

Why Father's Day?

Once again, HUD is asking Public Housing Authorities and residents across the country to have Father's Day events the week of June 10-15th. Last year 304 PHAs held events – events that ranged from all day celebrations to simple luncheons; from recognition ceremonies to health and job fairs.

Why Father's Day? Why "celebrate" fathers when everyone knows that it's the mothers that do much of the heavy lifting as it relates to raising families, especially in public housing where 75% of families are led by single women?

Raising children as a single mom is incredibly difficult, and involved fathers or father-like figures can offer vital support, whether it's attending PTA meetings, accompanying children to various events, or being the person a child can go to about navigating a difficult world. And, according to statistics drawn from communities across the country, children raised in absent father families are more at-risk for a host of negative factors, including dropping out of school. The focus on Father's Day is meant to be a starting point; either a celebration of existing relationships or a reason to form first connections.

We know that men in our communities are not always integrally connected to services. One of the key goals in HUD's Father's Day Initiative is to help connect men to resources that can improve their lives and the lives of their families. Some fathers may need help with job training or employment resources, others with access to health services. Father's Day events provide an opportunity for men to connect to resources that will allow them to become employed AND continue regular engagement with their kids. The more fathers become engaged and the more resources they access, the more they can support mothers in parenting. Federal agencies and national advocacy groups have joined HUD's mission to use Father's Day to help men find resources that will benefit the whole family.

Our hope is that Father's Day can be the kick-off that will lead to a greater involvement of fathers or other positive male role-models with the kids they love. HUD encourages you to make the day fun, attainable and valuable. We want local efforts to match with existing resources or organizations already committed to the goal of bridging father-to-child relationships. Wouldn't it be great to have fathers attend their children's Parents Night at schools? How about simply walking with their children on Halloween? Or volunteering with them on National Day of Service?

We urge you to think of Father's Day as a tremendous opportunity to not only assist the men in your community, but also the kids, the mothers, and, ultimately, the entire neighborhood. Check out our web-site for ways to make Father's Day a fun and meaningful event for fathers, children and the community.