondents do not include organizational leaders. Mean scale scores are ordered from least to most positive.

Table IV.4. Training and support

	Integrated cohort grantees	Open-entry workshop grantees	All RF grantees in PACT
Participated in training in past 12 months (%)	91	89	90
Have mentor or coach (%)	69	85	76
Frequency of individual supervision (%)			
Never	3	0	2
Weekly or more	49	46	48
Biweekly	23	23	23
Monthly	20	23	21
Less than monthly	0	8	3
Frequency of group supervision (%)			
Never	6	15	10
Weekly or more	20	65	39
Biweekly	40	19	31
Monthly	29	0	16
Less than monthly	3	0	2
Sample size	35	27	62

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Notes: Length of employment is as of fall 2013. Percentages may not sum to 100, due to rounding, respondents' ability to choose multiple responses, and respondent nonresponse. Respondents do not include organizational leaders. Mean scale scores are ordered from least to most positive.

V. FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RF PROGRAMMING



The four RF grantees participating in the PACT evaluation implemented programs that offered parenting, healthy relationship, and economic stability services. Each grantee had latitude to develop an approach to service delivery that would best meet the needs of its organization and the fathers it enrolled, provided that services in all three core areas were offered. This chapter summarizes lessons about program implementation in the first 21 months of PACT enrollment at the four programs and discusses implications for future programming.

A. Key implementation findings

1. RF programs in PACT offered a broad array of services that went beyond the three core areas of parenting and fatherhood, economic stability, and healthy relationships.

The OFA RF grant required programs to offer core services in the areas of parenting, healthy relationships, and economic stability. To meet the needs of their target populations, programs also offered services in the areas of personal development, child support, and case management. Program staff viewed these additional services as integral. Program staff helped fathers identify their needs and goals individually, using program assessments and life plans. They used core workshops to address fathers' socio-emotional issues. Recognizing the pervasive needs related to child support, all programs partnered with local or state child support agencies to help fathers navigate the child support system. All programs also provided one-on-one case management to address issues that interfered with fathers' ability to be

supportive parents. For instance, case managers provided referrals to fathers for help with health issues, substance abuse, and housing.

2. Employing staff who were role models facilitated RF programs' ability to connect with and serve fathers.

All programs employed fathers who had graduated from the RF program and had first-hand, personal experience overcoming many of the challenges that program participants faced. Program managers felt that these experiences helped staff connect with and serve fathers. These graduates worked at all organizational levels, including frontline staff, supervisors, management, and leadership. Nearly all program staff had some level of postsecondary education. Two organizations had education requirements for new hires and one organization required professional degrees for social workers and therapists. In addition to life experience and education, most staff had high levels of past experience, averaging over seven years providing parenting, relationship, and employment services.

3. Setting specific performance targets and using data to support program planning, monitor progress, and make course corrections helped RF programs enroll large numbers of fathers and engage them in services.

All programs developed monthly enrollment targets for PACT, which they generally met. These targets were either consistent across months or varied based on program cycles. Programs discussed enrollment targets and progress toward meeting them at all levels of their organizations: in meetings between program leadership and PACT evaluation staff, as well as between program managers and frontline staff. Program managers used enrollment targets to motivate their staff to recruit fathers. Ongoing discussions of enrollment numbers also led to changes in strategy at all organizations. For instance, one organization shortened its recruitment window to enroll participants closer to the beginning of new workshop cohorts, two organizations eased recruiting from high-yield, low-participation sources such as homeless shelters, and another organization reorganized its outreach and recruitment team.

Regular review of program participation data led programs to implement changes in their strategies for engaging fathers. By reviewing data, all programs learned that having fathers begin attending services soon after enrollment capitalized on their initial motivation. Integrated cohort programs adjusted their enrollment process to ensure the window between enrollment and the start of programming was minimal (this flexibility was already inherent in the structure of open-entry workshop programs). The integrated cohort programs created opportunities for fathers to engage in services while waiting for a cohort to begin. Reviewing retention data led programs to adjust services to fit fathers' schedules by offering workshops at various times to encourage participation and completion. To further encourage retention, two programs provided opportunities for fathers to make up workshop sessions they were unable to attend.

4. Integrating staff from partner organizations into the RF program promoted more seamless and consistent service delivery.

One RF program integrated staff from partner organizations who provide program services, by co-locating them, at least part time. Staff from these partner organizations were fully integrated into the RF programs, participating in group facilitation, case management, and program-wide meetings and training. They also participated in regular case reviews with program staff. Because programs and partner organizations worked together and shared data, all staff were focused on the same objectives of meeting participants' needs and achieving program goals. Participants were more likely to encounter continuity in service delivery across multiple locations and staff employed by different organizations.

5. While all RF programs partnered with their local child support agencies, the level of child support involvement ranged from limited to extensive.

Each RF program in PACT developed a partnership with its local child support office, but the nature and extent of the agency's involvement in supporting fathers in the RF programs varied widely. One RF program enjoyed a strong collaboration with two local child support agencies. Child support staff were co-located at the RF program locations and participated in the program's case review meetings. Another RF program developed an agreement with its local child support agency to reduce state-owed child support arrears for program participation, and a third program worked with its child support agency to establish child support courts. The fourth RF program had little direct involvement by local child support staff.

B. Implications for future RF programming

The data suggest that even when they are required to offer the same type of content, the ways RF programs offer and structure their services may influence such outputs as the population(s) reached, fathers' engagement and participation, and the amount and type of information most fathers receive. Differences in program outputs may, in turn, affect program outcomes (and a future report will look at impacts).

Effective programs require an understanding of the needs and interests of the fathers to be served and should implement a service delivery approach that is aligned with those needs and interests.

Higher retention in the integrated cohort programs does not provide evidence that these programs are better than the open-entry workshop programs at meeting fathers' needs or at improving their attitudes, behaviors, or outcomes, but these differences should inform program design. Specifically, effective programs require an understanding of the needs and interests of the fathers to be served and should implement a service delivery approach that is aligned with those needs and interests. This study identifies two approaches to service delivery; others may exist or may be developed. When developing such an approach, practitioners may want to consider doing the following:

1. Gather data about the target population’s needs; then structure service delivery approach and content based on those needs.

The needs and challenges of target populations may have implications for program structure and intensity. For instance, the two integrated cohort programs attracted fathers with a different level of need than the open-entry workshop programs—fathers who were perhaps more likely to be available and interested in highly structured, daily services. Fathers with relatively less severe life challenges may have appreciated the flexibility of open-entry workshop programs because they could work program participation into a schedule that included a job or child care, or attend only the services they felt they most needed. Understanding the life experiences of fathers in the community can also be useful for choosing curricula that will be most relevant, applicable, and accessible for fathers. All programs in the evaluation either developed their own curricula or adapted existing curricula to meet the needs of their target population.

2. Collect participation data to monitor achievement of program targets and inform potential refinements to service delivery.

All programs used an MIS to track enrollment and participation data. Programs tracked fathers’ workshop attendance, individual meetings with caseworkers, and referrals. Supervisors used these data to assess the performance of frontline staff and suggest strategies to increase participation. The MIS also provided a powerful tool to help frontline staff track and monitor their caseloads. Two programs held regular case reviews in which frontline staff discussed individual fathers as a group, informed by MIS data. Regular review of participation data influenced decisions about sequencing content and instigated conversations about, for example, how to reengage fathers whose participation had fallen off, or strategies for keeping enrolled fathers motivated before the start of a workshop.

3. To increase receipt of healthy relationship content, increase accessibility by integrating this content into parenting and economic stability services.

Participation in healthy relationship workshops was lower than for other workshops, except at the Family Formation Program, where the content was integrated into the core workshop. Low participation in the healthy relationship workshops may reflect the workshop’s sequencing or the program’s emphasis. Alternatively, fathers may believe that such services are unable to help them—especially if the mothers are unwilling to also participate—as many low-income nonresidential fathers have highly contentious relationships with the mothers of their children (see Holcomb et al. 2015). Indeed, of the three reasons for enrolling in the programs, fathers were least likely to enroll to improve relationships with the mothers of their children.

Healthy relationship services in RF programs may sometimes include content that is intended to both improve coparenting relationships (where the parents are no longer a couple but have a child together) and strengthen current romantic relationships.

Combining these two purposes may have led to confusion or disinterest by the fathers in the service offering; fathers who were not in a romantic relationship at the time of program participation may have viewed the services as less central to their needs.

Even though fathers may not identify a need to receive healthy relationship services, they may benefit from the content. To ensure that more fathers receive this content, programs may want to consider integrating it into the other services fathers are more likely to attend, such as parenting classes. Healthy relationship topics relevant to fathers, such as communication and conflict resolution, can build upon related content covered in parenting and economic stability workshops, such as coparenting, stress management, and workplace communication skills.



4. Encourage program participation by offering cohort-based services, employing staff who have worked through similar challenges, and offering supports or incentives.

Maintaining fathers' motivation and participation was a primary challenge programs faced. The integrated cohort programs have found that fathers who progress through services as a group tend to motivate and support one another to complete services. Financial incentives, such as reductions in state-owed child support arrears, can address barriers and reduce a source of pressure for fathers. Relieving other immediate needs, such as paying for bus tokens to attend the program or providing a free meal, may also promote participation.

5. Consider how to sequence or integrate services to ensure that fathers receive key content early.

The proportion of fathers attending at least one session of a parenting workshop ranged from 57 to 72 percent across programs, but the proportion of fathers attending

more than half of the sessions was lower, ranging from 21 to 59 percent. These figures suggest that many fathers missed important parenting topics, even if they attended some sessions. Programs may consider prioritizing the most relevant topics so that even if fathers do not complete services, they receive the core content during early sessions. Economic stability and healthy relationship workshops were often sequenced after parenting, and participation in these workshops was lower than in parenting sessions. Programs may consider making the initial sessions particularly engaging and participatory to induce ongoing participation.

6. Offer services in larger time blocks to promote higher participation and dosage.

Across programs, fathers received roughly half of the planned hours. However, due to the more intensive programming at the integrated cohort programs, fathers there received many more hours of services than those in open-entry programs. Integrated cohort programs offered more hours in larger time blocks, typically full-day workshops. With this format, fathers at the Family Formation Program, the most intensive program, spent almost double the average number of hours of services received by fathers across all programs in PACT. To provide larger blocks of time for services while accommodating the schedules of men who are employed, programs may also wish to consider weekend programming.

7. Develop partnerships with local child support agencies to potentially facilitate positive outcomes for nonresidential fathers

Across the programs in PACT, nearly 60 percent of fathers had a child support order at the time of enrollment. Partnerships between local child support agencies and RF programs can support the objectives of both of these programs and may lead to better outcomes for the fathers they serve. First, although RF programs are voluntary, the local child support agency can be an important source of referrals. Second, local child support agencies may find that they have discretion to design state-owed arrears-reduction programs for fathers who participate in RF programs and demonstrate that they are working on developing greater economic stability. And third, partnerships may facilitate quicker resolution of specific issues among RF program participants, such as modifications of child support orders or removal of driver's license suspensions due to non-payment. Although such assistance may be available to any father with a child support order, RF programs that collaborate with the child support agency may be able to facilitate meetings with child support staff. Programs should recognize that the discretion a child support agency has to set up special programs such as arrears reductions or removal of driver's license suspensions varies by locality. Nevertheless, RF programs are likely to benefit from exploring ways to partner and collaborate with their local child support agencies.

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APPENDIX A

**CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS
SUCCESSFUL STEPS PROGRAM PROFILE**

RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD PROGRAM PROFILE: SUCCESSFUL STEPS AT CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS

Program overview

Connections to Success (CtS) has served men and fathers in Kansas City for over 10 years. Its Responsible Fatherhood program, Successful STEPS, is comprised of a full-day, two-and-a-half week Relationship and Workforce Readiness (RWR) workshop that integrates content on personal development, parenting, and employment readiness, and a separate workshop that meets weekly, called Connect, where fathers who have completed the RWR workshop receive material on healthy relationships. CtS expects fathers in Successful STEPS to complete the daily RWR workshop, and then encourages attendance at Connect.

Program context and background

Organizational context

Connections to Success (CtS) is an anti-poverty organization operating in Kansas City, Kansas and Missouri, and St. Louis, Missouri. The mission of CtS is to help its clients achieve self-sufficiency. CtS leaders believe that clients should earn a living wage, not just a minimum wage, and that those who have been incarcerated or separated from their families should have the tools to productively reengage with their children.

CtS grew out of two parallel efforts by its founders, Kathy and Brad Lambert, to reduce barriers to employment for low-income families in and around St. Louis, Missouri. In the late 1990s, Kathy Lambert opened a Dress for Success boutique in St. Louis to provide business clothes to low-income single mothers. Around the same time, Brad Lambert began a program called Wheels for Success, which refurbished donated vehicles for low-income families in St. Charles County, a St. Louis suburb with limited access to public transportation, so they could have reliable transportation to get to work.

Through their work, the Lamberts came to recognize that the hardships faced by low-income families went far beyond lack of access to a job, and they began developing a holistic intervention to improve the circumstances of low-income families. In 2001, their newly formed organization, Connections to Success, began offering Personal and Professional Development (PPD), a multi-session workshop combining workforce readiness training with soft skills development and case management. PPD remains a core component of CtS's programming in St. Louis, and formed the basis for CtS's Kansas City operations when the organization opened a location there in 2003.

Responsible fatherhood program development

CtS expanded to Kansas City after receiving funding in 2003 from the U.S. Department of Justice to provide faith-based reentry services to men and women leaving prison. CtS

then received a Department of Labor Reintegration of Ex-Offenders (RExO) grant in 2005 to extend its work serving ex-offenders. Through the RExO grant, CtS came to understand how parenting education complemented its mission of self-sufficiency. Staff saw that men participating in RExO-funded services would quit their jobs over “family drama”—and those lacking employment could not pay child support or provide for their families. But, under the RExO grant, CtS did not explicitly or systematically provide parenting education; its model included a network of mentors, many of them faith based, who sometimes provided guidance to fathers about challenges in their family lives.

In 2011, the Kansas City location of CtS received a Responsible Fatherhood grant from the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) to create the Successful STEPS program. Successful STEPS integrates workforce readiness training and case management with parenting, fatherhood, and healthy relationship education. CtS’s initial approach to Successful STEPS was to compress its PPD model into 10 half-days of instruction and add an equivalent portion on fatherhood and parenting. The result became known as Relationship and Workforce Readiness (RWR).

In fall 2013, CtS staff revised the format of Successful STEPS to ensure fathers had sufficient time to engage deeply with the subject matter. Instead of offering two weeks of RWR classes split evenly between employment and fatherhood, CtS began to offer two and a half weeks of full-day classes. The first two weeks were dedicated to employment, following the PPD model, and the last two and a half days were dedicated to fatherhood education. This revised format increased the amount of time focused on delivering the PPD curriculum.

Community context

Successful STEPS enrolls Kansas City fathers from both Kansas and Missouri. During the first year of PACT enrollment—2013—the unemployment rate in the Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area was lower than the national average by nearly a percentage point, but Kansas City residents had lower-than-average household income, were more likely to receive public assistance, and were more likely to have lived below the poverty line during the prior four years.¹⁴ Between 2008 and 2012, the proportion of families headed by single mothers in Kansas City—16 to 19 percent, on average—was higher than the national average of 14 percent (all statistics from the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics). Additionally, Kansas City struggled with above-average violent crime (Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Statistics).

Fathers in Kansas City, Kansas, faced relatively more disadvantage than those living in Kansas City, Missouri. Between 2008 and 2012, annual household income in Kansas City, Kansas was \$37,768, compared to \$45,150 in Kansas City, Missouri. The receipt

of public assistance was higher in Kansas City, Kansas: 4 percent of its population received cash assistance and about 17 percent received SNAP benefits, on average, compared to roughly 3 percent and 14 percent in Kansas City, Missouri. Nearly one-quarter of families in Kansas City, Kansas, lived below the poverty line between 2008 and 2012, compared to about 19 percent in Kansas City, Missouri. Between 2008 and 2012, more than one in five Kansas City, Kansas, residents had not completed high school by age 25, a rate nearly twice that of Kansas City, Missouri (all statistics from the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau).

CtS is alone among Kansas City organizations in providing comprehensive services that combine employment and parenting skills development into a single workshop. A number of organizations in the community offer either job search assistance, workforce assessments, and training, or parenting classes and family services, but no other community organizations combine these activities. Some related community services are tailored to specific populations, such as Hispanic families or families of children with disabilities. Also, similar services and workshops offered by other community organizations are open-entry, open-exit, or by appointment, rather than cohort-based.

Program design

Population served

CtS serves low-income men and women living in Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri. Successful STEPS serves low-income fathers who are interested in getting a job or improving their employment situation, do not face debilitating or untreated substance abuse or mental health disorders, and have no convictions related to sex offenses.

Fathers who enrolled in PACT prior to August 22, 2014 were predominantly black, non-Hispanic men (Table A.1). About half had worked for pay in the 30 days prior to enrollment; the majority of these fathers earned less than \$500 during that time. Staff reported that many fathers had been incarcerated; data show that four out of five had been convicted of a crime, with the longest stint in a correctional institution averaging 2.4 years. Though 83 percent of fathers had ever lived with one of their biological children, only 20 percent did so at the time of enrollment. Most men reported that they were involved in the life of at least one of the children they fathered; over three-quarters of men reported spending time with a child in the month prior to enrollment. Many fathers were referred to Successful STEPS through the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) for failing to make child support payments. Although three-fifths had a legal child support arrangement, the average amount a father had paid in the 30 days prior to enrollment was about \$88. On average, the men had fathered 2.5 children.

Program philosophy, service delivery approach, and logic model

CtS’s credo, “do with, not for,” is aligned with its overall mission of promoting self-sufficiency and is woven into each component of Successful STEPS (Figure 1). Workshop facilitators, known as trainers, emphasize experiential learning and development of soft skills and emotional intelligence over didactic information delivery to provide fathers with the tools to achieve stability and self-sufficiency and productively interact with others in a work environment. Case management and job placement services are intended to connect fathers with resources, services, and job leads, but it is ultimately up to fathers to take advantage of these services and communicate with CtS staff.

One of the main activities underpinning a father’s experience in Successful STEPS is his life plan, which he writes with help from a trainer at the end of RWR and updates four times over the next 12 months with a life transformation coach (case manager). Fathers identify goals in eight domains (transportation, education, family, social, spiritual, employment, housing, and health)¹⁵ along with timelines for completion. The intent of the life plan is for fathers to focus on their lives and take accountability for their actions. Whereas RWR focuses on developing a father’s mindset to make a life plan, the goal of case management is to begin to actualize the life plan.

Table A.1. Baseline characteristics of randomly assigned fathers

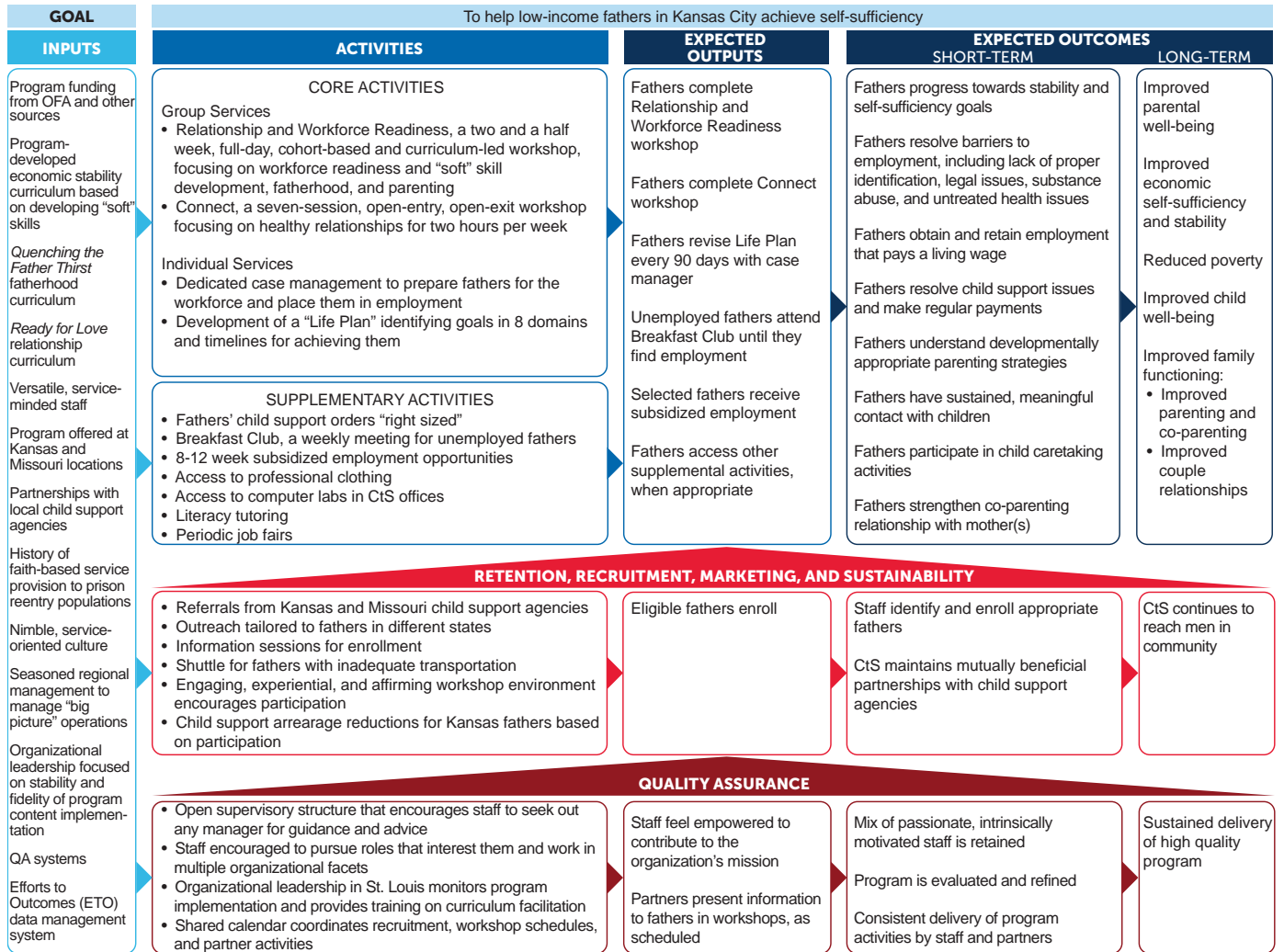
	Successful STEPS	Total PACT RF sample
Demographics		
Average age (years)	36	35
Race and ethnicity (%)		
Hispanic	4	5
Black, non-Hispanic	78	81
White, non-Hispanic	13	8
Other	5	6
Socioeconomic status		
Have high school diploma or GED (%)	68	69
Earnings in last 30 days (%)		
Did not work for pay	52	50
\$1–\$500	34	27
\$501–\$1,000	9	12
More than \$1,001	4	11

	Successful STEPS	Total PACT RF sample
Housing stability (%)		
Stable housing		
Own home	3	2
Rent home	21	26
Contribute to rent	10	18
Unstable housing		
Halfway house, group house, or treatment facility	14	10
Homeless	10	10
Live rent free in someone's home	38	30
Other unstable housing	4	4
Criminal justice system involvement		
Ever convicted of a crime (%)	80	73
Longest time in an adult correctional institution (years)	2.4	1.7
Currently on parole (%)	43	34
Father involvement and parenting behavior		
Number of children	2.5	2.6
Have children with multiple mothers (%)	48	47
Ever lived with any child (%)	83	87
Live currently with at least one child (%)	20	22
Spent time with at least one child in past month (%)	78	80
Have legal child support arrangement (%)	60	58
Amount paid in last 30 days	\$88	\$149
Paid informal child support in last 30 days (%)	27	31
Romantic relationships (%)		
Ever married to mother of at least one child	30	27
In romantic relationship	49	53
In romantic relationship with mother of at least one child	30	34
Motivation to participate in program (%)		
Improve relationship with children	39	60
Improve job situation	58	35
Improve relationship with children's mother	3	5
Sample size	605	4,734

Source: PACT baseline survey.

Note: All fathers randomly assigned to the program or control group through August 22, 2014, were included. RF sites began PACT intake between December 9, 2012, and February 13, 2013.

Figure A.1. Program logic model



Two important documents support the development of life plans by helping fathers identify and track needs and goals, and by assisting staff with guiding fathers on how to influence their circumstances. First, life transformation coaches complete a "stability checklist" with each father. This questionnaire documents a father's potential barriers to self-sufficiency, including his housing situation, mental health, and substance abuse. Life transformation coaches update the stability checklist every 90 days. Second, job developers complete an "employment data sheet" with each father. This sheet documents a father's barriers to employment, such as a prior felony or suspended license, as well as his career interests and prior education or training.

CtS approaches the delivery of each service component of Successful STEPS differently. The RWR workshop is highly structured and intensive. Fathers participate as a cohort for two and a half weeks, receiving 80 hours of instruction. Connect, a relationship workshop, is less intensive, meeting for two hours weekly over seven weeks. Fathers who complete the RWR workshop can begin attending Connect at any time and may attend as frequently as they like.

CtS staff believe core services and topics should be covered in a specific sequence. Staff report that many fathers enter the program with “old habits” formed by negative expectations from society, such as laziness or participation in illegal activity. As a result, fathers may have negative self-images that needed to be addressed in the RWR workshop before they can think about being a strong coparent or keeping a job.

Fathers graduate from Successful STEPS by completing all RWR workshop sessions. Attendance at Connect is not required to graduate. Life transformation coaches and job developers follow up with fathers for one year after graduation, but a father’s case is never closed. Though it is primarily the father’s responsibility to seek out services after finishing the workshop, Successful STEPS leadership believe that any father who has gone through the program should be able to receive services at any point thereafter.

Service components

For PACT, Successful STEPS includes the following core services:

Relationship and Workforce Readiness. The employment portion of the RWR workshop follows a curriculum originally developed in-house over 15 years ago that has been continually enhanced over time. This two-week portion of RWR covers career interests, resume development, and interviewing. During these sessions, facilitators, known at Successful STEPS as trainers, also emphasize personal or soft skill development, including developing self-confidence and a positive mindset, recognizing the environments in which one functions best, and analyzing how one reacts to different situations and stimuli. Trainers dedicate time to “affirmations” and activities to help fathers develop positive self-images, but they are also frank with fathers about the challenges they face and their responsibility for their own circumstances. Staff believe that this type of “keeping it real,” together with the socio-emotional development the workshop fosters, prepare fathers to tackle the sensitive topics covered in the fatherhood portion of the workshops. Guest speakers from child support enforcement offices, a local bank, and SAFEHOME, a domestic violence shelter, give presentations on child support, financial literacy, and domestic violence.

The final two and a half days of the RWR workshop cover fatherhood and parenting topics. Successful STEPS draws on the evidence-informed *Quenching the Father Thirst* curriculum, developed by the National Center for Fathering to “train men to become responsible fathers.”¹⁶ Topics addressed include (1) children’s needs, (2) manhood as the foundation for fatherhood, (3) challenges of being a father, (4) the effects of stress on parenting, (5) reconnecting with children, (6) family history, and (7) the relationship with the mother as a coparent. At the end of the RWR workshop, fathers write a life plan with goals and timelines in eight domains of their lives (see above).

Connect. Once a week, CtS offers Connect, a seven-session workshop that covers healthy relationship topics, for fathers who complete the RWR workshop. CtS staff

facilitate the *Ready for Love* curriculum, an adaptation of the evidence-based *Relationship Enhancement* curriculum. *Ready for Love* covers topics such as what makes a good mate, building trust, and setting and enforcing relationship boundaries.¹⁷ Facilitators also use Connect to reinforce modules from the RWR workshop. Guest speakers from partner organizations give presentations on domestic violence and financial literacy. Classes start with a light meal. Fathers can begin participating at any point and attend sessions in any order, and can attend as many—or as few—sessions as they chose.

Case management. After completing RWR, fathers are assigned to a life transformation coach for case management. Life transformation coaches hold an initial meeting with each father to complete a stability checklist and help the father secure proper identification, connect to a health care provider, arrange transportation to appointments or job interviews, and provide professional clothing. When making a referral to an external organization, the life transformation coach follows up with the organization and the client to make sure the client has followed through on the referral. Life transformation coaches help fathers review and update their life plans and stability checklists every 90 days for a year. They arrange weekly meetings with fathers who are just beginning case management, and adjust schedules based on individual fathers' needs.

Life transformation coaches determine when a father is “job ready.” Upon making this determination, the life transformation coach refers the father to a job developer. To be job ready, fathers with any substance abuse issues have to be clean for two weeks. Their medical needs have to be addressed, including filling any prescriptions and getting eyeglasses, and they must have appropriate government identification, such as a birth certificate. Fathers who missed any sessions of the RWR workshop have to make them up before being deemed job ready.

Job development. In an initial meeting with a job developer, the father discusses the type of job he wants to pursue and his barriers to employment, such as a felony conviction or lack of access to transportation. Together, the father and job developer complete an employment data sheet that includes the father's employment barriers, interests, and progress toward becoming employable. In follow-up meetings, job developers check on fathers' job search progress, update employment data sheets, and administer the O*NET assessment to help fathers identify potential occupations.¹⁸ Job developers also help fathers research employers, complete online applications, schedule interviews, arrange transportation, and conduct mock interviews. They make formal appointments with fathers on an as-needed basis.

Successful STEPS includes the following supplementary services:

Reductions in state-owed child support arrears. CtS partners with the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) to reduce fathers' state-owed child support arrears for participation in Successful STEPS. For every hour of participation,

Kansas DCF reduces the father's state-owed child support arrears, up to a maximum of \$1,625 (\$50 for each of the first 15 hours, and \$25 per hour for up to an additional 35 hours). Program participants who obtain a GED or commercial driver's license may receive an additional \$1,000 reduction. For every \$1 program fathers invest in a 529 college savings plan, DCF provides participants with a \$2 reduction in child support arrearages.¹⁹ CtS reports that between February 2012 and fall 2013, over \$170,000 in debt was absolved for fathers in Successful STEPS. Missouri fathers are not eligible for state-owed arrears reductions.

Breakfast Club. All Successful STEPS graduates are encouraged to attend Breakfast Club, a job club that meets for one and a half hours each week. Participants discuss employment issues and provide peer support. Employers and successful program alumni visit to give presentations. Breakfast Club is facilitated by the Successful STEPS trainer manager. Life transformation coaches and job developers expect unemployed fathers to attend. Those in attendance receive a weekly packet of job listings compiled by job developers.

Subsidized employment. Successful STEPS works with employers to subsidize 8 to 12-week jobs for Successful STEPS graduates. Job developers tell fathers that these are "try-outs" that could potentially turn into full-time jobs. Fathers receive a paycheck from the employer, who is reimbursed by CtS. CtS has established partnerships with employers in hospitality, waste removal, warehousing, and construction for placements. For example, a local construction company provides fathers with an 8-week internship on a job site.

In addition, fathers in Successful STEPS have access to a professional clothing closet; transportation to activities such as job interviews, eye exams, and meetings with parole officers; a computer lab in both states' offices; literacy tutoring; and periodic job fairs.

Partners in service delivery

CtS has formal partnerships with three organizations: a domestic violence education and shelter program and child support agencies in both Kansas and Missouri. Representatives from these organizations conduct presentations for fathers during RWR.

SAFEHOME. CtS's partnership with SAFEHOME, a domestic violence shelter, began in 2011 with the OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant. CtS approached the organization because of its experience providing education programming. A SAFEHOME facilitator conducts a presentation during each RWR cohort about how domestic violence affects children and leads a discussion on healthy relationships, emotional abuse, and controlling behavior during Connect. Fathers can bring their romantic partner and/or coparent to the Connect discussion. SAFEHOME also provides domestic violence training to CtS staff working on Successful STEPS.

Kansas Department for Children and Families. CtS first partnered with Kansas DCF in July 2011. As the primary recruitment source for Successful STEPS, Kansas DCF mails Successful STEPS pamphlets to fathers in its system with overdue child support payments. It has also provided CtS with spaces to recruit fathers and conduct RWR workshops and information sessions. A liaison from the agency delivers a presentation to each RWR cohort in Kansas on legal obligations, navigating the child support system, establishing paternity, and modifying child support orders. The liaison provides contact information for Kansas fathers to receive assistance with their specific cases. Kansas fathers with state-owed child support arrears are eligible for reductions.

Missouri State Department of Social Services Family Support Division/Child Support Enforcement Office (FSD/CSE). CtS formed a partnership with Missouri FSD/CSE in October 2013. A Missouri FSD/CSE staff member gives a presentation about child support to each RWR cohort of Missouri fathers. Unlike Kansas DCF, Missouri FSD/CSE does not have the administrative authority to alter state-owed child support arrears. However, Missouri FSD/CSE is responsive to requests to reinstate suspended driver's licenses, if the father makes a \$25 child support payment, and requests to modify child support orders. Missouri FSD/CSE refers fathers to Successful STEPS.

In addition to these partnerships, four other organizations provide support to Successful STEPS. Two are curriculum developers for *Quenching the Father Thirst* and *Ready for Love*, which CtS uses in workshops. The curriculum developers have provided trainings to staff. The third, Workforce Partnership, is an American Jobs Center that helps fathers enroll in Workforce Investment Act-funded training programs and KansasWorks, a state-run job board. A fourth organization, Literacy KC, conducts literacy assessments and provides tutoring to fathers; Literacy KC does not have a formal partnership with CtS.

Staffing, supervision, and implementation support

Successful STEPS has expanded significantly since February 2013, the start of enrollment for PACT. At the time of the staff survey in fall 2013, the average length of tenure in the organization was 2.7 years (Table A.2). Equal proportions of staff were men and women, and 64 percent described themselves as black, non-Hispanic.

Background and experience of staff

The founders of CtS stress the importance of having “the right people on the bus”: in their view, being self-motivated and having mission-driven character matter most. Managers cite qualities such as “servant heart,” “leadership attitude,” and a “passion to serve” as important for CtS employees. Prior direct experience and educational attainment are not critical hiring factors. Though nearly three-quarters of staff surveyed reported previous experience providing employment services, reflecting CtS's history as a workforce development agency, only 36 percent of staff reported experience

providing parenting or relationship skills education. All staff had at least some college coursework, and more than three-fifths had a bachelor's degree or higher (Table A.2).

Table A.2. CtS staff characteristics and experience

Staff characteristics		Staff experience	
Gender (%)		Experience providing parenting education (%)	
Male	46	Mean (years)	36
Female	46		7.3
Other	8	Experience providing relationship skills education (%)	
		Mean (years)	36
			7.3
Race and ethnicity (%)		Experience providing employment services (%)	
Hispanic	18	Mean (years)	73
Black, non-Hispanic	64		8.3
White, non-Hispanic	0	Education (%)	
Other, including mixed race	18	High school diploma or equivalency	0
Average length of employment (years)	2.7	Some college, associate's degree, or certificate	36
		Bachelor's degree	27
		More than bachelor's degree	36

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Note: Eleven out of 13 staff from CtS completed the survey.

Several staff members had experience in criminal justice, likely a reflection of CtS's history of serving ex-offender populations. Before joining CtS, the regional executive director was a parole officer. The training manager worked as a job developer for a county probation office. The lead life transformation coach's background was in prison ministry. One life transformation coach worked with mentally ill members of the reentry population for more than a decade before joining CtS. CtS's background as a faith-based organization is also reflected in its staff members' backgrounds. In addition to the lead life transformation coach's experience in prison ministry, a trainer and an outreach coordinator/trainer both worked as pastors outside of their employment with CtS.

Roles and responsibilities

To accommodate organizational growth, CtS has added management positions to oversee frontline staff working on Successful STEPS. CtS employed a dedicated Successful STEPS program manager; however, when the position became vacant, the regional director, who oversees all Kansas City programming, covered the responsibilities. Three managers are responsible for training new hires and supervising

and supporting staff. Frontline staff are asked to be flexible and open to working on tasks not part of their job description. Table A.3 lists CtS staff positions and the primary responsibilities of staff at each level of the organization.

Table A.3. Successful STEPS staff roles and responsibilities

Job title	Primary responsibilities
Leadership	
Regional executive director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee all CtS programming in Kansas City, including Successful STEPS and non-OFA RF grant-funded programs
Program manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage day-to-day operations of Successful STEPS program
Managers	
Lead life transformation coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervise life transformation coaches Conduct community outreach to help life transformation coaches find helpful resources for fathers
Job developer manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervise job developers Maintain relationships with potential employers Manage transitional jobs program Develop job leads for participants and job developers
Trainer manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervise trainers and outreach coordinators Facilitate Breakfast Club Organize and manage overall program calendar, including information sessions
Frontline staff	
Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate RWR May cover other duties within CtS, as requested
Outreach coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead outreach and recruitment activities Work with trainer manager to schedule and run information sessions May assume other duties; for example an outreach coordinator has also facilitated the fatherhood curriculum in RWR
Life transformation coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist fathers who enroll in Successful STEPS more than two weeks before the beginning of a cohort Provide case management to help fathers become “job ready,” may include individual meetings, providing referrals, and updating life plans
Job developer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help fathers obtain employment through identifying job leads and training opportunities, and administering occupational assessments Liaise with potential employers to identify job opportunities Prepare job leads for fathers attending Breakfast Club
Retention specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interact with employers to facilitate employment retention for fathers

Staff training

All new staff participate in an orientation to introduce the organization's background, funders and grants, and programming. After orientation, new employees meet with other members of their department to discuss their roles and complete department-specific training. For example, new life transformation coaches observe a full session of RWR and shadow meetings between other life transformation coaches and fathers. Experienced staff train new staff on how to document services, use the MIS, and fill out forms like the stability checklist.

Staff do not receive regular, ongoing training after initial orientation, but training is provided as needed. For example, CtS's CEO delivered a workshop on facilitation techniques to trainers in fall 2013. The developers of *Quenching the Father Thirst* and *Ready for Love*, the parenting and healthy relationship curricula, have also trained trainers. The National Center for Fathering, which developed *Quenching the Father Thirst*, has designated a staff liaison to provide technical assistance to CtS as needed. Several managers and job developers have attended the Offender Workforce Development Specialist Partnership Training, a 160-hour training developed by the National Institute of Corrections.²⁰

Supervisory support for direct service staff

CtS is a small organization whose leadership intends that staff members should feel comfortable going to any manager—not just their department manager—for advice, and should have a supportive and empowering work environment. Though most staff reported receiving monthly group supervision on the staff survey (Table A.4), the content and focus of these meetings are department specific. Trainers meet as a

Table A.4. Staff support at CTS

Frequency of supervision	Percent
Individual	
Weekly or more	36
Biweekly	18
Monthly or less	27
Never	0
Group	
Weekly or more	0
Biweekly	18
Monthly or less	74
Never	0

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Note: Eleven out of 13 staff from CtS completed the survey. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to item nonresponse.

team before each cohort of Successful STEPS. Life transformation coaches and job developers meet monthly to review caseloads and coordinate activities. Trainers and life transformation coaches meet towards the end of RWR to discuss specific issues facing fathers in the cohort who would transition to case management. Life transformation coaches also have group meetings every other week when the lead life transformation coach brings in speakers on community resources for fathers.

Outreach and recruitment

All staff are expected to assist with outreach and recruitment and to attend information sessions. Successful STEPS accepts referrals from public and private agencies and conducts recruitment activities at service delivery locations, public benefits offices, community events, and through general outreach.

- **Public and private agencies.** Kansas DCF mails a flyer to fathers who owe child support, and Missouri FSD/CSE refers fathers to Successful STEPS. The housing authority in Kansas City, Kansas allows CtS to conduct outreach at housing projects and leave recruitment flyers at the front desks. CtS also recruits for Successful STEPS from adult residential centers, halfway houses, reentry facilities, drug treatment centers, and American Jobs Centers. CtS has ceased recruiting from homeless shelters because it found these men were unlikely to engage once enrolled. Before beginning the PACT evaluation, Kansas DCF was the only referral source for Successful STEPS. Due to longstanding reliance on the agency's mailings, staff expressed concern that they may have exhausted their pool of potential participants in Kansas, and have discussed expanding mailings to fathers who are not receiving public assistance.
- **Community gatherings.** CtS staff attend events where large crowds are gathered, such as block parties, outdoor concerts, picnics, job fairs, sporting events, and local church functions, to hand out flyers and recruit eligible fathers. An outreach coordinator believes that these events are important to increase the community presence of Successful STEPS.
- **General street outreach.** Outreach coordinators hang door tags on houses, drop in to barbershops and food pantries, and ride bus routes handing out flyers. Staff noted that door hangers have been particularly successful because wives, girlfriends, and mothers have seen them and urged their partners and sons to enroll. CtS has periodically advertised for Successful STEPS on buses, on the radio and in newspapers. Newspaper advertising has been successful in bringing fathers to Successful STEPS, but many of those who responded were employed and did not meet enrollment requirements. Successful STEPS also receives exposure through a county legislator's radio program discussing reentry options for men leaving prison.

Outreach staff schedule regular information sessions for referred fathers to learn about the program and conduct enrollment. CtS screens potential participants for program suitability during the information session prior to enrollment by talking to the men, performing visual assessments to see whether they have tangible signs of mental health or substance abuse issues, and checking criminal databases to see whether potential participants have been convicted of sex offenses. Life transformation coaches with backgrounds in social work perform these screenings. Staff make case-by-case decisions about whether men are fit to participate. Men who admit to recent drug use are allowed to go through enrollment if they are in treatment. Men who exhibit visual signs of mental health issues are referred to the local health services agency and invited to come back once they receive treatment. Men who have been convicted of sex offenses are not allowed to participate in programming. Following enrollment and random assignment, life transformation coaches administer a quick needs assessment to see whether fathers require referrals to services before beginning a cohort of Successful STEPS.

Program outputs

Program enrollment

Between February 2013 and August 2014, CtS enrolled 606 fathers into the PACT evaluation; approximately half of the enrolled fathers were assigned to receive Successful STEPS. On average during this period, CtS enrolled 32 fathers per month; monthly enrollment ranged from 15 to 55 fathers. The number of fathers enrolled was impacted by staff turnover and inclement weather, with the lowest monthly enrollment occurring during the winter months. To explain success in months with higher enrollment, staff highlighted specific strategies used, including placing door hangers and appearing on a local legislator's radio show. High enrollment in October 2013 coincided with the beginning of the program's referral partnership with Missouri FSD/CSE.

According to the baseline survey, more than half of fathers who enrolled were motivated by the desire to improve their job situation. This is in keeping with Successful STEPS's main recruitment source, Kansas DCF, which refers fathers who have struggled to pay child support.

Program participation

By the end of March 2014, 222 fathers in Successful STEPS had enrolled in the PACT evaluation, had been randomly assigned to receive the program, and had the opportunity to participate in program activities for at least four months. To understand Successful STEPS' early participation trends, we examined engagement and retention in program services and assessed total program dosage during these fathers' first four months after program enrollment. Program activities completed by fathers beyond the first four months in the program were excluded from this analysis.

Eighty-one percent of fathers assigned to the program group in Successful STEPS engaged in at least one program activity within four months of program enrollment (Table A.5). Roughly the same percentage of fathers attended at least one session of the core RWR workshop (75 percent) as received at least one individual contact (76 percent). About one-third of fathers attended an optional group activity, typically Breakfast Club. From the start of PACT enrollment until fall 2013, RWR was structured so that economic stability and personal development content was delivered in a morning session and parenting content was delivered in the afternoon. Initial engagement in these content areas was about the same. Engagement in relationship content, delivered through Connect, was much lower. Individual contacts coded as “other content”—generally related to items on the stability checklist—had the largest initial engagement, though 72 percent of fathers’ had at least one individual contact focused on economic stability.

Table A.5. Engagement in at least one program activity, by content area

	Any program engagement	Core workshops	Individual contacts	Supplementary group activities
Engaged in any content (%)	81	75	76	32
Parenting/fatherhood		72	39	N/A
Relationships		37	54	N/A
Economic stability		74	72	32
Personal development		74	N/A	N/A
Other		N/A	76	N/A

Source: Site MIS data.

Note: The sample includes 222 fathers enrolled between February 3, 2013, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in the report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. “Other” content includes needs assessments, substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and/or transportation. N/A = not applicable.

Sixty-three percent of fathers assigned to receive the program attended half or more of the core workshop sessions (Table A.6). An additional 13 percent of fathers attended at least one session, but less than half, of the fatherhood portion of RWR, and an additional 11 percent of fathers attended at least one session, but less than half, of the economic stability portion of RWR. Attendance at the healthy relationship workshop, Connect, was much lower. More than three out of every five fathers never attended a session of Connect and only 15 percent of fathers attended three or more sessions of the healthy relationship workshop.

Fathers received about seven individual contacts, on average, during the first four months enrolled; contacts were split evenly between telephone conversations and in-person meetings (Table A.7). Contacts were not evenly distributed throughout the

first four months. Fathers had more than four individual contacts during the first two months, when they were likely to be participating in the core workshop, and about three contacts during the third and fourth months after enrollment. Over three-quarters of fathers received a referral to an externally provided support service, such as a free eye exam, GED program, or temporary housing.

Table A.6. Attendance at core workshop sessions

Core workshop	Number of hours	Number of sessions	Percentage of sessions attended		
			None	1 to 50 percent	51 percent or more
Quenching the Father Thirst	30/25 ¹	10/5 ¹	28	13	59
Workforce Readiness	40/70 ¹	10	26	11	63
Healthy Relationships (Connect)	14	7	63	22	15

Source: Site MIS data.

Note: The sample includes 222 fathers enrolled between February 3, 2013, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in the report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

¹On November 11, 2013, Connections to Success revised the format for offering Quenching the Father Thirst and Workforce Readiness. The new format decreased the number of hours and sessions for Quenching the Father Thirst and increased the number of hours included in Workforce Readiness. The sequence of the workshops also changed so that fathers would receive all workforce readiness content before receiving fatherhood content. Retention is based on the number of sessions of the group the father attended.

Table A.7. Individual contacts and referrals

	Percentage or number
Referrals and individual contacts with fathers	
Number of fathers	222
Percentage of fathers receiving at least one outside referral for support services	76
Average number of individual contacts per father	7.2
Average number of individual contacts per month per father	1.8
Average number of individual contacts per month per father, first two months	2.1
Average number of individual contacts per month per father, third and fourth months	1.5
Mode of individual contact	
Number of individual contacts	1,601
Percentage of individual contacts by	
Telephone	47
Program office visit	49
Other	4

Source: Site MIS data.

Note: The sample includes fathers enrolled between February 3, 2013, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included.

Across all fathers assigned to receive Successful STEPS (including those who never participated), fathers averaged about 41 hours of participation within four months of entering the program (Table A.8). The bulk of these hours were from attending the core RWR workshop. Substantially less time—about three hours—came from attendance at the weekly relationship workshop, Connect. A little more than three hours were spent on individual contacts. Optional group activities accounted for an hour and a half of participation, on average. Across participation in core workshops, individual contacts, and optional group contacts, participants spent similar amounts of time on parenting and economic stability and slightly less time on personal development content. Average hours of participation increased by nearly 25 percent when limiting the sample to only fathers who attended at least one program activity. The pattern of service receipt was similar for these fathers, however.

Program sustainability and improvement

Strategies and supports for encouraging program participation

Since beginning evaluation enrollment, CtS has prioritized recruiting close to the start of a cohort of Successful STEPS to limit the time between enrollment and the start of core programming. As soon as there are enough fathers to make up a cohort, staff hold information sessions during which fathers enroll in Successful STEPS. Keeping enrollment and programming in close proximity provides less opportunity for fathers to lose motivation and not show up to RWR. CtS aims to have fathers start a Successful STEPS cohort within two weeks of enrollment. If a father enrolls more than two weeks before the start of his Successful STEPS cohort, he is referred to a life transformation coach to address immediate barriers to participation. In general, CtS starts two Successful STEPS cohorts each month, a practice that began in March 2013.

CtS has emphasized recruiting from sources that they believe yield motivated and interested fathers who will engage in programming. Over time, CtS stopped recruiting for Successful STEPS from sources such as homeless shelters, because the enrolled fathers tended to not participate in the services offered. CtS has also made an effort to hold information sessions in locations convenient to large referral sources. For example, CtS has held Successful STEPS recruitment sessions on location at Kansas DCF and at a halfway house.

Ultimately, staff believe that the key to ongoing participation is an engaging workshop environment. Trainers lead interactive group activities and ice breakers to encourage fathers to build connections and bond with one another. Trainers also share affirming messages that encourage fathers to continue attending.

CtS has relationships with local parole officers, and leverages these to encourage attendance. Staff reach out to parole officers when contact information for a father is inaccurate or out-of-date in an effort to reengage the father.

Table A.8. Average hours of participation

	Core workshops	Individual contacts	Supplementary group activities	Total hours
All program group fathers				
Parenting/fatherhood	12.2	0.2	N/A	12.3
Economic stability	10.6	1.4	1.5	13.5
Relationships	2.8	0.4	N/A	3.2
Personal development	10.6	N/A	N/A	10.6
Other	N/A	1.4	N/A	1.4
Total hours	36.1	3.4	1.5	40.9
Program group fathers with any participation				
Parenting/fatherhood	15.1	0.2	N/A	15.3
Economic stability	13.1	1.8	1.8	16.7
Relationships	3.4	0.5	N/A	3.9
Personal development	13.1	N/A	N/A	13.1
Other	N/A	1.7	N/A	1.7
Total hours	44.8	4.2	1.8	50.8

Source: Site MIS data.

Note: The sample includes 222 fathers enrolled between February 3, 2013, and March 31, 2014 who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Of these, 179 program group fathers had any participation. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. "Other" content includes needs assessments, substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and/or transportation. N/A = not applicable.

Trainers offer three reasons why fathers would stop participating in Successful STEPS. Some fathers have what program staff termed a "fear of success." These fathers are concerned that they will not fit in with their communities or lifelong friends if they complete Successful STEPS. Others are "program hoppers" who sign up for a number of programs but do not yet have the commitment to see them through. A third group of fathers sign up for services because their main interest is getting a job. Once they become employed, they stop showing up.

Though CtS has stopped recruiting from homeless shelters, housing remains a chief barrier to participation. About two-thirds of men reported housing instability, including homelessness, on the baseline survey (Table A.1). Efforts of life transformation coaches to contact fathers in unstable housing often have been unsuccessful because their addresses and phone numbers change frequently.

Providing services to fathers in two states creates challenges to ensuring program participation. Workshops are offered in locations in both states, but have sometimes

been combined if there was only enough demand to fill one class or a facilitator was unavailable. CtS provides shuttle service to assist fathers who lack transportation or dislike crossing state lines. However, for some, the cross-state barriers could be difficult to overcome. For example, a father on parole may need a travel pass from his parole officer to cross into another state. According to the baseline survey, over 40 percent of fathers were on parole at the time of enrollment (Table A.1). Trainers and child support staff have encountered difficulty talking about child support in combined workshops where both Kansas and Missouri fathers were present. Each state's child support system is different, making it difficult to explain processes and procedures, including reductions in state-owed arrears, for which only Kansas fathers are eligible.

CtS's greatest challenge has been promoting participation at Connect. Fathers do not begin to participate in the workshop until after they complete RWR, and they may see Connect as an optional, supplementary activity. Transportation may also be an issue: when Connect sessions are scheduled in the evening, they sometimes end after the last public bus run. Fathers also may have conflicts due to work schedules or child care responsibilities. The program has found that providing food has helped to promote attendance, but participation remained low through summer 2014.

Systems for monitoring program operations

CtS uses Efforts to Outcomes, a web-based data management system, to track attendance and indicators of program operation. Social Solutions, the developer of the system, provides ongoing technical support. Staff track fathers' performance on curricula-based tests taken during RWR, and record whether a father has become employed, employment retention, changes in wage earnings, and the amount of child support arrears forgiven. Staff log their time spent in case management and upload each father's stability checklist and employment data sheet. They also use the "case notes" function to share information with other CtS staff, such as when one staff person has a contact with a participant on another staff member's caseload.

Managers use the data management system to monitor caseloads and see the breakdown between active participants and those who are stable because they have obtained employment or no longer require regular services. Managers also monitor the time fathers spend in case management, and what services are provided. Quarterly reports aggregate statistics on participants and are used to analyze trends in service provision.

CtS staff also use the data management system to improve recruitment and enrollment. The training manager and outreach staff use the system to monitor monthly recruitment numbers and targets. For example, early in 2013, staff met to review recruitment during 2012 and devise strategies for improvement, including intra-office challenges to see who could recruit the most fathers. The training manager also has used enrollment data to inform when and where classes should be scheduled.

APPENDIX B

**FATHERS' SUPPORT CENTER ST. LOUIS
FAMILY FORMATION PROGRAM PROFILE**

RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD PROGRAM PROFILE: FAMILY FORMATION PROGRAM AT FATHERS' SUPPORT CENTER ST. LOUIS

Program overview

Fathers' Support Center St. Louis (FSC) offers the Family Formation Program (FFP) to fathers in St. Louis, Missouri. The primary service is a six-week, cohort-based daily workshop that covers parenting, healthy relationships, economic stability, and personal development. Fathers are expected to participate in group-based curriculum sessions in the mornings and individualized activities in the afternoons to help them prepare for work.

Program context and background

Organizational context and responsible fatherhood program development

FSC was founded in 1997 to improve the outcomes of children in St. Louis, Missouri, by guiding fathers to become self-sufficient, responsible, and committed to strong family relationships. FSC addresses this mission primarily through a comprehensive program, the FFP. The structure and content of the FFP have remained largely unchanged since the first class in 1997. In addition to the FFP, the organization operates a youth leadership and mentoring program, a legal services clinic, and versions of the FFP adapted for mixed gender and incarcerated populations. These additional programs were not included in the PACT evaluation.

Since inception, FSC has woven together funding from a variety of sources. Initially, FSC obtained seed funding from the United Way's Community Action Program and other public and private sources. In 2003, FSC received a grant from ACF to support family development, responsible fatherhood, and job placement. In 2005, FSC received a Special Improvement Project grant from the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, and in 2006, it partnered with Better Family Life, Inc. on a Healthy Marriage grant from the federal OFA. Also, in 2006, it partnered with the St. Louis Healthy Marriage Coalition on an additional Healthy Marriage grant. In 2011, FSC received its first Responsible Fatherhood grant from the federal OFA. It combined the grant with funding from other donors to provide the FFP.

Community context

FSC is located in North St. Louis, an impoverished section of a city that faces considerable economic disadvantage. According to the 2008–2012 American Community Survey, the city's median household income averaged \$34,384, which was almost \$20,000 below the U.S. average (\$53,046). During that time period, an average of 4 percent of the population of St. Louis received cash assistance—one

percentage point higher than the national average—and 25 percent of the population received food assistance, slightly higher than the national average. Although St. Louis's unemployment rate has been about the same as the national rate since 2008, the city's poverty rate was nearly twice the national average from 2008 to 2012. Roughly 18 percent of St. Louis residents older than age 25 had not completed high school, and 19 percent of St. Louis households were headed by single mothers between 2008 and 2012 (all statistics from the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor). St. Louis also experienced more violent crime: in 2012, the violent crime rate was 20 percent greater in St. Louis than nationally (FBI's 2012 Uniform Crime Statistics).

St. Louis has a number of resources available for low-income individuals who are seeking to find a job or learn skills to improve their employability, but comparable comprehensive services for fathers that integrate economic stability assistance with parenting and healthy relationships are nonexistent, according to the executive director of St. Martha's Hall, a local domestic violence shelter. Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis' Fatherhood Initiative provided parenting services to men as recently as 2012, but these services were limited in comparison to those offered by FSC. The initiative offered neither healthy relationship nor economic stability programming, and offered fewer hours of services.

Program design

Population served

From its founding, FSC has targeted low-income fathers in St. Louis for the FFP. FSC leadership reports that more than three-quarters of the men who receive services have limited education and criminal backgrounds, and struggle with addiction. Those struggling with addiction must enroll in substance abuse treatment by regularly attending an outpatient substance abuse center or Narcotics Anonymous (NA) or Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings, as well as pass random drug screenings.

Fathers who enrolled in PACT before August 22, 2014 were predominantly black, non-Hispanic men (Table B.1). About two-thirds had a high school diploma or GED. Although FFP staff estimated that 80 to 90 percent of the men were unemployed, data suggest that about half worked for pay in the 30 days before they completed the baseline survey. Most who worked earned less than \$500. Almost two-thirds of fathers reported ever having been convicted of a crime; the longest length of stay in an adult correctional facility averaged nearly two years. The men had fathered an average of 2.8 children. Although 86 percent of men reported ever having lived with at least one biological child, less than a quarter of fathers lived with at least one biological child at the time they enrolled in the evaluation. Most men reported that they were involved in the life of at least one of the children they fathered; 85 percent reported spending time

in the last month with one of their children. Two-thirds of the fathers had formal child support arrangements; on average, they had paid \$142 in the past month.

Program philosophy, approach to service delivery, and logic model

The FFP’s approach to serving fathers is based on the founder’s experience as a member of NA and his time as a school social worker in the public schools; both emphasize taking responsibility and changing one’s mindset. The founder believes that fathers should recognize that structural forces related to poverty often work against them, but these forces are not excuses for poor decisions. Though structural forces may have influenced past behavior, the founder emphasizes that fathers must take responsibility for their actions.

The founder believes that the FFP’s success in redeeming fathers hinges on fathers’ readiness to accept responsibility for past behaviors and ability to take concrete steps to improve their circumstances. Program leaders view these steps as fundamental in learning to be a man. Thus, the program maintains a “no-excuses” policy toward following rules, creates a respectful atmosphere, and expects men to set goals for themselves. Challenging participants to meet the high expectations the program sets for them as men and fathers is a way for the program to “engage fathers’ pride” and alter their core beliefs about themselves.

Table B.1. Baseline characteristics of randomly assigned fathers

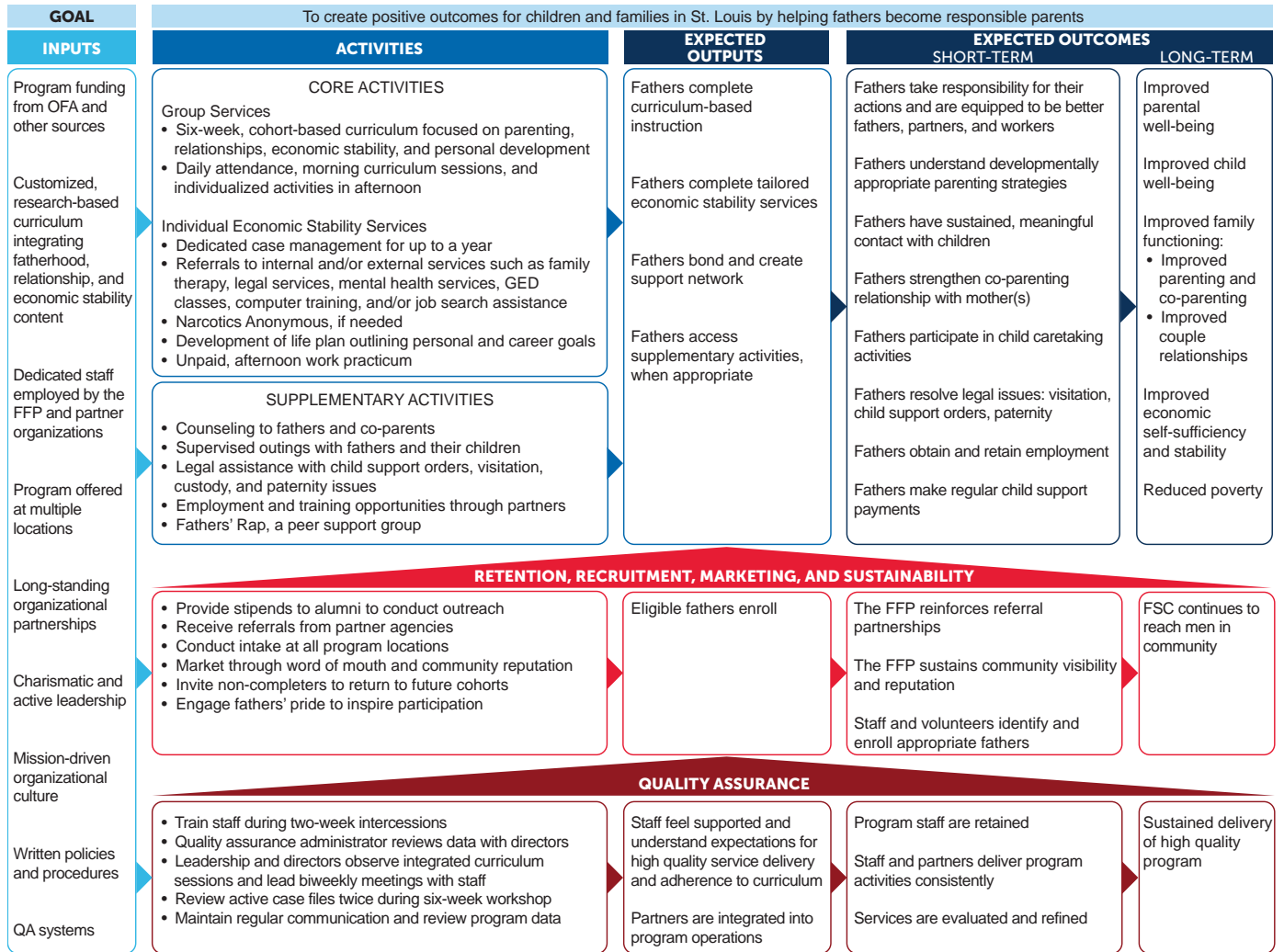
	Family Formation Program	Total PACT RF sample
Demographics		
Average age (years)	34	35
Race and ethnicity (%)		
Hispanic	1	5
Black, non-Hispanic	93	81
White, non-Hispanic	4	8
Other	3	6
Socioeconomic status		
Have high school diploma or GED (%)	64	69
Earnings in last 30 days (%)		
Did not work for pay	49	50
\$1–\$500	31	27
\$501–\$1,000	13	12
More than \$1,001	7	11

	Family Formation Program	Total PACT RF sample
Housing stability (%)		
Stable housing		
Own home	2	2
Rent home	24	26
Contribute to rent	21	18
Unstable housing		
Halfway house, group house, or treatment facility	6	10
Homeless	7	10
Live rent free in someone's home	35	30
Other unstable housing	4	4
Criminal justice system involvement		
Ever convicted of a crime (%)	65	73
Longest time in an adult correctional institution (years)	1.7	1.7
Currently on parole (%)	35	34
Father involvement and parenting behavior		
Number of children	2.8	2.6
Have children with multiple mothers (%)	52	47
Ever lived with any child (%)	86	87
Live currently with at least one child (%)	23	22
Spent time with at least one child in past month (%)	85	80
Have legal child support arrangement (%)	67	58
Amount paid in last 30 days	\$142	\$149
Paid informal child support in last 30 days (%)	31	31
Romantic relationships (%)		
Ever married to mother of at least one child	27	27
In romantic relationship	58	53
In romantic relationship with mother of at least one child	36	34
Motivation to participate in program (%)		
Improve relationship with children	60	60
Improve job situation	36	35
Improve relationship with children's mother	4	5
Sample size	1,728	4,734

Source: PACT baseline survey.

Note: The sample includes all fathers randomly assigned through August 22, 2014. RF sites began PACT intake between December 9, 2012, and February 13, 2013.

Figure B.1. Program logic model



The FFP defines a responsible father as one who is employed, paying child support, and actively involved with his children. To support men in their efforts to become responsible fathers, FSC takes a structured and intensive approach to the FFP (Figure B.1). Fathers are expected to attend programming five days a week for six weeks, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., for a total of 240 hours. Days are divided into morning curriculum-based workshop sessions and individualized afternoon activities. The morning curriculum integrates all content provided in the program. Well-trained and experienced facilitators (and occasional guest speakers) deliver parenting, relationship, and employment-skills instruction in the mornings.

Social workers and job developers, who conduct assessments of fathers' needs and meet with them individually, work together to determine afternoon activities. Afternoon activities include GED or computer classes, substance abuse treatment, job search activities, a work practicum, or mental health services. Case management is handled collectively by a team of staff. Social workers, therapists, and job developers meet twice

as a group during an FFP cohort to review all cases and ensure that all participants' needs are being met.

The program emphasizes shared experience through participation as a cohort. The aim of the cohort is to help fathers form bonds that sustain motivation; program staff shared that cohorts have referred to themselves as a “band of brothers.” Facilitators see the benefits of these bonds when fathers help each other process information during breaks or monitor each other’s use of derogatory, sexist, or inappropriate language. All but one facilitator ever employed by the program is an FFP graduate; facilitators are thus able to use their personal experiences as examples.

Adherence to the curriculum is ingrained in FFP service delivery. All facilitators at different locations deliver the same curriculum modules at the same pace, which is tracked daily by program leadership. Program leaders emphasize that all graduates should receive similar instruction that covers similar information; they believe it is important that the community knows what to expect from FFP graduates.

Service components

Core services. For PACT, the program’s 240 hours include core content in a group setting and individualized activities. The core content is presented all day during the first week and in the mornings during the remaining five weeks (with individualized activities in the afternoons). Facilitators at the three locations²¹ teach from a curriculum that has been refined by the FFP over the years to integrate content in several areas. Overall, about 20 percent of the curriculum focuses on parenting, about 30 percent addresses economic stability, and the remaining half is split between healthy relationships and personal development content. Healthy relationship content encompasses communication skills, which could apply to either romantic or coparenting relationships. Personal development content delves into concepts of manhood, tendencies and belief systems, and how to apply what is learned in the FFP to the future.

To develop its core curriculum, the FFP drew on, refined, and adapted portions of three evidence-informed curricula: *Fatherhood Development: A Curriculum for Young Fathers*,²² *Money Smart*,²³ and *Within My Reach*.²⁴ The curriculum’s first week orients fathers and addresses personal responsibility, which encompasses goals and values, what it means to be a father and a provider, and personal health and drugs. Weeks two and three of the curriculum focus on healthy relationships, communication skills, anger management, and conflict resolution. In week four, fathers learn about child support rights and responsibilities, qualities of a good father, and roadblocks to effective parenting. During the final two weeks, which focus on economic stability, fathers are required to wear a shirt and tie daily to project a professional attitude and be prepared for job interviews. Fathers are taught skills such as how to create a resume, mock

interviewing, and financial skills. The program staff believe that only after learning to be accountable and receiving the parenting and relationship curriculum are fathers ready to focus on employment. One day each week addresses parenting specifically, but parenting is a constant focus throughout the six weeks. For example, fathers take time each morning to share what they did the previous evening (or weekend) with respect to their children, often sparking parenting discussions.

During week two, each father is assigned a social worker and a job developer. These staff members help fathers develop a personal and career plan, conduct employment assessments, and provide referrals. For example, social workers might refer a father to an on-staff family therapist, legal services, or external mental health services. Job developers might refer fathers to employment-related services, such as the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment, a city agency that serves as an American Jobs Center and the local Workforce Investment Board. During the final week, fathers update their original personal and career plan. Social workers follow up with fathers each month for one year after graduation.

Social workers and job developers coordinate with facilitators to identify appropriate afternoon activities for each father. Depending on a participant's needs and what is available at his location, he may participate in GED classes, computer training, job search assistance, or substance abuse treatment. All unemployed fathers also complete a "work practicum," an unpaid internship with a community employer that serves to build their resumes and learn skills such as construction or landscaping. The job developer follows each father's progress and obtains employer feedback.

At Prince Hall, fathers are able to attend a modified evening class that delivers the same curriculum but operates one week behind the daytime class and meets for about five hours per night. Fathers in the evening program might be employed or otherwise unable to attend the daytime program. Unemployed fathers in the evening program can attend afternoon activities.

To officially graduate and receive follow-up services, fathers have to attend all six weeks (with no more than three unexcused absences) and pass a drug test.

Supplementary services. Fathers have access to a number of supplementary services. Staff lead family outings to promote father-child bonding; these also enable staff to observe fathers with their children. The FFP offers a job club at Prince Hall. Graduates can visit FSC's legal clinic for reduced-price legal representation and enroll in services provided by partner organizations, such as vocational education courses at the Metropolitan Education and Training (MET) Center, the headquarters of Family and Workforce Centers of America.

Fathers' Rap is a twice-weekly, open-entry discussion group open to anyone who has graduated from or is enrolled in but has not yet participated in the FFP. Fathers' Rap is hosted at Employment Connections. Participating in the PACT evaluation has enabled the FFP to offer Fathers' Rap more frequently. Using the FFP curriculum as a guide, a staff member facilitates discussions on personal responsibility, manhood and fatherhood, parenting skills, child support issues, employment, custody and visitation, and communication skills. Fathers' Rap participants also have access to other FSC services, such as GED classes and the legal clinic.

Partners in service delivery

Five organizations have formal partnerships with FSC to deliver FFP program services, funded by the OFA grant at three sites. FSC's founder facilitated these partnerships through his long-standing relationships with the agencies. Staff employed by partner agencies work alongside FFP staff and attend regular training sessions and biweekly staff meetings. FSC leaders believe that the key to productive partnerships is full involvement in programming, from the initial funding process to staffing, training, and monitoring program outputs and outcomes. FSC staff believe bi-directional referral relationships are important so clients can receive services from either organization regardless of where contact was initiated.

Employment Connections. FSC's partnership with Employment Connections began at the time FSC was founded. In the early days, Employment Connections offered FSC support in providing job readiness and job placement services. As part of its partnership on the 2011 Responsible Fatherhood grant, Employment Connections hosts FFP classes and Fathers' Rap meetings. A facilitator, job developers, and social workers from the FFP work from Employment Connections' facility during FFP programming. Three Employment Connections staff also work on FFP programming: two full-time job developers and a part-time staff member who provides assistance with job searches. Fathers who attend the FFP at Employment Connections receive a modified version of Employment Connections' workforce-readiness training, "The World of Work," which is taught by Employment Connections staff for one half-day each week. Fathers can access Employment Connections' computer labs, job placement services, and the free clothing closet.

Family and Workforce Centers of America. FSC began its partnership with Family and Workforce Centers of America through a 2006 Healthy Marriage grant from OFA.²⁵ Family and Workforce Centers of America hosts FFP classes. FSC places a facilitator, job developers, and social workers at the MET Center. Family and Workforce Centers of America has assigned one staff member to serve as a job developer for fathers in the FFP at the MET Center and to facilitate a portion of the relationship curriculum. Fathers can attend GED classes led by Family and Workforce Centers of America staff. During the FFP, a representative from a credit union based

at the MET Center discusses money management with the fathers. Fathers are also given access to all other MET Center services, including the computer lab, community college classes, certification programs in diesel engine maintenance and forklift driving, workforce assessments, and public benefits offices.

Missouri State Department of Social Services Family Support Division/Child Support Enforcement Office. FSC began its partnership with the Missouri Child Support Enforcement Office in 1997 and has continued the relationship through several state and federal grants. The Family Formation Program worked with the local child support enforcement office to start the child support courts in St. Louis, and then helped get legislation signed in 2008 that established child support courts statewide. Staff from the Missouri Child Support Enforcement Office give presentations to fathers in FFP classes. The agency also sends FFP program information to fathers who are having trouble making child support payments and allows FFP staff to recruit at local child support offices. In turn, the program alerts the agency to concerns a father might be facing, such as a fraudulent claim, the need to correct a paternity determination, or modify a child support order, and helps fathers to arrange meetings with child support staff, as needed. The agency is receptive to requests to delay driver's license revocation or civil or criminal prosecution when fathers are participating in the FFP.

St. Martha's Hall. Since 2006, FSC has partnered with St. Martha's Hall, a domestic violence shelter. Staff from St. Martha's Hall have trained all FFP staff about signs of domestic violence, identifying batterers, the dynamics of power and control, and the concept of masculinity. A St. Martha's Hall staff member delivers a one-hour domestic violence seminar to fathers attending the FFP at each location.

Computer Village. FSC partners with Computer Village to give afternoon computer classes to fathers attending services at Employment Connections and Prince Hall.

Staffing, supervision, and implementation support

Over the last 10 years, FSC has grown from 8 to 40 employees, 27 of whom worked on the FFP in fall 2013, when a survey of staff was administered. (The remainder worked exclusively on programming at FSC that was not being evaluated in PACT.) At the time of the survey, about 40 percent of staff working on the FFP were male and about 70 percent described themselves as black, non-Hispanic (Table B.2). The organization has experienced low turnover; the average tenure with the organization in fall 2013 was about 3.4 years. At that time, nearly all staff in management positions had been with the FFP for a decade or more. The executive vice president believed the low turnover, particularly in management, was vital to the program's strong culture and maturation, since program managers shared the same goals for the program and expectations for staff and were able to maintain the same program philosophy over a long period of time without changing course.

Table B.2. FFP staff characteristics and experience

Staff characteristics		Staff experience	
Gender (%)		Experience providing parenting education (%)	
Male	42	Mean (years)	6.9
Female	58		
		Experience providing relationship skills education (%)	
Race and ethnicity (%)		Mean (years)	
Hispanic	0		
Black, non-Hispanic	71	Experience providing employment services (%)	88
White, non-Hispanic	4	Mean (years)	7.7
Other, including mixed race	25		
		Education (%)	
Average length of employment (years)	3.4	High school diploma or equivalency only	0
		Some college, associate's degree, or certificate	46
		Bachelor's degree	21
		More than bachelor's degree	33

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Note: Twenty-four out of 27 staff from the FFP completed the survey. Only staff from sites participating in PACT were surveyed.

Roles and responsibilities

FSC has a well-defined organizational structure with three hierarchical levels below the CEO: (1) leadership, (2) directors, and (3) frontline staff. In general, leadership run programs or grants and report directly to the CEO, directors oversee departments, and frontline staff interact with clients. Three frontline staff—one facilitator, one job developer, and one social worker—serve as departmental coordinators; they work to promote teamwork within and between the departments and ensure objectives are met. Table B.3 shows staff positions and primary responsibilities for staff at each level of the organization.

Background and experience of staff

The FFP places high value on work and personal experience, and frequently promotes internal staff. The executive vice president and vice president of community programs previously served as directors and frontline staff. Two directors were promoted from frontline positions. Most frontline positions do not require specific experience. The exception is job developers, as the program believes that prior experience helps them navigate the employment landscape. On the 2013 staff survey, more than four out of five staff members reported experience providing employment services, with an average

of more than 7.5 years of experience. A majority of staff also reported experience providing parenting education and relationship skills education (Table B.2).

For facilitators, “prior experience” means more than formal experience leading a group workshop; it also means personal experience similar to that of program participants. Like the vast majority of fathers in the program, they are African American men,

Table B.3. FFP staff roles and responsibilities

Job title	Primary responsibilities
Leadership	
Executive vice president	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee department directors, including those who do not work on the FFP
Vice president of community programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage Fathers’ Rap and recruiting of volunteers
Quality assurance administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and ensure compliance for all FSC grants, including FFP • Manage the collection of performance measures
Directors	
Director of social services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee social workers, facilitators, and family therapists • Lead biweekly staff meetings
Director of employment services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervise job developers and adult basic education staff • Build organizational partnerships with employers for job placements
Director of legal services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the legal clinic and legal staff • Maintain a caseload of 40 to 50 fathers who need help navigating the child support system or representation in family court
Frontline staff	
Facilitators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach the FFP curriculum • Lead parent/child bonding activities • Conduct outreach and recruitment
Job developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the employment needs of 40 to 120 fathers • Check in with fathers during their work practicum • Cultivate relationships with employers • Deliver instruction in employment and economic stability
Social workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the social service needs of 10 to 20 fathers • Conduct monthly check-ins with program graduates for their first year after graduation • Observe and facilitate aspects of the FFP curriculum
Family therapists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsel fathers on their romantic or familial relationships • Observe fathers during selected FFP modules

and many were raised in the same neighborhoods as the participants. FFP facilitators have overcome challenges common among the population being served, including incarceration, separation from their children, and substance abuse. All but one of the FFP facilitators ever hired have been program graduates. The FFP staff believe these “redeemed men” are the best messengers for the FFP’s lessons because they have a personal understanding of the participants’ struggles, have the gravitas to speak hard truths to fathers, and can hold themselves up to participants as role models and success stories. Though facilitation experience is not a requirement, some facilitators had experience leading study groups while incarcerated, before they connected with the FFP. Before being hired as facilitators but after graduating from the program, most served as outreach and recruitment volunteers. Once hired, they had to observe a full six-week session of the FFP (this time as staff, since almost all attended previously as participants) before they were allowed to cofacilitate and, eventually, facilitate a group.

The FFP values formal education for its staff. More than half of staff members have a bachelor’s degree or higher (Table B.2). Some positions have education requirements: (1) social workers must have a bachelor’s or master’s degree in social work and (2) family therapists have to be licensed professional counselors or licensed clinical social workers. The director of social services, who supervises social services staff, is a licensed social worker. The FFP prefers that job developers have a bachelor’s degree, believing the college instruction they received helps them understand the labor market and what employers seek from participants. The FFP prefers that facilitators have a college degree. If a facilitator lacks a degree, the FFP requires enrollment in postsecondary education, as this could serve as a good example for program participants.

Two staff exemplify the background that the FFP values in its employees: the facilitator coordinator and the director of employment services. The facilitator coordinator first encountered the FFP as a participant. He had been released from prison after more than a decade and was spending little time with his daughter. After graduating from the program in 1999, he volunteered with the FFP and eventually was hired as a facilitator. As of fall 2013, he was a single parent caring for his daughter and was pursuing his bachelor’s degree. The director of employment services also first became involved with the FFP as a program participant after he was laid off, recovering from a work injury, and trying to pay child support. In 2000, he became the FFP’s first full-time employee and in 2004, became director of employment services.

Staff training

The FFP’s initial training focuses on integrating new employees into the organizational culture and emphasizes the expectation that everyone follow the FFP model. All new staff first observe a full six-week cohort. Facilitators then cofacilitate a cohort before facilitating independently. Staff who carry a caseload are assigned fathers after they observe a full cohort. New staff members interview each current staff member to learn

each person's role and understand how the organization operates. Frontline staff receive training in the curriculum's content and intentions so as to fully understand the lessons and attitudinal changes sought in participants. New staff also complete three days of domestic violence training led by St. Martha's Hall.

Continuing education for staff occurs during the two weeks between each FFP cohort. All program staff participate, including those from partner organizations. During training sessions, staff prepare for the upcoming cohort by reviewing policies, procedures, the curriculum, and pacing, and reflect on the prior FFP cohort. Also, facilitators receive additional training if their facilitation skills do not meet the program's standards. In February 2014, the National Partnership for Community Leadership, which developed *Fatherhood Development: A Curriculum for Young Fathers*, provided a two-and-a-half-day training session for staff. The goals were for staff to gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum and its philosophy and to review facilitation techniques and best practices.

Supervisory support for direct service staff

Leadership and directors provide supervision and also encourage staff to rely on each other. In the staff survey, nearly all staff reported having received supervision on a regular basis and feeling supported by their supervisor and other staff in the FFP (Table B.4).

Management staff complete supervision through formal and informal mechanisms. The CEO, executive vice president, and director of social services visit curriculum-based workshop sessions to assess facilitators on a weekly basis. Directors actively supervise

Table B.4. Staff support at the FFP

Frequency of supervision	Percent
Individual	
Weekly or more	54
Biweekly	25
Monthly or less	17
Never	4
Group	
Weekly or more	29
Biweekly	50
Monthly or less	13
Never	8

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Note: Twenty-four of 27 staff from the FFP completed the survey. Only staff from sites participating in PACT were surveyed.

by interacting with their staff daily, maintaining an “open door” policy, and meeting with staff as needed. Although frontline staff are aware of the open door policy, they reported that they generally discuss their concerns first with other frontline staff. Staff help each other handle the stresses in their professional and personal lives; supervisors believe this is a reflection of the cohesion and strength of the organizational culture.

The director of social services facilitates staff meetings every other week throughout FFP cohorts and directly responds to questions received between meetings. At these biweekly meetings, departments provide updates on their activities. During weeks three and five of the FFP curriculum, frontline staff and directors discuss each father in the cohort. Directors also meet weekly with their departments to discuss general issues with frontline staff.

Outreach and recruitment

Outreach strategies. Outreach is an ongoing activity, but is most intense during the two weeks between FFP cohorts. All program staff are trained and expected to conduct outreach and recruitment. Staff practice “flyer to hand” outreach, regularly visiting places where men congregate, such as barbershops, bars, gyms, parks, corner stores, and community events, to share program information. The FFP advertises in newspapers and on radio, television, buses, and billboards. FFP program graduates also assist with recruitment as paid volunteers; they earn a \$100 stipend. The executive vice president cites community reputation and word of mouth as the strongest outreach tools. A communication and marketing firm helped the FFP to articulate its outreach and recruitment plan, create branding for FSC, and design marketing materials.

The FFP locations are convenient to other service providers, which staff believe helps to draw in potential participants. At Prince Hall, the FFP operates from the same building as offices for the Missouri Department of Social Services. The MET Center is also an American Jobs Center, and Employment Connections is prominently located in downtown St. Louis.

To supplement partner agencies’ outreach efforts, FFP staff receives additional referrals from three partners. The St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment refers men who fit the program’s eligibility criteria. The State of Missouri Department of Corrections Office of Parole and Probation refers offenders who are within six months of release and ex-offenders who are noncustodial parents. The Missouri State Department of Social Services Family Support Division mails promotional materials to fathers who owe child support and the agency allows the FFP to recruit in its lobby.

The FFP collects information from fathers about how they heard about the program and uses it to assess the strength and appropriateness of outreach strategies. After ascertaining that many fathers who were recruited from homeless shelters were not

participating in services after enrollment, the FFP recruited only men who were referred by a homeless shelter case manager and thus, more likely to participate in services.

Intake process. With the current grant, the FFP began to conduct intake at all program locations. An assigned intake lead at each location enrolls fathers, primarily during the two weeks between FFP cohorts.²⁶ Potential participants are required to schedule an intake appointment.²⁷ Outside of the two weeks between classes, the FFP conducts intake only through the MET Center's twice-weekly open enrollment recruitment fair.

Program outputs

Program enrollment

Between December 2012 and August 2014, the FFP enrolled 1,737 fathers into the PACT evaluation, with approximately half randomly assigned to attend the FFP. On average, the program recruited 83 fathers per month during this period; monthly enrollment ranged from 45 to 176 fathers. The number of fathers enrolling each month was affected by whether staff were recruiting actively for a new FFP cohort. Months that had no FFP cohort starting were intentionally low compared to months that had an FFP cohort starting. Months of high enrollment occurred during the summer; staff reported attending and recruiting at more community events during these months.

Staff reported that fathers enrolled for a number of reasons. Fathers often received encouragement from parole officers, relatives, or romantic partners to enroll.²⁸ Although the large majority of fathers were unemployed, not all men came seeking employment. According to the baseline survey, 36 percent of fathers viewed improving their job situation as the primary motivation to enroll (Table B.1). A larger percentage of them (60 percent) indicated that improving their relationship with their children was the main reason for enrolling. Fathers' greatest non-employment needs included assistance with child support and visitation issues, housing, and help paying for utilities. Social services staff reported that many of the fathers had endured trauma at an early age and were in need of assistance to address issues stemming from this trauma.

Program participation

By the end of March 2014, 719 fathers had enrolled in the PACT evaluation at the FFP, had been randomly assigned to receive FFP services, and had at least four months in which to participate in program activities. To understand the FFP's early participation trends, we examined engagement and retention in program services and assessed these fathers' total program dosage during the first four months after program enrollment.

More than two-thirds of fathers engaged in at least one FFP program activity or one individual contact within four months of program enrollment (Table B.5). Roughly the same percentage (67 percent) of fathers attended at least one session of the core FFP workshop as received at least one individual contact (65 percent). Less than one in 10 fathers attended an optional group activity, which primarily were sessions of Fathers' Rap. The percentage of fathers receiving at least some content in parenting, employment, relationships, or personal development through the core workshop ranged from 58 to 65 percent.

Table B.5. Engagement in at least one program activity, by content area

	Any program engagement	Core workshops	Individual contacts	Supplementary group activities
Engaged in any content (%)	71	67	65	8
Parenting/fatherhood		58	46	N/A
Relationships		59	34	N/A
Economic stability		65	45	N/A
Personal development		63	N/A	N/A
Other		45	64	8

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 719 fathers enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. "Other" content includes needs assessments, substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and/or transportation. N/A = not applicable.

About 40 percent of fathers attended half or more of the daily workshop sessions (Table B.6). This means that a sizeable group of fathers (two out of five) attended more than 15 sessions. An additional 24 percent of fathers attended some, but less than half, of the core workshop.

Fathers received, on average, 6.4 individual contacts during the first four months enrolled in the FFP; 83 percent of these were in-person contacts at the program office (Table B.7). Contacts were not evenly distributed throughout the first four months. Fathers had more individual contacts during the first two months when they were likely to be participating in the core workshop—about 2.8 contacts each month—and about one additional contact in the third or fourth month. Only a small percentage of fathers received a referral for an externally provided support service.

Across all program group fathers at the FFP (including those who never participated), fathers averaged about 90 total hours of participation within four months of random assignment (Table B.8). The bulk of the hours were from attending the core group workshop. About four of these hours were from individual contacts and less than one

Table B.6. Attendance at core workshop sessions

Core workshop	Number of hours	Number of sessions	Percentage of sessions attended		
			None	1 to 50 percent	51 percent or more
Responsible Fatherhood workshop	240	30/32 ¹	35	24	41

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 719 fathers enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

¹ FFP is offered in two formats, a 30-session daytime program and a 32-session evening program. If the father participated in more than one FFP cohort, we counted only participation in the cohort with the maximum number of attendances.

Table B.7. Individual contacts and referrals

	Percentage or number
Referrals and individual contacts with fathers	
Number of fathers	719
Percentage of fathers receiving at least one outside referral for support services	15
Average number of individual contacts per father	6.4
Average number of individual contacts per month per father	1.6
Average number of individual contacts per month per father, first two months	2.8
Average number of individual contacts per month per father, third and fourth months	0.4
Mode of individual contact	
Number of individual contacts	4,582
Percentage of individual contacts by	
Telephone	2
Program office visit	83
Other	16

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 719 fathers enrolled between December 9, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included.

hour was from attending a supplemental group activity. More than half of the total hours focused on content related to economic stability. The remaining time was split between personal development, parenting, relationships, and other content. Average hours of participation increased to 128 when limiting the sample to only fathers with engagement in at least one program activity, though the pattern of service receipt was similar across content areas for the engaged fathers compared to all fathers.

Table B.8. Average hours of participation

	Core workshops	Individual contacts	Supplementary group activities	Total hours
All program group fathers				
Parenting/fatherhood	10.4	0.7	N/A	11.1
Economic stability	49.1	0.9	N/A	50.0
Relationships	9.7	0.3	N/A	10.0
Personal development	14.2	N/A	N/A	14.2
Other	1.9	2.2	0.7	4.8
Total hours	85.4	4.1	0.7	90.2
Program group fathers with any participation				
Parenting/fatherhood	14.8	1.0	N/A	15.8
Economic stability	69.5	1.3	N/A	70.8
Relationships	13.8	0.4	N/A	14.2
Personal development	20.2	N/A	N/A	20.2
Other	2.6	3.2	1.0	6.8
Total hours	120.9	5.8	1.0	127.7

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 222 fathers enrolled between February 3, 2013, and March 31, 2014 who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Of these, 179 program group fathers had any participation. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. "Other" content includes needs assessments, substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and/or transportation. N/A = not applicable.

Program sustainability and improvement

Strategies and supports for encouraging program participation

Staff in the FFP attempt to involve fathers in services soon after enrollment. Social workers and family therapists often are present during intake and, if needed, meet fathers within 72 hours of enrollment.²⁹ Some fathers require immediate assistance with bus fare, child care, substance abuse, shelter, or food. Fathers can attend Fathers' Rap until the start of FFP. However, only a small percentage of program fathers actually attended Fathers' Rap, which may have been due to the proximity in timing between program enrollment and the start of each FFP cohort (Table B.5). Program staff call all newly enrolled fathers on Thursday before a FFP cohort starts to encourage participation the following Monday.

If a father who is expected to attend FFP does not attend the first workshop session, facilitators visit the man's neighborhood and attempt to locate him. If he is found, facilitators approach to ask why he did not attend. The facilitator encourages the father

to attend by “engaging his pride,” or asking him to prove himself as a man by living up to his commitment. Staff also reach out to nonparticipating fathers by phone.

By the end of the first week of each cohort, staff members cease attempts to encourage nonparticipating fathers to attend. After this point, fathers who want to begin attending must wait for the next cohort to begin. During the two weeks between cohorts, staff again attempt to engage fathers who did not attend their initially assigned group.

FFP staff believe that ongoing participation is best fostered through presenting an engaging program. Facilitators believed that if a father attends the program’s first two weeks, he is unlikely to drop out (though he could be removed from the program for noncompliance). After the first weeks, staff reported that fathers typically want to continue attending, are engaged in the program’s content, and have formed bonds with the other fathers. To keep fathers engaged, facilitators share their own life stories, which are often similar to the participants’ stories, and model the program’s principles.

Fathers can earn financial incentives based on program attendance and meeting other criteria related to responsibility, such as punctuality, keeping appointments, participation in NA meetings, and respectfulness. To encourage program participation among all fathers enrolled in the PACT evaluation, the FFP began to offer \$15 for each week of perfect attendance and meeting other criteria, which later increased to \$100.³⁰ To avoid the potential that fathers enroll just to receive the incentives, participants are not informed of the incentives during recruitment or intake, but only after they attend the first full week of programming. Prior to participation in PACT, the FFP did not offer financial incentives because the program aimed to focus primarily on men who had already made a commitment to change their lives. Providing incentives may keep fathers who are less convinced of the FFP’s value in the program long enough for them to see how the services could benefit them.

FFP staff believe that fathers should not be coddled. Staff members take a “tough love” approach, expecting fathers to meet high expectations. Fathers who are noncompliant or commit “gross misconduct” are asked to leave. Fathers who test positive for illegal substances are removed from the program if they do not attend substance abuse treatment and do not pass random drug screenings. According to program leadership, drug abuse is rampant in the target population, and is adamant that substance abuse will not be tolerated. Fathers who do not complete the FFP for any reason are encouraged to attend the next cohort and can attend as many cohorts as it takes for them to finish.

To complete the FFP and receive follow-up services, fathers have to complete all six weeks of the FFP with no more than three unexcused absences. There is one exception: fathers who become employed are excused from the last two weeks, which focus on economic stability. FSC staff expect 60 percent of fathers to complete the FFP.

Monitoring program operations

Having a structured system to monitor program operations is a priority for the FFP. Before entering the PACT evaluation, FSC contracted with a consulting firm to develop an online participant tracking system to monitor participant engagement and performance management, including participant attendance, activities, and referrals. Pre-session and post-session surveys, which measured such outcomes as changes in fathers' behaviors, were also loaded into the online system. Leadership used these reports to discuss performance with partner organizations. After entering the evaluation, the FFP adopted PACT's management information system. Directors obtain reports from PACTIS for their departments and review them regularly with the quality assurance administrator.

Frontline staff are rigorous about documentation. Incident reports for behavioral infractions, such as tardiness, are added to a father's case file in the online system, along with weekly reports that determine whether a father has earned a participation incentive. Facilitators complete a daily tracker to chart their progress in delivering the curriculum. In the third and fifth weeks of FFP, frontline staff, including those employed by partner organizations, discuss each father's progress to coordinate services and ensure that no participants fall through the cracks. Case files are audited twice during session cohorts by the quality assurance compliance administrator.

APPENDIX C

**GOODWILL—EASTER SEALS MINNESOTA
THE FATHER PROJECT PROGRAM PROFILE**

RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD PROGRAM PROFILE: FAMILY FORMATION PROGRAM AT FATHERS' SUPPORT CENTER ST. LOUIS

Program overview

The FATHER Project at Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota serves fathers in the Minneapolis–St. Paul area.³¹ Enrolled fathers attend a two-day orientation that introduces available services, provides information on fathers' rights and responsibilities, and aims to motivate participants to fully engage in program services. Following orientation, participants work with a case manager (known at the FATHER Project as a father advocate) to develop a fatherhood plan that specifies the sequence and type of services fathers should engage in. The FATHER Project offers separate open-entry, open-exit workshops on parenting and healthy relationships, in addition to a one-day employment readiness workshop and individual meetings with employment consultants. Father advocates work to address fathers' barriers to employment and child involvement. Fathers may also meet with child support staff who are co-located on site, and they can receive other supplementary services, such as GED tutoring or assistance from a partner organization providing legal services.

Program context and background

Organizational context

Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota aims to provide workforce development services to individuals with employment barriers, such as a physical disability, addiction, homelessness, or prior incarceration. The agency serves a broad population, including low-income fathers and at-risk youth. Employment and training services offered by Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota include one or more of the following six components: (1) job placement, retention, and advancement; (2) education and training; (3) individual case management; (4) assessment; (5) mental health services; and (6) connections to community resources.

Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota has received funding for its programs from federal, state, and local government, and private philanthropy. Revenue from Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota thrift stores provide additional funds for services. For the FATHER Project, Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota received two ACF Responsible Fatherhood grants—the first was in 2006, the second was in 2011.

Responsible fatherhood program development

The FATHER Project began as a program administered by the Office of the Mayor of Minneapolis in 1998, who had obtained funding from the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) for a Partners for Fragile Families grant. The original

program model included case management, employment services, parenting classes, and assistance with child support, with activities occurring at different locations. The FATHER Project later added a two-day orientation to introduce fathers to available services and consolidated services at a central location.

When its OCSE grant expired in 2004, the FATHER Project merged with Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota, which supported small-scale program operations in the absence of outside funding. The ACF grants that Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota received in 2006 and 2011 allowed the organization to expand the capacity of the FATHER Project—for example, by establishing partnerships to serve Spanish-speaking Latino fathers, as well as Native American, Somali, and Hmong fathers; developing partnerships to augment parenting, relationship, and economic stability services; and expanding the program to four new locations in Minnesota.

Community context

Despite having lower unemployment and higher educational attainment than the rest of the United States, Minneapolis and St. Paul have struggled with poverty. Between 2008 and 2012, the median incomes in Minneapolis (\$48,881) and St. Paul (\$46,305) were below the U.S. average. An average of 7 to 8 percent of the population received cash assistance—more than double the national average—and 14 to 16 percent received food assistance (compared to 11 percent nationally). Although average unemployment during 2013 was substantially lower than the national average in the Minneapolis–St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area (5 percent versus 7 percent),³² the poverty rate in the Twin Cities was one-and-a-half times higher than the national average. Roughly 12 to 14 percent of residents in the Twin Cities who were over the age of 25 had not completed high school, and 12 to 15 percent of Twin Cities households were headed by single mothers between 2008 and 2012 (all statistics from the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor). The rate of violent crime in the Minneapolis–St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area was more than double the national rate in 2012 (FBI's Uniform Crime Statistics).³³

St. Paul and Minneapolis have few programs for low-income men other than those the FATHER Project provides. Resource Inc., located in Minneapolis, runs a program for young fathers, but it is only open to those 26 and under. Ujamaa Place, located in St. Paul, runs an empowerment program for young black men aged 18 to 30. (Men do not need to be fathers to participate.) The FATHER Project is listed on Ujamaa Place's website as a partner providing services for fathers. Another OFA grantee participating in the PACT evaluation, the Center for Fathering (CFF) at Urban Ventures, also operates in Minneapolis.³⁴ The FATHER Project aims to serve younger fathers under 40, while CFF accepts fathers of any age.

Program design

Population served

The FATHER Project serves fathers living in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and three other Minnesota cities (which are not participating in the PACT evaluation). For PACT, the program targeted fathers between the ages of 17 and 40. At intake, fathers had to certify that they were currently unemployed or having difficulty paying child support. The FATHER Project completes a background check on all potential participants. Fathers who have a criminal record related to sexual misconduct, malicious punishment of children, or felonies related to domestic violence that prohibit interaction with mothers or children are not enrolled in the FATHER Project, but they can participate in other services from Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota.

Fathers who enrolled in PACT prior to August 22, 2014, were predominantly black, non-Hispanic men (Table C.1). Sixteen percent of the fathers were Hispanic and 11 percent of the fathers were foreign-born. Three out of five fathers had worked for pay in the last 30 days, but a quarter of the fathers earned \$500 or less during the month prior to enrolling in the program.

More than 7 of 10 fathers had been convicted of a crime, with the average longest stay in a correctional institution 10 months. Enrolled men had fathered an average of 2.6 children. Although nearly 9 in 10 fathers reported having ever lived with any of their children, fewer than a quarter were living with at least one of their children at the time of enrollment. Most men reported that they were involved in the lives of at least one of their children—83 percent had spent time with at least one child in the month prior to enrollment. About two-thirds of fathers had a legal child support arrangement; they paid an average of \$182 in child support during the month prior to enrollment.

Program philosophy, approach to service delivery, and logic model

The FATHER Project works to achieve its goal of increasing fathers' emotional and financial involvement with their children through a series of group workshops. These workshops aim to help fathers strengthen their parenting skills, improve their relationships with their partners and coparents, and secure employment so that they can support themselves and their families (Figure C.1). The program's services promote personal development and build on the unique experiences and needs of individual fathers in the program.

Program fathers attend a two-day orientation to the FATHER Project's services, which includes an opportunity to reflect on personal experiences and set self-improvement goals. After orientation, participants work with father advocates to develop a fatherhood plan that identifies goals for self-improvement in the areas of parenting, child support, and employment, and defines a course of services. After developing a

plan, fathers are expected to attend the open-entry workshops at least weekly. They can also attend other services. The parenting workshop is the program's cornerstone; most fathers participate in this workshop first.

The leaders of the FATHER Project view the relationships that staff build with participants as critical to the fathers' progress. Each father is assigned a father advocate who meets individually with him throughout the program to address case management needs. Father advocates expect fathers to meet with them every month. Employment consultants are available to provide one-on-one assistance to fathers seeking employment. Father advocates, employment consultants, and other program staff also encourage and motivate participants.

Service components

The program offers the following core group services:

Orientation. All new FATHER Project participants attend a two-day, 12-hour group orientation prior to attending other services. The first day of orientation introduces fathers to program and service delivery partner staff and the range of available services. An attorney with Central Minnesota Legal Services discusses paternity, custody, parenting time, and legal issues related to establishing and increasing the fathers' time with their children. Staff from each county's child support office describe

Table C.1. Baseline characteristics of randomly assigned fathers

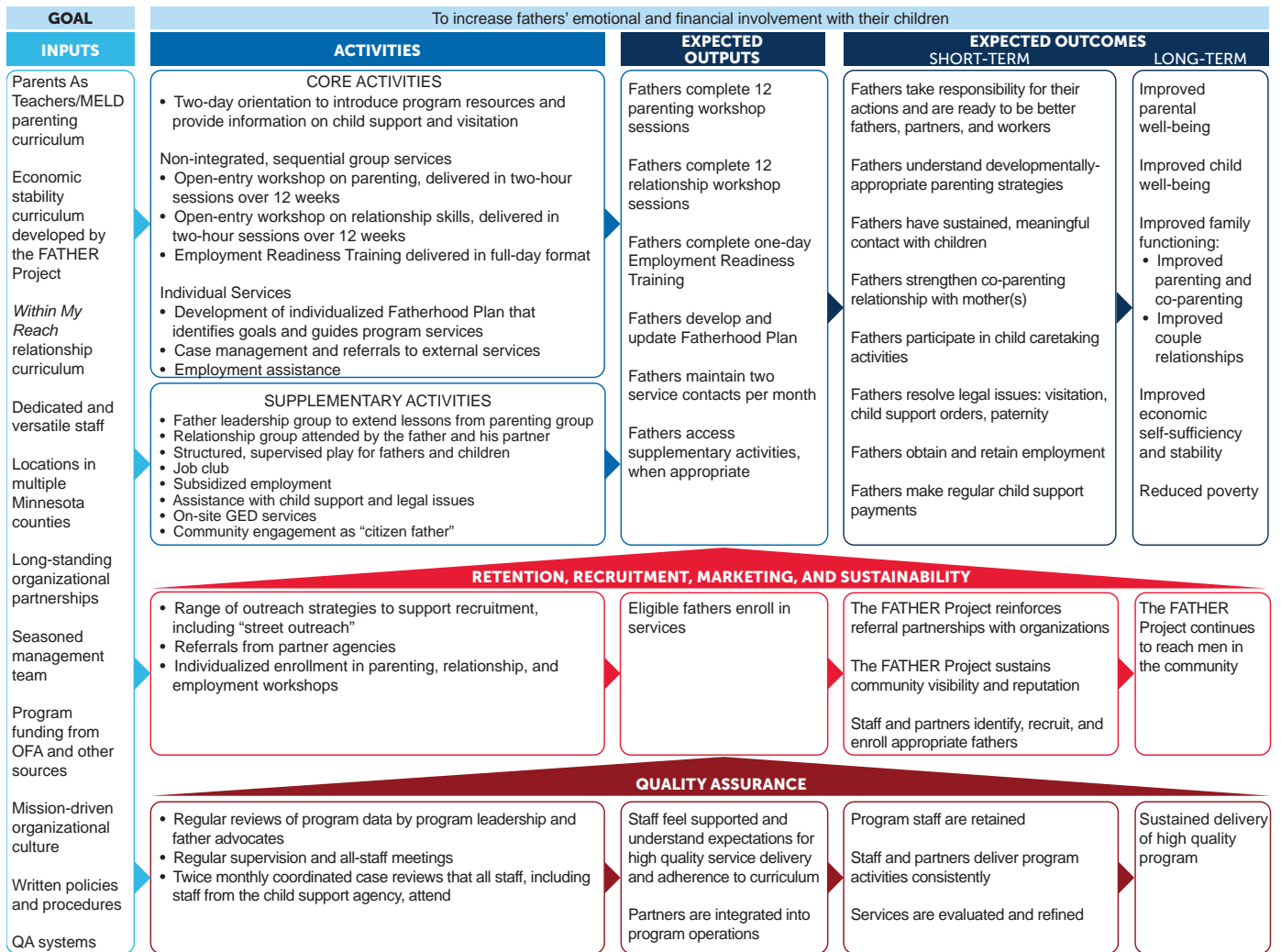
	The FATHER Project	Total PACT RF sample
Demographics		
Average age (years)	32	35
Race and ethnicity (%)		
Hispanic	16	5
Black, non-Hispanic	62	81
White, non-Hispanic	13	8
Other	8	6
Socioeconomic status		
Have high school diploma or GED (%)	71	69
Earnings in last 30 days (%)		
Did not work for pay in the last 30 days	40	50
\$1–\$500	25	27
\$501–\$1,000	16	12
More than \$1,001	20	11

	The FATHER Project	Total PACT RF sample
Housing stability (%)		
Stable housing		
Own home	3	2
Rent home	32	26
Contribute to rent	21	18
Unstable housing		
Halfway house, group house, or treatment facility	7	10
Homeless	8	10
Live rent free in someone's home	26	30
Other unstable housing	3	4
Criminal justice system involvement		
Ever been convicted of a crime (%)	71	73
Longest time in an adult correctional institution (years)	0.8	1.7
Currently on parole (%)	30	34
Father involvement and parenting behavior		
Number of biological children	2.6	2.6
Have children with multiple mothers (%)	49	47
Ever lived with any child (%)	89	87
Lives currently with at least one child (%)	22	22
Spent time with at least one child in past month (%)	83	80
Have legal child support arrangement (%)	66	58
Amount of child support paid in last 30 days	\$182	\$149
Paid informal child support in last 30 days (%)	34	31
Romantic relationships (%)		
Ever married to mother of at least one child	23	27
In romantic relationship	56	53
In romantic relationship with mother of at least one child	34	34
Motivation to participate in program (%)		
Improve relationship with children	70	60
Improve job situation	22	35
Improve relationship with children's mother	7	5
Sample size	970	4,734

Source: PACT baseline survey.

Note: All fathers randomly assigned to the program or control group through August 22, 2014, were included. Sites began PACT intake between December 9, 2012, and February 13, 2013.

Figure C.1. Program logic model



how the child support office works and the assistance available to fathers to address child support concerns.³⁵

During the second day, fathers engage in motivational and personal development activities. They reflect on their experiences as fathers; articulate future goals related to parenting, child support, and employment; and consider how their participation in the FATHER Project could facilitate goal attainment.

Parenting workshop. The program's parenting service is an open-entry workshop that uses the evidence-informed *Young Dads/Young Moms* curriculum. Another similar, culturally tailored curriculum, *Nueva Familia*, is used during parenting groups with Latino fathers who are predominantly Spanish speakers.³⁶ The parenting workshop provides 24 hours of instruction in 12 weekly, two-hour sessions. Each series of 12 sessions includes 10 topic-based sessions and two sessions for guest speakers. Prior to each series, facilitators agree upon 10 topics that they will cover, selecting from a list of

approximately 30 options. Facilitators select highly relevant topics or those that have been well received by past participants, such as coparenting, relationship management, and discipline versus punishment. The FATHER Project requires that the areas of child development, work, family health, and safety be covered, but facilitators choose the specific topics for these areas. Participants talk about their experiences and challenges in a peer-driven discussion in the first hour of each session. The second hour is educational and didactic. Two father advocates, or a father advocate and a program graduate trained as a parenting workshop facilitator, facilitate each parenting workshop session together. A light meal precedes each session.

Fathers are able to begin the parenting workshop at any point in the 12-week series. The program staff encourage weekly attendance, but consider fathers to be meeting expectations if they have two service contacts per month. Fathers complete the parenting workshop once they attend 12 sessions, regardless of topic. Father advocates encourage participants to complete the parenting workshop before starting the Relationship Empowerment workshop, but this is not required.

Relationship workshop. The program's relationship skills workshop, Relationship Empowerment, uses the evidence-informed *Within My Reach* curriculum.³⁷ Workshop topics include communication, managing expectations in relationships, the stages of a relationship, conflict management, physical and emotional abuse, emotional and mental health, mutual support, and joint decision making. As with the fatherhood workshop, Relationship Empowerment is delivered in 12 two-hour sessions. Fathers' coparents or partners can attend a separate relationship skills workshop held at the same time as Relationship Empowerment. (A couples group is also offered as a supplementary service.) As with the fatherhood workshop, a father completes Relationship Empowerment once he attends 12 sessions.

Employment workshop. Employment Readiness Training (ERT) is a one-day, six-hour workshop offered twice per month. Employment consultants administer a skills assessment to fathers and provide information on how to complete job applications, write a resume, and participate in a job interview. Father advocates encourage all unemployed fathers (including those who have temporary jobs or work as day laborers) to participate in ERT. The FATHER Project originally offered the workshop through four weekly, one-and-a-half-hour sessions, but transitioned to a single-day format to increase the number of fathers who complete the workshop early in their involvement with the program.

The FATHER Project provides the following individual services:

Case management. Father advocates work individually with fathers to identify and address needs and provide referrals. Advocates help fathers create and regularly update their fatherhood plan, which articulates goals in three key areas: (1) employment, (2)

parenting, and (3) child support. Each father is assigned to a father advocate upon enrollment; he first meets his assigned advocate following orientation. During the initial meeting, advocates arrange parenting education, employment services, or child support assistance, depending upon individual need. Father advocates schedule a follow-up meeting two weeks after the initial meeting to check on the father's progress and update the fatherhood plan. Father advocates meet at least monthly with fathers on their caseloads thereafter.

Employment assistance. Employment consultants provide one-on-one help to participants who are seeking employment. Following attendance at ERT, fathers are assigned an employment consultant, who works with the father to develop an employment plan that identifies employment barriers, career interests, and work history. The father and employment consultant typically develop an employment plan during a 30-minute, in-person meeting. Following plan development, employment consultants check in with fathers twice monthly by phone, email, or an in-person meeting. Depending upon a father's needs, employment consultants administer workforce assessments, create placement plans, help identify and pursue job leads and training opportunities, conduct mock job interviews, and provide support for job retention and advancement. One employment consultant focuses on job development by working with potential employers to identify opportunities for FATHER Project participants and matching participants with employers. To promote job retention, consultants follow up with participants at 30, 60, and 90 days after placement to see whether they are still employed and how their experience has been on the job. Consultants also complete child support logs that document a father's progress on job placement.

Employment consultants use their professional judgment to select fathers for a limited number of internships that fit with fathers' skills and career goals. Fathers receive training during the first month, perform work during the second month, and work more independently during the third month. At that point, employers have the option of hiring the participant. For example, an employment consultant reported placing one father, a veteran with medical training, at a clinic where he was subsequently hired.

Assistance with child support issues. The FATHER Project partners with the child support enforcement agencies in Hennepin and Ramsey counties. Child support enforcement staff help fathers navigate the child support system and resolve child support issues. Minneapolis (Hennepin County) and St. Paul (Ramsey County) fathers have their cases transferred to the portfolios of dedicated county child support enforcement staff who work out of Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota's offices twice a week.

Child support enforcement officers help fathers understand their child support records and orders, assist fathers with paying child support, and establish individual

case plans, if necessary. When appropriate, child support workers modify orders or help participants reinstate suspended driver's licenses. All fathers in Minneapolis are encouraged to meet with child support staff to review their case, whether or not they have an active child support concern.

Both counties offer fathers an incentive plan to reduce arrears owed to the state. After six months of consistent child support payments, fathers in Hennepin County have half of their state-owed child support debt forgiven. After one year of consistent payments, the remainder is also forgiven.³⁸ In Ramsey County, after two months of consistent participation in the FATHER Project, the Ramsey County Division of Child Support forgives 15 percent of fathers' state-owed arrears, and forgives an additional 20 percent after five months of consistent program participation. If a father participates for six months, completes the parenting group, and pays child support for six months, Ramsey County forgives another half of the original arrears amount. After this, Ramsey County forgives the remaining 15 percent of state-owed arrears on a one-for-one basis—that is, a dollar of state-owed arrears for each dollar of support the father pays.

The FATHER Project provides the following supplementary services:

Father Leadership workshop. Father Leadership is a 24-hour supplemental parenting group for fathers who complete the core parenting workshop and wish to continue attending a workshop on parenting and fatherhood topics. Its format is similar to the core parenting workshop. The workshop follows the evidence-informed *On My Shoulders* curriculum,³⁹ which teaches skills to support fathers' relationships with their children and covers communication, coparenting, discipline, and gratitude.

Facilitator training. Fathers who complete the core parenting workshop and the Father Leadership group can receive training as a parent group facilitator. Once they are trained, they can help facilitate the core parenting workshop with a father advocate.

Citizen Father group. Fathers who complete the core parenting workshop and the Father Leadership group can also participate in the Citizen Father group. Developed in partnership with Dr. Bill Dougherty and the Citizen Professional Center at the University of Minnesota, this father-led group identifies community projects, conducts presentations around Minneapolis, and helps recruit new fathers for the FATHER Project. For example, members of the Citizen Father group serve as guest speakers for the parenting workshop and present at locations in the community on the journey of low-income men and the importance of fatherhood and child involvement.

Couples group. Fathers and their partners can attend an open-entry relationship workshop for couples. The group uses the evidence-based *Within Our Reach* curriculum,

which teaches healthy relationship skills to enhance the couple's communication and manage relationship expectations.⁴⁰

Play and Learn. Play and Learn is an opportunity for fathers to have positive interactions with their young children. Weekly sessions are facilitated by a licensed teacher and a trained FATHER Project staff member. Through structured, interactive playtime with their children, fathers learn about child development and parenting skills that support school readiness and positive child development outcomes.

Job club. Job club is a weekly, two-hour support group facilitated by employment consultants for fathers who are looking for a job. Fathers discuss their job search progress and review job openings. Occasionally, employment consultants bring in guest speakers to discuss their professional or personal experiences.

Assistance with legal issues. Central Minnesota Legal Services, a service partner that presents to fathers during orientation, provides pro bono representation in child support, child custody, and visitation cases for 20 to 30 participants per year.

GED preparation services. The program provides GED tutoring on site and assists participants in covering the cost of GED tests. FATHER Project staff and community volunteers provide GED tutoring. Fathers learn about GED tutoring in the two-day project orientation, and can be referred by a father advocate.

Partners in service delivery

Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota developed formal partnerships with five organizations to provide FATHER Project services:

Hennepin County Division of Child Support. The Hennepin County Division of Child Support helps fathers attending the FATHER Project navigate the child support enforcement system and resolve issues with paternity and child support. Two child support enforcement staff members are partially co-located at the FATHER Project, which allows them to participate in the orientation workshop, meet individually with fathers, and attend coordinated case reviews with FATHER Project staff members. Child support staff also teach FATHER Project staff about the child support system during staff training sessions. The Hennepin County Division of Child Support has been a partner of Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota for more than 10 years.

Ramsey County Division of Child Support. The Ramsey County Division of Child Support helps fathers in the FATHER Project navigate the child support enforcement system and resolve child support issues. Two child support enforcement staff members are partially colocated at the FATHER Project, which allows them to participate in the orientation workshop, meet individually with fathers, and attend

coordinated case reviews with FATHER Project staff members. Ramsey County Division of Child Support has an arrangement with the FATHER Project to forgive fathers' state-owed arrears for meeting program participation milestones. The Ramsey County Division of Child Support has been a partner of Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota since spring 2012.

Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES). CLUES provides a range of services for Latino families involved with the FATHER Project including family services, mental health, substance abuse, aging, and economic advancement services. CLUES staff provide FATHER Project services to Spanish-speaking fathers. Two father advocates, an employment consultant, and an intake staff member employed by CLUES are colocated and integrated into the Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota FATHER Project team. They participate in coordinated case reviews and staff meetings. CLUES has been a partner of Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota for more than five years. CLUES did not offer father-specific services prior this partnership.

Central Minnesota Legal Services (CMLS). CMLS conducts presentations for fathers about legal rights and the services it provided during orientation and parenting workshops. It also provides pro bono legal services and advice to a limited number of fathers each year, and provides training to FATHER Project staff. CMLS has been a partner for more than 10 years.

Way to Grow. Way to Grow is an early childhood education nonprofit. A dedicated staff member from Way to Grow provides case management to interested fathers, which includes giving fathers tips for how to play with their children to develop literacy, numeracy, and fine motor skills, as well as to prepare them for school. The Way to Grow staff member conducts home visits to observe fathers interacting with their children and provides coaching. Way to Grow also accepts referrals from the FATHER Project for its nutrition classes, financial literacy classes, and other resources, and presents to fathers at orientation and the parenting group about child development, the importance of child interaction, and the services it provides. Way to Grow has been a partner of Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota since before receipt of the OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant.

Staffing, supervision, and implementation support

In fall 2013, staff at the FATHER Project responded to a survey about their backgrounds. Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota employed a total of 20 staff members in its Minneapolis and St. Paul FATHER Project offices.⁴¹ Nearly two-thirds of the staff were male; the majority described themselves as black, non-Hispanic (Table C.2). Staff reported low turnover; the average employee had been with Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota for about 3.7 years.

Background and experience of staff

Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota values prior work experience and requires all frontline staff members to have at least an associate’s degree or requisite experience (Table C.2). According to the staff survey, more than 90 percent of staff had at least some postsecondary education. When assessing prior work experience, Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota looks for individuals who have not only served in similar positions, but have worked with populations who face barriers to employment or encounter significant life challenges. Respondents to the staff survey who indicated prior experience providing core services averaged between six and eight years of experience—about twice as long as the average tenure within the organization. Applicants for supervisory roles must have experience providing direct services.

Table C.2. Staff characteristics and experience

Staff characteristics		Staff experience	
Gender (%)		Experience providing parenting education (%)	82
Male	65	Mean (years)	8.0
Female	29		
Other	6	Experience providing relationship skills education (%)	47
		Mean (years)	6.1
Race and ethnicity (%)			
Hispanic	12	Experience providing employment services (%)	82
Black, non-Hispanic	59	Mean (years)	7.4
White, non-Hispanic	18		
Other	12	Education (%)	
		High school diploma or equivalency	6
Average length of employment (years)	3.7	Some college, associate’s degree, or certificate	47
		Bachelor’s degree	29
		More than bachelor’s degree	18

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Note: Seventeen of 20 staff members from the FATHER Project in Minneapolis and St. Paul completed the survey.

Roles and responsibilities

The FATHER Project has a hierarchical management structure that is nested within the leadership structure of its parent organization (Table C.3). FATHER Project leadership coordinates services between offices in different locations (including those not included in the PACT evaluation).

Table C.3. FATHER Project staff roles and responsibilities

Job title	Primary responsibilities
Leadership from Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota	
Vice president for services and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees all employment services at Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota Supervises the area director of community programs
Area director of community programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitors FATHER Project staffing and budget Supervises the FATHER Project director Supervises other community program directors in areas such as mental health services and non-metro area program development
FATHER Project director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees FATHER Project operations Maintains program administrative data Develops and maintains relationships with partner agencies Supervises the FATHER Project manager
FATHER Project leadership	
FATHER Project manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages day-to-day operations of the FATHER Project Hires and supervises FATHER Project Staff Trains and supports supervisors of FATHER Project satellite locations Leads the Citizen Father group
Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes coordinated case reviews and father-child activities Assists with day-to-day operations Coordinates service delivery with partner agencies
Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinates Minneapolis and St. Paul FATHER Project offices Supervises staff located in Minneapolis and St. Paul offices
Frontline staff	
Father advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitates parenting group workshops Manages a caseload of 40–45 fathers, including development of fatherhood plans and monthly follow-up with fathers Conducts outreach to identify new participants
Employment consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitates ERT workshop and weekly job club Works individually with fathers to support job placement activities Develops relationships with community employers to facilitate job placement
GED coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinates team of volunteers who provide GED tutoring to FATHER Project participants
Community liaison ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts community outreach to identify new participants Cultivates referral relationships through presentations to community organizations

^aThis is a part-time position.

Staff training

New staff members participate in multiple mandatory orientations. All new Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota employees—not just those who work on the FATHER Project—receive an overview of all services provided by Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota (8 hours) and training on motivational interviewing (16 hours). Depending upon the new employee’s role in the FATHER Project, program-specific training can cover coaching circles, a peer-directed learning exercise, (32 hours over 8 sessions), early childhood development (12-and-a-half hours over 5 sessions), and the roles of partner organizations. All father advocates and facilitators participate in a 24-hour facilitation training program before leading a parenting workshop.

As part of their continuing obligations, staff members must complete job-specific training so that they understand their roles, know how to provide appropriate services, and are able to meet participants’ needs. For example, father advocates receive training in managing a caseload, developing fatherhood plans, engaging with the community and partner organizations, and working with confidential data. Staff are encouraged to develop annual professional development plans.

Supervisory support for direct service staff

Leadership’s approach to supervision mirrors the program’s philosophy when working with fathers. They attempt to remediate struggling staff members and deliver individualized support to help them improve. During interviews, supervisors indicated that when a staff member failed in a task, the supervisor was responsible for not adequately supporting the staff member.

According to the survey, supervisors of frontline staff held regular, individual meetings with their supervisees (Table C.4). More than two-thirds of staff members met individually with their supervisors at least twice per month or more. The frequency of individual supervision varied by role. Father advocates met with their supervisor every other week to review their caseload. Program leadership monitored the supervisors through biweekly calls and observation of the programs.

The FATHER Project convenes twice monthly staff meetings, but in the survey, half of the staff reported meeting as a group more frequently. Meetings preview upcoming events, review recent enrollment and participation trends, discuss policies and procedures, and address issues that are affecting participants.

Outreach and recruitment

Outreach strategies. The community liaison is primarily responsible for outreach and recruitment. Father advocates and The FATHER Project manager also spend approximately one-fifth of their time conducting community outreach. The FATHER

Table C.4. Staff support at the FATHER Project

Frequency of supervision	Percent
Individual	
Weekly or more	31
Biweekly	38
Monthly or less	31
Never	0
Group	
Weekly or more	50
Biweekly	31
Monthly or less	0
Never	19

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Note: Seventeen of 20 staff members from the FATHER Project completed the survey. Only staff working in the Minneapolis and St. Paul offices were asked to complete the survey.

Project's primary strategy is street outreach. The community liaison, father advocates, and manager walk neighborhoods, approach men on the street to tell them about the FATHER Project, and give them instructions on how to set up an intake appointment to enroll. FATHER Project staff also hang out in places where men congregate, such as barbershops and bars, to recruit participants.

Aside from street outreach, the FATHER Project advertises on social media and radio. The community liaison delivers presentations at community organizations, such as drug treatment centers, jails, and churches, to educate organizations about the FATHER Project and cultivate them as referral sources. The FATHER Project accepts referrals from partners, employment and training centers, drug treatment centers, and other community-based service organizations.

In late 2013 and the first half of 2014, the FATHER Project developed and implemented five- and six-month recruitment plans in an effort to boost enrollment. These plans revised recruitment targets and staff roles and instituted mass mailings and weekend recruitment events. For example, the FATHER Project sent small, targeted teams of staff and volunteers out to do street outreach. The smaller groups were made up of men of different backgrounds, including African Americans and Spanish-speakers, and included program staff and program graduates. The FATHER Project wanted gregarious and outgoing men in the groups. Staff who were less comfortable striking up conversations with strangers on the street were instead assigned to other outreach and recruitment tasks such as preparing mass mailings, scheduling events, and making follow-up phone calls. The community liaison worked with the project director

to develop a recruitment script and deliver training. The script involved telling personal stories to get potential participants excited about enrolling. The FATHER Project increased internal recruitment targets because program management wanted to set high expectations. Outreach and recruitment staff also developed individual goals and the community liaison met weekly with the project manager to discuss progress.

Intake process. Intake is conducted at both PACT-involved program locations. Prospective participants are encouraged to schedule an intake appointment, but the FATHER Project also accommodates walk-ins. Fathers complete an intake application and service-level determination form, which are required by Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota, and make an appointment to complete random assignment. The service-level determination form is used to communicate basic information to the county child support division about the applicant’s children and custody arrangement. Once the appropriate child support division receives the form, it takes one to two days to determine whether the father has difficulty meeting child support obligations, an eligibility criterion for participation in FATHER Project services. Intakes are conducted continuously, but enrollment for orientation closes the day before it is held. If a father enrolls after that, he has to wait until the next orientation session to participate.

Program outputs

Program enrollment

Between January 20, 2013, and August 22, 2014, the FATHER Project enrolled 962 fathers into the PACT evaluation, about half of whom were assigned to attend the FATHER Project. On average, the program recruited 48 fathers per month during this period; monthly enrollment ranged from 20 to 95 fathers. In the months with the lowest enrollment, program management felt that responsibilities outside of outreach and recruitment had decreased the organizational focus on enrolling fathers into the program. Recruitment steadily increased through 2014, after the FATHER Project refocused by developing and implementing five- and six-month recruitment plans (see above).

Staff reported that fathers enrolled for a number of reasons. Fathers often received encouragement from parole officers, relatives, or romantic partners to enroll. According to the survey taken at the time of enrollment (Table C.1), fathers most commonly indicated an interest in improving their relationships with their children as the primary motivation for enrollment. Nearly a quarter of fathers were motivated to enroll in the FATHER Project to improve their job situation. Fathers’ greatest non-employment needs included help with child support and visitation.

Program participation

By the end of March 2014, 312 fathers who had enrolled in the PACT evaluation were randomly assigned to receive FATHER Project services and had at least four months to participate in program activities. To understand the FATHER Project’s early participation trends, we examined engagement and retention in program services and assessed these fathers’ total program dosage during the first four months after program enrollment. Program activities that fathers completed after their first four months in the program were excluded from this analysis.

About 80 percent of fathers assigned to the program group engaged in at least one program activity within four months of program enrollment (Table C.5). More fathers attended at least one session of a core workshop (77 percent) than received at least one individual contact (66 percent). Few fathers attended an optional group activity, but the FATHER Project did not offer many optional services that would initially engage a father.⁴² For nearly all fathers, the first program activity was the two-day orientation workshop. Initial engagement rates in the content areas covered by the core workshops varied. The topics covered during orientation (parenting, personal development, and others) had the highest initiation rate—between 62 and 68 percent. “Other” topics included presentations about services available from partner organizations during the orientation, such as legal services. Initiation rates for the remaining topics (relationships and economic stability) were lower, at 39 and 23 percent, respectively. Among individual contacts, those coded as parenting or other content had the largest initial engagement.

Orientation and parenting were the two most heavily attended workshops (Table C.6). Sixty-five percent of fathers assigned to the program group attended one or both days

Table C.5. Engagement in at least one program activity, by content area

	Any program engagement	Core workshops	Individual contacts	Supplementary group activities
Engaged in any content (%)	80	77	66	4
Parenting and fatherhood		68	62	2
Relationships		39	24	1
Economic stability		23	45	0
Personal development		63	N/A	1
Other		62	62	3

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 312 fathers enrolled between February 13, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. “Other” content included needs assessments, substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and transportation. N/A = not applicable.

Table C.6. Attendance at core workshop sessions

Core workshop	Number of hours	Number of sessions	Percentage of sessions attended		
			None	1 to 50 percent	51 percent or more
Two-day orientation	16	2	36	19	46
Parenting	24	12	42	37	21
Relationship Empowerment	24	12	83	15	2
Employment Readiness Training ^a	8	1 or 3 ¹	79	1	21

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 312 fathers enrolled between February 13, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

^a Employment Readiness Training was offered for either one or three sessions. Fathers' retention was based on the number of sessions at whichever group was attended.

of orientation. Twenty-one percent of fathers attended at least 7 of the 12 parenting sessions and an additional 37 percent attended between 1 and 6 parenting sessions. Attendance at the relationship and economic stability workshops were much less frequent within the four-month period considered for this analysis.

Fathers received, on average, four individual contacts during their first four months enrolled in the FATHER Project. More than three-quarters of contacts were in-person at the program office (Table C.7). Contacts were close to evenly distributed throughout the first four months. Fathers engaged in two to three contacts during the first two months of enrollment and between one and two contacts over the third and fourth month of enrollment. FATHER Project staff referred only a small percentage of fathers to an externally provided support service.

Across all program group fathers, including those who did not participate, fathers averaged about 17 hours of participation within four months of enrollment (Table C.8). They accrued the bulk of their hours of participation in core workshops, particularly the parenting workshop. Fewer than 3 of the 17 hours came from individual contacts and very little time was credited to supplemental group activities. The greatest amount of time was split about evenly between parenting, personal development, and other services—the content covered in the orientation and parenting workshops. The remaining time was divided between economic stability and relationship content. When limiting the sample to only fathers with engagement in at least one program activity, the average hours of participation increased to 21, though the pattern of service receipt was similar across content areas for engaged fathers compared to all fathers.

Table C.7. Individual contacts and referrals

	Percentage or number
Referrals and individual contacts with fathers	
Number of fathers	312
Percentage of fathers receiving at least one outside referral	2
Average number of individual contacts per father	4.0
Average number of monthly individual contacts per father	1.0
Average number of monthly individual contacts per father, first two months	1.2
Average number of monthly individual contacts per father, third and fourth months	0.8
Mode of individual contact	
Number of individual contacts	1,261
Percentage of individual contacts by	
Telephone	18
Program office visit	77
Other	6

Source: PACTIS.

Note: Includes fathers enrolled between February 13, 2012 and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and thus were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included.

Program sustainability and improvement

Strategies and supports for encouraging program participation

To encourage participation, the FATHER Project relies on a combination of (1) engaging and relevant program services, (2) strong connections between participants and staff, and (3) meaningful program supports.

Orientation aims to hook fathers into participating in the full array of program services. During orientation, staff members work to create connections with and among participants. Staff members aim to make participants feel like they have joined a community by distributing handouts welcoming fathers to the FATHER Project “family” and including opportunities for participants to mingle. Following orientation, program staff attempt to engage fathers in services quickly, intending to capitalize on the father’s initial motivation to participate. For example, father advocates schedule one-on-one meetings with each participant shortly after orientation to finalize the fatherhood plan, which is started during orientation.

Although staff members affirm and encourage participation and the fatherhood plan motivates follow-through, it is ultimately up to the participants to engage in services. Father advocates support participants during individual meetings and the parenting

Table C.8. Average hours of participation

Content	Core workshops	Individual contacts	Supplementary group activities	Total hours
All program group fathers				
Parenting/fatherhood	3.4	0.8	0.1	4.3
Economic stability	1.4	0.7	0.0	2.2
Relationships	1.8	0.2	0.0	1.9
Personal development	4.2	N/A	0.0	4.2
Other	3.6	0.7	0.1	4.4
Total hours	14.4	2.4	0.2	17.0
Program group fathers with any participation				
Parenting/fatherhood	4.2	1.0	0.1	5.3
Economic stability	1.8	0.9	0.0	2.7
Relationships	2.2	0.2	0.0	2.4
Personal development	5.2	N/A	0.0	5.2
Other	4.5	0.9	0.1	5.5
Total hours	17.9	3.0	0.2	21.1

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 312 fathers enrolled between February 13, 2012, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Of these, 251 fathers had any participation. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. "Other" content included needs assessments, substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and transportation. N/A = not applicable.

workshop. Staff express their appreciation that participants attend the parenting workshop and make participants feel valued as a member of the group. They believe these affirmations encourage participation. Father advocates do not typically provide proactive reminders about workshops, but they follow up by telephone and mail when participants are not in compliance with their fatherhood plans. Father advocates continue these efforts once per week for 90 days before closing a father's case.

FATHER Project staff provide program supports on an as-needed basis to promote participation. To cover the cost of travel to and from the program location, bus cards are provided to participants who demonstrate commitment to the program. Gift cards worth \$25 are provided to newly employed fathers or those who engage in a job search, to help purchase basic work clothing. Grocery store gift cards are also provided to help cover the cost of food between a father's start of employment and receipt of the first paycheck. Rent assistance of up to \$200 per year is provided through Goodwill-Easter Seals' community resource program, as needed.

Program staff identify three main challenges to participation. One challenge relates to the experience and acumen of father advocates. Inexperienced advocates may have difficulty knowing how to push participants to engage in services. Supervisors and experienced father advocates are responsible for bolstering this skill in junior staff members. The second challenge to sustaining participation comes when a participant becomes employed. Program activities can overlap with work hours, making it difficult for employed fathers to participate. A father can become less interested in services once employed, if improving a job situation was his primary motivation for enrolling. Finally, some staff members feel that some participants lack motivation or are not ready to fully commit to changing their lives and meeting program expectations. These participants prove difficult to reach.

Monitoring program operations

FATHER Project staff members have two main strategies for monitoring program operations: (1) monitoring data collected in the management information system (known as PACTIS) and (2) holding regularly scheduled case reviews with all program staff, including partners. PACTIS is used to track enrollment, participant attendance, and program contact, as well as program outcomes. Staff enter data regularly so that the system can provide a real-time picture of program operations. Father advocates use the system to track participant engagement and identify which participants require case management follow-up. Project leadership review employment outcomes and wages to assess the quality of their employment services. Twice monthly, coordinated case reviews provide a structured opportunity for staff to review cases and develop plans for addressing fathers' needs. All staff involved with the FATHER Project, including those employed by CLUES and child support, attend the case reviews.

APPENDIX D

URBAN VENTURES

THE CENTER FOR FATHERING PROGRAM PROFILE

RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD PROGRAM PROFILE: URBAN VENTURES

Program overview

The Center for Fathering (CFF) at Urban Ventures (UV) offers men in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the opportunity to attend weekly open-entry workshops on parenting and relationships, and to receive assistance with employment through “Ready? Set! Work!” (RSW) workshops, as well as access to a staffed resource room. Following a philosophy of honoring fathers’ individual values and needs, fathers attending CFF receive individualized attention from program staff who work to address the fathers’ needs.

Program context and background

Organizational context

The mission of UV is to break the cycle of generational poverty in Minneapolis “one person, one family at a time.” Its various programs and services seek to create sustainable jobs, enhance children’s educational opportunities, develop youth leaders, and strengthen families from the poorest neighborhoods in Minneapolis. UV’s campus in south Minneapolis includes the Colin Powell Youth Leadership Center, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, a recreation center, and corporate and program offices, including CFF. CFF provides UV’s English-language fatherhood services.⁴³

UV staff believe the key to breaking the cycle of generational poverty is to increase fathers’ engagement with their children. Fatherhood services were added to UV’s portfolio in 1994—soon after the organization’s inception in 1993. UV received its first OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant in 2006 to support the CFF, and received a second OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant in 2011.

Program development

From 1994 to 1997, UV’s fatherhood program consisted of a curriculum-based fatherhood workshop only. Starting in 1997, under the leadership of CFF’s current director, the program expanded, adding social service supports, meals, and bus vouchers to cover the cost of transportation to the workshop sessions. In 2008, UV incorporated an employment program—that is, RSW—into the fatherhood program. Upon receiving its second OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant in 2011, CFF added a healthy relationship workshop.

Community context

Minneapolis is an economically diverse city that, despite having lower unemployment and higher educational attainment than the rest of the United States, struggles with poverty. Between 2008 and 2012, the city’s median income averaged \$48,881, just below the U.S. average. An average of 7 percent of the population received cash

assistance—more than double the national average—and 14 percent received food assistance (compared to 11 percent nationally). Although average unemployment during 2013 was substantially lower than the national average in the Minneapolis–St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area (5 percent versus 7 percent),⁴⁴ the poverty rate in Minneapolis was one-and-a-half times higher than the national average. Roughly 12 percent of Minneapolis residents over the age of 25 had not completed high school and 12 percent of households were headed by single mothers, between 2008 and 2012 (all statistics from the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor). The rate of violent crime in the Minneapolis–St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area was more than double the national rate in 2012 (FBI Uniform Crime Statistics).⁴⁵

Another OFA grantee participating in the PACT evaluation, the FATHER Project at Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota, also operates in Minneapolis.⁴⁶ Although CFF accepts fathers of any age over 18, the FATHER Project aims to serve younger fathers. Other employment services are available in the community, including from Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota’s main office. Resource Inc., another community agency, runs a program for young fathers, but it is only open to those 26 and under.

Program design

Population served

CFF’s target population is low-income fathers living in the poorest neighborhoods in Minneapolis, though it serves fathers from anywhere in Hennepin County, including Minneapolis and surrounding suburbs. CFF also targets fathers who have been recently released from prison.

Fathers who enrolled in the PACT evaluation were predominantly black, non-Hispanic men (Table D.1). Almost three-quarters had a high school diploma or GED and 42 percent reported working for pay in the 30 days prior to enrollment, with about half of those who worked earning less than \$500. Eight in 10 fathers reported being convicted of a crime; the longest stint in an adult correctional facility was nearly 2 years, on average. The fathers had 2.4 children, on average, often with the same mother. Almost 90 percent of the fathers reported ever living with at least one of their children; one in five fathers reported living with at least one of their children at the time of the baseline survey. Almost three-quarters of fathers reported spending time with at least one of their children in the past month. About 4 in 10 fathers had formal child support arrangements, paying an average of \$163 in child support in the month prior to enrollment.

Table D.1. Baseline characteristics of randomly assigned fathers

	Center for Fathering	Total PACT RF sample
Demographics		
Average age (years)	38	35
Race and ethnicity (%)		
Hispanic	4	5
Black, non-Hispanic	80	81
White, non-Hispanic	7	8
Other	9	6
Socioeconomic status		
Have high school diploma or GED (%)	73	69
Earnings in last 30 days (%)		
Did not work for pay in last 30 days	58	50
\$1–\$500	20	27
\$501–\$1,000	10	12
More than \$1,001	11	11
Housing stability (%)		
Stable housing		
Own home	1	2
Rent home	27	26
Contribute to rent	14	18
Unstable housing		
Halfway house, group house, or treatment facility	14	10
Homeless	17	10
Live rent free in someone's home	22	30
Other unstable housing	4	4
Criminal justice system involvement		
Ever convicted of a crime (%)	80	73
Longest time in an adult correctional institution (years)	1.8	1.7
Currently on parole (%)	30	34

	Center for Fathering	Total PACT RF sample
Father involvement and parenting behavior		
Number of children	2.4	2.6
Have children with multiple mothers (%)	39	47
Ever lived with any child (%)	88	87
Lives currently with at least one child (%)	21	22
Spent time with at least one child in past month (%)	73	80
Have legal child support arrangement (%)	41	58
Amount of formal child support paid in last 30 days	\$163	\$149
Paid informal child support in last 30 days (%)	30	31
Romantic relationships (%)		
Ever married to mother of at least one child	28	27
In romantic relationship	48	48
In romantic relationship with mother of at least one child	32	34
Motivation to participate in program (%)		
Improve relationship with children	62	60
Improve job situation	32	35
Improve relationship with children's mother	6	5
Sample size	1,431	4,734

Source: PACT baseline survey.

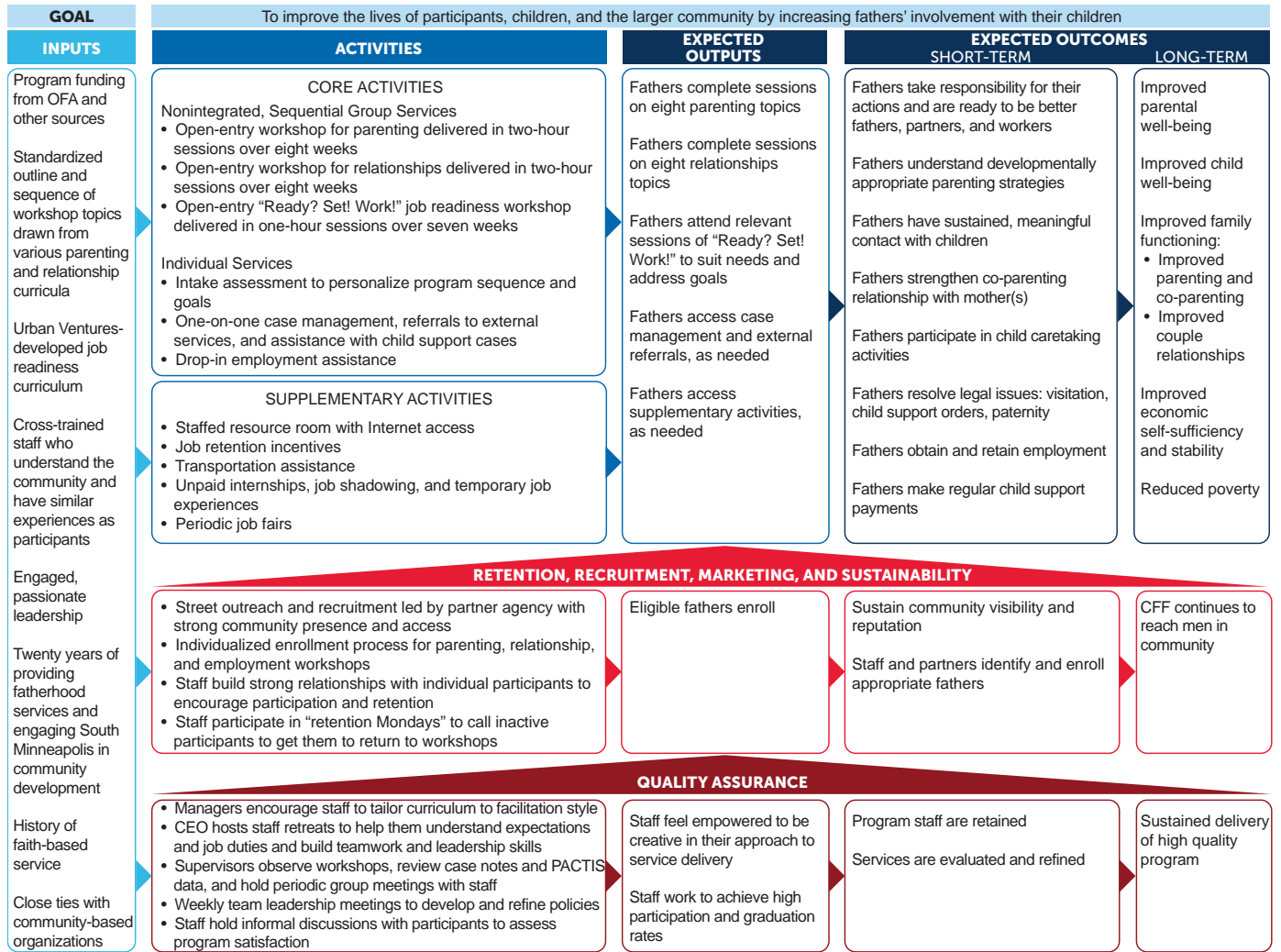
Note: All fathers randomly assigned to the program or control group through August 22, 2014, were included. RF sites began PACT intake between December 9, 2012, and February 13, 2013.

Program philosophy, service delivery approach, and logic model

The aim of CFF is to improve the lives of participants, their children, and the larger community by increasing fathers' involvement with their children. CFF seeks to achieve these goals by providing services to strengthen fathers' parenting skills, improve their relationships with their partners or spouses, and secure employment so they can support themselves and their families.

In PACT, CFF offers separate open-entry, open-exit workshops on parenting, economic stability (that is, RSW), and relationships, as shown in the logic model (Figure D.1). The parenting and relationship workshops are designed to be delivered in eight weekly sessions, and RSW is designed to be delivered in seven sessions. Because of CFF's emphasis on improving outcomes for children, fathers first are steered to the parenting workshop. Staff ask fathers to attend at least one session of the parenting workshop before participating in RSW. They also expect fathers to complete the

Figure D.1. Program logic model



parenting workshop before beginning participation in the relationship workshop. Participants proceed through the workshops at their own pace, though staff for CFF encourage them to attend at least one workshop session per week. Participants must complete all sessions of a workshop to be considered a graduate of that component.

Individualization of services is the core of CFF's philosophy. When engaging in groups and in one-on-one services, staff are instructed to gauge service delivery based on fathers' needs and to "meet participants where they were." From enrollment forward, staff tailor program services to meet participants' needs. After assignment to the evaluation program group, an intake coordinator assesses fathers' needs and helps to develop goals, such as "becoming employed" or "completing all eight sessions of the parenting workshop." These goals guide which services fathers attend. If a father prefers, he could attend the relationship workshop before the parenting workshop or else attend the RSW workshop simultaneously with the parenting or relationship workshop.

CFF's emphasis on seeing each participant as an individual in need of customized services extends to one-on-one services. Instead of being assigned a caseload, staff collectively discuss fathers' needs and decide who among them should provide a father with a referral or other assistance. Program leadership feels that involving all staff in case management encourages them to build relationships and personal connections with all participants, creating a deep understanding of the fathers' circumstances and needs. If the program used dedicated case managers, leadership feels that staff without caseloads would not expend the same effort to get to know participants.

Service components

CFF provides the following core group services:

Parenting workshop. CFF's parenting workshop curriculum was developed in-house and draws from the evidence-informed *Effective Black Parenting*⁴⁷ and the evidence-based *HighScope Early Childhood Curriculum for Preschool, Infants, Toddlers, and Early Elementary Children* curricula.⁴⁸ Prior to receiving its first OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant in 2006, CFF's parenting workshop leaned heavily on a curriculum that required fathers to bring workbooks home. This discouraged many participants who struggled with reading skills. After deciding that the curriculum did not "meet fathers where they were," staff revised the curriculum to incorporate new material and did away with workbooks. CFF continues to revise the curriculum to meet the needs of participants, including using videos as discussion prompts and relying more on research-based materials.

The parenting workshop is 12 hours, delivered during eight sessions, with each session focused on a single topic: (1) the role of the father, (2) nurturing parenting, (3) parenting without violence or fear, (4) communication, (5) coparenting, (6) growth and child development, (7) domestic abuse, and (8) understanding discipline. Parenting sessions are held twice per week in the evening and once per week in the afternoon. One topic is covered each week. Each workshop starts with a meal. Evening parenting and relationship workshops run concurrently; participants in both workshops share the same meal. Participants can begin attending at any point in the eight-session sequence. They are encouraged to attend at least once per week, but can attend multiple sessions within a week.

Relationship workshop. CFF's relationship workshop is based on the evidence-informed *Nurturing Skills for Families* curriculum,⁴⁹ but has additional detail about domestic violence delivered by a partner agency. Program staff frequently personalize the curriculum and supplement it with other information to meet the needs of participants. The workshop's format, including the frequency with which it is offered, the length of the workshop sessions, the number of weeks and the graduation requirements, mirrors the parenting workshop. The topics include (1) the characteristics

of a healthy relationship, (2) relationship roles and expectations, (3) domestic violence, (4) communication, (5) conflict resolution, (6) intimacy, (7) coparenting, and (8) finances and goal setting. Participants are encouraged to complete six of the eight parenting workshop sessions before proceeding to the relationship skills workshop.

Employment workshop. The RSW workshop is held two mornings per week and is comprised of seven one-hour sessions that cover (1) realistic expectations, (2) skill identification, (3) job applications, (4) resumes and cover letters, (5) job hunting, (6) interview techniques, and (7) positive work attitudes. One topic is covered per week. Each participant in RSW also completes an assessment of basic employment information, including job history, jobs of interest, and employment barriers. Sessions are conducted in the RSW resource room; many participants work on job applications or their resumes during the sessions. Light refreshments and coffee are available. Participants are encouraged to attend at least one session of the parenting workshop before beginning the job readiness workshop.

Participants graduate from a component by completing all workshop sessions. Fathers never officially graduate from the whole program and can continue attending group workshop sessions as long as they like. Program staff reported that some fathers have continued to attend on a weekly basis for several years.

CFF provides the following individual service:

Case management and needs-based assistance. Staff build relationships with participants to gain their trust and to learn about their various needs. Program staff discuss participants' needs and collectively decide which staff member is best suited to address a particular need. This often results in participants receiving individualized services from multiple staff members. The frequency of these individual interactions is largely dependent upon the motivation of participants to seek out assistance from staff, but a staff member can also schedule a formal one-on-one appointment with a participant, if necessary. No staff carries an assigned caseload of fathers.

Staff at CFF link participants with other services provided by UV and with other community resources, such as substance abuse treatment, homeless shelters and housing, health clinics, mental health services, food assistance, business clothing, transportation, domestic violence services, and child maltreatment services. Staff also help fathers negotiate the child support system. For example, CFF staff advocate for the child support agency to reinstate participants' driver's licenses and provide emotional support to participants during custody, visitation, or child support hearings in court.

CFF offers the following supplementary services:

Staffed resource room. The RSW resource room has computers, phones, tools for training in computer skills and job search, and email access to facilitate job searches. RSW is conducted in the resource room, so these services are used by participants who attend the workshop. The resource room is open five days per week for participants to drop in, use available services, and receive assistance from employment specialists and a job developer. Employment specialists administer assessments of job skills and provide employment counseling. They also help fathers develop individual employment plans, develop resumes, and practice completing employment applications and mock interviews. Job developers also assist fathers with job placement.

In addition, fathers who receive services from CFF can access unpaid internships, job shadowing, and other temporary job services, as well as periodic job fairs held at UV.

Partners in service delivery

CFF developed formal partnerships with two service providing organizations: the Domestic Abuse Project (DAP) and Hennepin County Child Support Services.

Domestic Abuse Project (DAP). DAP's mission is to stop domestic violence by serving entire families, including perpetrators of domestic violence. DAP supports CFF by providing input on the design and content of domestic violence awareness sessions for the parenting and relationship workshops. DAP also trains CFF staff to identify and intervene with perpetrators of domestic violence. A DAP staff member typically presents information on domestic violence at least once during each relationship workshop cycle. DAP also accepts referrals from CFF for participants who were perpetrators or victims of domestic violence. DAP's relationship with CFF predates the award of the most recent OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant in 2011.

Hennepin County Child Support Services. Hennepin County Child Support Services has a formal agreement with CFF to collaborate with "respect and flexibility to overcome jurisdictional and other barriers" and to work with participants on a case-by-case basis to help them understand their child support orders and available options. Fatherhood program staff reach out to child support staff on an as-needed basis to help with participants' child support issues. Child support agency staff have attended parenting workshops to provide fathers with information about child support.

Staffing, supervision, and implementation support

From the inception of CFF up to its involvement in the PACT evaluation, CFF relied on fewer than 10 staff members to provide its fatherhood program. In 2013, UV hired 4 additional staff members for CFF: a job developer, two recruitment and intake staff members, and an outplacement coordinator. Even with the expanded capacity, staff continue to serve in multiple roles.

Background and experience of staff

When hiring new staff, the CFF places more emphasis on life experience than past work. The organization wants staff to “meet participants where they are” and develop personal connections to identify and resolve needs. Staff who have overcome life challenges similar to those of the participants share anecdotes from their own experiences and act as role models, serving as reminders of what participants can attain. For example, one program recruiter, who also helps fathers with child support issues, tells participants his story of successfully getting custody of his child in order to convince them that the same outcome is possible for them. CFF follows the assumption that participants feel more comfortable sharing their challenges and goals with people who have been in their circumstances. The director, both facilitators, and several support staff are prior CFF participants. In addition to the potential for program graduates to serve as examples for current participants, CFF believes that hiring graduates gives program staff credibility when reaching out to employers, because these graduates are evidence of what the program can achieve.

CFF often has filled open staff positions with internal candidates instead of external recruits. Six of the 13 CFF staff at the time of a staff survey in fall 2013—including the director—started with the organization in other capacities before being promoted to their current roles. It has been common for UV, and CFF specifically, to hire interns after completing their internships. Two frontline staff members started with CFF as interns.

Although overcoming past life challenges is CFF’s primary, sought-after characteristic for new staff, 90 percent of staff had at least some postsecondary education and a majority had prior experience providing relationship skills education, parenting education, or employment services (Table D.2). The average tenure with the organization was only 1.5 years, in part due to the recent hiring, but program leadership was consistent. The CFF director has been with the program for nearly 20 years.

Roles and responsibilities

The CFF is overseen by a director who reports to UV’s CEO (Table D.3). Four managers are responsible for day-to-day operations of the Responsible Fatherhood program components, including quality assurance. Five frontline staff members have responsibility for direct interaction with program participants.

Staff training

Most staff receive on-the-job training in their basic duties from their supervisor and colleagues. New facilitators have to observe workshops for approximately one month before they lead their own classes. CFF occasionally hosts formal trainings by outside groups on topics such as recognizing and responding to mental health issues. In 2012

Table D.2. CFF staff characteristics and experience

Staff characteristics		Staff experience	
Gender (%)		Experience providing parenting education (%)	70
Male	40	Mean (years)	8.9
Female	60		
		Experience providing relationship skills education (%)	60
Race and ethnicity (%)		Mean (years)	8.2
Hispanic	10		
Black, non-Hispanic	70	Experience providing employment services (%)	90
White, non-Hispanic	10	Mean (years)	8.0
Other, including mixed race	10		
		Education (%)	
Average length of UV employment (years)	1.5	High school diploma or equivalency	10
		Some college, associate's degree, or certificate	50
		Bachelor's degree	30
		More than bachelor's degree	10

Source: PACT staff survey, fall 2013.

Note: Ten out of 13 staff members from UV completed the survey.

and 2013, CFF sent two staff members to a leadership conference to learn about motivating employees. As of fall 2013, the RSW manager, the CFF manager, the project supervisor, and a program recruiter had attended.

Supervisory support for direct service staff

Staff in supervisory positions work closely with their supervisees. Supervisors monitor staff work through direct observation and by reviewing case notes and data entered into PACTIS, the evaluation's data and reporting system. The director frequently attends parenting and relationship workshops to monitor facilitators and ensure adherence to the session topic assigned for the evening. The RSW manager and project supervisor schedule regular meetings with all staff they supervise. Nearly all staff reported having group meetings with their supervisor on a weekly basis (Table D.4). One-on-one meetings occur between supervisors and staff on an as-needed basis. Seventy percent of staff reported having weekly individual meetings with supervisors.

Table D.3. CFF staff roles and responsibilities

Job title	Primary responsibilities
Leadership	
Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees CFF program services and staff Directly supervises the manager, senior program coordinator, RSW manager, project supervisor, and a consultant Provides case management services to participants facing complicated child support cases and other difficult issues
Managers	
CFF manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages day-to-day operations of the Responsible Fatherhood program Supervises workshop facilitators Facilitates parenting and relationship classes, as needed
Senior program coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides administrative support to program operation Manages the data and reporting system (PACTIS) Assists the director, as needed Assists with case management, as needed
RSW manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the RSW program Supervises all RSW staff Facilitates RSW workshop Provides case management, as needed
Project supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervises program recruiters and intake workers Supervises support staff, including administrative assistants and kitchen staff Assists with job development, as needed
Frontline staff	
Employment specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides one-on-one employment assistance with resumes, computer skills, interview preparation, and job search; administers employment assessments Provides case management and referrals to work supports
Job developer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies employers who are willing to hire program participants Coordinates job fairs and interview days for prescreened participants
Program recruiter and intake worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruits fathers Conducts intake and enrollment Administers initial needs assessments Monitors workshop attendance and follow-up with fathers Provides case management
Outplacement coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists individuals in the PACT evaluation control group (who cannot receive CFF services) with accessing community resources Assists with enrollment and intake activities, as needed Monitors workshop attendance and follow-up with fathers
Program facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads parenting and relationship workshops Reviews and refines workshop curricula Provides case management

Table D.4. Staff support at CFF

Frequency of supervision	Percent
Individual	
Weekly or more	70
Biweekly	0
Monthly or less	30
Never	0
Group	
Weekly or more	90
Biweekly	0
Monthly or less	0
Never	10

Source: PACT Staff survey, fall 2013.

Note: Ten out of 13 staff members from UV completed the survey.

Outreach and recruitment

Outreach strategies

CFF has a contract with the Minneapolis chapter of Men Against Destruction—Defending Against Drugs and Social Disorder (MAD DADS) to recruit participants for CFF. This has been CFF’s largest referral source. MAD DADS is a national organization that aims to bring positive change to its chapters’ communities by combating social ills and disorder, such as drugs and violence. MAD DADS and the RF program at UV have partnered for more than 10 years. The president of MAD DADS was one of the program’s first participants, and he established the Minneapolis chapter of MAD DADS in 1998 with the support of CFF’s director.

Minneapolis MAD DADS has a contract with MetroTransit (Minneapolis’s public transportation operator) that allows MAD DADS staff to recruit public bus riders into their programs in exchange for maintaining peace on the buses. These “bus patrols” are conducted approximately six times per week. MAD DADS staff collect contact information from fathers who express interest, and they instruct them to visit UV to enroll in CFF. MAD DADS staff follow up by phone with the men who expressed interest. MAD DADS also recruits men on the street. CFF staff also conduct street outreach, mostly through informal encounters between staff members and potential participants throughout the day, either on the street or on the bus.

Several community organizations refer fathers to CFF, including substance abuse treatment centers, the Salvation Army, Amicus (an employment agency for ex-offenders that leases space from UV), and domestic violence organizations

(including the domestic violence partner, DAP). Parole officers also refer participants to CFF.⁵⁰ Program staff report that churches were a large source of referrals prior to the implementation of random assignment for the PACT evaluation. Many churches were not comfortable with assigning some referred fathers to a control group that would restrict them from attending the program, so referrals from churches decreased during the evaluation. As a result, program staff increased their efforts to receive referrals from other sources.

Intake process

Intake for CFF is performed on a rolling basis. Prior to joining the PACT evaluation, intake was conducted by anyone on staff, typically just before a workshop, or by employment specialists meeting with fathers interested in RSW. Upon joining the PACT evaluation, CFF formalized the intake process. Interested fathers are directed to a central enrollment location at UV, an office space converted to accommodate intake. Intake workers for CFF describe the program and the evaluation, enroll men in the study, and conduct a needs assessment of fathers assigned to the treatment group. After enrollment, staff complete a “closing” form with the father, which documents the program component he is interested in completing first, as well as the referrals he received. The father receives a tear-off portion of the form that also contains this information.

Program outputs

Program enrollment

Between February 2013 and August 2014, CFF enrolled 1,409 fathers into the PACT evaluation, with about half assigned to receive services from CFF. Enrollment averaged 74 fathers per month and ranged from 28 to 157 fathers. Staff for CFF attributed their strong enrollment to their partnership with MAD DADS—although, in the latter portion of this period, they intentionally slowed outreach efforts after realizing that the wide outreach did not yield a high proportion of enrolled fathers who would actually engage in the services. To attract fathers who were likely to engage, CFF focused on enrolling fathers who expressed a strong interest in attending program services. CFF worked to communicate these revised expectations to MAD DADS because MAD DADS provided most referrals.

According to the survey taken at enrollment and staff reports, the majority of participants (62 percent) indicated that improving a relationship with their children was the main reason for enrolling, while 32 percent viewed improving their job situation as the primary motivation (Table D.1). Fathers’ greatest non-employment needs included housing, child support, help paying utilities, and visitation rights. Staff reported that many fathers endured trauma at an early age and may have been in need of assistance to address issues stemming from this trauma.

Program participation

By the end of March 2014, 601 fathers had enrolled in the PACT evaluation at CFF, were randomly assigned to receive the program, and had at least four months to participate in program activities. To understand CFF's early participation trends, we examined initiation and retention in program services and examined total program dosage during these fathers' first four months after study enrollment.

About 90 percent of fathers assigned to the program group at CFF engaged in at least one program activity within four months of study enrollment (Table D.5). Most often, this was in the form of an individual service contact (88 percent), with two-thirds attending at least one session of a core workshop. Few participated in optional group activities, such as occasional job fairs, which were primarily offered through the RSW resource room.

Table D.5. Engagement in at least one program activity, by content area

Content	Any program engagement	Core workshops	Individual contacts	Supplementary group activities
Engaged in any content (%)	91	66	88	2
Parenting and fatherhood		53	57	N/A
Relationships		49	19	N/A
Economic stability		37	55	2
Personal development		0	N/A	N/A
Other		0	79	N/A

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 601 fathers enrolled between February 13, 2013, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. "Other" content included needs assessments, substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and transportation. N/A = not applicable.

Initial engagement rates in the content areas covered by the core workshops were higher for the parenting and relationship workshops (53 and 49 percent, respectively) than for the employment workshop (37 percent). Accessibility may have explained higher initial participation in the parenting and relationship workshops. CFF offered parenting and relationship workshops during the day and evening; the employment workshop took place only in the morning. Also, CFF offered the parenting and relationship workshops three times per week, as opposed to twice for RSW. A final reason that participants may have been less likely to engage in the RSW workshop was that CFF placed greater emphasis on individual service contacts for providing economic stability services (55 percent). The parenting workshop may also have had the highest initial engagement because it was typically the first core service that participants encountered.

Among individual contacts, fathers were equally likely to be engaged in parenting or economic stability services. However, the largest share of fathers receiving at least one service contact within four months (79 percent) received content other than parenting, relationships, or economic stability, such as a meeting about substance abuse or legal issues.

Nearly 40 percent of fathers received at least half of the parenting workshop, attending at least four of the eight sessions (Table D.6). An additional one-fifth of fathers attended between one and four sessions. More than three-quarters of fathers did not attend the relationship workshop, but of those who did, nearly two-thirds attended at least four sessions. Only 7 percent of fathers attended more than half of RSW; more than two-thirds of the fathers did not attend any RSW workshop sessions.

Table D.6. Attendance at core workshop sessions

Core workshop	Number of hours	Number of sessions	Percentage of sessions attended		
			None	1 to 50 percent	51 percent or more
Parenting	12	8	43	19	38
Relationship	12	8	78	8	14
RSW	7	4 or 7 ^a	68	24	7

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 601 fathers enrolled between February 13, 2013, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. Participation is shown during the first four months following random assignment. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

^aRSW was offered in groups for either 4 or 7 sessions. Retention for fathers attending groups with both sessions was calculated based on a potential of 7 sessions. Otherwise, fathers' retention was based on the number of sessions for the group attended.

Program group fathers received, on average, four individual contacts during their first four months enrolled at CFF (Table D.7). Fathers received about three contacts over the first two months, and one contact during the second two months. Nearly 90 percent of contacts were in-person at the program office. About one in five program fathers received a referral for an externally provided support service.

Across all program fathers at CFF (including those who never participated), fathers averaged about 11 hours of participation within four months of random assignment (Table D.8). The bulk of these hours came from attending core workshops, with time about evenly split between the parenting and the relationship workshop. Program fathers received, on average, three hours of services through individual contacts and less than one hour from attending an optional economic stability activity. About half of the total hours of participation focused on content related to parenting and fatherhood and just over one-third focused on content related to relationships. Average hours of participation increased to over 12 hours for fathers who engaged in at least one activity. The pattern of service receipt was similar across content areas for engaged fathers.

Table D.7. Individual contacts and referrals

	Percentage or number
Referrals and individual contacts with fathers	
Number of fathers	601
Percentage of fathers receiving at least one outside referral for support services	18
Average number of individual contacts per father	4.1
Average number of individual contacts per month per father	1.0
Average number of individual contacts per month per father, first two months	1.7
Average number of individual contacts per month per father, third and fourth months	0.3
Mode of individual contact	
Number of individual contacts	2,441
Percentage of individual contacts by	
Telephone	10
Program office visit	89
Other	1

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 601 fathers enrolled between February 13, 2013, and March 31, 2014, who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included.

Program sustainability and improvement

Strategies and supports for encouraging program participation

After joining the PACT evaluation in February 2013, CFF centralized its intake process by hiring two intake workers, whose primary responsibilities were developing standard intake processes and enrolling fathers into the program. CFF also hired an outplacement coordinator to refer fathers enrolled into the evaluation control group to other services. Centralization has allowed these staff to begin encouraging program participation immediately following enrollment. Intake staff conduct a single, comprehensive assessment and identify the activities that best meet participants' needs. Following the assessment, fathers receive a "closing" form. Staff at CFF believe that this form has increased initial program engagement by reminding fathers of the referrals they were given and the program component in which they expressed interest. In addition, CFF has moved the location of RSW activities so that all three workshops—parenting, relationship, and employment—are in the same area and, thus, more visible to participants. The goal of this change was to increase participants' exposure to all program components and reinforce RSW as a core service.

CFF has occasionally offered condensed versions of the parenting and relationship workshops during the day or on a weekend to boost participation. Participants

Table D.8. Average hours of participation

Content	Core workshops	Individual contacts	Supplementary group activities	Total hours
All program group fathers				
Parenting and fatherhood	3.8	1.2	N/A	5.1
Economic stability	0.6	0.6	0.1	1.2
Relationships	3.9	0.3	N/A	4.2
Personal development	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Other	0.0	0.8	N/A	0.8
Total hours	8.3	2.9	0.1	11.3
Program group fathers with any participation				
Parenting and fatherhood	4.2	1.3	N/A	5.6
Economic stability	0.7	0.6	0.1	1.3
Relationships	4.3	0.4	N/A	4.6
Personal development	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Other	0.0	0.9	N/A	0.9
Total hours	9.1	3.2	0.1	12.4

Source: PACTIS.

Note: The sample includes 222 fathers enrolled between February 3, 2013, and March 31, 2014 who were randomly assigned to receive the program for PACT. Of these, 179 program group fathers had any participation. Programs enrolled and served additional fathers who were not eligible for the evaluation and, thus, were not included in this report. All participation during the first four months after random assignment was included. "Other" content includes needs assessments, substance abuse, domestic violence, emergency needs, housing, legal services, clothing, food, utility assistance, health and wellness, medical services, and/or transportation. N/A = not applicable.

attending the condensed workshops are able complete a component in two days, rather than several weeks or months. As with the standard core workshops, the condensed parenting and relationship workshops are each 12 hours. The condensed format may encourage participation among fathers who worked in the evening. The compressed schedule allows staff to maintain contact with participants and sustain their attention.

In September 2013, CFF offered a special week of condensed programming to boost participation and completion. Compressing the time it takes to complete a component from several weeks to a couple of days made it easier for staff to maintain contact with participants and for participants to sustain contact with the program. The relationship workshop was offered on a Monday and Tuesday, the parenting workshop followed on Wednesday and Thursday, and RSW was held on Friday. CFF used attendance data to identify participants who had attended fewer than half of the sessions, then invited them to the workshops. The program offered incentives for attendance and completion of the parenting and relationship workshops.⁵¹ Fathers who completed the RSW workshop during the week were given a \$50 gift card and were entered into a drawing for a bus pass.

All staff made calls to participants to encourage workshop attendance throughout the evaluation. Staff called inactive fathers with whom they had established relationships to encourage reengagement. Facilitators called fathers who missed several consecutive sessions. Every Monday, intake workers called fathers who were enrolled but had not attended any services. These calls continued weekly as long as the CFF had a working number or until the father requested that they stop calling.

CFF offered fathers incentives to encourage completion of components and meeting goals. Fathers who completed eight weeks of the parenting or relationship workshop received a \$50 gift card and a t-shirt. Fathers participating in RSW who became employed could request a 30-day bus pass.⁵² Fathers who remained employed for one year could receive \$200. Also, CFF occasionally offered special incentives to encourage attendance, such as those associated with the condensed workshops described above. CFF provided fathers with bus tokens to travel to and from the program and meals before the start of each workshop. Support staff provided child care during parenting and relationship workshops.

Monitoring program operations

Staff at CFF use PACTIS to monitor enrollment, participation, and job placements. Staff in supervisory roles, including the director and project supervisor, review case notes weekly to monitor the work of frontline staff and to ensure that services are documented properly. One result of this regular monitoring is identification of low participation rates, which is what led the CFF to implement the condensed workshops and revise recruitment strategies, as discussed above.

CFF staff assesses program quality through participation, graduation, and employment rates of participants. Direct service staff work to meet the needs of participants and to boost retention rates by contacting those who stop attending. Program leaders and supervisors discuss expectations with staff and hold regular meetings to promote a common understanding of high quality programming. Staff also stress the importance of considering client satisfaction in developing a holistic understanding of the program. Staff use informal conversations with clients to assess satisfaction; systematic data are not gathered.

CFF leadership value the staff's creativity and ability to customize workshop lessons to meet the needs of participants by telling personal stories, supplementing the curricula with other materials, or varying their approaches. They do not expect staff to take a consistent approach to one-on-one services and case management. Staff are instructed to use their judgment to tailor service delivery based on each client's needs. Facilitators are expected to stay on topic for the workshop sessions and cover the core material assigned, but they are encouraged to be creative in their approach. Some facilitators use a lecture style with question-and-answer time, while others use role playing. The director frequently attends parenting and relationship workshops to monitor facilitators and ensure fidelity to the session topics.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Three grantees were initially involved in the PACT HM evaluation; two have remained.
- ² In all RF programs in PACT, fathers may receive services for at least 12 months, but they typically are the most active within the first few months of enrollment.
- ³ All fathers were randomly assigned by March 31, 2014; the last date of participation was July 31, 2014.
- ⁴ In Minneapolis, Minnesota, where two grantees are located, applicants placed into the control group at one program were not permitted to obtain services at the other program.
- ⁵ The staff survey included all RF program staff members employed by the grantees participating in PACT. We excluded staff employed by the grantees in PACT who did not work for the RF program and staff from partner agencies that may have been involved in RF program delivery.
- ⁶ Some fathers, at the FATHER Project in particular, must participate in the program as a condition of their parole and are excluded from the PACT evaluation.
- ⁷ As discussed in Chapter II, Connections to Success used its own MIS for monitoring program delivery. However, all programs used PACTIS for the random assignment and enrollment process.
- ⁸ In all RF programs in PACT, fathers may receive services for at least 12 months, but typically are the most active in the first few months. For the final report on program implementation, we will be able to use a longer participation window.
- ⁹ See Figure I.1 for a timeline of key dates in the PACT evaluation, including when each program began enrollment for PACT.
- ¹⁰ We defined substantive individual contacts as telephone calls or face-to-face meetings that lasted five minutes or more.
- ¹¹ The Family Formation Program offered a single workshop that integrated parenting, relationship, and economic stability content; we report attendance and retention for this workshop separately from the other programs. Successful STEPS offered a workshop that integrated content in parenting and employment, but it tracked attendance separately by topic, which allowed us to measure retention separately for these topics.
- ¹² We limited the analysis to core workshops for three reasons. First, we wanted to understand participation in activities required by the OFA RF grant. Second, programs expected all fathers to attend these workshops. Third, these workshops had a defined number of sessions, which allowed us to measure the proportion of sessions that fathers attended. Some supplementary activities, like Fathers' Rap at the Family Formation Program, were simply ongoing weekly peer discussion groups.
- ¹³ Because of this sequence, it is possible that the analysis window of four months was not long enough to fully capture participation in the relationship workshops at the open-entry workshop programs.
- ¹⁴ The Kansas City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes both Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas. The American Community Survey provides household statistics separately for Kansas City, Missouri, and Kansas City, Kansas, whereas the Bureau of Labor Statistics provides unemployment data for the MSA only.
- ¹⁵ RF grantees must be neutral with respect to religion and not promote, endorse, or favor religious beliefs over nonreligious beliefs, nor disparage religious beliefs in any way.
- ¹⁶ A description and details of the *Quenching the Father Thirst* curriculum are available through the National Center for Fathering website (<http://support.fathers.com/site/PageServer?pagename=QFTOverview1>).
- ¹⁷ *Ready for Love* is a 16-hour curriculum developed by IDEALS for Professionals (IFC, <http://www.skillswork.org/mml-curriculum/mastering-the-mysteries-of-love/ready-for-love/>).
- ¹⁸ The O*NET (<http://www.onetcenter.org/tools.html>) is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA).
- ¹⁹ Reductions in state-owed child support arrears based on obtaining a GED or commercial driver's license or from investments in 529-savings plans are available to all fathers in Kansas who owed child support arrears, not just Successful STEPS participants.
- ²⁰ An agency within the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons
- ²¹ FSC offers the FFP at three locations in St. Louis. Prince Hall is FSC's headquarters in North St. Louis. The Metropolitan Education and Training (MET) Center is near the West End of St. Louis, and is connected to the city's light rail system. Employment Connections is in downtown St. Louis.
- ²² *Fatherhood Development: A Curriculum for Young Fathers* is a 25-module parenting curriculum developed by Dr. Jeffrey Johnson, the president of the National Partnership for Community Leadership (<http://www.npclstrongfamilies.com>).
- ²³ *Money Smart* is an 11-module financial education curriculum developed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (<https://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/moneysmart/>)
- ²⁴ *Within my Reach* is a 15-module healthy relationship curriculum developed by PREP, Inc. (<https://www.prepinc.com/Content/CURRICULA/Within-My-Reach.htm>)
- ²⁵ Better Family Life, Inc. was the lead organization for the 2006 federal Healthy Marriage grant. In July 2011, Family Workforce Centers of America split from a Better Family Life, Inc. to form a distinct organization. FSC's partnership with a Better Family Life, Inc. transitioned to Family Workforce Centers of America when the organization was formed.
- ²⁶ Prior to summer 2013, the FFP enrolled fathers on a rolling basis and asked them to participate in Fathers' Rap until the start of the next FFP. However, the potentially long window between intake and the start of FFP led to a lower than hoped percentage of enrolled fathers attending the FFP. Compressing the intake period to immediately before the start of a class allowed fathers to more quickly begin FSC's core program.
- ²⁷ For PACT, the FFP began requiring appointments so that random assignment could be conducted. Staff do not believe this to be a barrier, as fathers often call for program information or need several meetings to provide the identification required for enrollment into the program, regardless of the evaluation processes.
- ²⁸ Though parole officers could ask fathers to participate in the FFP, they could not mandate enrollment or attendance. Participation in the FFP is voluntary.

- ²⁹ Any therapy provided was not supported by OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant funds.
- ³⁰ The FFP also began to offer \$25 for each week of perfect attendance at Fathers' Rap, later increasing the incentive to \$50.
- ³¹ Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota also serves three other Minnesota cities: Park Rapids, Rochester, and St. Cloud. However, these cities are not included in the PACT evaluation.
- ³² Unemployment rates in Minneapolis–St. Paul included several other cities in Minnesota (Blaine, Bloomington, Brooklyn Park, Burnsville, Coon Rapids, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Maple Grove, Plymouth, and Woodbury) included in the Minneapolis–St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area, making the comparison between unemployment rates and poverty rates an imperfect one.
- ³³ One limiting factor in the comparison of violent crime rates was that these statistics represent crime in two large cities. However, other cities in the Minneapolis–St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area were excluded from the FBI's Uniform Crime Statistics.
- ³⁴ Fathers from the FATHER Project assigned to the control group could not receive services at the Center for Fathering.
- ³⁵ Minneapolis is in Hennepin County; St. Paul is in Ramsey County.
- ³⁶ The *Young Dads/Young Moms* and *Nueva Familia* curricula were developed by Parents As Teachers/ Minnesota Early Learning Design (MELD).
- ³⁷ *Within My Reach* (<https://www.prepinc.com/Content/CURRICULA/Within-My-Reach.htm>) is a 15-module healthy relationship curriculum developed by PREP Inc.
- ³⁸ This incentive plan is open to all Hennepin County fathers, not just those participating in the FATHER Project.
- ³⁹ *On My Shoulders* (<https://www.prepinc.com/content/CURRICULA/On-My-Shoulders.htm>) was developed by PREP Inc.
- ⁴⁰ *Within Our Reach* (<https://www.prepinc.com/content/CURRICULA/Within-Our-Reach.htm>) is a version of the Within My Reach curriculum that is tailored for couples. It was developed by PREP Inc.
- ⁴¹ Program graduates who have been trained to facilitate the parenting workshop were not included among FATHER Project staff.
- ⁴² Fathers were eligible to participate in most optional services only after completing the orientation workshop and a core workshop; each workshop required at least 12 weeks to complete, or longer if fathers did not attend weekly.
- ⁴³ UV also operates a Spanish-language fatherhood program separate from CFF that was not supported by OFA Responsible Fatherhood grant funding.
- ⁴⁴ Unemployment rates in Minneapolis included St. Paul and several other Minnesota cities (Bloomington, Brooklyn Park, Plymouth, Woodbury, Maple Grove, Coon Rapids, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Burnsville, and Blaine) included in the Minneapolis–St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area.
- ⁴⁵ One limiting factor in the comparison of violent crime rates was that these statistics represent crime in two large cities. However, other cities in the Minneapolis–St. Paul Metropolitan Statistical Area were excluded from the FBI's Uniform Crime Statistics.
- ⁴⁶ Fathers from UV assigned to the control group could not receive services at Goodwill–Easter Seals Minnesota's FATHER Project.
- ⁴⁷ *Effective Black Parenting* was a 10-session, culturally sensitive parenting curriculum developed by the Center for the Improvement of Child Caring (<http://www.ciccparenting.org/EffBlackParentingDesc.aspx>).
- ⁴⁸ The *HighScope Early Childhood Curriculum for Preschool, Infants, Toddlers, and Early Elementary Children*, a parenting curriculum designed to help adults learn about child development, was developed by the HighScope Educational Research Foundation (<http://www.highscope.org>).
- ⁴⁹ *Nurturing Skills for Families* is a curriculum for at-risk families that presents material in 16 competency areas. This curriculum (<http://www.nurturingparenting.com/ecommerce/category/1:2:1/>) was developed by Family Development Resources Inc.
- ⁵⁰ CFF accepted a small number of men who were referred by parole officers and whose participation in services was a condition of their release. They did not go through random assignment and were not part of the PACT evaluation.
- ⁵¹ Fathers who had not attended a session before the condensed workshop was offered received \$100 if they attended and completed the condensed workshop. Fathers who had attended once or twice, but had not yet completed the workshop, received \$75 for attending and completing the condensed workshop, while fathers who had attended three or more times received \$50 for completing the condensed workshop.
- ⁵² CFF did not advertise this incentive and fathers had to request it.

