



## Quarterly Update

*Latest developments in the evaluation*

*Spotlight on two programs*

**October 2014**

OPRE Report Number: 2014-74

### Program Spotlights

#### Study Progress

**Enrollment of fathers and couples into PACT evaluation continues.** As of August 31, 6,742 individuals (fathers and members of couples) were enrolled in the study across the four PACT responsible fatherhood programs and the two PACT healthy marriage programs. Study enrollment will continue through spring 2015.

**Follow-up data collection for the impact study continues.** Follow-up telephone interviews with responsible fatherhood study participants continue, and interviews with healthy marriage study participants have begun. Program and control group members who enrolled in PACT approximately 12 months earlier are being interviewed about their parenting, couple relationships, and economic circumstances. This information will be used to assess how participants have grown since enrollment, especially in the areas of parenting, healthy relationships, and employment.

**Distilling findings from the first round of Implementation Study data collection.** Evaluation staff are developing implementation profiles of each grantee's program and identifying themes across all grantees. The two implementation study reports will be available in early 2015. The first report will describe implementation of the responsible fatherhood programs, and the second report will describe implementation of the healthy marriage programs.

**Coding and analysis of the in-depth interviews with fathers continues.** A report on findings from the first round of interviews with about 90 program fathers will be produced in early 2015. In the first round of interviews, fathers were asked to reflect on their lives, their relationship with their children and their experience with their program. A second round of interviews with the same fathers will take place in fall 2014. These interviews will focus on changes that have occurred since the previous interview, as well as information about their experiences in their neighborhood and community organizations.

#### Responsible Fatherhood Programs Featured in the PACT Hispanic Fatherhood Study

The PACT Hispanic Fatherhood Study was created (alongside the other evaluation activities mentioned above) in order to: (1) learn how a number of federally-funded responsible fatherhood programs serving Hispanic populations developed, adapted, and implemented culturally-relevant programs; and (2) gain insights on participating fathers' program experiences. Four programs were invited to participate in the study, and site visits were completed in June. Information and data from the site visits are being analyzed, and a report on findings is planned for early 2015. Below we describe the two of the four programs selected for this study.



#### Southwest Key San Antonio, TX

**Program overview.** Southwest Key provides a multi-prong program: an 8-hour parenting class over eight weeks; a 12-hour healthy marriage workshop; a 4-hour core job readiness workshop (focusing on computer skills, workplace behavior, and financial literacy); ongoing case management as needed after completion of the core course; support groups; peer mentors; and activities where fathers and children can interact together. Employment specialists help clients develop a resume, interview skills and find employment. Most program staff have a bachelor's degree and case management experience.

**Hispanic population(s) served.** About 80 percent of program fathers are of Hispanic origin. Most were born in the U.S. and are from families who have been in the community for many years. Most fathers are bilingual in Spanish and English, but English is their stronger language.

**Cultural-specific program features.** The program emphasizes what it means to be an *hombre noble* (a man who lives up to his word and commitments) and seeks to promote the positive involvement of fathers with their children by reconnecting them to traditional cultural themes and values, such as respect for elders and the family and traditions around Hispanic foods and holidays. The program discusses traditional gender roles and expectations regarding sharing feelings with others. Emphasis is placed on the importance of nurturance

and effective communication with the partner and children. Staff aim to make fathers feel supported and safe, like *familia*. Most staff are Latino, bilingual, and have a bachelor's degree, and many have backgrounds and experiences similar to those of the program participants. The program draws on several curricula targeted to Hispanic men, including *Raising Children with Pride*, *El Joven Noble /Hombres Jóvenes Con Palabra* (The Noble Young Man Program/Young Men with Credible Word), and *Cara y Corazón* (Face and Heart). Workshops are offered in both Spanish and English.



**The Children's Institute, Inc.**  
Los Angeles, CA

The Children's Institute, Inc., offers Project Fatherhood to non-custodial fathers, including youth, in ten locations in a 20-mile urban corridor of central Los Angeles. Most fathers are employed, and most participants are married or live with a partner.

**Program overview.** The core component of Project Fatherhood is an open-ended, peer support group that meets weekly and is facilitated by male staff with master's degrees and backgrounds in psychology, social work, counseling, and/or parent education. These Men in Relationship Groups (MIRGs) promote responsible parenting and address past traumatic events affecting fathers' current relationships with their children and partners. Project Fatherhood also offers parallel Mothers Groups and Children's Groups, a healthy relationship workshop using the *Within My Reach* curriculum, a financial literacy workshop, ESL classes, job club, subsidized employment, legal consultation, case management, individual and family counseling, and father-child enrichment activities.

**Hispanic population(s) served.** About 70 percent of program participants are of Hispanic origin, largely from Mexico and Central America. Participants are first, second, and third generation immigrants. Almost half are monolingual Spanish-speakers, but the program also serves Spanish-English bilingual and monolingual English-speakers.

**Cultural-specific program features.** Some MIRGs are offered primarily in Spanish and others primarily in English; participants attend the workshops in the language of their preference. Culture-specific topics are not part of the curriculum by design; they are addressed only when they arise during workshop discussions. Camaraderie among fathers (*compadres*) is encouraged. Staff are both bilingual and bicultural, and about half are Latino fathers themselves.

## PACT Grantees Recognized at 2014 HMRF Grantee Conference

The four responsible fatherhood and two healthy marriage grantees participating in the PACT Evaluation were publicly recognized during the annual grantee conference held in Washington D.C. Plenary keynote speaker Joe Jones—founder, president, and CEO of the Center for Urban Families in Baltimore and a leader in the fatherhood field—acknowledged that evaluations are hard but are crucial for learning what works and for improving programs. Mr. Jones thanked the PACT grantees for participating in the PACT Evaluation and provided inspirational words of encouragement as the grantees enter the last months of study intake.

ACF and Mathematica staff also showed their appreciation by producing a video celebrating the success of grantees participating in PACT in enrolling large numbers of fathers and couples into the evaluation, highlighting program participants and the dedicated staff that serve them. (See <http://youtu.be/MnFtDVS40uc>.)

The grantees participating in PACT also served on a panel during a breakout session in which evaluation staff presented findings on what leads fathers and couples to participate in healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood programs. Men in fatherhood programs reported wanting to become better men and parents. They appreciated nonjudgmental staff, activities that promote peer sharing and peer support, and facilitators who are role models and “success stories.” Couples were motivated by a desire to improve communication and their relationships. They appreciated when facilitators shared their own relationship experiences, and valued program supports (such as on-site child care) and the opportunity meet with their facilitator for more individualized support. The presentation was followed by a conversation with grantee panelists regarding strategies they find most useful in fostering attendance and completion among program participants.

To find out more about the PACT Evaluation:

- Contact the federal project officers at ACF: Seth Chamberlain ([seth.chamberlain@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:seth.chamberlain@acf.hhs.gov)); or
- Contact the evaluation contractor, Mathematica Policy Research: Robin Dion ([rdion@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:rdion@mathematica-mpr.com)).



This quarterly update is in the public domain. Permission to reproduce is not necessary. Suggested citation: Dion, Robin, Heather Zaveri, and Sharon McGroder (2014). Parents and Children Together (PACT) Quarterly Update: April 2014, OPRE Report # 2014-74, Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

This quarterly update and other reports sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation are available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre>.

Disclaimer The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services