



WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

Partnership for Father Success: Collaboration Between Wayne State University and the F.A.R.M. Project

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Background

Father involvement has been linked to many positive outcomes for both their children and the children's mother, including but not limited to:

- Decreases in infant mortality (Alio et al., 2011).
- Increases in prenatal care for moms, decreases in risky health behaviors during pregnancy (Martin et al., 2007).
- Positive social-emotional, cognitive, physical outcomes for children (Cabrera & Tamis-LeMonda, 2013).

However, many men are at risk for disruptions in the parent-child relationship due to factors such as unemployment, experiencing community and/or interpersonal violence, and incarceration (Tamis-LeMonda & McFadden, 2013).

CEO of the Family Assistance for Renaissance Men (F.A.R.M.) project, Willie Bell, established the nonprofit in 2013 as a way of assisting men who have been stigmatized by unemployment. The project helps men reconnect with their children and take an active role in their lives.

The F.A.R.M. project provides education, training, legal, and parenting resources to fathers in collaboration with Wayne State social workers and local courts.

F.A.R.M. Program

Description: F.A.R.M. is a non-profit organization that focuses on helping fathers to reunite with and make a difference in their children's lives. It is an 8- to 13-week training program that incorporates content related to the development of healthy, adaptive manhood and effective fathering. This program covers multiple life domains including: parenting, employment, finances, housing, and lifestyle through didactic training with interactive group activities in group meetings.

Program Building Blocks		
Principles of Fatherhood	Description	Delivery Method
Parenting Training & Father-Child Relationship Support	Establishment or re-establishment of healthy father-child relationship.	Through parent coaching, weekly lectures, and activities, support is provided during father-child interaction meetings.
Co-Parenting Support	Establishment or re-establishment of father-mother relationships to achieve a co-parenting plan that will increase engagement activity with their children and provide financial support.	With permission, social work staff will contact mothers or coach fathers in making these contacts.
Workforce Development-Education and Job Skills Training	The provision of skilled trades training and remediation classes in reading and math to prepare fathers for employment and apprenticeship opportunities.	1) Hands on training 2) Classroom Instruction 3) On-site skill development
Legal Assistance	Legal assistance for fathers who have encountered issues that prevent the reunification with their children and/or employment issues.	Access to a social worker who will review legal issues of participants with an attorney to remediate matters with legal counseling.
Housing Assistance	Securing adequate housing for participating fathers and their children.	Utilizing vacant houses for renovations and refurbishment. Fathers are then able to seek housing in those renewed homes.

Social Work Involvement

Social workers at Wayne State work in collaboration with the F.A.R.M. project by:

- Compiling success data from other fathering programs to build examples
- Building data collection procedures and participant information databases
- Identifying and evaluating areas of strength and improvement in the program, informing future program changes
- Aiding in grant writing and applications



Discussion

Collaborations between university social workers and local non-profit organizations is mutually beneficial. Through involvement in local non-profits, researchers have the opportunity to inform services and apply research in direct ways that can improve outcomes for community members. They can assist non-profits in program evaluation, which can help identify areas of success and improvement for the non-profit, as well as assisting in the grant application process to improve funding possibilities and access to services.

While working in collaboration provides benefits for both researchers and non-profits, the greater benefits are transferred to the parents and children receiving services provided by the non-profit.

