

Outcome Team Roster

Gayle Bullard

Mont. Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services (starting June 2010)

Co-champion

Julie Liss-Katz

Premier Health Partners (starting Sept. 2010)

Co-champion

Christy Norvell

Mont. Co. Dept. of Job & Family Services (through March 2010)

Co-champion

Claire Renzetti Ph.D.

University of Dayton (through July 2010)

Co-champion

Ken Betz

Coroner's Office /
Regional Crime Laboratory

Marlese Durr, Ph.D.

Wright State University (starting June 2010)

Olivia Hester

Miami Valley Hospital (starting June 2010)

Paul Jones

Battelle & Battelle, LLP

Larry Lewis

Ohio Department of Youth Services

Connie Lucas-Melson

Community Volunteer

Jim McCarthy

Miami Valley Fair Housing Center

Bonnie Parish

Family Service Association

Rev. Dr. William B. Schooler

Dayton Baptist Pastors & Ministers Union

Joe Spittler

Montgomery County Criminal Justice Council

Dr. Robert C. Walker

Wesley Community Center

STAFF:

Catherine A. Rauch

OCFC

Sandra Barnum

OCFC

Rhianna Crowe

OCFC



STABLE FAMILIES

Vision

The community respects and supports families, recognizing that family composition in a diverse society is varied. Family members have healthy relationships with each other. Families nurture their members and provide a sense of well-being and safety. Family members work together and feel that they also belong to something larger than themselves.

Stable Families Outcome Team Report

The Stable Families Outcome Team saw a transition in leadership and the addition of new members during 2010. Christy Norvell has been the longest-serving Stable Families co-champion having begun her tenure in March 2007 and ending it in March 2010 upon her retirement from Montgomery County. Christy's successor as Director of Montgomery County Job and Family Services, Gayle Bullard, also succeeded her on the Stable Families Outcome Team. Julie Liss-Katz, Director of Public Affairs with Premier Health Partners, has assumed the other co-champion position which was vacated by Claire Renzetti, Ph.D., when she began employment with the University of Kentucky.

Fatherhood

The Stable Families Outcome Team has been concerned about the insufficient supports for fathers, most notably those financially disenfranchised and without visitation or custody. These concerns are based on extensive information about the consequences of absent fathers and the impact of fathers' involvement on the well-being of children. The evidence clearly indicates that fathers factor significantly in the development and future success of their children. (See "The Importance of Father Involvement," next page.)

During 2010, the Team reviewed evidence-based research findings about fatherhood programs and found the ultimate goal of such services should be to improve the well-being of children. The research reviewed identified three focus areas of fatherhood programs:

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- Work skills, self-sufficiency and employment
- Responsible fatherhood (paying child support and being a role model)
- Healthy relationships and co-parenting (improved family relationships including with the child's other parent)

In addition, the Team learned about educational, employment, and other resources available for fathers in Montgomery County. Although there are services to benefit low-income men of varying ages, there are very few services available to and specifically targeting fathers. Two services that do exist operate with minimal or no funding, providing support and assistance to fathers in a grassroots environment. A third service benefits fathers under 24 years old only and is limited in the number of young men who can be enrolled. The Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services contracted with a social service agency to deliver specialized services in 2010 for fathers with incomes at least 200% below poverty level who owe child support. Even together these four programs are a far cry from the services necessary to meet the need existing in the county. Only

through comprehensive expansion and the addition of other services could more low-income fathers be assisted in supporting and improving their relationships with their children.

The Importance of Father Involvement

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 24 million children in America—one out of three—live in biological father-absent homes. The following facts, which illustrate the impact on children, have been reported by the National Fatherhood Initiative¹:

- Children in father-absent homes are five times more likely to be poor. In 2002, 7.8 percent of children in married-couple families were living in poverty, compared to 38.4 percent of children in female-householder families.
- A child with a nonresident father is 54 percent more likely to be poorer than his or her father.
- Students living in father-absent homes are twice as likely to repeat a grade in school; 10 percent of children living with both parents have ever repeated a grade, compared to 20 percent of children in stepfather families and 18 percent in mother-only families.
- Researchers using a pool from both the U.S. and New Zealand found strong evidence that father absence has an effect on early sexual activity and teenage pregnancy. Teens without fathers were twice as likely to be involved in early sexual activity and

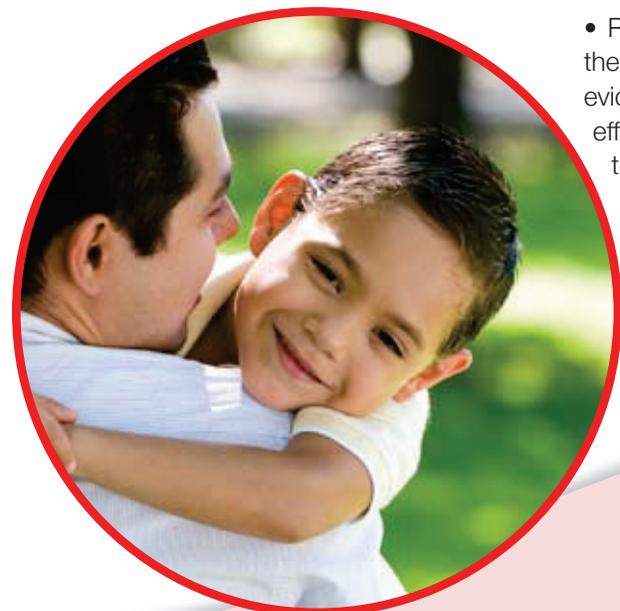
seven times more likely to get pregnant as an adolescent.

- Youths are more at risk of first substance use without a highly involved father. An increase in father involvement is associated with a reduction in substance use. Living with both biological parents also decreases the risk of first substance use.
- Even after controlling for income, youths in father-absent households still had significantly higher chances of being incarcerated than those in mother-father families. Youths who never had a father in the household experienced the highest chances.
- In a longitudinal study of more than 10,000 families, researchers found that toddlers living in stepfamilies and single-parent families were more likely to suffer a burn, have a bad fall, or be scarred from an accident compared to kids living with both of their biological parents.

24 Million...

There are 24 million children nationally affected by father absence. That is more than the number of Americans

1. <http://www.fatherhood.org/Page.aspx?pid=403>, accessed on Dec. 14, 2010. More information on the sources of these data can be found on the site.



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living with all types of cancer, Alzheimer's, and AIDS combined. The effects of widespread father absence on the health and well-being of children are severe.

Approximately 735,000 of those children are in Ohio and over 40,000 in Montgomery County. Therefore, the Stable Families Outcome Team is committed to making a contribution to addressing this issue in Montgomery County during 2011.

Collaboration on Issues Affecting Multiple Outcome Areas

For two years, the Stable Families Team had a representative participating on the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Task Force. Volunteers integrated information from varied sources, identified shared concerns and established overall priorities. Stable Families Team involvement continued through the recommendations phase. The Task Force's work was completed in April 2010. See page 34 for more on the Task Force.

- Encouraging a collaborative process that will reduce the risk factors of abuse through the coordinated response to these cases
- Identifying community resources to which elders can be referred for other assistance.

During the first quarter of 2010, copies of the final guidelines were distributed to all law enforcement agencies in Montgomery County and many human services organizations. It is hoped their use will improve the coordination of investigative resources and response to elder abuse.

Follow-up on Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Over a two-year period, the Stable Families Committee on Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation worked to impact the issue of elder abuse in Montgomery County. Investigative guidelines were developed in 2009 with the following goals:

- Establishing the primary and secondary agencies which may be involved in the investigation of a suspected crime against an elder
- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of these agencies
- Establishing a standardized approach for "first responders"

