

Utilizing a Holistic Service Delivery Model to Enhance the Lives of Fathers and Families

Strong Fathers/Strong Families, Priority Area 1 Grantee



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Abstract

The Strong Fathers/Strong Families (SF/SF) project provides assistance to unmarried fathers (custodial and non-custodial) and their families in Baltimore City to promote and sustain healthy marriages, foster responsible parenting, and provide economic stability.

Background

- Each participant is assigned a case manager that specifically provides program support, along with information and referrals to community services to the participating fathers and their families.
- Participants discuss issues of Domestic Violence.
- strategies to help fathers secure higher paying employment opportunities.
- Project participation is voluntary.
- Partners: Maryland Department of Human Resources, Baltimore City Department of Social Services (Office of Male Initiatives), Campaign for Our Children, Optimal Solutions Group, Bugg, Hardnett & Associates, and House of Ruth of Maryland.

Research Objectives

As outlined in the Logic Model, the SF/SF program works to improve the situation of Baltimore's fathers through these venues:

- Increasing the fathers' access and visitation and the likelihood of family reunifications
- Strengthening relationships
- Improving communication, relationship, conflict resolution skills
- Finding and securing employment
- Provide case management services
- Referring fathers to community services and organizations

Methodologies

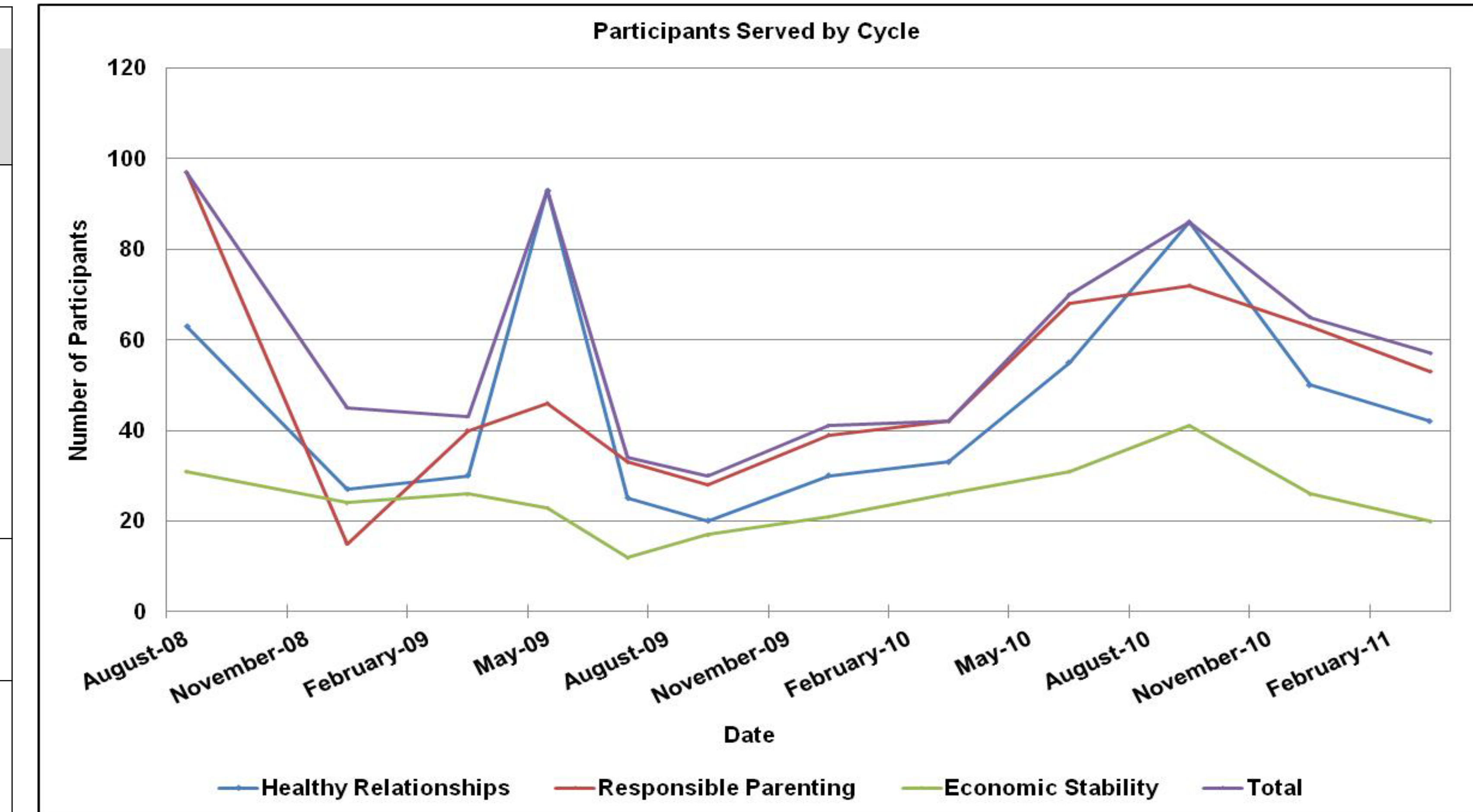
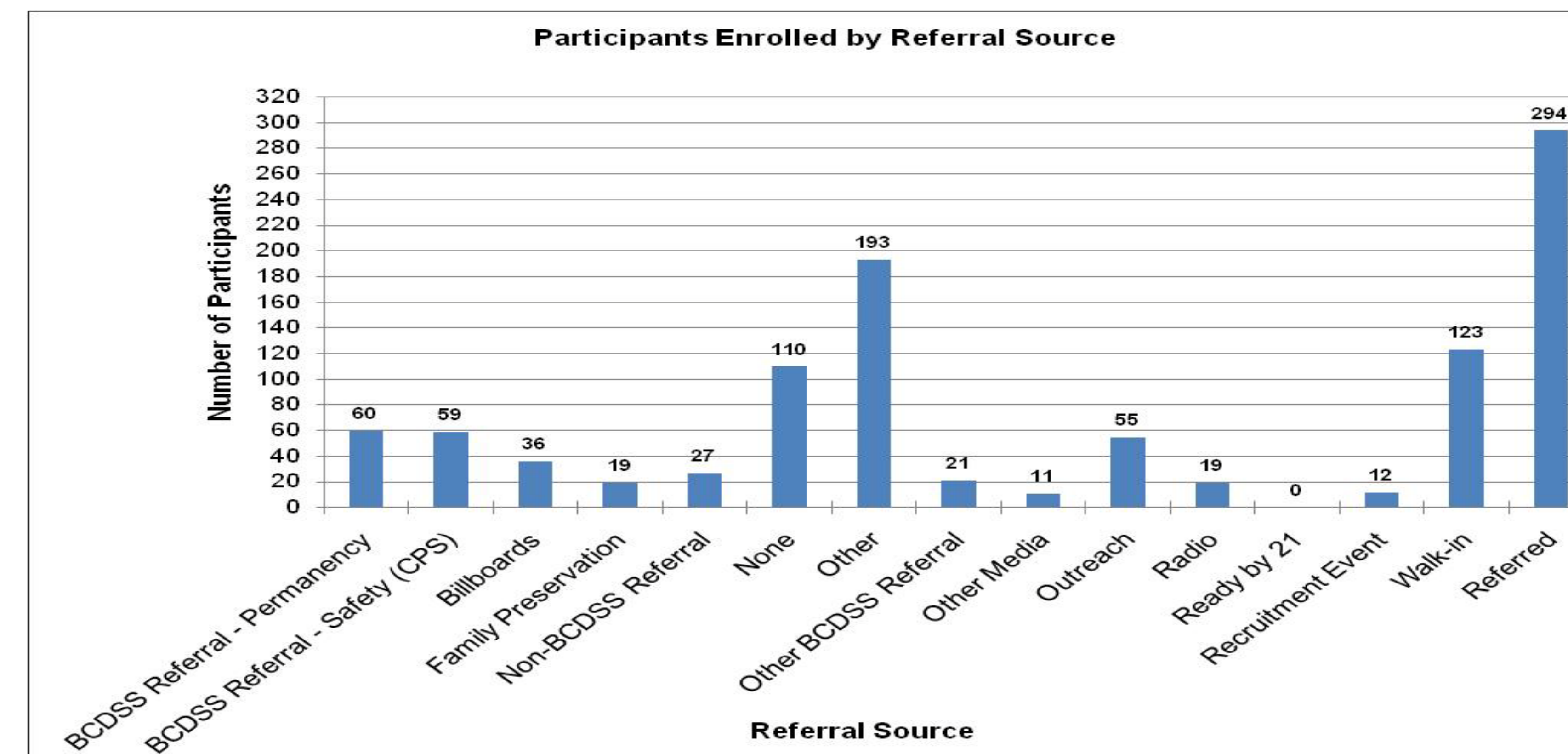
- A participant is enrolled in SF/SF after attending orientation and one class.
- Participants complete the pre-survey at the first class in each activity area and complete the post-survey at the last class of each activity area.
- Optimal analyzes the average responses to the pre- and post-surveys to assess participants' changes in attitudes and perspectives towards relationships, parenting, and financial stability.

Change in Survey Outcomes by Survey Index						
Measuring Indices	Scale Used	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	% Change		
Healthy Relationships (n = 168)*	Activities	(1) Yes; (0) No	0.32	0.36	13%	
	Disagreement	(1) Often - (3) Never	1.44	1.46	1%	
	Violence Exposure	(1) Often - (3) Never	1.51	1.50	-0.7%	
	Marriage Perspectives	(1) Yes; (0) No	0.14	0.15	7%	
	Life Changes	(1) Much Worse - (5) Much Better	1.66	1.84	11%	
	Involvement With Children	(1) Yes; (0) No	0.72	0.74	3%	
	Marriage Attitudes	(1) Strongly Disagree - (4) Strongly Agree	2.24	2.31	3%	
	Marriage Quality	(1) Not Important - (3) Very Important	2.12	2.12	0%	
	Family Man	(1) Strongly Disagree - (4) Strongly Agree	2.03	2.12	4%	
	Responsible Parenting (n = 243)*	Involvement	(1) Strongly Disagree - (4) Strongly Agree	3.71	3.72	0.2%
Support		(1) Not Important - (3) Very Important	2.92	2.90	-0.7%	
Economic Stability (n = 112)*	Life Changes	(1) Much Worse - (5) Much Better	2.80	3.16	13%	
	Involvement	(1) Yes; (0) No	0.83	0.89	7%	
	Marriage	(1) Strongly Disagree - (4) Strongly Agree	2.47	2.49	0.8%	
	Support	(1) Not Important - (3) Very Important	2.89	2.90	0.3%	

*Sample sizes determined by complete and matched pre- and post-surveys.

Results Since Implementation

- 550 participants served in Healthy Relationships
- 596 participants served in Responsible Parenting
- 296 participants served in Economic Stability
- 78 participants who completed Economic Stability obtained employment:
 - 61 participants obtained full-time employment
 - 28 participants maintained employment for at least 90 days
 - Improvement in *Life Changes* index in Healthy Relationships (11%) and Economic Stability (13%) surveys
 - Increase in doing activities together (13%), as indicated in Healthy Relationship survey



Program Recognition

- Successfully completed 14 cycles
- Surpassed five-year objective for participants served in Responsible Parenting
- Gained support and recognition from U.S. Representative Elijah Cummings and 45th District Senator Nathaniel J. McFadden, Baltimore City Senate Delegation
- Trained case workers in *Exploring Relationships and Marriage with Fragile Families* curriculum and National Partnership for Community Leadership
- Executed media campaign across Baltimore city, including billboards, bus/metro signage, t-shirts, events, and printed materials
- Utilized real-time case management system to improve data quality and accuracy

Literature Cited

- Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, Center for Research on Child Wellbeing
- *Exploring Relationships and Marriage with Fragile Families*, Center for Urban Families
- *Fatherhood Development: A Curriculum for Young Fathers*, National Partnership for Community Leadership
- *Roadmap to Employment*, Bugg, Hardnett & Associates

For Further Information

MD-DHR Fatherhood Programs: <http://www.dhr.maryland.gov/fatherhood/>