



## Quarterly Update

*Latest developments in the evaluation*

**October 2015**

OPRE Report Number: 2015-102

### Study Overview

The Parents and Children Together (PACT) evaluation is an ongoing multi-component study of four responsible fatherhood programs and two healthy marriage programs, examining grantees' experiences operating their programs, the perspectives of participants, and the effectiveness of services. PACT also includes a sub-study of program strategies and adaptations used by responsible fatherhood programs serving Hispanic fathers: four additional programs are participating in this component. For more information, please see the [PACT](#) website.

### Study Progress

**Enrollment into the PACT study has ended, but follow-up data collection continues.** In total, 5,522 fathers and 1,595 couples enrolled in the impact study across the four responsible fatherhood programs and the two healthy marriage programs. Follow-up telephone interviews with study participants will conclude in mid-2016. 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 program impacts related to parenting, healthy relationships, and employment.

**Data collection for the implementation and qualitative studies is nearing completion.** We have completed two rounds of data collection for the responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage implementation studies and the responsible fatherhood qualitative study. We have also completed data collection for the Hispanic sub-study. The final round of in-depth interviews for the qualitative study will occur in early 2016.

**Three publications were previously published, and a fourth has just been released.** A [report](#) on the first round of in-depth interviews with fathers was released in June 2015, following on [two briefs](#) for practitioners related to program implementation. (The new release is discussed next.)



**Parents and Children Together:  
Design and Implementation of  
Responsible Fatherhood Programs**

**A newly published report** describes how the four responsible fatherhood programs were designed and

operated and presents data on enrollment, initial participation, retention, and the amount and content of services fathers received in the first 21 months of study enrollment.. (These programs have all been highlighted in earlier quarterly updates.). Key findings include:

- The four RF programs enrolled 4,713 fathers into PACT's between December 2012 and August 2014, 99 percent of their collective goal for this period.
- The vast majority of fathers who voluntarily enrolled were low-income African American men who did not live with their children.
- On average, 80 percent of fathers attended at least one program activity in the first four months following study enrollment, ranging from 71 to 91 percent across programs.
- The most frequently attended workshops were on parenting and fatherhood, followed by workshops on economic stability. Programs found it difficult to engage fathers in standalone healthy relationship workshops.
- Program retention was higher in intensive programs that integrated content into a single, daily workshop than in programs offering open-entry, less-intensive workshops focused on a single content area.
- Fathers in these four RF programs—including those who did not participate at all—attended an average of 46 hours during their first four months after enrollment; the average ranged from 11 to 90 hours across programs.
- Setting performance targets and using data to support planning, progress monitoring, and mid-course corrections helped programs enroll and engage fathers.
- Employing staff who had overcome challenges similar to those of the participants facilitated the programs' ability to serve fathers.
- Programs partnered with local child support agencies, but the intensity of this partnership varied across the four programs..
- Co-locating or otherwise integrating staff from organizational partners promoted consistent service delivery.

Several additional publications are expected in late 2015 and 2016. First, a report on the sub-study of programs serving Hispanic fathers will be released soon. Second, a report on the implementation of healthy marriage programs during the first part of the evaluation is forthcoming. And third, a report covering the implementation of responsible fatherhood programs over the entire period of the evaluation is expected in 2016.

To find out more about the PACT Evaluation:

- Contact the federal project officer 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, PACT Project Director ([rdion@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:rdion@mathematica-mpr.com)) or Heather Zaveri, Deputy Project Director ([hzaveri@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:hzaveri@mathematica-mpr.com))

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