

Promising Practices When Working With Fathers

1. Develop and employ models of programs and services that are relevant to local fathers.
2. Create and maintain a father-friendly environment.
3. Recruit staff, independent contractors or volunteers with experiences similar to agency clients to provide services.
4. Employ methods and strategies that support mothers and fathers to work together for the benefit of their children.
5. Utilize an asset approach, rather than the deficit approach, in your service provision.
6. Offer a variety of affordable accessible services specifically designed for fathers and men in families.
7. Train staff to recognize and respect both maternal and paternal parenting styles.
8. Serve single, married, and divorced fathers of all races, income levels, cultures, and background.
9. Recognize and address staff's personal biases regarding working with fathers.
10. Help clients get over suspicions that agency's focus is merely paternity establishment or child support enforcement.
11. Recognize and acknowledge individual, institutional and societal barriers that fathers confront.
12. Promote a sense of trust, be genuine, don't invalidate, have high expectations, ask open-ended questions, be consistent.
13. Allow future growth of services to be shaped by client needs.
14. Encourage parents to pursue win/win opportunities as often as appropriate.
15. Staff schedule home visits with both parents, as often as appropriate.
16. Employ effective and appropriate evaluation methods, tools and forms.
17. Focus outreach plan upon the domain of fathers and men in families.

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