



Topical Area:  
Early Education and Family Supports

# Early Education and Family Supports

## Current State

### Community-level & Lived Experience Insights

Taken from 10 local *Fathers Matter Community Café's* attended by 280 fathers, service providers, and dad allies.



#### What works for fathers:

- Some men in the early childhood classrooms and home visiting
- Growing awareness around needing more male role models.
- ECEAP has dads on the parent advisory councils and das learn how to advocate for their kids
- More Dads are involved in planning and advisory groups



#### What doesn't work for fathers:

- Community groups to build resilience don't include dads
- Groups often meet when dads can't come
- Parenting facilitator say "parent like mom, have a unified front", "but I parent like me I am a Dads"
- Home visiting doesn't include dads very often
- Child care subsidy is confusing when there are two households so often Dad thinks they don't qualify
- Child care enrollment and recruitment is all sent to moms
- People say they make decisions about what gets funding from community people but dads are not in those groups.



#### What needs to change:

- More male role models in early care and education services
- More outreach to Dads about child care and how to afford it.
- More awareness of Dads role in early development
- Increase support and training to home visiting on how to work with dads
- Requiring early childhood services to reach all parents
- More male providers in all services.

# Early Education and Family Supports

## Current State: Statewide Agencies

### Key Agencies Impacting Fathers

#### Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)



Washington State Department of CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

- Division of Early Learning
- Division of Partnership, Prevention, and Services – Family & Community Supports

### Current Metrics

- 6% of single fathers access Working Connections, as compared to 80% single mothers, and 14% parents from two-parent households
- 213 out of 3,093 slots (6.8%) are fathers enrolled in Home Visiting, as compared to the remaining 93% which are mothers

## State of the State Study: What we learned across six dimensions at the agency-level

### Policies

1 Pre-Aware

The [Early Learning Coordination Plan \(ELCP\)](#) and the [Preschool Development Grant \(PDG\)](#) are the guiding policies in WA state that drive strategy, equity goals, and key impact outcomes. There is some **emerging awareness** of the unique needs of fathers across these policies and frameworks

### Funding and Resources

1 Pre-Aware

There is a combination of national (Head Start, Home Visiting, PDG) and state (ECEAP, HMG, ESIT, Working Connections) funding efforts that support the early learning, education, and childhood systems. There is **minimal dedicated funding** that is fatherhood specific statewide.

### Systems

1 Pre-Aware

The early learning, childhood systems in DCYF work closely with DOH, DSHS – CSD/TANF, HCA, and many others. There is **growing awareness** that systems need to focus of both parents in outreach and involvement.

### Services and Programs

1 Pre-Aware

Statewide programs include Head Start, ECEAP, Working Connections, ESIT, Strengthening Families, and Help Me Grow (HMG). There are local partnerships with implementing and community-based organizations **designing fatherhood specific or inclusive programs.**

### Data and Monitoring

1 Pre-Aware

DCYF data and monitoring metrics are focused on two-generational impacts of early childhood systems; more parental involvement and impact metrics are being captured, but not consistently. There is an **awareness of the need** to understand father involvement and needs

### Equity Considerations

1 Pre-Aware

There are some bright spots in local communities that are developing and implementing fatherhood programs for men of color / communities of color, but a **consistent awareness or emphasis on equity considerations is lacking**, specifically among communities experiencing disparities

#### Levels of Maturity<sup>1</sup>

- 1 Pre-awareness
- 2 Awareness
- 3 Demonstrated Action
- 4 Integration

### Key Takeaway:

Overall, DCYF Early Learning and Family & Community Supports are developing **an awareness** of the importance for involving both parents in the engagement and development of early childhood systems. Historically, these systems engaged primarily with the mother and child. There are opportunities to **better understand the unique needs of fathers**

1. *Pre-awareness*—limited data, funding, programs or strategy for father-inclusive or –specific elements. *Awareness*—understanding of fathers’ unmet needs and emerging efforts; *Demonstrated Action*—Action consistently promoting fatherhood inclusion; *Integration*—Systems integrated to promote fatherhood inclusion, sustained action and demonstrated outcomes

# Early Education and Family Supports

## Future State: System-Level Recommendations and Outcome Metrics

### System-Level Recommendations



Across early childhood and early learning systems, there is a **need for understanding fatherhood involvement, participation, and specific needs** for culturally specific services. There is **an opportunity to increase awareness, outreach, participation, and increase the percentage of male service providers**, and those with lived experiences in the **workforce**



There are opportunities to **pilot and fund fatherhood-specific and –inclusive activities** both statewide and locally; build local coalitions and groups to activate fatherhood involvement in early childhood systems, involve more parent voice groups to include both male and female presenting parents, and **fund workforce development** and parent advisory groups to include male presenting service providers and parents

### Recommended Impact Outcomes to Build & Monitor

*Nationally, nearly 85% of EHS children had at least one father or father figure involved in their lives, however EHS services only reached a small percentage of men. Home visitors reported that only 19.9% of families they served had a father participate in a recent home visit. Similarly, only 19.3% of families reported that a father had ever attended an event specific to men/ fathers. This finding reveals a **continued missed opportunity for working with fathers and father figures who play important roles in children's lives.**<sup>1</sup>*



Across Early Learning, Family & Community Supports, and early childhood systems, there is an opportunity to measure and track the **number of fathers involved (i.e., non-cohabiting parents or shared custody) in a child's life**

#### Impact outcomes (to build & monitor):

- % of fathers involved in child's life (captured during intake/enrollment into programs)
- % of fathers enrolling or accessing programs, services, or funding
- % of male-presenting service providers in workforce

### Hypothetical Data Metric

*# of dads participating in Home Visiting Programs (currently available) **out of the total families that have dad involvement in child's life (need to track)***

1. Schindler, H.S., & Granda, C. (2023). A portrait of fathers in Early Head Start: Two decades later. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association conference.

# Agency Commitments



### Commitments by the (6) Dimensions

Policies	Funding and Resources	Cross-Agency Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create more <b>strategic awareness and explicit call outs</b> for strategies and funding to include dads when engaging, designing, and implementing funding, programs, and services for parents and families.</li> <li>• When creating quality frameworks, family engagement guidance, and performance standards, there are <b>opportunities to call out father and fatherhood figure engagement</b>.</li> <li>• There is an opportunity to <b>clarify eligibility across programs</b> (child support<sup>1</sup>, SNAP, TANF, WIC, Working Connections childcare subsidies Paid Family Medical Leave benefits, and others) so that fathers know what they qualify for, especially when the co-parent is accessing the same programs.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to engage across DCYF's divisions in Family &amp; Community Supports (FCS), Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR), Child Welfare, and Early Learning to develop cross-sectional strategies in engaging fathers within the context of families</li> <li>• Align to PDG, ELCP goals and strategies, infant early mental health workgroup, and coordinate strategies to focus on fatherhood related efforts; specifically, within ELCP, there is an opportunity to call out the unique needs of fathers more explicitly</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Service and Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create more <b>awareness, outreach, recruitment, and engagement with fathers</b> and fatherhood figures</li> <li>• There are opportunities to design/fund fatherhood <b>inclusive or specific initiatives and outreach efforts</b> through Head Start, ECEAP, and Working Connections to engage with this underserved population and better understand the challenges associated with access to early learning and childcare programs for children on behalf of fathers</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Data and Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are opportunities to <b>collect data on gender differences</b> in family engagement &amp; involvement during intake and enrollment of children into Head Start, ECEAP, or parents accessing Working Connections childcare subsidy programs</li> <li>• For Working Connections, where there is a much lower uptake of single fathers (6%) as compared to single mothers (80%), there is an opportunity to better understand the <b>root causes, potential barriers</b> for single fathers and the potential negative impact on children if fathers cannot access affordable child care.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Community-Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with contractors and <b>community partners to determine how quality and family engagement is implemented across service providers, and how service delivery can be designed to meet the unique needs of fathers.</b></li> <li>• Partner with Cultivate at University of Washington, to understand if there are evidence-based practices, industry best practices, and disaggregated data analysis to better engage and serve dads.</li> </ul>

1. An example: fathers who are non-custodial parents (NCPs) that have child support orders from the Division of Child Support (DCS) had misperceptions that NCPs are ineligible for Working Connections if the other parent was already accessing child care subsidies through Working Connections; DCYF Early Learning has since clarified that both parents including NCPs are able to apply and access Working Connections

# Levels of Maturity

- Pre-Awareness**
- Awareness**
- Demonstrated Action**
- Integration**

### Department of Children Youth and Families – Early Learning (DCYF EL): **Pre-Awareness**

- Given that in the early learning world we address the work from a holistic place, we have not specifically focused our efforts on fathers but rather families.
- For our ECEAP programming, we explicitly expect programs to submit written plans to encourage fatherhood involvement.
  - Although we could disaggregate the data to accurately identify the number of fathers that participate in ECEAP, this is not something that a reports develops automatically so with the funding necessary, we would have to automate our software and applications to do this.
- For our subsidy system (Working Connections Child Care) we can accurately identify the number of fathers. However, we do not require father-specific involvements, and our strategy has been focused on ensuring working class and/or income eligible families apply and receive subsidy, so we will continue growing our strategy around father-inclusive elements.



# Agency Overview



## Family & Community Supports (ESIT, SFWA, HMG)

### State Level Snapshot

- ESIT hosts the Parent Institute for Engagement (PIE) – a 12-month training program for parents to engage in leadership & advocacy efforts
- Strengthening Families and its Home Visiting programs have developed webinars and trainings to engage with fathers through the Fatherhood Provider Learning Series; currently, the Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant – community capacity funding went to Tribal fatherhood programs (i.e., Fatherhood is Sacred or Conscious Fathering), Strengthen Families Locally, Child Welfare Early Learning Navigators (CWELNs) and Public Awareness/Primary Prevention
- HMG WA is a statewide and local system that provides resource navigation for families with young children to access social, health, and basic needs; while funding comes from DCYF, WithinReach is the implementing organization that delivers services (e.g., navigation, resource directory, client intake); HMG WA is building tags for its resource directory for fatherhood specific resources.

#### DCYF Family & Community Supports' priorities in the near term are to:

- Increase engagement with fathers through parent advisory groups, PIE, and other family facing efforts
- Provide strategic guidance in community funding to consider both parental figures while engaging families

### Key Metrics & Data Points

- Program enrollment:
  - 213/3093 slots of fathers enrolled in Home Visiting<sup>1</sup>
  - 6 out of 40 are fathers in DCYF's Parent Advisory Group
  - TBD # of fathers in PIE (funded by ESIT); TBD
  - TBD # of fathers connected to early intervention services (ESIT; DMS data)
- Cost/Funding:
  - \$40K per program; 3 tribal communities received community funding for fatherhood programs

### Partner or Community Snapshot

- Through Strengthen Families Locally, funded by a five-year federal grant, four communities have developed Strong Community Networks that include using data for Local Prevention Plans:
  - [Kitsap Strong](#) is a coalition that builds resiliency for families; through its partnership with Strengthen Families Locally, and the Fatherhood Council, hosted a Community Café, and is supporting a fatherhood group (no funding),
  - [The Health Justice Recovery Alliance](#) in Spokane is primarily serving communities of color and has focused some efforts on dads of color as priority populations based on high rates of child welfare in black and American Indian populations.
- Strengthening Families Washington also contracts with [Partner Organizations](#) such as Tribal fatherhood programs, Family Resource Centers (FRCs), diaper banks, etc., to meet the needs of local communities.

- [Unsung Heroes: Single dad approaches fatherhood with strength, courage and excitement | Unsung Hero | Seattle's Child \(seattleschild.com\)](#)
- Child Welfare Early Learning Navigators (CWELNs) – case management for supporting a dad in setting up child care enrollment after child was reunified with dad
- Tribal fatherhood programming is in its second year of funding and hopes to be re-funded for one more year.

1. Based on HRSA data for FY 2021, the Washington Home Visiting Program served 2,858 participants and conducted 14,963 home visits using the Nurse-Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers evidence-based models.



# Agency Tribal Dads Overview

## Tribal Snapshot

- DCYF funded Tribal Nations Fatherhood Program:
  - Lummi Nation
  - Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
  - United Indians of All Tribes Foundation
- All three programs chose to use the Fatherhood Is Sacred/Motherhood is Sacred, in some cases are blending with other curricula.
- The programs focused on areas such as Suicide Prevention, Addressing Family Violence and Abuse, and Strengthening Relationships.
- They are also building in cultural practices such as drum making, participating in events such as Powwows.
- # of fathers who participated: From November 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023: 15 fathers participated in the combined 3 programs
- Duration of the funding: Contracts started November 1, 2022. We expect to renew them through September 30, 2025.
- Key Activities: The first year included start up work, including recruiting and training program facilitators, and recruiting participants. They have also had to navigate staff turnover and figure out how to recruit and retaining participants.
- Narrative / father experiences: Fathers who have stayed in the programs have found them beneficial, as evident from this excerpt from a letter from one participant:

*I recently completed the "Fatherhood is Sacred" program. This program was facilitated by Clayton Burley and Wayne Graika. The program was great from my perspective. One of the best aspects was the fact that both Wayne and Clay were very open about their own experiences as well as very accepting of mine. The three of us are from seemingly very different backgrounds, however, as we got to know each other and worked through the sessions, I found that we had much more in common than I thought. Every man has some form of childhood and generational trauma and while ours were drastically different on the surface, I found that we all had the same goal. To be better fathers than those before us, to honor the traditions of the Snoqualmie people (our ancestors), and to help others do the same.*

*The program was well aligned with my current life situation as it dealt heavily with recovery. While I am not in recovery myself, my spouse is and I have had many friends, past and present, that have experienced recovery in their lives. I believe in the fellowship of AA/NA as it has saved my wife and I found that my learnings from her and her fellowship were closely aligned with the program.*

*I also strive to be a better father, leader, spouse and community member and the learnings from this program contain some great tools to get there.*

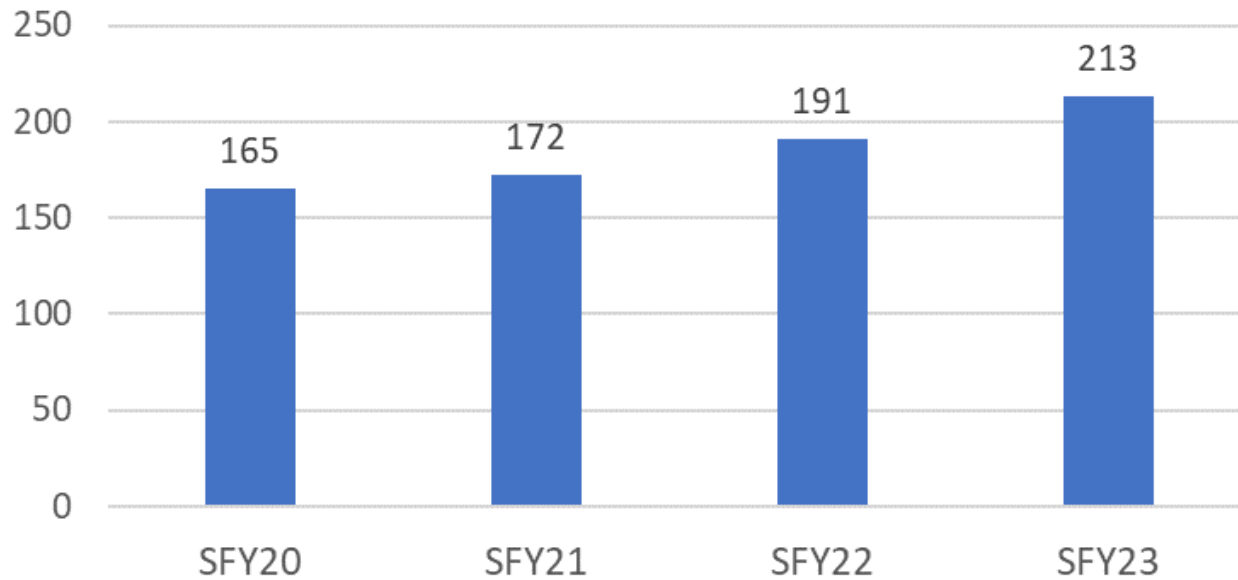
*Finally, on a personal level, I am newly enrolled in the Snoqualmie Tribe. My great grandfather was basically stolen from his people, and it has been a long road back home from there. Once again, the Snoqualmie People, notably these two gentlemen, have proved that I am welcome, that I belong and that I have come home. I thank them and Ginger from the bottom of my heart for that and I look forward to a long and valuable friendship.*



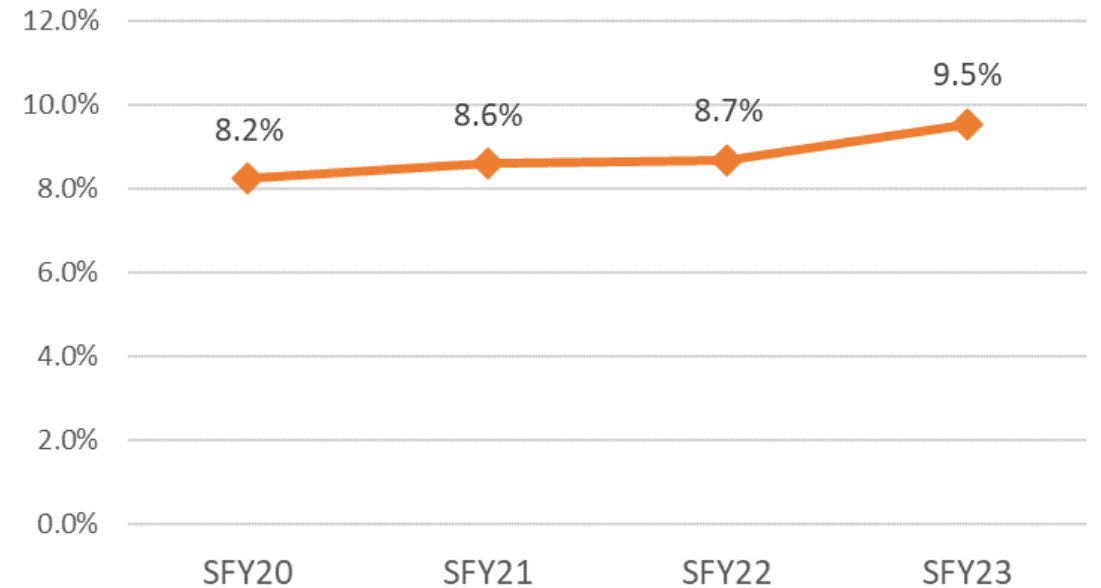


## Male Caregivers Enrolled in HVSA SFY2020-2023

Number of male caregivers served as enrolled participants, All HVSA, SFY20-SFY23



% of Male caregivers served by HVSA, excluding pregnant caregivers, SFY20-SFY23



Note: It needs to be clarified as to what is meant by "enrolled participants" (i.e. single dads, non-cohabitating fathers served directly, in-tack couples with fathers present).

# Agency Commitments



## Family & Community Supports (ESIT, SFWA, HMG)

### Commitments by the (6) Dimensions

#### Policies

- Create more **strategic awareness and explicit call outs** for strategies and funding to include dads when engaging, designing, and implementing funding, programs, and services for parents and families.

#### Funding and Resources

- Create **an awareness and feedback loop structure to build a mechanism for more funding and resources** at the community level to engage fathers and fund more fatherhood specific activities that meet their needs.
- Leverage existing **local community efforts** (e.g., Kitsap dad support group, or Spokane community of color, dads of color group) to learn about bright spots and needs.

#### Cross-Agency Partnerships

- Potential to engage across **DCYF's divisions in Family & Community Supports (FCS), Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR), Child Welfare, and Early Learning** to develop cross-sectional strategies in engaging fathers within the context of families
- Align to **ELCP goals and strategies**, and coordinate strategies to focus on fatherhood related efforts
- Continue to strengthen partnerships with other agencies, such as **DOC to support parents and families** -Parenting Inside Out, DOC navigators working with CWELNs.

#### Services and Programs

- Create more **awareness, outreach, recruitment, and engagement** with fathers and fatherhood figures in Parent Advocacy / Advisory and capacity building to increase **male service providers** through workforce development.
- Create **processes (e.g., HMG resource navigation intake) and trainings that explicitly ask about father** and father figure participation, involvement and understands the dynamic between parents; **develop customized referral pathways (via HMG system) for fathers to access specific resources.**
- Consider opportunities to **engage male providers, or those with father experiences in the workforce;** diversify gender representation of service providers in early childhood systems.

#### Data and Monitoring

- Continue or further expand data collection at the funding and programmatic levels to capture **how often dads or male-presenting parent are receiving, participating in programs/services** (e.g., Home Visiting programs, ESIT's early intervention services, HMG WA resource navigation)
- Utilizing **data to understand the potential barriers** and challenges associated with accessing programs (e.g., ESIT, Home Visiting) when the child goes from mom's care to dad's care

#### Community-Engagement

- Identify any **best practices or local community bright spots** in serving dads or convening parent advisory groups that engage all parents, employ male service providers with lived experiences
- Identify community organizations or groups **outreach and recruitment of fathers** to join and engage in parent advisory or advocacy groups (e.g., DCYF Parent Advisory Group, ESIT PIE, or HMG Family Voice Group); support & utilize advisory structures to engage individuals with lived experiences to inform policies and programs for fathers
- Continue to leverage **regional and local coalitions or community engagement structures** (e.g., WCFC, SF Locally (locales), DCYF regions for Child Welfare) to identify needs and gaps

# Levels of Maturity

- Pre-Awareness**
- Awareness**
- Demonstrated Action**
- Integration**

## Department of Children Youth and Families – Family & Community Supports (DCYF FCS): **Pre-Awareness**

- Currently there is limited data being collected across family & community supports to fully understand the unique needs of fathers and how they engage or would want to participate in programs such as ESIT and home visiting programs, or how they may need specialized resource navigation support from HMG WA.
- While there are limited funding, programs and strategies that are explicitly targeting fatherhood initiatives or promotion, there are existing structures like the Parent Advisory Group, and Parent Institute for Engagement (PIE), and HMG WA is in process of forming a Family Voice Group, that can be leveraged to identify the unique needs of fathers, and to better understand systemic or structural barriers for engagement.
- To move to an awareness stage, the focus is to collect father-specific data and engage with diverse fatherhood voices

## Lived Experience Insights

Taken from 10 local *Fathers Matter Community Café's* attended by 280 fathers, service providers, and dad allies.

### What works for fathers:

- When dads understand it is not about us, but about the kids the resources really help
- When fathers' families are found in a relative search and are part of the process it is better for Dads and children
- Engaging dads and their extended family in the process doubles the resources for the child
- Having a family navigator (in DOC) has finally put someone on my side in the CPS process- helped me reach my caseworker and attorney.
- Peer to peer supports with someone who has gone through the system

### What doesn't work for fathers:

- Dads have to work extra hard to be seen as a fit parent-the bar is set lower for moms and higher for dads.
- Dads have to pay for mandated services- classes, supervised visitation, and they may not be able to pay for it.
- Each situation is different and not all parents have the same issues but often may have the same requirement
- Burden of proof – when mom accuses dad of something he has to prove he didn't do it, if dad accuses mom of something he has to prove she did.
- Difficult finding jobs that supports mandated activities – court, classes, random UAs
- Sometime the GAL/ CASA doesn't talk to dads or hear their side

### What needs to change:

- Need more collaboration with child welfare and all the other folks who work with families
- Still missing Dad's family as possible placement and that reduces the chance that Dads will be a permanent choice.
- Many dads say they can't reach their caseworker and don't get court date notices or call outs.
- Need more training for GAL/CASAs to realize the important role of fathers and how to engage them

“

I had to go through 19 programs to have the court see me as an option for my daughter and I had to pay for all of them.

Fatherhood Council Dad

Lots of stigma around dads as a “fit parent” why don't we start off the process in court thinking both parents are an equal option.

Fatherhood Council Dad

”

# Agency Overview



## State Level Snapshot

- Overview: DCYF Child Welfare has the Child Protective Services (CPS), foster and kinship care, child welfare providers, and related areas that focus on protecting and ensuring the safety of children
- [HB 1227 Keeping Families Together](#) is an important and recent policy enacted with the intention of reducing number of children placed into care; it has increased the removal standards, and led to longer periods of evaluation, when more services and supports can be provided to families.
- The [Families First Prevention Services Act](#) focused on improving well-being of children and families already experiencing DCYF involvement. The evidence-based supportive services and programs focus on families; currently the plan does not have fatherhood specific programs
- Child Welfare working with family navigators at DOC to support incarcerated fathers in access to their children and their case; Dad can access [Securus](#) services allowing money transfers and access to electronic media services to call children, co-parent, social workers.
- DCYF Child Welfare teams have a long and extensive history with the Fatherhood Council, including [Engaging Fathers website](#), [award](#), leading Dad Allies meetings on safety planning and CPS, and permanency; attending the Fatherhood Summit, and Parent Allies groups that train foster care parents with a focus on dads.

## Key Metrics & Data Points

- Prospective Data –
- Program enrollment:
    - # of fathers served, participating child welfare programs
    - # of fathers that attend Child Welfare meetings (data on participation or involvement) – this is currently tracked
    - Gender differences on return to parents (disposition data)
    - Increased relative search #'s (e.g., increased ability to reach dad's family for placement with relatives)
  - Cost/Funding:
    - \$ Funding that's inclusive or specific for fatherhood programs
    - \$ Funding – court ordered treatment plans that go to male parent

## Partner or Community Snapshot

- Child Welfare liaisons in all 6 regions focused on fatherhood inclusion activities, attend the Fatherhood Council meetings, and seek resources to reduce barriers for fathers.
  - Service providers for parent education are including fatherhood specific and culturally appropriate curriculum such as Nurturing Fatherhood and 24/7 Dad [Amara – Brave Conversations](#), provides local support for parents, foster care parents, and kinship care support; partners with fathers with lived experiences, speak to foster care families about the importance of fatherhood involvement.
  - Focus program – works with parents with lived experiences, and has specifically recruited fathers, to work with parents/families that are undergoing investigation, in order to prevent removal of children.
- CW Dad Award in June 2023 – father receiving award have a powerful narrative.

# Agency Commitments



## Commitments by the (6) Dimensions

### Policies

- The [Families First Prevention Services Act](#) focused on improving well-being of children and families already experiencing DCYF involvement. The evidence-based supportive services and programs offered to families currently does not have fatherhood specific programs; there is an opportunity to update the programming to include more **father-specific services**

### Funding and Resources

- Some barriers and unintended challenges associated with supporting incarcerated parents, fathers face barrier in seeing their families, access to legal and court proceedings, access share planning/parenting meetings. Child welfare and DOC are partnership together to pilot programs and processes, before system-wide expansion takes place
- [Securus](#) services allows money transfers and access to electronic media services to call children, co-parent, social workers is being piloted in Region 2, the intent and goal are to be statewide.

### Cross-Agency Partnerships

- Continued partnership with DOC to support families, and more specifically incarcerated fathers in accessing resources, programs, and services that enabling ongoing involvement with their families and during re-entry transitions

### Services and Programs

- There are currently only 2 DOC family navigators, one in each of the 2 prison facilities - Airway Heights, and [Purdy Women's Corrections](#); there is a need for expansion to all prison facilities.
- There is a need to fund local workforce providers to teach culturally and regionally specific parenting classes that are inclusive and/or specific to fathers to satisfy court requirements; these classes are often privately funded or volunteer-based.

### Data and Monitoring

Ideally, the key data outcome to track is:

**# of children that are reunified with fathers (% comparison with moms, reunified).**

This outcome helps us understand how the system is enabling fathers to maintain a relationship with the child after removal

Data system: there is an opportunity to leverage the FTDM model to build and track father-specific data.

### Community-Engagement

- Child Welfare father liaisons work with community partners to increase access for fathers
- Child welfare staff have produced 3 Dad Allies Provider Learning sessions that have been attended by over 300 providers across the state.



# Levels of Maturity



- Pre-Awareness
- Awareness
- Demonstrated Action
- Integration

## Department of Children, Youth and Families – Child Welfare (DCYF CW): **Demonstrated Action**

- DCYF Child Welfare division has a rich history of programs, services, involvement, and specific roles that focused on fatherhood inclusion and involvement
- The team has demonstrated successes in working directly with fathers through local community child welfare liaisons
- There are opportunities to build more data metrics to track how fathers are navigating and experiencing the system, specifically child reunification with fathers is an important metric to capture



## Current State: Data Summary, Programs, Outcomes, and Dimensional Analysis

### # of fathers

- As of Dec 2023, there are currently **30 fathers** in juvenile rehabilitation (7.2%)<sup>1</sup>

### Programs Overview

- DCYF JR program enrollment: **8 fathers** enrolled in father-specific program - Dynamic Dads / Nurturing Fathers curriculum (27% of known fathers).
- New program: Community Transition Services program will launch in May 2024. Program will allow young people to go into the community in electronic monitoring up to 18 months before their sentence date. Impact: eligible fathers are able to live at home and bond with their family/children.

### Current Outcome Metrics

- DCYF JR tracks **recidivism** as outcome to monitor but has a different methodology to calculate recidivism amongst juvenile populations.
- In addition to reducing recidivism, DCYF JR is considering measuring **desistance**<sup>2</sup> from crime for youth that can show an overall positive trend towards less inhibition and better judgment & decision-making among justice involved populations.

### Policies

2 Aware

In recent years, **there is awareness** for the importance of supporting justice-involved youth who may already be parents or may be parents in the future; policies will need to be developed for fatherhood support programming to be widespread in the DCYF JR system

### Funding and Resources

2 Aware

While there is limited funding for father-focused programming (\$8K for 2 groups of Dynamic Dads at Greenhill, as of Oct 2023). **Additional sustainable sources of funding are required** for high-quality and scalable programming to reach the youth population in JR.

### Systems

3 Action

There is currently a **strong focus on system level partnerships** across agencies DCYF, DOC, Commerce, DSHS to support justice-involved populations, reentry readiness and navigational supports.

### Services and Programs

3 Action

While there is an inconsistent availability of father-supportive programs across **DCYF JR residential facilities due to limited number of fathers (~30 total)**, there has been **action taken** to implement programs for father in JR

### Data and Monitoring

2 Aware

DCYF **does not currently have a comprehensive data tracking** mechanism, one current method used is to reach out to all sites monthly to collect data on restitution payments. Ongoing input metrics (e.g., # of fathers) activity-level metrics (e.g., # of participants in father programs), and outcomes (e.g., recidivism for fathers receiving services) need to be built and reported.

### Equity Considerations

2 Aware

Intergenerational incarceration rates broken down by racial subgroup highlight the **importance of family-supportive programming** that disrupts these cycles imposed on families due to systemic inequities. Two-generational impacts of a justice involved youth need to be considered when designing programming and supports

1. DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation 2020 data.  
 2. Desistance is moving towards adult self-sufficiency (e.g., reduction in impulsivity, improvements in behaviors) Source: [Pathways Study](#)  
 3. Pre-awareness—limited data, funding, programs or strategy for father-inclusive or –specific elements. Awareness—understanding of fathers’ unmet needs and emerging efforts; Demonstrated Action—Action consistently promoting fatherhood inclusion; Integration—Systems integrated to promote fatherhood inclusion, sustained action and demonstrated outcomes

#### Levels of Maturity<sup>3</sup>

- 1 Pre-awareness
- 2 Awareness
- 3 Demonstrated Action
- 4 Integration

# Agency Overview



Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

*Juvenile  
Rehabilitation*

## State Level Snapshot

DCYF JR is **aware** of the unique multifaceted needs of youth parents and has taken **action** to design family support services and fatherhood specific programming. Current barriers include program scalability across facilities (largely due to low volume of fathers) and capacity.

The policies and programs that impact youth fathers at reentry:

- JR Functional Family Parole and Community-Assisted Reentry – not father-specific resources
- Contract with Team Child for legal support.

Current father-specific programs are:

- Nurturing Fathers program/curriculum; Dynamic Dads (began Oct 2023) at Green Hill
- Parenting University – for the parents of the young people who are incarcerated.

**DCYF JR's priorities in the near term are to:**

- Improve the family visitation experience
- Expand Dynamic Dads; currently beginning with a small with a group at Green Hill, then move to Echo Glenn and the 8 community facilities
- Other programs/partners that DCYF JR works in partnership with: Early learning, Partnership, Prevention and Services Division – which includes Early Support for Youth and Toddlers, Help Me Grow, Strengthening Families.

## Key Metrics & Data Points

30 of 416 (7.2%) of those in juvenile rehabilitation are fathers (2020 data)<sup>1</sup>

Program enrollment:

- 8 fathers enrolled in Dynamic Dads program (27% of known fathers)
- 6 parents of incarcerated youth enrolled in Parent University

Cost/Funding:

- Total cost of father-focused programming: \$8,000 for 2 groups of Dynamic Dads
- No dedicated ongoing funding for father-focused programs

*Data currently unknown/not collected*

- *% of known fathers with child support orders*
- *Recidivism rate for incarcerated youth that are fathers*

DCYF does not currently have a comprehensive data tracking mechanism to collect data on restitution payments

Current outcome that DCYF JR focuses on - reduce recidivism;

Advocates recommend that another important metric to monitor (not currently being tracked) is an increase in desistance<sup>2</sup>.

## Community Snapshot

- Community partners want to come in and the support JR population to build relationships with youth so that upon release, they have a team they can reach out to for support.
- Community transitions: occurs at the regional level, community partners;
- 50% of young people receive parole aftercare, the other 50% can apply for community assistance support through local community service offices (CSO's) and voluntarily receive support from the JR Community Assisted Reentry Specialists for up to 12 months post-release.

## Barriers and Challenges<sup>3</sup>

- Housing/financial burden: before youth arrive in juvenile rehabilitation they are often living with their parents whereas when they reenter, they sometimes live independently. There can be a significant financial burden to set up living arrangements (furniture, rental deposit, etc.)
- Need for assistance with accessing resources for their children while incarcerated.
- Need for support for a smooth transition upon reentry such as financial support and help finding and renting an apartment, transportation, etc.
- Need for visitation space that is child friendly.

1. Recent policy changes [HB 1646 \(2019\)](#) and [SB 6160 \(2018\)](#) have extended JR facilities to allow youth up to the age of 25; there may be a higher % of fathers in the JR system going forward.

2. Desistance is moving towards adult self-sufficiency (e.g., reduction in impulsivity, improvements in behaviors) Source: [Pathways Study](#)

3. Barriers and challenges sourced from DCYF JR staff, leadership, and community members/fathers.

# Agency Commitments



## Commitments by the (6) Dimensions

Policies	Funding and Resources	Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCYF JR needs headquarters oversight for family engagement; a clear leader to oversee the development of a framework in addition to two coordinators—one for each the east and west sides of WA State.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Funding required to attain.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create more and improved visitation rooms that are child friendly and correctional staff training to appropriately engage children/families. Requires capital to invest in two improved visitation spaces and experience. Additional funding required to maintain the spaces.</li> <li>Access funding for Parenting University.</li> <li>Request edits to proviso language for Evidence Based Expansion funds to access broader programming.</li> <li>Currently, funds are restricted for use on an outdated and limited program menu.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine how to ensure fathers within DCYF JR have as much access to parenting services as those within DOC.</li> <li>Create linkages with home-visiting through Strengthening Families</li> <li>Pilot with Community Transition Services (CTS).</li> <li>Identify additional partners who can provide services to young people who have the training and built-in curriculum to be able to support youth.</li> </ul>
Services and Programs	Data and Monitoring	Community-Engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JR needs a sustainable Pregnancy, Parenting and Fatherhood program, could be tied to education on sexuality, STD and pregnancy prevention (DOH/CARDEA)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Sustainable funding required; this is currently grant funded but ends at the end of 2025</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to track recidivism as the common accepted metric but also add in desistance<sup>1</sup> to monitor any trending behaviors (i.e., inhibition control and executive judgment is improving).</li> <li><i>Short-term:</i> Work within systems already in place, i.e. DCYF does not currently have a comprehensive data tracking mechanism on restitution payments. Opportunity to create a short-list of additional data fields to collect as a part of this monthly solicitation across all sites.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># of youth who are fathers</li> <li># of youth fathers having visits</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather information from the community to assist with reentry supports for young people who are parents to access resources.</li> <li>Seek ways to have the community engagement extend to young people while they are still residing in facilities to strengthen linkages and supports.</li> </ul>

Legend



1. Desistance is moving towards adult self-sufficiency (e.g., reduction in impulsivity, improvements in behaviors) Source: Pathways Study - <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/pathways-desistance-crime-among-juveniles-and-adults-applications-criminal-justice>

# Levels of Maturity



- Pre-Awareness**
- Awareness**
- Demonstrated Action**
- Integration**

## Department of Children, Youth and Families – Juvenile Rehabilitation (DCYF JR): **Awareness / Demonstrated Action**

- DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation **demonstrates a culture of awareness** of the importance of father inclusivity:
  - Commitment to the strategic priority of improving visitation rooms via the family visitation proposal, though additional funding is required.
  - Desire to dedicate a staff member to focus on areas of visitation, family engagement (including parenting/fathers), and leading comprehensive integration of meeting parenting needs across the division's strategy and services.
  - Aware of the importance of partnerships with other DCYF programs (i.e., Strengthening Families) are in process of making connections to further support parents/fathers.
  - Considering the opportunity to seek Social Services Block Grant funding to provide the resources needed to implement the opportunities identified.
  - In the absence of additional funding, Community facilities are considering how to make visitation rooms more child friendly, i.e., in the process of obtaining toys, games, etc.
- **Pockets of demonstrated action** are already being taken:
  - Dynamic Dads program has been implemented in one facility, though the program is facing engagement issues among youth fathers having started with 8 students and now enrollment is down to 4. There is an opportunity to improve implementation strategy with site readiness and preparing youth to receive and engage with these services.
  - Community Transition Services is a program that will launch in May 2024. The program allows young people (eligible through specific criteria) to reside at home with electronic monitoring up to 18 months prior to reaching their sentence date. Impact on fathers: fathers able to live at home and bond with their children; reduces separation time.