



THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

March 27, 1996

Dear Delegate:

As you may know, last June President Clinton requested that all federal agencies review their policies and programs in order to strengthen their support for the important role of fathers in the lives of children and families. The President asked that responses be directed to me at the National Performance Review. Since then, we have received a variety of interesting proposals affecting the programs, research and personnel policies of many federal agencies.

On May 3rd, the National Performance Review, the Domestic Policy Council and the Department of Health and Human Services are co-hosting a "Federal Conference on Strengthening the Role of Fathers in Families." The purpose of this conference is to highlight promising approaches being developed in various agencies to strengthen the ability of fathers to be involved in the lives of their children. I will chair the opening sessions of the conference and hope to be joined by Secretaries Shalala, Pena, Perry, Reno and Riley as well as Carol Rasco, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, for a discussion forum with a group of fathers who have been helped by their efforts.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to extend to you an invitation to attend the conference and workshop sessions which will provide exciting program ideas and interesting implementation strategies. Certainly, this conference will be an invaluable resource for ensuring that all agencies are able to meet the President's objectives in a timely fashion.

I look forward to continuing to work with you to meet our common objective of strengthening support for America's children and families.

Sincerely,

Al Gore

AG/nrh

Federal Conference on Strengthening the Role of Fathers in Families

MAY 3, 1996

AGENDA **[draft, subject to revisions]**

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. | Registration |
| 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. | Opening Session |
| | Welcome
Vivian L. Gadsden, Philadelphia Children's Network |
| | Remarks and Introduction of the Vice President
Secretary Donna E. Shalala |
| | Remarks
Vice President Al Gore |
| | Introduction of Fathers
Secretaries Peña, Riley, Shalala, Perry and Attorney General Reno (invited) |
| | Interactive Conversation with program Fathers
Vice President Al Gore |
| 10:30 - 12:00 p.m. | Workshops - Session I |
| | Working with Practitioners |
| | New Parent Support |
| | Improving Federal Research on Fathers: Collaborative Strategies |
| | Fathers and Employment Strategies |
| | Fathers' Roles in Children's Learning: Models that Work |
| | Telecommuting |
| | Best Practices: Work and Family Programs |
| 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. | Buffet Luncheon |
| 1:15 - 2:45 p.m. | Workshops - Session II |
| | Adolescent Males: Preparation for Fatherhood |
| | Through a Child's Eyes: Why Fathers Matter |
| | Reunion and Re-Integration Support for Fathers |
| | Working with Foundations |
| | Dads Do Count: Working with Nonresidential Fathers |
| | Youth Violence |
| | Fathers in Early Child Care |
| 2:45 - 4:00 p.m. | Wrap Up Session |
| | Remarks - Ken Canfield, National Center for Fathering |
| | Elaine Kamarck, Senior Policy Advisor for the Vice President |
| | Facilitator - Vivian L. Gadsden, Philadelphia Children's Network |

WORKING WITH PRACTITIONERS

Most communities probably have at least one program in existence that could serve as a springboard for a program to support fathers. In this session the National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families (NPNFF) and the Father-to-Father Network will focus on the exciting things that are happening in the field. Both networks are composed of service providers, researchers, policymakers, and funders and will highlight programs at the local and national levels.

GETTING READY: NEW PARENT SUPPORT

Most new parents need support and reassurance to fulfill their new responsibilities. This session highlights efforts by various departments to provide outreach and support services to new parents while seeking to engage fathers as full participants in the parenting process. A variety of programs, such as the New Parent Support program that seeks to prevent child abuse and enhances the father's active involvement in parenting and nurturing, will be discussed. This workshop will also demonstrate how work environments can make adjustments to support efforts that proactively engage young and new fathers.

IMPROVING FEDERAL RESEARCH ON FATHERS: COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES

This session explores the need for more father-focused federal research and presents strategies for overcoming barriers. The workshop will begin with a discussion of why federal research should focus more on fathers (married, divorced or never-married) and families. Panelists will describe data collection problems that impede our ability to collect detailed information about fathers, and also the issues involved in designing program evaluations that include father involvement. The workshop will conclude with a discussion of strategies that government agencies are using to improve federal research and collaborative efforts.

FATHERS AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

Being able to provide for your children is at the core of many men's definition of successful fatherhood. But when a father is unemployed or underemployed, his ability to help his children may drive him away from any type of involvement or support. During the past several years, federal agencies in varied areas of public assistance have had very instructive experiences in developing employment strategies for fathers. Panelists will discuss effective strategies devised according to the employment and training needs of different types of low-income fathers, i.e., young fathers; non-custodial fathers of children receiving public assistance; fathers with child support orders versus fathers without orders; fathers with skills; low-skilled fathers versus fathers with significant job experience. Examples of how government programs can improve the employability of low or no income fathers will be highlighted in this workshop.

FATHERS' ROLES IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING: MODELS THAT WORK

One very effective way that fathers can help support their children is to become actively involved in helping their children learn. This session presents successful programs in the community that actively involve fathers in their children's education. These programs can be adapted by other community and school based programs as well as by employers who are looking for ways to strengthen fathers' roles in children's learning.

TELECOMMUTING

As more women enter the workforce, more child rearing responsibilities are shared by both mothers and fathers. To fulfill these responsibilities, fathers may need to reduce the amount of time spent at the office. This session incorporates both the "best practices" in federal telecommuting, highlights the National Telecommuting Initiative, and provides guidance on developing an action plan, recognizing that telecommuting will foster a family-friendly workplace and improves the quality of work life.

BEST PRACTICES: WORK AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

Raising a family is hard work. Families often need access to resources and referrals to help them manage a crisis or meet daily needs. Employers have begun to realize that family situations effect productivity and morale. This session will focus on developing work and family programs that support fathers in the workplace. Programs such as the Connection Customer Service Center will be highlighted with a discussion to follow on services and programs that are currently being offered.

ADOLESCENT MALES: PREPARATION FOR FATHERHOOD

One important way to support and strengthen the role of fathers--and to promote responsible fatherhood--is to help young men postpone fatherhood until they are able to assume the role both financially and emotionally. This workshop addresses how programs working with youth can address such issues as ensuring that young men understand their responsibility in preventing early unintended pregnancies; ensuring opportunities for young men to continue and complete their education and obtain other necessary skills for employment; and for those young men who become fathers before they are ready, offering instruction on infant and child development and helping young men to develop effective parenting skills.

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES: WHY FATHERS MATTER

Research findings on the impact of fathers on children are ambiguous, but children and program practitioners positively attest to the difference that having a loving and caring father can make in a child's life. This session focuses on how a child's needs are met through the presence and support of a father. The discussion will center on research findings on father involvement and lessons learned from successful fatherhood programs that target families with diverse needs. The outcome will be to provide conference attendees with the background essential to adapting their programs so that greater support will be provided for fathers and their interaction with the child.

REUNION AND RE-INTEGRATION SUPPORT FOR FATHERS

Fathers may spend time away from their children for many reasons, including military deployments, civilian job transfers, overseas assignments, custody arrangements and institutionalization. This session highlights efforts by various departments to provide outreach and support services to fathers and families to ensure that the father's presence is retained. The workshop will include information that helps the father's reintegration back into the family in a healthy and positive manner.

WORKING WITH FOUNDATIONS

This session will focus on the efforts of the Funders Collaborative, which provides technical assistance and funding to organizations that work with fathers and fragile families. Representatives from the Collaborative, which includes the Ford Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Dartmouth Foundation, will lead a discussion that highlights the critical elements of designing a program that effectively involves fathers.

DADS DO COUNT: WORKING WITH NONRESIDENTIAL FATHERS

Child Support is often at the top of the list of ways that non-residential fathers are considered important in the lives of their children. Child support is not the only way that non-residential fathers' count. This session will discuss why it is important for employers and program managers to understand and address the concerns of fathers who are not living with their children. Unresolved child support, custody, and child access issues all can lead to reduced employee productivity and decreased program effectiveness. This workshop will outline strategies for helping to resolve and reduce conflicts and increase parental involvement and support.

YOUTH VIOLENCE

Many communities throughout the United States are struggling with how to keep families safe. This workshop will discuss how programs that focus on fathers of teens and teenaged fathers have the potential to dissuade violence in communities. Panelists will discuss a variety of programs, such as ones that deal with gang violence, to demonstrate that there are creative interventions that lessen violence in communities throughout the country.

FATHERS IN EARLY CHILD CARE

With more mothers in the labor force there is an increased need for fathers to become active care-givers. This session focuses on the strategies being utilized to involve fathers in early child care, as well as other child development programs, that increase awareness to the benefits children derive from male participation. The workshop will offer practical information on how to get fathers involved in early childhood programs; how to promote staff-father interactions; and how to create specific strategies that increase opportunities for father involvement. The workshop will also include a discussion on "lessons learned" from existing model programs.

WILLIAM H. NATCHER CONFERENCE CENTER NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

45 Center Drive * Bethesda, MD * (301) 496-9966

Directions

Metro Travel:

Board the Red Line and exit at Medical Center Station. Upon exiting the station at the ground level, take the steps/ramp to your left. You can see the Natcher Building located up the steps/ramp, diagonally left of Metro. Follow the walkway to the entrance of the Natcher Conference Center Atrium. Because parking at the Natcher is limited, use of the Metro is highly recommended.

Driving Directions:

From Washington: ➡ Take Wisconsin Avenue, heading north towards Bethesda. Continue/pass through downtown Bethesda, and move to your left lane. After passing Woodmont Street, proceed to the next traffic light which is located at Center Drive (also called Jones Bridge Road on right). Turn left onto Center Drive. The Natcher, a white brick and green tinted glass structure, is the first building located on the right.

From Northern Virginia: ➡ Take the Capital Beltway, I-495 East, towards Maryland. Proceed approximately 7.5 miles to exit 34, Wisconsin Avenue, (Route 355 South/Rockville Pike). Continue towards Bethesda for approximately 1.5 miles. Stay in your right lane. Once passing the Naval Hospital (located on your left), the next street/traffic light is Center Drive. Turn right onto Center Drive. The Natcher, a white brick and green tinted glass structure, is the first building located on the right.

From Baltimore: ➡ Take I-95 South to the Capital Beltway, I-495 West/Silver Spring. Take Exit 34 (Bethesda/Rockville, Wisconsin Avenue) stay in the far right lane and follow the signs for 355 South. At the traffic light, make a left turn heading towards Bethesda (southbound on 355/Wisconsin Avenue). Proceed approximately 1.5 miles on Wisconsin Avenue. Once passing the Naval Hospital (located on your left), the next street/ traffic light, is Center Drive. Turn right onto Center Drive. The Natcher, a white brick and green tinted glass structure, is the first building located on the right.

Parking:

Parking at the Natcher is very limited. NIH does not provide parking for conference facilities. NIH sticker parking is available in the Natcher Center garage. Visitor parking is located next to building 41-A.

Fe'er Conference Strengthenin the Role f Fathers in Families

Friday, May 3, 1996 7:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Registration Form

To insure adequate seating, please indicate your choices for each workshop session:
[Please select one first and second choice for each session, otherwise you will be randomly assigned.]

Morning Workshop Sessions: [check two boxes only]

- | first
choice | second
choice | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| ☐ | ☐ | Working with Practitioners |
| ☐ | ☐ | New Parent Support |
| ☐ | ☐ | Improving Federal Research on Fathers: Collaborative Strategies |
| ☐ | ☐ | Fathers and Employment Strategies |
| ☐ | ☐ | Fathers' Roles in Children's Learning: Models that Work |
| ☐ | ☐ | Telecommuting |
| ☐ | ☐ | Best Practices: Work and Family Programs |

Afternoon Workshop Sessions: [check two boxes only]

- | first
choice | second
choice | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| ☐ | ☐ | Adolescent Males: Preparation for Fatherhood |
| ☐ | ☐ | Through a Child's Eyes: Why Fathers Matter |
| ☐ | ☐ | Reunion and Re-Integration Support for Fathers |
| ☐ | ☐ | Working with Foundations |
| ☐ | ☐ | Dads Do Count: Working with Nonresidential Fathers |
| ☐ | ☐ | Youth Violence |
| ☐ | ☐ | Fathers in Early Child Care |

PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Internet Address: _____

Special Needs: (please specify) _____

FAX COMPLETED FORM TO ENCORE AT (301) 608-8705 BY MONDAY, APRIL 22, 1996

If you have any questions please call Sallie Holder at (301) 608-8700

IMPORTANT: THIS REGISTRATION WILL NOT BE CONFIRMED. PLEASE ARRIVE AT MEETING SITE EARLY TO RECEIVE
YOUR BADGE, REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENTS.