



Reconnecting Families & Dads

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Thank You, Public Housing Authorities!!!

A record 322 public housing agencies in 40 states hosted Father's Day events in 2013. Those of us at HUD want to thank you for all your efforts. Connecting fathers with their children is not easy at any economic level. For those of us focused on families in assisted housing where 80% of households are headed by mothers, it's an even more daunting task. But we know interactions between a child and a father-figure has rewards beyond just the one day. We believe that your efforts will help spin off a life-time of interactions.

2013 marked the successful third anniversary of HUD's Reconnecting Families and Dads (RFD). The numbers of participating PHAs has increased every year – from 209 in 2011, to 304 in 2012, to 322 this year. With sequestration impacting PHAs across the country, we anticipated that the number of PHAs sponsoring Father's Day events would decline. Yet our numbers increased, as PHAs became more creative in designing programs that involved local partners. It is this kind of dedication and continued commitment that beckons us to forge ahead and continue the RFD initiative.

We have all seen the many reports that stress the importance of a father or a father figure in the lives of their children, particularly their sons. We know having a father greatly improves life outcomes. In addition, a father's absence means greater responsibility for the mother as a single parent. Encouraging fathers to reconnect could help ease the daily challenges our mothers face.

As a means to build upon the success of 2013 in anticipation for 2014, this fall, a series of themed bi-monthly newsletters are planned to help local interests connect in tangible ways. Topics will include Education, Health, Child Support and Workforce Development.



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Father's Day 2013 = SUCCESS!!!

More than likely, these local connections are already in place through your Family Self-Sufficiency or Resident Initiatives programs. Our intention is to expand these collaborative efforts by working with our Federal counterparts, who will in turn urge their local grantees to work closer with you on your efforts.

We're proud of the achievements we have made together since the initial Father's Day program in 2011. We want to particularly acknowledge the PHAs and HUD staff in Region 4: Nearly half of the PHAs that sponsored events came from that region. We thank all of you and hope you continue to work with us in 2014.

HUD's Father's Day initiative is part of a larger Obama Administration effort to promote responsible fatherhood. In his first term, President Obama started a *National Conversation on Responsible Fatherhood and Strong Communities* and made the issue of fatherhood and at-risk youth a priority for the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. President Obama knows firsthand the power fathers have in the lives of their children, and the pain of absent fathers.

Making plans to continue the momentum is worth the effort to promote the importance of fathers in a child's life. By involving fathers, we hope to keep youth from dropping out of school, using drugs or committing crime. Statistics show these negatives are more likely to happen when children grow up without a father or father-figure in their lives. Find more resources through the White House's Fatherhood initiative at www.fatherhood.gov.

To view some of the numerous Success Stories we received, be sure to check out our updated website at www.hud.gov/fathersday.

