

# ENGAGING DADS: TOP TIPS

When you support a father, you give hope to a child.

## 1 FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS

Before you implement a program, think about the fathers that may come to your organization, the types of families you serve, or the kind of fathers you're looking to serve.

## 2 ASSESS YOUR FATHER-FRIENDLINESS

Your father involvement efforts won't be successful unless fathers feel comfortable. Check out things like the environment, programs, staff development, policies and procedures, and your community networks. Dad Central Canada has assessments for you to use.

## 3 COMMUNITY/STAFF TRAINING

Take part in training and community action planning that will provide information for staff, community partners, and families about the importance of father involvement. It will also assist in the planning and implementation of effective strategies.

## 4 PARTNER WITH OTHERS

Be creative and look for a variety of non-profit and for-profit partners that will help you increase your reach and provide valuable resources that you may not have on your own. This can include a referral list, access to a volunteer network, and help with promotion.

## 5 TRAIN FACILITATORS

Training can include fatherhood curricula, best practices, and strategies to help ensure that your program is successful. It is helpful to learn about facilitating men's groups, program format, evaluation, and recruitment/retention.

## 6 INCENTIVES

Feed the men. Food is a draw and something to gather around. Provide gift cards, transportation, letters of support, giveaways, etc. Incentives can be provided by community partners and sponsors.

## 7 RECRUITMENT

Focus any promotion on how the program benefits children. Dads respond better when they are learning about helping others, especially their children. Promote in places dads go, like hardware stores, sports venues, and libraries. Encourage children to take flyers home to dad.

## 8 STAY THE COURSE

It will take time to build momentum. Don't give up easily. Small numbers are a great start. Being consistent and present will encourage the word-of-mouth promotion as dads (and moms) talk with others about what you are doing.

