



Healthy Start TA & Support Center Fatherhood Newsletter

*Strengthening Healthy Start to
support family health and well-being*



Healthy Start Fatherhood Newsletter

2021 Recap

Throughout 2021, the Healthy Start TA & Support Center hosted several Fatherhood-focused webinars, trainings, and other technical assistance activities. Below is a recap of the events that took place in 2021.

Webinars

Fatherhood Talk Tuesday Series

In 2021, the Healthy Start TASC hosted nine Fatherhood Talk Tuesday webinars. These webinars focus on a variety of fatherhood topics relevant to the Healthy Start community. Click the links below to access the materials from the 2021 Fatherhood Talk Tuesday webinars.

- [Opportunities to Address Men's Health During the Perinatal Period](#) (January 2021)
- [Celebrating Black Fatherhood](#) (February 2021)
- [Male Doulas](#) (March 2021)
- [Positive Parenting](#) (April 2021)
- [Reflecting on the Fatherhood Cohort & ACF OFA Fatherhood FIRE Grant](#) (May 2021)
- [Men's Health in the Era of COVID-19: A Practical Approach](#) (June 2021)
- [Infant Mortality Awareness Month & Programming for Fathers in an MCH Program; Harnessing the Promise of Program Evaluation & Paternal Factors and Maternal Child Health](#) (September 2021)

- [Healthy Start Fatherhood](#) (October 2021)
- [Healthy Start Fatherhood in Healthy Start and Review 2021 & Fatherhood Programming in Two Healthy Start Projects](#) (December 2021)

Fostering an Attitude of Inclusion in Healthy Start Programs

When undergoing efforts to engage fathers in your Healthy Start program, there can often be challenges with obtaining buy-in and commitment from internal staff. It is essential for all staff members to understand the importance and value of engaging fathers in their program. When staff members have an *Attitude of Inclusion*, they understand the significance of providing family-focused services to improve birth outcomes, reduce maternal morbidity and mortality, and improve men's health. During this webinar, the concept of an Attitude of Inclusion was introduced. This webinar, which took place in February 2021, explored how an Attitude of Inclusion can fill the gap that many programs have experienced when recruiting fathers into their program. **To view the webinar recording, [please click here](#).**

Networking Café: Father/Male Recruitment & Retention

In response to grantees requesting support around increasing fatherhood involvement in programs, the Healthy Start TASC hosted a Healthy Start Networking Café focused on father and male partner recruitment and retention in August 2021. Networking cafés are informal lunchtime sessions that provide Healthy Start staff an opportunity to come together and share their experiences, challenges, and strategies around a specific topic. TASC facilitated a conversation about the work that is currently being done around father and male partner recruitment and retention and supported Healthy Start staff with brainstorming next steps. **To view the session recording, [please click here](#).**

Solutions-Based Café: Father/Male Recruitment & Retention

During the Father/Male Recruitment & Retention Networking Café, attendees voiced that a follow up session focused on addressing the challenges discussed during the session would be beneficial. The Healthy Star TASC invited attendees back for a second Solutions-Based Café session to share strategies that they have used to engage fathers and increase male recruitment and retention numbers. **To view the session recording, [please click here](#).**

Male Doula Webinar

In August 2021, the TASC hosted a Male Doula webinar. Meloney Baty, Project Director of South Phoenix Healthy Start, shared her project's journey working with doulas and how they are redefining the role of fathers in maternal care by incorporating male doulas into the Healthy Start model. **To view the webinar recording, [please click here](#).**

An Innovative Approach to Preconception Care for Young African American Men & Women: the Gabe & Gabby Health IT Systems

In September 2021, the Healthy Start TASC and the Project Preconception Care team from the Department of Family Medicine at Boston Medical Center hosted the "An Innovative Approach to Preconception Care for Young African American Men & Women: the Gabe & Gabby Health IT Systems" webinar. This presentation explored the background and current state of preconception care for African American and Black men, and the utility of a health IT system – like Gabe – to

close the gap and provide care at a tailored and individualized level. **To view the webinar recording, [please click here.](#)**

Trainings

Building a Successful Fatherhood Program Training

Earlier this year, TASC and the National Healthy Start Association hosted the first-ever Building a Successful Fatherhood Program Training. This two-part training was designed to support Healthy Start programs in developing, strengthening, and enhancing their fatherhood programs. The training helps grantees assess their fatherhood work and build from that point to ensure success in achieving the Healthy Start enrollment goals. Click the links below to access the training materials.

- [Part 1 Recording & Materials](#)
- [Part 2 Recording & Materials](#)

NFI 24/7 Dad Webinar Training

In July 2021, the Healthy Start TASC partnered with the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) to offer their 24/7 Dads[®] Webinar Training to Healthy Start grantees. 24/7 Dads[®] is an evidence-based fatherhood program used by hundreds of organizations across the nation to improve the knowledge, behavior, and skills of dads of all races, religions, and demographics. The program is built on the basis that fathers can be nurturers, and for men, nurturing is a learned skill. Training attendees learned more about the program and how to use it with their Healthy Start clients.

Prenatal Paternal Early Attachment Training

The Healthy Start TASC worked with Real Dads Forever to provide their Paternal Prenatal Early Attachment training to Healthy Start grantees in September 2021. The Paternal Prenatal Early Attachment training imparted knowledge and skills for educating, supporting, and inspiring parents during the prenatal period. From this training, participants:

- Understood how each parent experiences the prenatal journey differences becoming a mom and becoming a dad changing bodies shifting expectations
- Learned to help parents learn to communicate effectively up to and through delivery, navigating the relationship with empathy
- Learned how to build prenatal co-parenting capacity relationship challenges vulnerability and empathy fetal development first 1,000 days
- Understood dad's significant contribution during the developmental stages – nutrition, exercise, stress management, and practical and effective ways dads can support moms, socially and emotionally
- Explored the art and science of supporting dads to remain engaged in the process of connecting with men, challenges and opportunities, recruitment and retention, while creatively managing their experiences

Fathering in 15

Earlier this year, TASC partnered with the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) to make their one-year license of the Fathering in 15 curriculum available to all Healthy Start grantees. Fathering in 15 uses an online, mobile-accessible format that allows you to engage fathers in learning wherever they are, with no facilitator required. The curriculum takes dads through 15 interactive, engaging topics, each in 15 minutes. To learn more about the curriculum, [please click here](#). **If you are interested in obtaining the Fathering in 15 curriculum for your Healthy Start project, please complete this survey.**

Fatherhood Learning Academy

Healthy Start Learning Academies provide an opportunity for grantees to take a deep dive into a specific topic (e.g., Quality Improvement, Community Action Networks, Fatherhood) and prepare them to apply their learnings to their Healthy Start program's day-to-day activities. Throughout a series of monthly lectures, required readings, and assignments, participants will learn from evidence-based practices, build their knowledge and develop core skills on a specific topic.

Each of the Healthy Start Learning Academies is connected to a specific topic associated with the four HS approaches and 19 HS benchmarks. Learning Academies will be facilitated by subject matter experts, in partnership with TASC staff, over a period of approximately 5 months.

Learning Academies are open to all Healthy Start staff members. There is no application required but participants are required to register to attend each lecture. Participants should be prepared to attend all lectures and devote five hours per month to the Learning Academy, including attending the monthly lectures and completing all assigned readings and assignments. Assignments will be designed to support HS projects in implementing evidence-based practices and making improvements to better serve the women, infants, fathers, and families in their communities. Multiple staff members from each site are encouraged to attend the Learning Academies and partner together to complete assignments. That said, staff are not required to attend lectures or complete assignments with a partner.

Following the conclusion of the initial Learning Academy, lectures, required readings, and assignments will be posted to the EPIC website in an e-learning format. This will allow those who cannot attend the live sessions to participate in the Learning Academy. This online format will be ideal for new Healthy Start staff members and those staff members hoping to further their professional development by gaining a deeper understanding of these key topics.

In July 2021, the Healthy Start TASC launched its first Learning Academy focused on Fatherhood! The goal of the Fatherhood Learning Academy was to examine the breadth and depth of the fatherhood movement in the 20th and 21st century, and to deeply examine the policies and practices that have influenced fatherhood programming that has either encouraged or impeded father engagement. **To view the Fatherhood Learning Academy content, [please click here](#).**

Technical Assistance

In 2021, the Healthy Start TASC supported many grantees in their fatherhood work through 1:1 technical assistance. One of our most popular offerings this year was the Attitudes of Inclusion training, led by Ken Scarborough of the National Healthy Start Association (NHSA). When undergoing efforts to engage fathers in your Healthy Start program, there can often be challenges with obtaining buy-in and commitment from internal staff. It is essential for all staff members to understand the importance and value of engaging fathers in their program. When staff members have an Attitude of Inclusion, they understand the significance of providing family-focused services to improve birth outcomes, reduce maternal morbidity and mortality, and improve men's health. In one instance, Mr. Scarborough and the TASC team worked with the Bo Torres of Strong Beginnings/Spectrum Healthy Start to provide the training in both Spanish and English.



Upcoming Events & Deadlines

Save the Date!

TASC is partnering with NHSA to host its annual fatherhood training on January 28th, facilitated by Kenn Harris and Ken Scarborough. More information will be shared about this two-part training very soon! To review the 2021 trainings, [please click here](#).

Partners4Fatherhood

TASC is excited to have launched Partner4Fatherhood (P4F), an informal group that will bring together new and experienced Fatherhood Coordinators to connect, share wins and barriers, and discuss their Healthy Start Projects' workaround fatherhood. All Healthy Start fatherhood coordinators and other related staff are invited to join as this group can serve as a fellowship opportunity with a mentoring structure. The participants will be able to share their insights and concerns with the entire group while also being paired with another member for a more concentrated dialogue. If you are interested in participating in this group, please email healthystart@nichq.org.

Project Highlights

Male Doulas

The South Phoenix Healthy Start (SPHS) began its male doula program in 2018. The SPHS Community Doulas work to educate and provide emotional, physical, and informational support to parents throughout pregnancy, labor and delivery, and the early postpartum stage.



The Male Doulas actively support the Healthy Start fathers as partners in maternal and early infant care by providing them with community resources and helping develop them in their role as fathers. To hear more about the SPHS Male Doula Program, listen to the webinar recording [here](#).

The Foundation for Delaware County Healthy Start partnered with Daddy University Incorporated's Doulas 4 Dads to create and offer a tailored doula program that is designed to support and educate both parents in maternal and paternal care.



Tribal & Rural Projects

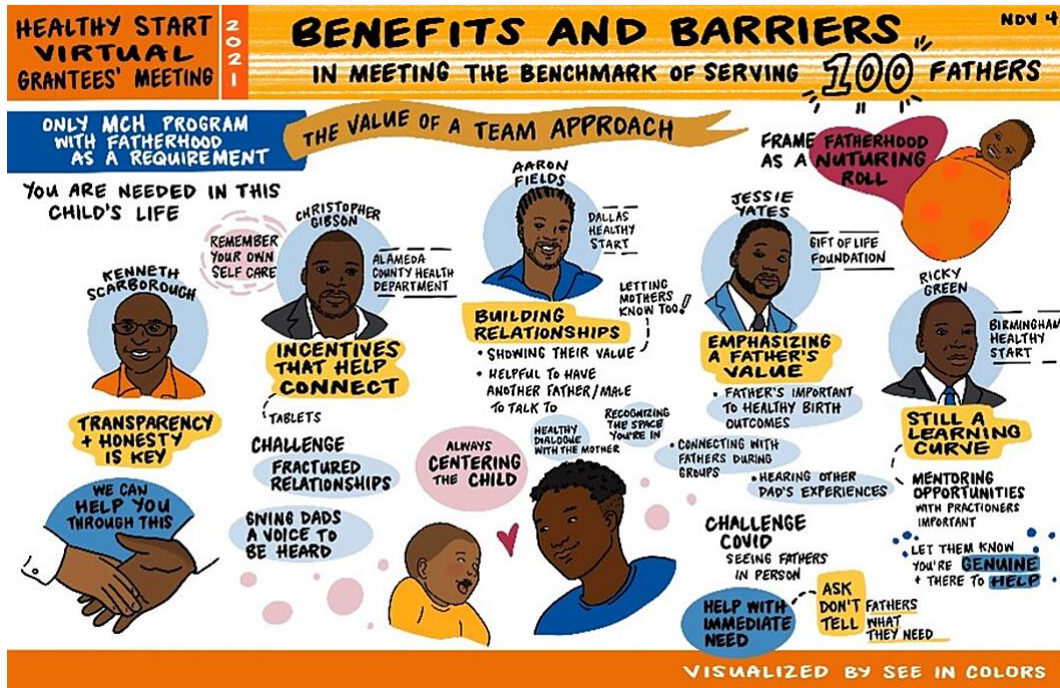
During the [December Fatherhood Talk Tuesday](#), the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc. and LIFT Community Action Agency, Inc. both shared their projects' experiences working with dads in their tribal and rural communities.



Fatherhood Coordinators at the 2021 Healthy Start Virtual Grantees Meeting

At the Healthy Start Virtual Grantees' Meeting, a breakout session featured a panel discussion with Healthy Start program fatherhood practitioners: Aaron Fields

of Dallas Healthy Start, Jessie Yates of Gift of Life Foundation, Rick Green of Birmingham Healthy Start, and Christopher Gibson of Alameda County Health Department. They discussed the good, the bad, and the ugly of reaching, enrolling, and serving 100 fathers in the maternal and child health environment. Attendees heard from both new and experienced fatherhood practitioners as they shared their successes, challenges, and what it took to get where they are today – be it good, bad, or ugly! To view the recording, [please click here](#).



#HealthyStartStrong

We want to hear from you!

Our team at the Healthy Start TA & Support Center would love to highlight the work of Healthy Start projects in upcoming newsletters, as part of our #HealthyStartStrong initiative. This spotlight can include new improvement methods, developments, resources, or initiatives taken that you'd like to share.

If you'd like to share, please email us at healthystart@nichq.org!

Fatherhood 1:1 TA



Noticing some areas for improvement in your fatherhood work? Your project may benefit from further individualized support. The Healthy Start TA & Support Center (TASC) offers 1:1 TA to all grantees on a wide array of topics, including fatherhood! [Click here to submit a TA request.](#)

Your request will be acknowledged within two business days by email by the TASC. The TASC team will work with you to understand your request in greater detail and determine the most efficient way to complete your request and develop a TA workplan together while keeping your Project Director and Project Officer in the loop.

Feel free to email us at healthystart@nichq.org with questions on 1:1 TA support.

Stay Connected

Please encourage your fellow Healthy Start staff members to subscribe to the Healthy Start email distribution list! Once subscribed, they will receive these weekly update emails and the monthly newsletter, which include information about upcoming webinars, training opportunities, and more. To subscribe, please email healthystart@nichq.org.



Have questions? Either respond to this email or contact the TA & Support Center at healthystart@nichq.org

National Institute for Children's Health Quality (NICHQ), 308 Congress Street, 5th Floor, Boston, Massachusetts 02210, United States, 617-391-2700

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