



BCYF SESSION I I

Engaging Parents & Families In Youth Development Programs

Tuesday, September 28, 2021
530p-730p



MARYLAND
MENTOR

Welcome! & Webinar Logistics



Please remain muted unless called upon by speaker.

Use the chat box for comments, questions, aha moments, additional resources, and responding to requests from the speaker; make sure to type to all “panelist and attendees”.

Towards the end of the presentation, we ask that you please complete our session evaluation.

Remember, things happen. So, please give us and each other space and grace!

Have fun & learn!

ABOUT: **BALTIMORE CHILDREN & YOUTH FUND**



The Baltimore Children and Youth Fund (the Fund) is a \$12 million non-lapsing fund dedicated to supporting Baltimore’s children, youth, and young adults. The Fund was launched in 2015 by Baltimore City Council President Bernard C. “Jack” Young and approved by voters in November 2016 with over 80 percent support.

In 2017, a Task Force of community leaders, youth program service providers, City government representatives and other key community representatives was convened to make recommendations on the Fund’s governance and operations. The Task Force presented recommendations which stressed the importance of racial equity and community empowerment as core principles guiding the Fund’s design, and developed the following guiding values under which to operate:

- Our work is informed, driven and led by youth voices, and
- Our work both advances equity and is welcoming and supporting of all races, classes and gender identities, and
- Our work is accountable and impacts to local communities, neighborhoods and places where young people connect, and
- Our work is not politically-driven and promotes confidence from the caring networks of Baltimore’s young people, and
- Our work inspires new partnerships and new approaches to philanthropy to advance Baltimore’s young people, and
- Our work is focused, expedient, and conducted with urgency.

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GUIDING VALUES & PRINCIPLES

1. **Racial Equity:** The entire grant review process must be built on racial equity. We should clearly identify and directly address how society's power structures show up in the operation of the Proposal Review Panel, including how assumptions about race may figure into the decision-making process. Specifically, white people should not dominate or drive the conversation. Additionally, the evaluation of different programs should include a basic understanding and appreciation of the cultural resources and assets within each community.
2. **Intergenerational Leadership:** In the West we often greet each other by saying, "How are you doing?" The Maasai people of East Africa greet each other by asking, "How are the children?" This greeting represents the idea that the well-being of the children defines the well-being of the community. The purpose of the Fund is to help the whole city of Baltimore to embrace and live out the worldview embodied in this Maasai greeting. Specifically, the well-being of our children is everyone's responsibility. The Proposal Review Panel must include youth leaders along with adults. Having different generations work together will reflect how our entire community must work together to improve the quality of life for our young people.
3. **Community Ownership:** The purpose of the Fund is to provide the communities typically seen as merely recipients of services with equal, authentic decision-making power to disperse the Fund's resources. This means that the members of the Proposal Review Panel should reflect the totality of our community. Specifically, the Proposal Review Panel must include a variety of people who are highly committed to the communities they serve.
4. **Collective Decision-Making:** "Gatekeeping," when one person has too much power in a decision-making process, marginalizes the people and communities who are most hurt by structural racism. Gatekeepers can use their power to circumvent community accountability and limit access to power and resources. Therefore, the Proposal Review Panel must structure its decision-making process to be collective, not individual. Specifically, the Proposal Review Panel will work together truly as a group to make decisions.

ABOUT: **Maryland MENTOR & Strategic Resources Group**



Maryland MENTOR is a non-partisan organization that galvanizes the Maryland mentoring movement. We serve as community-based experts and create statewide infrastructure to expand quality relationships for young people. We fulfill this role through our unique role as a unified clearinghouse for training, research, public awareness, mentor recruitment, and advocacy. Maryland MENTOR provides the critical link between MENTOR's national efforts and local organizations and programs that foster and support quality mentoring relationships across the state.

Strategic Resources Group (SRG) Strategic Resources Group LLC (SRGroup) is a multi-disciplined collective of change agents who provide planning, project management, fundraising, program development and evaluation, and organizational capacity training and technical assistance to nonprofits, grassroots community groups, governments agencies, and corporations and foundations that support communities of color.



About this series...

~~Session 1: Community Based Mentoring Program Design - Tues, April 27~~

~~Session 2: Small Group Session - Sat, May 1~~

~~Session 3: Virtual Programming to Engage and Retain Youth - Tues, May 25~~

~~Session 4: Small Group Session - Sat, May 29~~

~~Session 5: Best Practices for Group Mentoring - Tues, June 22~~

~~Session 6: Small Group Session - Fri, June 26~~

~~Session 7: Partnership Development 101 for Community Based Mentoring Programs - Tues, July 27~~

~~Session 8: Small Group Session - Fri, July 31~~

~~Session 9: Incorporating Authentic Youth Voice & Creating Youth-Friendly Programming - Tues, Aug 24~~

~~Session 10: Small Group Session - Fri, Aug 28~~

~~Session 11: Engaging Families in Youth Development Activities - Tues, Sept 28~~

Session 12: Small Group Session - Fri, Oct 1

Session 13: Youth Development 101 for Coaches - Tues, Oct 19

Final Session: Baltimore City Virtual Youth Development Forum - Nov 11-12



Register for Next Session: <https://bcyfund.org/events/>

TODAY'S PRESENTERS



Richard A. Rowe
Strategic Resources Group



David Miller
Strategic Resources Group

Agenda



- Context Setting
- Exploring Types of Family Configurations
- Evidence Based/Promising Practices
- Characteristics of an Effective Family Centered Engagement Program
- Barriers & Challenges
- Key Strategies
- Q&A
- Wrap-up/Next Steps/Evaluation

TOP 10 CHALLENGES/ISSUES FACING YOUTH TODAY

- 1. Single Parent Households-** Raising a child in itself is difficult enough, no matter whether it is a single parent home or not, especially with tough economic conditions.
- 2. Drug/Alcohol Abuse-** Today, about 21% of high school students admit drug use and 41% report drinking alcohol.
- 3. Growing Up Too Fast-** Today, even at the earliest of ages, some children are partaking in adult activities with serious consequences. In many places around the world, children are involved in economic activities and bear a burden of responsibility for their families.
- 4. Violence in Schools-** Unfortunately, this is not always the case, as in many instances, schools have become “war zones” (i.e., shootings, stabbings, fighting bullying and suicides).
- 5. Stress, Anxiety & Time Management-** Managing the pressure to succeed in every area of life and finding time to do it all seems to be one of the biggest challenges facing the youth today.

CHALLENGES/ISSUES FACING YOUTH TODAY

- 6. Political & Social Issues-** Understanding what goes on around the world and finding one's own opinion on the social and political issues is a big challenge for the youth, who struggle to differentiate between "good" and "bad" news sources and find their way in the mud of today's world.
- 7. Materialism-** We live in a society that promotes materialism and young people are taught to measure success and happiness in life based on how much stuff they have.
- 8. Obesity-** Recent numbers show that more and more children and youth especially in the United States are becoming obese.
- 9. Inequality / Social Injustice-** Different groups of young people seem to have unequal access to all of the socio-economic life-giving resources and opportunities.
- 10. Police Brutality / Black Lives Don't Matter-** In today's society, the open markets and globalization result in laying off workers and outsourcing work to the countries where it is cheaper. This makes it more difficult for the young people to find jobs and further complicates the already problematic lives of the youth.

MAJOR BENEFITS OF PARENT, FAMILY AND CARETAKER ENGAGEMENT

Research shows that when parents are involved in their children's lives, the children are more likely to:

- **Earn better grades**
- **Score higher on tests**
- **Pass their classes**
- **Attend school regularly**
- **Have better social skills**
- **Show improved behavior**
- **Be more positive in their attitude toward school**
- **Form trusting relationships**
- **Complete homework assignments**
- **Graduate and continue their education**
- **Enhanced social & emotional stability**

Source: Pew Research Center, 2017

Youth.gov



TYPES OF FAMILY CONFIGURATIONS

PARENTS AND FAMILY ARE ESSENTIAL



DEBUNKING THE MYTH ABOUT BLACK FATHERS

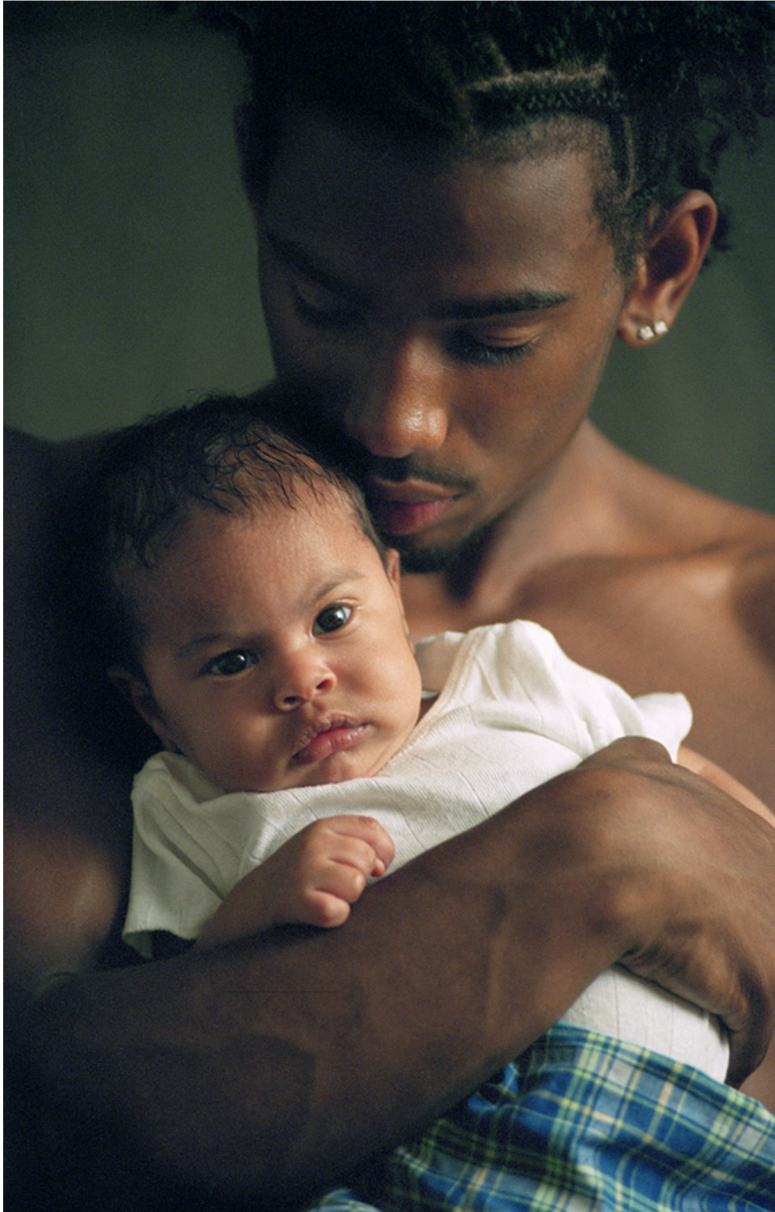
Centers for Disease Control- Division of Vital Statistics Fathers' Involvement With Their Children: United States, 2006–2010

- *Children under the age 5:* Black Fathers prepared and/or ate meals more with their children vs their white and Hispanic counterparts
- *Children 5-18:* Black Fathers took children to and from activities daily more compared to their white and Hispanic counterparts
- *Children 5-18:* Black Fathers also helped their kids with homework more than their white and Hispanic counterparts

AT A GLANCE- FATHERHOOD INVOLVEMENT ENGAGEMENT

1. High levels of father involvement are correlated with higher levels of sociability, confidence, and self-control in children. Children with involved fathers are less likely to act out in school or engage in risky behaviors in adolescence.
2. Children with actively involved fathers are: 43% more likely to earn A's in school and 33% less likely to repeat a grade than those without engaged dads.
3. Father engagement reduces the frequency of behavioral problems in boys while also decreasing delinquency and economic disadvantage in low-income families.

*Allen, S & Daly, K. (2007) *The Effects of Father Involvement: An Updated Research Summary of the Evidence*.
Fatherhood Research Alliance: University of Georgia.



YOUNG FATHERS

- Experience significant financial hardship
- Struggle navigating systems
- Require legal advice to maintain contact with their child
- Benefit from relationship support to maintain contact with the mother
- Interested in connecting with older fathers (mentoring relationships)
- Need parenting advice as much as mothers, but tailored to a male audience.

*Young fathers tend to be emotionally and intellectually unprepared for parenthood which often leads to poor parenting practices.

ASSESSMENT

1. Have you surveyed fathers in your network to determine needs and potential activities?
2. Do the services realistically address the core needs of the fathers we serve?



Single Parents

- In 2020, there were **about 15.31 million children** living with a single mother in the United States, and about 3.27 million children living with a single father.
- The number of single fathers has increased by 60% in the last ten years, and is one of the fastest growing family situations in the United States.

Challenges Faced by Single Parents



1. Financial instability
2. Juggling between work and family
3. Sense of loss and feeling of loneliness
4. Communicating with your child (ren)
- why the other parent lives somewhere else
5. Managing homework and extracurricular activities
6. Finding time to relax

Engaging Single Parents

1. Creating meaningful resources/referral networks
2. Access to legal support (partnerships with pro bono services)
3. Offering support groups (Face to Face or virtual)
4. Workshop/seminars that address the ongoing challenges single parents face
5. Create opportunities for single parents raising children with special needs



**“The youth can walk faster, but
the elder knows the road.”**

-African Prover



Grandparents and Other Caregivers

National Data:

- 4.5 million children are living in a grandparent-headed household
- 1.5 million children in the U.S. live in homes headed by other relatives

The Role of Grandparents

1. Grandparents play a unique role in raising children in communities
2. Grandparents step up to parent their children's – children because of the emotional and or physical loss of one or both biological parents
3. A biological parent may or may not live in the home
4. The grandparent/grandchild relationship may or may not consist of a legal relationship



Challenge Grandparents Experience

- Physical and emotional exhaustion
- Increased health problems
- Legal relationship with grandchildren
- Dual relationship with their children and grandchildren
- Lack of support from other family members
- Understanding norms (music, lifestyles, technology etc.)



Strengths of Grandparents

- Wisdom from lived experiences (Elders)
- Family history and roots
- Positive identity and family continuity
- A sense of security and family pride
- Communication of unconditional love



Supporting Grandparents

1. Increasing educational support (navigating issues that impact grandparents raising children)
2. Increasing emotional support (developing support groups and activities for grandparents raising children)
3. Financial support and incentives to support grandparents raising children (many times grandparents are on a fixed income)

Breakout Session

1. Participants will be assigned to breakout rooms
2. Select a spokesperson for each group (take notes)
3. Each group will share reflections based on the breakout session questions

Breakout Session


1. What have your efforts been to engage parents, and what have been some of the challenges?
2. What have been some of the strategies that work “best” with engaging parents?



ENGAGING AND CONNECTING WITH PARENTS, FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

Involving parents and caregivers in youth related programs is an important action step to ensure success.

Programs whose parents, guardians, and other caregivers work in concert with youth program staff are more likely to see positive changes in youth and improved program outcomes.





**EVIDENCE-BASED/
PROMISING
PRACTICES**

ENGAGING PARENTS AND FAMILIES IN YOUR PROGRAM (EVIDENCE-BASED AND PROMISING PRACTICES)

Start with intention. Start your program with an intentionality of involving families as you recruit mentors and youth. Before your program even starts, think critically about how you will engage families.

Build a strong orientation process. Many mentoring / youth programs have found success in holding an orientation session for youth and parents. This is a great time to set expectations for participation and explain why it is important for the youth to have consistent attendance to get the most out of the program or a mentor relationship. This is also a time to ease concerns—some parents worry they have done something wrong if their child wants or needs a mentor. Supporting their child in the program is a sign of great parenting.

Source: [Michigan State University Extension](#)

ENGAGING PARENTS AND FAMILIES IN YOUR PROGRAM (EVIDENCE-BASED & PROMISING PRACTICE)

Set clear expectations. Families need complete information to make sure the program is the right fit for them and their child and to fully engage in the program. Explain the program goals, expectations and required paperwork. Offer to answer any questions at the beginning of the mentoring experience or throughout the program.

Stay connected. If you are not successful in getting parents to an orientation session, make an effort to call them. Throughout the program, stay connected with families. There are multiple ways to stay connected through social media, phone, text, email or one-on-one meetings.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF AN
EFFECTIVE AND
SUCCESSFUL PARENT /
FAMILY-CENTERED
ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM**

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL PARENT / FAMILY-CENTERED ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

- ❑ CREATE WAYS FOR THE PROGRAM TO SHARE PARENT / FAMILY SUCCESS STORIES.
- ❑ HAVE AND COMMUNICATE CLEAR AND REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS, TASKS AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE PARENTS AND FAMILIES.
- ❑ PROVIDE ONGOING SKILLS BUILDING WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES.
- ❑ CONSISTENTLY ASSESS AND EVALUATE PROGRESS TOWARD REACHING PARENT / FAMILY ENGAGEMENT GOALS.





BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES TO PARENT/FAMILY CENTERED ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES

-
1. Program sent the message that invitations to get parents are for a certain class of parents / families.
 2. Lack of a real long-term commitment to the parent/family engagement component's success by program staff.
 3. The absence of a clear plan of action to guide the program through the first year of the program. (i.e., Who? When? Where? Why? How?)
 4. Approaches to engage parents lack an inviting and welcoming parent-centered environment that are appealing.
 5. Staff have negative perceptions of parents/families and adopt negative generalizations about the commitment of parents and families.
 6. The absence of parents / families and community partners on the planning team.



KEY STRATEGIES

KEY STRATEGIES FOR STARTING A PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

1. Identify a key staff member who is willing to make a long-term commitment to the effort.
2. Educate parents about the importance of their involvement through a special parents only welcoming session. Emphasize the positive benefits of parent's involvement in their children's personal and academic lives.
3. Establish a plan of action. Get parents/families involved in concrete projects.
4. Address any program safety concerns and follow volunteer and visitation policies.



KEY STRATEGIES FOR STARTING A PARENT ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

5. Develop an engagement team of parents, caretakers and guardians.
6. Seek out mothers, fathers, grandparents, caregivers and community leaders. Ask parents / families to join directly, rather than through flyers or posters.
7. Adapt parent/family friendly communication and activities for parents. Don't use generic materials! Keep messages succinct and to the point. Promote and publicize parents / families participating in activities to avoid the appearance of a "token" presence.



KEY TAKE-AWAY

THE NEED FOR COLLABORATION

It is impossible for any one organization to adequately address all of the needs of parents, families and caregivers. Partnerships and collaborations afford organizations opportunities to do better to support parents and families. Too often we operate in silos which prevent meaningful collaborative efforts to better serve children, parents and families. Thus, the participants and communities we serve, suffer!

A topographical map of the African continent, showing various elevations and terrain features in shades of green, yellow, and brown. The map is set against a dark background. Overlaid on the map are two lines of text in different colors and styles.

**"If you want to go quickly,
go alone."**

- African Proverb

If you want to go far
go together."



QUESTIONS



Thank you!



PLEASE COMPLETE TRAINING EVALUATION

<https://tinyurl.com/bcyfsurvey928>

For a certificate of completion from today's training,
please email info@marylandmentor.net



UPCOMING TRAININGS

~~Session 11: Engaging Families in Youth Development Activities - Tues, Sept 28, 530p-730p~~

Session 12: *Small Group Session*
Fri, October 1, 10a-12p

Session 13: *Youth Development 101 For Coaches*
Tues, October 19, 530p-730p

Finale: *Baltimore City Virtual Youth Development Forum*
Thurs, November 11- Fri, November 12, 2021

Register for future sessions:
<https://bcyfund.org/events/>



RESOURCES

- **Family Engagement in Mentoring Programs:** [Kylie Rymanowicz](#) and [Jodi Schulz](#), [Michigan State University Extension](#) - February 3, 2021
- **Helping Children and Adolescents Cope with Violence: National Institutes of Mental Health**
- **Institute for Relationship Intelligence:** <https://freeteensyouth.org/>
- **Parent Like it Matters:** Dr. Janice Johnson Dias
- **Pew Research Center:** [Pew Research Center | Pew Research Center](#) – www.pewresearch.org
- **Youth.gov:** www.youth.gov

CONTACT:



David Miller, M.Ed.

Richard A. Rowe, MPA

Strategic Resources Group

[www.http://strategicresourcesgrp.com/](http://strategicresourcesgrp.com/)