

Policies and Programs Affecting Fathers

A State-by-State Report

Jessica Pearson, PhD, Director, Center for Policy Research, Denver, Colorado

Rachel Wildfeuer, PhD Candidate, Research Analyst, Center for Policy Research, Denver, Colorado

Chapter 11: Responsible Fatherhood

Responsible fatherhood programs represent one effort to promote father engagement and improve outcomes for children living in single-parent households. Emerging in the late 1990s, largely in reaction to the passage of welfare reform (U.S. Public Law 104-193 (1996)), which reduced the public benefit program and vastly expanded the enforcement tools available to the child support agency, fatherhood programs have evolved from a narrow focus on financial stability and support to a broader agenda that includes father involvement and relationship and parenting skills.¹ Despite the proliferation of programs, and evidence of some modest impacts in rigorous studies,^{2,3,4} the fatherhood field continues to struggle with limited funding, short-term grants, and cuts during tough economies.⁵ Throughout their history, fatherhood programs have served disadvantaged men of color, with recent large-scale evaluations finding that the programs serve populations that are heavily non-Hispanic Black or Hispanic/Latinx; educated only at the high school level or below and extremely likely of having been convicted of a crime, being unemployed, and reporting housing instability.⁶

1 Tollestrup, J. (2018). *Fatherhood initiatives: Connecting fathers to their children* (RL31025). Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL31025.pdf>.

2 Avellar, S., Covington, R., Moore, Q., Patnaik, A., & Wu, A. (2018). *Parents and children together: Effects of four responsible fatherhood programs for low-income fathers* (OPRE Report #2018-50). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/opre/parents_and_children_together.pdf.

3 Cancian, M., Meyer, D. R., & Wood, R. G. (2019). *Final impact findings from the Child Support Noncustodial Parent Employment Demonstration (CSPED)*. Institute for Research on Poverty. Retrieved from <https://www.irp.wisc.edu/resource/csped-final-impact-report/>.

4 Holmes, E. K., Hawkins, A. J., Egginton, B. M., Robbins, N., & Shaffer, K. (2018). *Do responsible fatherhood programs work? A comprehensive meta-analytic study*. Fatherhood Research & Practice Network. Retrieved from <https://www.frpn.org/asset/frpn-grantee-report-do-responsible-fatherhood-programs-work-comprehensive-meta-analytic-study>.

5 Klemplin, S., & Mincy, R. B. (2011–2012). *Tossed on a sea of change: A status update on the responsible fatherhood field*. Columbia University School of Social Work, Center for Research on Fathers, Children and Family Well-Being. Retrieved from http://crfcfw.columbia.edu/files/2012/09/OSF-Fatherhood-Survey_Final-Report_9.25.12_SK_RM.pdf.

6 Sorensen, E. (2020). *What we learned from recent federal evaluations of programs serving disadvantaged noncustodial parents* (OPRE Report #2020-120). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/what-we-learned-about-programs-serving-disadvantaged-noncustodial-parents>.

In this chapter, we discuss state activities to prevent teen pregnancy and state expenditures for fatherhood programs and services from applicable federal sources, specifically the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant. We also present information on competitive Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) grants made to fatherhood programs in the 50 states and the District of Columbia by the federal government since 2011, the first year for which state-level information is available. We note multi-agency entities that exist at the state level to promote father inclusion including commissions, councils, and other resources. Finally, we describe state-level activity to support programing dealing with two-generation and/or anti-poverty approaches that might be expanded to enhance the inclusion of fathers in family policies and programs.

Potential Fathers

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

The Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have funded three research projects on pregnancy prevention for young men aged 15–23. The Computer-Assisted Motivational Interviewing Intervention for Teen Pregnancy Prevention (CAMI-TPP) involved motivational coaching session and a mobile app to record health behaviors and goals. The Fathers Raising Responsible Men (FFRM) intervention involved sessions delivered to Black/African-American and Latino males and their fathers by trained coaches to increase communication about sexual and reproductive health. Manhood 2.0, a group-level intervention for Black and Latino youth, focused on healthy relationships, healthy masculinity, and critical reflection about gender norms.⁷ Participants indicate that Manhood 2.0 increased and sustained their confidence in discussing birth control and increased their understanding of sexual consent.⁸



More widespread are the four federal programs funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that focus on delivering education on teenage pregnancy prevention to vulnerable young people via grants to states, nonprofits, and other entities.⁹

7 Division of Reproductive Health. (2018). *Effectiveness of teen pregnancy prevention programs designed specifically for young males*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/teenpregnancy/projects-initiatives/engaging-young-males.html>.

8 Parekh, J., Whitfield, B., Griffith, I., Manlove, J., Nembhard, C., & Charles, C. (2021). *Black and Latino men share what they learned two years after participating in a pregnancy prevention program*. Child trends. Retrieved from <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/black-and-latino-men-share-what-they-learned-two-years-after-participating-in-a-pregnancy-prevention-program>.

9 Fernandes-Alcantara, A. L. (2020). *Teen pregnancy: Federal prevention programs (R45183)*. Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45183>.

The Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (TPP) actually has specific grants (Tier 2C) that focus on teen pregnancy prevention programs for young males, but no state received Tier 2C grant funds in FY 2019. Rather, in FY 2019, grantees in 13 states received Tier 1 funds, grantees in three states and the District of Columbia received Tier 2 funds, and grantees in 18 states received both Tier 1 and Tier 2 grant funds. The Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) grants, which are available to each state and the District of Columbia, fund sexual education programs that focus on both abstinence and contraception for at-risk youth who are ages 10 through 19. States can also apply for Competitive PREP funds that are drawn from funds allocated for states that do not apply for regular PREP funding. Finally, states can apply for Personal Responsibility Education Innovative Strategies (PREIS) funds for innovative strategies targeting high-risk, vulnerable, and culturally underrepresented youth populations (including youth in foster care, runaway and homeless youth, and rural youth). In FY 2019, only one state—Kansas—did not receive State PREP funding or Competitive PREP funding and 15 states and the District of Columbia received PREIS funds.

A third funding stream is the Title V Sexual Risk Avoidance Education program, which provides funds to implement sexual risk avoidance education that is medically accurate or complete, age-appropriate, and based on adolescent learning and developmental theories. In FY 2019, grantees in 41 states received Title V Sexual Risk Avoidance Education program funds. The fourth funding stream, the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education program, provides funds for abstinence-only education that uses medically accurate information. In FY 2019, grantees in 14 states received Sexual Risk Avoidance Education program funds to incorporate an evidence-based program and/or effective strategies.

Table 1 indicates, for each state and the District of Columbia, whether grantees in that jurisdiction received TPP program grants (Tier 1, Tier 2, or both), PREP grants (State, Competitive, and/or PREIS), Title V Sexual Risk Avoidance Education program grants, and/or Sexual Risk Avoidance Education program grants.



State	Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Program Grants	Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) Grants	Title V Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program Grants	Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program Grants
Alabama		State	Yes	Yes
Alaska		State	Yes	
Arizona	Both	State	Yes	
Arkansas		State	Yes	Yes
California	Both	State*	Yes	
Colorado		State	Yes	
Connecticut	Tier 1	State		
Delaware		State		
DC	Tier 2	State*		
Florida	Tier 1	Competitive*	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Both	State	Yes	Yes
Hawaii	Tier 1	State	Yes	
Idaho		State	Yes	
Illinois	Both	State	Yes	
Indiana	Tier 1	Competitive	Yes	
Iowa	Both	State	Yes	
Kansas				Yes
Kentucky	Tier 1	State	Yes	
Louisiana	Both	State*	Yes	Yes
Maine		State		
Maryland	Both	State	Yes	
Massachusetts		State	Yes	
Michigan	Both	State*	Yes	Yes
Minnesota	Tier 1	State	Yes	Yes
Mississippi	Both	State	Yes	Yes
Missouri	Tier 1	State	Yes	Yes
Montana	Tier 2	State	Yes	
Nebraska		State	Yes	
Nevada	Tier 1	State	Yes	
New Hampshire		State		
New Jersey	Tier 2	State	Yes	Yes
New Mexico	Both	State*	Yes	
New York	Both	State	Yes	
North Carolina	Both	State	Yes	
North Dakota		Competitive		
Ohio	Both	State*	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma	Both	State	Yes	
Oregon	Both	State	Yes	
Pennsylvania	Both	State*	Yes	
Rhode Island		State		
South Carolina	Tier 1	State	Yes	Yes
South Dakota	Tier 1	State	Yes	
Tennessee	Tier 1	State	Yes	
Texas	Both	Competitive*	Yes	
Utah		State	Yes	
Vermont		State		
Virginia	Tier 2	Competitive*	Yes	
Washington	Both	State	Yes	
West Virginia	Tier 1	State	Yes	Yes
Wisconsin	Tier 1	State	Yes	
Wyoming		State		

Source: Fernandes-Alcantara, A. L. (2020). *Teen pregnancy: Federal prevention programs* (R45183). Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R45183>.

Note: * indicates that the state also received PREIS grant funds.



Sex and Parenting Education

State Laws and Policies. According to the Guttmacher Institute, as of April 2022, 29 states and the District of Columbia mandate sex education in public schools.¹⁰ When provided, sex education must be medically accurate in 16 states, must include negative outcomes of teen sex in 18 states and the District of Columbia, and must provide information on healthy relationships in 31 states and the District of Columbia. Under state law HB 2176, Texas requires high school health classes to include a parenting and paternity awareness curriculum. In response, the Texas child support agency developed the Parenting and Paternity Awareness (p.a.p.a.) program and helped to implement it throughout the state by providing free training to teachers, school nurses, and parent educators in community-based programs. The p.a.p.a. program is an evidence-based, educational curriculum designed for young adults that teaches the benefits of waiting to become a parent and focuses on the importance of father involvement, the value of paternity establishment, legal realities of child support, financial and emotional challenges of single parenting, benefits of both parents being involved in a child's life, healthy relationship skills, and relationship violence prevention.¹¹

Grants for Parenthood Programming. In August 2020, the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF), awarded responsible parenting and economic mobility demonstration grants to child support agencies in eight states to develop programs to educate teens and young adults about the financial, legal, and emotional responsibilities of parenthood.¹² In July 2021, OCSE awarded grants to a second cohort comprised of nine states.¹³ The grants require child support agencies to collaborate with youth development programs, teen pregnancy prevention programs, and other entities that reach youth to develop and deliver information on promoting economic mobility, building healthy relationship skills, learning parenting skills, reducing unplanned pregnancies, preventing relationship violence, and enhancing life skills.

Table 2 indicates, for each state and the District of Columbia, whether sex education is mandatory, whether sex education must be medically accurate when it is provided, whether sex education must include negative outcomes of teen sex when it is provided, whether sex education must include information on healthy relationships when it is provided, and whether they received an OCSE responsible parenting and economic mobility demonstration grant in 2020 and/or 2021.

¹⁰ Guttmacher Institute. (2022). *Sex and HIV education*. Retrieved from <https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/sex-and-hiv-education>.

¹¹ Texas Attorney General. (2021). *Parenting and Paternity Awareness*. Retrieved from <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/child-support/programs-and-initiatives/parenting-and-paternity-awareness>.

¹² Administration for Children and Families. (2020). *\$8.7 million awarded to develop responsible parenting and economic mobility interventions for teens and young adults*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/media/press/2020/ocse-awards-millions-develop-responsible-parenting-and-economic-mobility>.

¹³ Administration for Children and Families. (2021). *HHS' Administration for Children and Families awards \$10.9 million to a second cohort of responsible parenting grantees*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/media/press/2021/hhs-administration-children-and-families-awards-109-million-second-cohort>.

Chapter 11, Table 2. State Sex Education Policy and OCSE Responsible Parenting and Economic Mobility Grants

State	Sex Education Is Mandatory	Sex Education Must Be Medically Accurate	Sex Education Must Include Negative Outcomes of Teen Sex	Sex Education Must Include Information on Healthy Relationships	Received OCSE Grant
Alabama					
Alaska					
Arizona			Yes	Yes	
Arkansas				Yes	
California	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes (2021)
Colorado		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (Both)
Connecticut			Yes	Yes	
Delaware	Yes			Yes	
DC	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Florida	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Georgia	Yes				Yes (2020)
Hawaii	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Idaho				Yes	
Illinois		Yes	Yes	Yes	
Indiana			Yes		
Iowa	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes (2020)
Kansas	Yes				
Kentucky	Yes			Yes	Yes (2020)
Louisiana		Yes		Yes	Yes (2021)
Maine	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Maryland	Yes			Yes	
Massachusetts				Yes	
Michigan					
Minnesota	Yes				Yes (Both)
Mississippi	Yes		Yes		
Missouri		Yes	Yes		Yes (2020)
Montana	Yes				Yes (2021)
Nebraska				Yes	
Nevada	Yes				
New Hampshire	Yes				
New Jersey	Yes	Yes		Yes	
New Mexico	Yes		Yes	Yes	
New York					
North Carolina	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
North Dakota	Yes		Yes		
Ohio	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes (Both)
Oklahoma					
Oregon	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Pennsylvania				Yes	
Rhode Island	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
South Carolina	Yes			Yes	
South Dakota					
Tennessee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Texas	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes (2020)
Utah	Yes	Yes			
Vermont	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Virginia		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (2021)
Washington	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes (2021)
West Virginia	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Wisconsin					Yes (2021)
Wyoming					

Sources: Guttmacher Institute. (2022). *Sex and HIV education*. Retrieved from <https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/sex-and-hiv-education>.
Administration for Children and Families. (2020). *\$8.7 million awarded to develop responsible parenting and economic mobility interventions for teens and young adults*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/media/press/2020/ocse-awards-millions-develop-responsible-parenting-and-economic-mobility>.
Administration for Children and Families. (2021). *HHS' Administration for Children and Families awards \$10.9 million to a second cohort of responsible parenting grantees*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/media/press/2021/hhs-administration-children-and-families-awards-109-million-second-cohort>.

TANF Funding for Fatherhood and Two-Parent Family Programs

Since welfare reform in 1996, monies previously spent on cash assistance may be used for activities compatible with fatherhood programming that support Temporary Assistance of Needy Families (TANF) goals such as promoting or sustaining marriage, enhancing responsible parenting, reducing out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and/or fostering economic stability and reducing dependence on TANF.¹⁴ According to financial data tables from the Office of Family Assistance (OFA), 22 states used at least some funds in FY 2020 for "Fatherhood and Two-Parent Family Formation and Maintenance Programs," the national spending average



being 0.5% of total TANF and Maintenance of Effort (MOE) transfers.¹⁵ Actual spending for fatherhood, however, is substantially lower since some states that record making such payments include after-school care programs and other initiatives to support two-parent families in that funding category.¹⁶ In addition, despite being urged to use TANF funds for employment programs for noncustodial parents, 40 states and the District of Columbia failed to spend their TANF money and ended FY 2020 with \$5.2 billion of unobligated TANF balances.¹⁷ Tennessee, the state with the largest unobligated TANF balance, recently announced the award of \$175 million in TANF funds to seven public-private groups to implement pilot strategies to promote economic mobility among low-income families, including fathers.¹⁸

Table 3 shows, for each state and the District of Columbia, the percentage of federal TANF and state MOE expenditures for Fatherhood and Two-Parent Family Formation and Maintenance activities in FY 2020 and the amount of unobligated TANF balances at the end of FY 2020, some of which could have been spent on allowable fatherhood activities.

- 14 Tollestrup, J. (2018). *Fatherhood initiatives: Connecting fathers to their children* (RL31025). Congressional Research Service. <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL31025.pdf>.
- 15 Office of Family Assistance. (2021). *FY 2020 federal TANF & state MOE financial data*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ofa/fy2020_tanf_financial_data_table_092221.pdf.
- 16 Pearson, J., & Fagan, J. (2019). State efforts to support the engagement of nonresident fathers in the lives of their children. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 100(4), 392–408.
- 17 Falk, G., & Landers, P. A. (2021). *The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant: Responses to frequently asked questions* (RL32760). Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL32760.pdf>.
- 18 Tennessee Department of Human Services. (2022). *\$175 million in TANF funds awarded to seven groups across the state for 3-year pilot initiatives*. Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/news/2022/5/5/-175-million-in-tanf-funds-awarded-to-seven-groups-across-the-state-for-3-year-pilot-initiatives.html>.

Chapter 11, Table 3. **State Percentage of Expenditures on Fatherhood and Two-Parent Family Formation and Maintenance Activities in FY 2020 and Unobligated TANF Balances at End of FY 2020**

State	Percentage of Expenditures on Fatherhood & Two-Parent Family Formation and Maintenance Activities in FY 2020	Unobligated TANF Balances at end of FY 2020 \$ in Millions	State	Percentage of Expenditures on Fatherhood & Two-Parent Family Formation and Maintenance Activities in FY 2020	Unobligated TANF Balances at end of FY 2020 \$ in millions
Alabama	1.8%	96.4	Montana	0.0%	19.5
Alaska	0.0%	17.8	Nebraska	0.0%	52.1
Arizona	0.0%	38.8	Nevada	0.0%	1.8
Arkansas	7.4%	56.4	New Hampshire	4.3%	44.9
California	0.0%	0.0	New Jersey	0.3%	25.0
Colorado	0.1%	87.5	New Mexico	2.2%	60.1
Connecticut	2.9%	0.0	New York	0.0%	586.1
Delaware	0.0%	45.5	North Carolina	0.0%	0.0
DC	0.0%	15.2	North Dakota	0.0%	1.5
Florida	0.0%	0.0	Ohio	0.7%	582.6
Georgia	0.0%	79.8	Oklahoma	5.2%	264.1
Hawaii	6.2%	364.3	Oregon	0.0%	45.2
Idaho	0.0%	8.3	Pennsylvania	0.2%	411.0
Illinois	0.0%	0.0	Rhode Island	0.0%	25.1
Indiana	9.8%	18.6	South Carolina	1.2%	0.0
Iowa	0.0%	0.0	South Dakota	0.0%	22.8
Kansas	0.7%	57.1	Tennessee	0.0%	789.6
Kentucky	1.9%	38.8	Texas	1.0%	281.4
Louisiana	0.3%	65.4	Utah	0.6%	59.4
Maine	0.0%	93.1	Vermont	0.0%	0.0
Maryland	0.2%	0.1	Virginia	0.0%	125.8
Massachusetts	0.0%	0.0	Washington	0.0%	105.8
Michigan	0.0%	94.2	West Virginia	0.0%	101.4
Minnesota	0.0%	104.0	Wisconsin	0.5%	205.0
Mississippi	20.0%	47.0	Wyoming	0.0%	27.2
Missouri	3.7%	0.0			

Sources: Office of Family Assistance. (2021). *FY 2020 federal TANF & state MOE financial data*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ofa/fy2020_tanf_financial_data_table_092221.pdf.
Falk, G., & Landers, P. A. (2021). *The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant: Responses to frequently asked questions (RL32760)*. Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL32760.pdf>.

Funding Through the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Program

Although Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama included funding for responsible fatherhood programs in each of their budgets, it was not until the 109th Congress of 2005–2006 that the Healthy Marriage Promotion and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) program was created and funded under the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005. Beginning in 2006 through 2010, funding for fatherhood programs was authorized at \$50 million per year, with \$100 million per year for healthy marriage programs. Funding for the two programs was equalized in 2011 under the Claims Resolution Act of 2010, and subsequent annual funding levels for Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage remained at \$75 million per year, respectively. The funds are awarded on a competitive basis to applicant organizations that commit to deliver services in three areas: healthy marriage and couple relationships, responsible parenting, and economic stability. To date, the Office of Family Assistance (OFA) of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has awarded four cohorts of five-year grants in 2006, 2011, 2015, and 2020. ACF's Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), in collaboration with OFA, oversees numerous research and evaluation projects related to Responsible Fatherhood grant programs, as well as the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFC).¹⁹

During 2006–2025, OFA will have awarded or committed over \$1 billion to 285 grantee organizations for fatherhood programming. State-specific breakdowns for the 94 awards in 28 states that OFA made during 2006–2010 are not available, but state-by-state award information is available for the 59 awards in 29 states that it made in 2011–2015, the 34 awards in 19 states that it made in 2016–2020, and the 58 awards in 28 states that it made in 2020–2024. An analysis of award patterns for 2011–2025 shows that 11 states have never received funding, 19 states and the District of Columbia have received funds in only one of the three five-year grant cycles, eight states have received grant awards in two five-year cycles, and 12 states have received funds in all three grant cycles. The states with the highest grant awards over all three five-year cycles are California, New York, and Texas. Collectively, they received \$286.4 million in Responsible Fatherhood grants or 35.5% of the \$805 million that OFA has awarded and/or committed between 2011–2025.²⁰

Table 4 shows, for each state and the District of Columbia, the total number of Responsible Fatherhood awards and their total dollar value made by OFA to organizations for 2011–2026, as well as the ranking in award dollars. State breakdowns are not available for FY 2006–2010.

19 Tollestrup, J. (2018). *Fatherhood initiatives: Connecting fathers to their children* (RL31025). Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/RL31025.pdf>.

20 Pontisso, D. (2022). *Responsible Fatherhood grant: Summary of data analysis* [internal memo]. Responsible Fatherhood Roundtable.

Chapter 11, Table 4. State Total Grant Awards, Award Level, and Ranking

State	Total Grant Awards	Total Award Level	Ranking in Award Dollars 1 = Most 41 = Least
Alabama	1	\$12.5 million	21
Alaska	2	\$7.7 million	29
Arizona	0	\$0	41
Arkansas	1	\$5 million	33
California	26	\$132.5 million	1
Colorado	5	\$19.7 million	11
Connecticut	2	\$7.3 million	31
Delaware	0	\$0	41
DC	2	\$11.6 million	24
Florida	3	\$14.8 Million	15
Georgia	3	\$12.5 million	19
Hawaii	0	\$0	41
Idaho	0	\$0	41
Illinois	5	\$23.3 million	9
Indiana	1	\$8.5 million	28
Iowa	1	\$3.8 million	35
Kansas	1	\$4.9 million	34
Kentucky	8	\$30.5 million	6
Louisiana	1	\$2.7 million	38
Maine	0	\$0	41
Maryland	5	\$22 million	10
Massachusetts	0	\$0	41
Michigan	1	\$2.2 million	39
Minnesota	2	\$12.5 million	20
Mississippi	0	\$0	41
Missouri	5	\$28.5 million	7
Montana	1	\$12 million	22
Nebraska	0	\$0	41
Nevada	2	\$7.5 million	30
New Hampshire	0	\$0	41
New Jersey	4	\$17 million	14
New Mexico	2	\$10.5 million	25
New York	15	\$81.5 million	2
North Carolina	1	\$10 million	26
North Dakota	1	\$10 million	27
Ohio	7	\$49 million	4
Oklahoma	2	\$17.5 million	12
Oregon	0	\$0	41
Pennsylvania	9	\$41.6 million	5
Rhode Island	1	\$3.7 million	36
South Carolina	2	\$17.5 million	13
South Dakota	1	\$6 million	32
Tennessee	3	\$14 million	17
Texas	13	\$72.9 million	3
Utah	2	\$13 million	18
Vermont	1	\$1.9 million	40
Virginia	4	\$14.1 million	16
Washington	1	\$3.7 million	37
West Virginia	1	\$11.8 million	23
Wisconsin	4	\$28 million	8
Wyoming	0	\$0	41

Source: Pontisso, D. (2022). *Responsible Fatherhood grant: Summary of data analysis* [internal memo]. Responsible Fatherhood Roundtable.

Commissions, Councils, and Initiatives Focused on Fatherhood

Four states—Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, and Ohio—have legislatively created bodies that were established in the early years of the responsible fatherhood movement (1999–2003) to promote father engagement and the delivery of services. Staffing occurs in various ways, ranging from no dedicated staff (Hawaii and Illinois), staff that leverages work on other projects in addition to their work with the commission (Connecticut), and dedicated commission staff (Ohio). The commissions are structured to maximize involvement of individuals and agencies across multiple agencies and organizations (8 to 40 members); meet regularly; and may be engaged in a wide range of activities, ranging from policy, education, fatherhood services, and promotional events.²¹ The only funded commission, the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood (COF), currently has an annual allocation of \$2.5 million in state TANF funds.²² The 20 COF members meet five times a year to fund experienced fatherhood programs, support pilot fatherhood programs in underserved areas, develop policy recommendations, and build the capacity of service providers in the fatherhood area. The COF collects and reports outcome data and return on investment information across funded programs using standardized tools and provides leadership to a variety of state agencies on fatherhood issues and father engagement.²³

Although they are not statutory, at least ten other states have statewide entities that advocate for fathers and promote communication between and among fatherhood service providers. Some aspire to become legislatively created commissions; others find a non-statutory context more practical.^{24, 25} For example, Pennsylvania is currently engaged in obtaining legislative support to create the Pennsylvania Commission on Greater Father Family Involvement. The measure received bipartisan support (Senate Bill 476 and House Bill 2871) and was referred (House Bill 1731) to the Committee on Children and Youth in July 2021.²⁶ Kentucky is also trying to obtain statutory support for the Commonwealth Center for Fathers and Families. Housed at the Lexington Leadership Foundation, a nonprofit organization that serves as its fiscal agent, the Commonwealth is a multi-organizational entity that seeks to influence fatherhood policy at the state level and promote diversity, inclusion, and equity.²⁷ Both the Pennsylvania and Kentucky initiatives were byproducts of the State Planning Grant Initiative of the Fatherhood Research & Practice Network (FRPN), which made awards of \$10,000 to organizations in 11 states (including Pennsylvania and Kentucky) in 2019 to help promote systemwide change and enhance father inclusion in state programs and policies. All funded states were required to establish planning teams comprised of the State Child Support Director and at least one other agency head, a fatherhood researcher, and fatherhood program personnel. Planning teams in the 11 funded planning states met regularly, participated in learning community calls with FRPN and peer states, and developed action plans to further father inclusion. Other project activities that the states pursued included collecting information on unmet father needs, mapping the availability of fatherhood programs throughout

21 Pearson, J., & Fagan, J. (2019). State efforts to support the engagement of nonresident fathers in the lives of their children. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 100(4), 392–408.

22 Email correspondence with Kimberly Dent, Executive Director of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, April 21, 2022.

23 Ohio Commission on Fatherhood. (2022). *State Fiscal Year 2021 annual report*. Retrieved from https://fatherhood.ohio.gov/Portals/o/Ohio%20Commission%20on%20Fatherhood%20SFY%202021%20Annual%20Report-Online.pdf?ver=WLXXHwwjAz1ApWX_ANkCbg%3d%3d.

24 Pearson, J., & Fagan, J. (2019). State efforts to support the engagement of nonresident fathers in the lives of their children. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 100(4), 392–408.

25 Pearson, J., & Wildfeuer, R. (2020). *Year two follow-up on the FRPN state planning grant initiative*. Fatherhood Research & Practice Network. Retrieved from <https://www.frpn.org/asset/frpn-research-brief-year-two-follow-the-frpn-state-planning-grant-initiative>.

26 Pennsylvania Greater Father Family Involvement Campaign. (2022). Retrieved from <https://pagffic.org/>.

27 Pearson, J., & Wildfeuer, R. (2020). *Year two follow-up on the FRPN state planning grant initiative*. Fatherhood Research & Practice Network. Retrieved from <https://www.frpn.org/asset/frpn-research-brief-year-two-follow-the-frpn-state-planning-grant-initiative>.

their states, conducting summits and other convenings to build support for fatherhood and promote communication across fatherhood program staff, and pursuing funding for fatherhood programming.²⁸

State planning team activities and outcomes during the two years following the FRPN awards are documented in several FRPN briefs.²⁹⁻³⁰ Notable outcomes include the passage of obligor-friendly child support legislation in Washington and Rhode Island; the creation of an advisory board to elicit parent input into the programs and policies of the child support agency in Pennsylvania and Michigan; the creation of a new position in the state child support agency to coordinate with fatherhood programs in Colorado and North Carolina; the creation of new employment programs for noncustodial parents using TANF funds in Colorado and Wyoming; an OCSE 1115 grant waiver to support funding for noncustodial parent employment programs in Michigan; the award of OFA Responsible Fatherhood grants in Colorado and South Carolina; and OCSE-funded Economic Mobility and Responsible Parenting grants in Colorado, Kentucky, Minnesota, and Washington.

While not statewide, the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative (MFI), in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, hosts an annual MFI summit and helps connect men to education, employment, child support, driver's license recovery, men's health services, and more while encouraging positive father involvement.³¹ The Fatherhood Task Force of South Florida is a regional partnership between agencies and organizations to highlight the importance of fathers and maintain a clearinghouse of research on fatherhood.³² In another Florida development, on April 11, 2022, Governor DeSantis approved a bill to provide \$70 million to support fatherhood initiatives statewide and encourage fathers to take an active role in their children's lives. The bill directs the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to contract for a responsible fatherhood initiative to promote father engagement, requires the Department of Juvenile Justice and DCF to identify children involved with both systems and take actions to better serve them, and requires the child support agency to expand programs serving noncustodial parents who are having difficulty paying child support.³³ In a similar vein, California will dedicate \$4.2 million in federal funding to fund up to eight grantees during 2022–2025 to prevent child abuse and neglect by supporting evidence-based, evidence-informed, or promising father engagement initiatives dealing with father education, case management, and peer-to-peer support.³⁴

One of the major activities of states with fatherhood initiatives is to hold annual or biannual fatherhood summits and conferences. These convenings help to build support for father inclusion across state and local programs and agencies that serve children and families. They also allow for training and the exchange of best practices among fatherhood practitioners. Some states engage fathers along with practitioners and agency representatives to ensure that fatherhood programs and policies reflect the needs and priorities of fathers being served. In addition, some states use TANF funds, child support incentive funds, and/or child support Section 1115 waiver funds to provide employment services for fathers in the child support system,

28 Pearson, J. (2020). *Implementation & lessons learned from the FRPN state planning grant initiative*. Fatherhood Research & Practice Network. Retrieved from <https://www.frpn.org/asset/frpn-research-brief-implementation-lessons-learned-the-frpn-state-planning-grant-initiative>.

29 *Ibid.*

30 Pearson, J., & Wildfeuer, R. (2020). *Year two follow-up on the FRPN state planning grant initiative*. Fatherhood Research & Practice Network. Retrieved from <https://www.frpn.org/asset/frpn-research-brief-year-two-follow-the-frpn-state-planning-grant-initiative>.

31 City of Milwaukee. (2022). *Fatherhood initiative*. Retrieved from <https://city.milwaukee.gov/mayorbarrett/Initiatives/Fatherhood-Initiative>.

32 Fatherhood Task Force of South Florida. (2022). *Home*. Retrieved from <https://ftfsf.org/site/>.

33 H.B. 7065. Florida House of Representatives. 2022 Legislature. (Florida 2022). Retrieved from <https://legiscan.com/FL/bill/H7065/2022>.

34 Office of Child Abuse Prevention. (2022). *Father Engagement Program Request for Applications*. California Department of Social Services. Retrieved from https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/OCAP/PDFs/Grants/5822_OCAP_Father_Engagement_RFA_Final_4.19.22_ADA.pdf.

with some including programming aimed at improving parenting and coparenting (these noncustodial parent employment programs are discussed in the Child Support chapter).³⁵

Table 5 summarizes, for each state and the District of Columbia, whether they have a fatherhood commission or other father-specific council, whether they were an FRPN State Planning Grant awardee, and whether they conduct annual or biannual fatherhood summits.

Chapter 11, Table 5. **State Fatherhood Commissions, Councils, and Initiatives**

State	Fatherhood Commission or Council	FRPN Planning Grant Awardee	Annual/Biannual Fatherhood Summits
Alabama			
Alaska			
Arizona			
Arkansas			
California			
Colorado	Non-statutory	Yes	
Connecticut	Statutory	Yes	Yes
Delaware	Non-statutory		
DC			
Florida	Regional		
Georgia			
Hawaii	Statutory		
Idaho			
Illinois	Statutory		
Indiana	Non-statutory		
Iowa			
Kansas			
Kentucky	Non-statutory	Yes	Yes
Louisiana			
Maine			Yes
Maryland			
Massachusetts			Yes
Michigan	Non-statutory	Yes	Yes
Minnesota	Non-statutory	Yes	Yes
Mississippi			
Missouri			
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada			
New Hampshire			
New Jersey			
New Mexico			
New York			
North Carolina	Non-statutory	Yes	Yes
North Dakota			
Ohio	Statutory		Yes
Oklahoma			
Oregon			
Pennsylvania	Non-statutory	Yes	Yes
Rhode Island	Non-statutory	Yes	Yes
South Carolina		Yes	

35 Pearson, J., & Wildfeuer, R. (2020). *Year two follow-up on the FRPN state planning grant initiative*. Fatherhood Research & Practice Network. Retrieved from <https://www.frpn.org/asset/frpn-research-brief-year-two-follow-the-frpn-state-planning-grant-initiative>.

South Dakota			
Tennessee			
Texas	Non-statutory		Yes
Utah			
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington	Non-statutory	Yes	Yes
West Virginia			
Wisconsin	Regional		
Wyoming		Yes	

Sources: Pearson, J., & Fagan, J. (2019). State efforts to support the engagement of nonresident fathers in the lives of their children. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, 100(4), 392–408.

Pennsylvania Greater Father Family Involvement Campaign. (2022). Retrieved from <https://pagffic.org/>.

Pearson, J., & Wildfeuer, R. (2020). *Year two follow-up on the FRPN state planning grant initiative*. Fatherhood Research & Practice Network. Retrieved from <https://www.frpn.org/asset/frpn-research-brief-year-two-follow-the-frpn-state-planning-grant-initiative>.

City of Milwaukee. (2022). *Fatherhood initiative*. Retrieved from <https://city.milwaukee.gov/mayorbarrett/Initiatives/Fatherhood-Initiative>.

Fatherhood Task Force of South Florida. (2022). *Home*. Retrieved from <https://ftfsf.org/site/>.

H.B. 7065. Florida House of Representatives. 2022 Legislature. (Florida 2022). Retrieved from <https://legiscan.com/FL/bill/H7065/2022>.

Pearson, J. (2020). *Implementation & lessons learned from the FRPN state planning grant initiative*. Fatherhood Research & Practice Network. Retrieved from <https://www.frpn.org/asset/frpn-research-brief-implementation-lessons-learned-the-frpn-state-planning-grant-initiative>.

Note: Legislation for a fatherhood commission in Pennsylvania is pending.

Other Initiatives That Might Address Fatherhood Issues

While relatively few states have policy and action initiatives exclusively dedicated to fatherhood, some may be able address father inclusion in conjunction with state efforts dealing with the related issues of two-generation mobility, poverty reduction, health equity, and racial impact.

Two-Generation (2Gen) Initiatives

The two-generation (2Gen) approach focuses on serving children and their caregivers together in a holistic fashion and assisting the whole family to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. The approach aims to overcome fragmentation in state agencies and programs, inflexible regulations and funding streams, lack of participation, retention, and family engagement in solutions that seek to address the issues they face. Under the leadership of Ascend at the Aspen Institute, the approach has gained traction in the delivery of health and human services. At least 13 states and the District of Columbia have been highlighted by Ascend at the Aspen Institute for their 2Gen legislation and initiatives which range from exploratory episodes of 2Gen programming to hiring 2Gen coordinators to manage efforts at the state/systems level (Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, and Washington). Ascend at the Aspen Institute also highlights five states that, as of June 2021, are exploring 2Gen approaches.³⁶

Proposed 2Gen legislation exists at the state and federal level too. In Massachusetts, legislators in both the Senate³⁷ and House of Representatives³⁸ are considering a pair of bills to establish a special commission on two-generation approaches. In New Jersey, legislation has been proposed in the Senate to establish, within the Department of Education, a five-year two-generational school readiness and workforce development pilot program to foster family economic self-sufficiency in low-income households.³⁹ At the federal level, the Two-

³⁶ Mosle, A., & Sims, M. (2021). *State of the field: Two-generation approaches to family well-being*. Ascend at the Aspen Institute. Retrieved from <https://ascend-resources.aspeninstitute.org/resources/state-of-the-field-two-generation-approaches-to-family-well-being/>.

³⁷ Bill S.2723. Massachusetts Senate. 191st Legislature. (Massachusetts 2019–2020). Retrieved from <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S2723>.

³⁸ Bill H.275. Massachusetts House of Representatives. 192nd Legislature. (Massachusetts 2021–2022). Retrieved from <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/HD495>.

³⁹ Bill A1068. New Jersey Legislature. (New Jersey 2020–2021). Retrieved from <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2020/A1068>.

Generation Economic Empowerment Act of 2020 was introduced in the Senate in February 2020 to establish federal programs to improve family economic security by breaking the cycle of multigenerational poverty.⁴⁰

Although 2Gen programs have grown in popularity, fathers are often left out. For example, a national scan of 52 active 2Gen programs published in 2017 found that they typically focus on primary caregivers and their children and that none included nonresident fathers.⁴¹ Some recent efforts to redress this imbalance and include fathers are the Two-Generation Strategies Toolkit published by the National Conference for State Legislatures (NCSL) in 2018, which discusses the legislative role in two-generation approaches and highlights fatherhood programs as a type of family service that can bring child- and parent-focused programs together.⁴² A June 2018 Ascend at the Aspen Institute brief on states leading the way with practical two-generation solutions highlighted Colorado, Connecticut, and Utah as states that engage fathers in their 2Gen models.⁴³ Colorado was featured for providing employment services for noncustodial parents in the child support system, along with early childhood services for their children. Connecticut was featured for its 2017 legislation requiring programs that receive grant funding to incorporate fathers in their programming. Utah was featured for providing community college and technical training for parents. More recently, a February 2021 National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) blog post discussed how fatherhood program can get into the 2Gen game.⁴⁴ As NFI explains, the 2Gen approach is comprised of five components (early childhood education, postsecondary and employment pathways, economic assets, health and well-being, and social capital) and fatherhood programs and initiatives can fit into any one or more of the five components. Additionally, an April 2022 Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity video emphasizes Ascend at the Aspen Institute's support of fathers in 2Gen work.⁴⁵ While not focused on fathers specifically, the Expanding Opportunities for Young Families (EOYF) is a 2Gen initiative funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation focused on improving the educational and economic success of young parents being piloted in Austin, Texas; Miami, Florida; and Santa Fe, New Mexico.⁴⁶

Poverty Reduction and Related Initiatives

Another potential vehicle for addressing father inclusion at the state level are commissions and task forces focused on poverty reduction and related issues. As the July 2018 Ascend at the Aspen Institute brief notes, the term “intergenerational poverty” is part of Utah’s 2Gen work.⁴⁷ Utah’s Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission was established by the Intergenerational Poverty Mitigation Act of 2012. This commission reviews data and existing policies; creates benchmarks and plans; appoints the Intergenerational Poverty Advisory

40 S. 3338. U.S. Congress, 116th Congress. (2019–2020). *Two-Generation Economic Empowerment Act of 2020*. Retrieved from <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/3338/text>.

41 Sama-Miller, E., & Baumgartner, S. (2017). *Features of programs designed to help families achieve economic security and promote child well-being* (OPRE Report #2017-49). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/opre/ib_environment_scan_v11_b508.pdf.

42 National Conference of State Legislatures. (2018). *Two-generation strategies toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/two-generation-strategies-toolkit.aspx>.

43 White, R., Mosle, A., & Sims, M. (2018). *States leading the way: Practical solutions that lift up children and families*. Ascend at the Aspen Institute. Retrieved from <https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/states-leading-the-way-practical-solutions-that-lift-up-children-and-families/>.

44 Brown, C. A. (2021). *How fatherhood programs can get into the 2Gen game*. National Fatherhood Initiative. Retrieved from <https://www.fatherhood.org/fatherhood/how-fatherhood-programs-can-get-into-the-2gen-game>.

45 Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity. (2022). *Flipping the narrative script: The Ascend journey*. Retrieved from <https://spotlightonpoverty.org/spotlight-exclusives/flipping-the-narrative-script-the-ascend-journey/>.

46 Child Trends. (2021). *Expanding Opportunities for Young Families*. Retrieved from <https://www.childtrends.org/project/expanding-opportunities-for-young-families>.

47 White, R., Mosle, A., & Sims, M. (2018). *States leading the way: Practical solutions that lift up children and families*. Ascend at the Aspen Institute. Retrieved from <https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/states-leading-the-way-practical-solutions-that-lift-up-children-and-families/>.

Committee; and releases annual reports on the progress of the Intergenerational Poverty Initiative, which is housed within the Department of Workforce Services.⁴⁸

NCSL has highlighted poverty task forces in two additional states.⁴⁹ Nebraska's Intergenerational Poverty Task Force was established by legislation in 2015 to look at intergenerational poverty in the state. While the task force was disbanded, its report and recommendations are still used in education and policy discussions. In Washington, the governor created an interagency work group on poverty reduction in 2017, the Poverty Reduction Work Group (PRWG), as an expansion of the existing WorkFirst Oversight Task Force (WorkFirst is the state's TANF agency), and legislation in 2018 enacted the legislative-executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force and an intergenerational poverty advisory committee. In January 2021, the PRWG released a comprehensive 10-year plan to dismantle poverty in Washington.⁵⁰ Improving the status of fathers is viewed as integral to the Task Force's poverty reduction goal and members of the Task Force sit on Washington's Fatherhood Council.

A Center for Policy Research (CPR) review in September 2021 of poverty reduction initiatives and related initiatives (regarding economic opportunity, equity, and health) identified active initiatives in nine additional states and the District of Columbia and a proposed initiative in one state. In Illinois, 2020 legislation established the Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security as part of the Intergenerational Poverty Act (IPA).⁵¹ In Michigan, a governor's executive order in 2019 created the Michigan Poverty Task Force within the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.⁵² In New York, the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative funds programs throughout the state aimed at helping low-income families break cycles of poverty.⁵³ In the District of Columbia, legislation was approved in April 2021 to establish a Commission on Poverty.⁵⁴ The 2021–2022 state legislature in Alaska has a Poverty & Opportunity Task Force in the House of Representatives.⁵⁵ Additionally, House Bill 3278 was introduced in West Virginia in March 2021 to create the Intergenerational Poverty Task Force.⁵⁶

In Louisiana, the Rural Revitalization Council, comprised of key state and local stakeholders appointed by the Governor, is focused on improving economic opportunity in rural parts of the state.⁵⁷ The Old Fourth Ward Economic Security Task Force, launched in June 2020 in Atlanta, Georgia, is focused on addressing economic security in Atlanta and, more broadly, southern cities and states that face economic inequality amidst a unique racial history.⁵⁸ Colorado established the Colorado Equity Alliance that consists of representatives of 13 state agencies and community organizations that meet to review certain daily operations of state agencies

48 National Conference of State Legislatures. (2018). *Two-generation strategies toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/two-generation-strategies-toolkit.aspx>.

49 *Ibid.*

50 Poverty Reduction Work Group. (2021). *The 10-year plan to dismantle poverty in Washington*. Retrieved from <https://dismantlepovertyinwa.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Final10yearPlan.pdf>.

51 Illinois Department of Human Services. (2020). *Pritzker administration launches the Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security to address inequality and poverty across the state*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/f/?id=00000176-4078-d3e7-a3ff-d3f890af0000>.

52 Labor and Economic Opportunity. (2022). *Michigan Poverty Task Force*. Michigan.gov. Retrieved from https://www.michigan.gov/leo/0,5863,7-336-78421_97193--,00.html.

53 JobsFirstNYC. (2020). *Governor Cuomo announces projects funded through the Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative launching in the Bronx*. Retrieved from <https://jobsfirstnyc.org/latest/governor-cuomo-announces-projects-funded-through-the-empire-state-poverty-reduction-initiative-launching-in-the-bronx/>.

54 Council of the District of Columbia. (2016). *B23-0090 – Commission on Poverty in the District of Columbia Establishments Act of 2019*. Retrieved from <https://lims.dccouncil.us/Legislation/B23-0090>.

55 Alaska State Legislature. (2022). *House Poverty & Opportunity Task Force*. Retrieved from <https://www.akleg.gov/basis/Committee/Details/32?code=HPTF>.

56 PolicyEngage, LLC. (2022). *West Virginia HB3278: Create Intergenerational Poverty Task Force*. Retrieved from <https://trackbill.com/bill/west-virginia-house-bill-3278-create-intergenerational-poverty-task-force/2073409/>.

57 Office of the Governor. (2022). *Rural Revitalization Council*. Retrieved from <https://gov.louisiana.gov/page/rural-revitalization-council>.

58 Old Fourth Ward Economic Security Task Force. (2022). *Toward guaranteed income for a more just & equitable Atlanta*. Office of Atlanta City Councilmember Amir Farokhi. Retrieved from <https://www.econsecurityatl.org/>.

through an equity lens, identify the underlying causes of opportunity gaps, and establish policies and practices to address them.⁵⁹ In North Carolina, the Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental, and Health Equity Task Force, established by 2020 legislation, addresses disparities in communities of color that were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The five focus areas of the task force are access to health care, economic opportunity and business development, educational opportunity, environmental justice and inclusion, and patient engagement.⁶⁰ A Social Determinants of Health Task Force in Wyoming has identified a goal of expanding fatherhood programming throughout the states in connection with improving health outcomes.⁶¹ More recently, Baltimore announced a guaranteed income pilot that will provide 200 randomized lottery selected young parents unconditional cash payments of \$1,000 per month for two years. The evaluation will assess how ongoing financial assistance affects the financial standing of parents, as well as family health and well-being.⁶²

Racial Impact Statements

Racial impact statements are a final way that fatherhood issues and priorities might be addressed at the state level. Racial impact statements are reports which detail the potential impacts of a proposed change to criminal justice legislation on communities of color and inform policy makers of potential racial disparities in proposed legislation. They seek to proactively limit racist policymaking and amplify the voices of members of communities of color in otherwise unrepresentative legislative bodies.⁶³

As of June 2021, nine states mandated the drafting and consideration of racial impact statements on proposed criminal justice legislation. In another nine states, racial impact statement legislation has been proposed but not yet adopted.⁶⁴

The responsibility of crafting these racial impact statements might be conferred upon a plethora of reasonable parties. In Maryland and New Jersey, statements must be provided by the Offices of Legislative Services. Similarly, Connecticut and Florida rely upon government accountability administrations to create these reports. An additional alternative is to employ a criminal justice commission or council, as is the case in Oregon. Every state has a body capable of researching and reporting on potential racial consequences, through budget and planning agencies, legislative services, department of correction, commissions on criminal justice, or even through sentencing commissions.⁶⁵

A recent example of state legislation in the child support arena being changed as a result of an audit of its differential impact on people of color is the Illinois decision to stop charging interest on unpaid child support because it disproportionately affects low-income families and people of color.⁶⁶ Minnesota's child support agency is in the midst of an external assessment of racial disparities in its use of drivers' license suspension

59 Colorado Equity Alliance. (2022). *Colorado Equity Alliance*. Retrieved from <https://sites.google.com/state.co.us/colorado-equity-alliance/home>.

60 North Carolina Department of Administration. (2022). *The Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental, and Health Equity Task Force*. Retrieved from <https://ncadmin.nc.gov/ahtf>.

61 Telephone correspondence with Jen Davis, Health Policy Advisor of the Wyoming Office of the Governor, on March 16, 2021.

62 Dean, L. T., & Sngun, S. (2022). *Baltimore's guaranteed income pilot among first to focus on health influence*. The Baltimore Sun. Retrieved from <https://www.baltimoresun.com/opinion/op-ed/bs-ed-op-0503-guaranteed-income-pilot-20220502-322bbutcdfanxjm2kagr73vq-story.html>.

63 Mauer, M. (2009). Racial impact statements: Changing policies to address disparities. *Criminal Justice*, 23(4), 16–20.

64 Porter, N. D. (2021). *Racial impact statements*. The Sentencing Project. Retrieved from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/racial-impact-statements/>.

65 *Ibid*.

66 Hancock, P. (2021). *State drops most child support interest charges*. Illinois Newsroom. Retrieved from <https://illinoisnewsroom.org/state-drops-most-child-support-interest-charges/>.

and other procedural justice issues. Upon conclusion of the study, it plans to revisit a variety of child support policies and generate legislative proposals that ensure that its policies are equitable and address the needs of the African-American community.⁶⁷

Table 6, summarizes, for each state and the District of Columbia, whether they have or are exploring 2Gen initiatives, whether they have established or proposed poverty reduction or related initiatives, and whether they have adopted or proposed racial impact statements. States that staff a state-level 2Gen coordinator and/or engage fathers in their 2Gen initiative are noted.

Chapter 11, Table 6. **State 2Gen Initiatives, Poverty Reduction and Related Initiatives, and Racial Impact Statements**

State	2Gen Initiative	Poverty Reduction or Related Initiative	Racial Impact Statement
Alabama	Yes		
Alaska		Poverty	
Arizona			
Arkansas			Proposed
California	Exploring		
Colorado	Yes*+	Equity	Yes
Connecticut	Yes*+		Yes
Delaware			
DC	Yes	Poverty	
Florida	Yes		Yes
Georgia	Yes	Economic opportunity	
Hawaii	Yes*		
Idaho			
Illinois		Poverty	Proposed
Indiana			
Iowa			Yes
Kansas			
Kentucky			Proposed
Louisiana		Economic opportunity	
Maine	Yes		Yes
Maryland	Yes*		Yes
Massachusetts	Exploring		
Michigan		Poverty	
Minnesota	Yes		Proposed
Mississippi	Yes		Proposed
Missouri			
Montana			Yes
Nebraska		Poverty	Proposed
Nevada			
New Hampshire	Yes		
New Jersey	Yes		
New Mexico			
New York		Poverty	Proposed
North Carolina		Equity	Yes
North Dakota			
Ohio			
Oklahoma			Proposed
Oregon	Yes		

67 Email correspondence with Shaneen Moore, Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services Children and Family Services, on May 19, 2022.

Pennsylvania	Exploring		
Rhode Island			
South Carolina	Exploring		
South Dakota			
Tennessee	Yes		
Texas			
Utah	Yes+	Poverty	
Vermont	Yes		
Virginia	Exploring		Yes
Washington	Yes*	Poverty	
West Virginia		Proposed	
Wisconsin			Proposed
Wyoming		Health	

Sources: Mosle, A., & Sims, M. (2021). *State of the field: Two-generation approaches to family well-being*. Ascend at the Aspen Institute. Retrieved from <https://ascend-resources.aspeninstitute.org/resources/state-of-the-field-two-generation-approaches-to-family-well-being/>.

White, R., Mosle, A., & Sims, M. (2018). *States leading the way: Practical solutions that lift up children and families*. Ascend at the Aspen Institute. Retrieved from <https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/states-leading-the-way-practical-solutions-that-lift-up-children-and-families/>.

National Conference of State Legislatures. (2018). *Two-generation strategies toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/two-generation-strategies-toolkit.aspx>.

Poverty Reduction Work Group (2021). *The 10-year plan to dismantle poverty in Washington*. Retrieved from <https://dismantlepovertyinwa.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Final10yearPlan.pdf>.

Center for Policy Research review of poverty reduction and related initiatives in September 2021.

Telephone correspondence with Jen Davis, Health Policy Advisor of the Wyoming Office of the Governor, on March 16, 2021.

Porter, N. D. (2021). *Racial impact statements*. The Sentencing Project. Retrieved from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/racial-impact-statements/>.

Notes: * indicates that the state staffs a state-level 2Gen coordinator, and + indicates that the state engages fathers in their 2Gen initiative.



Conclusions

Despite the approval of a dedicated federal funding stream of \$75 million per year for fatherhood through the HMRF grant program and the investment of over \$1 billion in awards to programs that offer fatherhood services, the fatherhood field continues to struggle with limited funding, short-term grants, and cuts during tough economies.⁶⁸ More to the point, Ohio is the only state to have developed a statutory commission that is funded and staffed at the state level and dedicated to supporting fatherhood programs and achieving father inclusion in relevant programs and policies. In part, the vacuum reflects the competitive, program-specific nature of federal HMRF grant awards, which are made in fewer than half the states during any five-year grant cycle and the resulting lack of programming continuity and buy-in that these awards inspire at the state

68 Klemplin, S., & Mincy, R. B. (2011–2012). *Tossed on a sea of change: A status update on the responsible fatherhood field*. Columbia University School of Social Work, Center for Research on Fathers, Children and Family Well-Being. Retrieved from http://crfcfw.columbia.edu/files/2012/09/OSF-Fatherhood-Survey_Final-Report_9.25.12_SK_RM.pdf.

level. The vacuum also reflects the challenging funding landscape for fatherhood programming from other sources. Although fatherhood funding is permitted under TANF goals two and three, there is stiff competition for uncommitted TANF funds at the state level and a growing tendency for states to retain uncommitted TANF balances which reached \$5.2 billion by the end of FY 2020. And while state child support agencies may pursue waivers to use child support incentive funds for fatherhood programming and Section 1115 waiver funds for employment programs for noncustodial parents, these expenditures are not permitted with regular child support monies which are reimbursed by the federal government at the rate of 66%. As a result, few state child support agencies make substantial investments in fatherhood.

Fatherhood-specific social change initiatives, however, do exist at the state level. Despite their lack of statutory authority and/or funding, approximately 16 states have multi-agency commissions, councils, networks, and initiatives that focus on fathers and seek to enhance their standing and their inclusion in programs and policies dealing with children and families. They meet with varying degrees of regularly, review prospective legislation and programs to enhance father engagement, identify father needs, conduct training on father-friendly approaches, and establish relationships with fatherhood program practitioners and father representatives. At least a dozen states conduct annual or biannual summits or conferences dealing with fatherhood for practitioners, policymakers, and fathers themselves. In 2019, organizations in 20 states applied to FPRN for small grants of \$10,000 to conduct a planning effort aimed at improving father inclusion in state programs and policies, and awards were made to 11 states, most of which have continued with a varied menu of father inclusion efforts for over a three-year period. Finally, about a dozen states have initiatives dealing with two-generational mobility, poverty reduction, and the elimination of health disparities and racial impacts in state laws and policies that include fathers as part of their scope and/or are logical places to which improvements in the status of fathers might be added.

These developments suggest the salience of fatherhood issues in many states. They point to growing awareness of the importance of fathers to the health, education, and welfare of their children and the precarious status of so many fathers, especially those who are low-income and nonresident. Finally, they underscore the importance of working at both programmatic and societal levels to address the issues that fathers face.



Fatherhood Research & Practice Network

About the FRPN

The Fatherhood Research & Practice Network (FRPN) was created and operated by Temple University and the Center for Policy Research through funding by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation from 2013-2019 (OPRE grant #90PR0006). FRPN promotes rigorous evaluation of fatherhood programs, disseminates information to fatherhood practitioners and researchers, and catalyzes system-level changes that support father engagement and equity. Visit www.frpn.org for an extensive library of resources for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.

Policies and Programs Affecting Fathers: A State-by-State Report was prepared with the support of the Center for Policy Research in Denver, Colorado. Thanks are extended to Jay Fagan, Professor Emeritus of Social Work at Temple University; Johan Dellgren, Student at Pomona College; Jane Venohr, Research Associate and Economist at the Center for Policy Research; Christopher Brown, President, National Fatherhood Initiative; and various subject matter and policy experts with whom we consulted in the course of developing this report.

To the best of our knowledge, the information we provide is current as of report publication and/or the date indicated in the report and table sources. Nevertheless, since state policies and programs continually evolve, there are inevitable changes and developments that we have not captured. The views expressed in the report are those of the authors.

©2022. Center for Policy Research, Denver, Colorado. Suggested citation: Pearson, J., & Wildfeuer, R. (2022). Policies and Programs Affecting Fathers: A State-by-State Report. Center for Policy Research and Fatherhood Research & Practice Network.