Father Friendly Engagement and Breastfeeding
Father involvement is related to positive cognitive, developmental, and socio-behavioral child outcomes, such as:

- improved weight gain in preterm infants
- improved breastfeeding rates
- higher receptive language skills
- higher academic achievement

The Alameda County Fathers Corps was established in 2013 in Alameda County, California.

Collaborative effort – Alameda County First 5, Health Care Services Agency, and Social Services Agency

Began with learning community for male service providers
Fathers Corps Core Components

- Capacity Building
- Research and Assessment
- Systems Change
Capacity Building

- Fathers Corps Learning Community
- County-wide campaign to adopt and implement Father Friendly Principles
- FFP Trainings
- Technical Assistance for Community Partners
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<td>Strategies for Implementing the Father Friendly Principles (FFPN and Fathers Corps)</td>
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<td>Understanding How Fathers Support Brain Development</td>
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<td>Engaging and Supporting Formerly Incarcerated Fathers</td>
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<td>Life Course Approach to Improving the Lives of Boys and Men of Color (FFPN and Fathers Corps)</td>
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Father-Friendly Principles

- Include the needs of fathers
- Provide father-friendly services
- Portray positive father images
- Create positions that serve fathers
- Train staff on fatherhood issues
- Expect father participation
- Design programs for fathers
Engaging and Retaining Fathers

- Father specific
- Male facilitators
- Meet fathers where they are
- Reliable referral process
- Trust and authenticity
- Leadership and staff are patient
- Program names that speak to fathers
- Incentives
Why is this important to you and Breastfeeding!

As breastfeeding advocates, we should commit to engaging and involving fathers and partners figures because:

• they are important and influential allies to their breastfeeding partner;
• it increases breastfeeding participation and babies are healthier!

1/30/19
Breastfeeding Assessment

Where were fathers participating in care?
How well did they meet your needs as a father?
What do you think would best help fathers understand about breastfeeding?
What would you tell a new father about how to support breastfeeding?
What suggestions do you have to make services more father-friendly?
Including fathers/partners in all aspects of prenatal and postpartum breastfeeding education and support is mandated in Medi-Cal Managed Care Delivery contracts.

Clinical providers must follow standards of practice set by professional authorities (ACOG, AAP) and these clearly promote father inclusion in breastfeeding.
Dads, Partners and Breastfeeding

Develop specific father-centered breastfeeding materials and messages
• *Dads, Partners, and Breastfeeding*
• Video “shorts” on key topics for dads
• Post father centered breastfeeding support on *ACBreastfeeds.org*

Provide ongoing training to staff on working with fathers to promote breastfeeding
• Hire and/or engage male staff “champions”
• Apply/secure funding for father-specific programs
BREASTFEEDING BASICS FOR DADS: Your Breastfeeding Questions Answered

Breastfeeding gives your baby a healthy start in life. But it may not be easy. It takes time, practice, patience, and teamwork. Your support and encouragement are critical to breastfeeding success. Learn why breastfeeding is important and how you can be involved in every step of the breastfeeding journey.

Why is breastfeeding the healthiest option for my baby?

- Breast milk lowers your baby’s risk of certain infections and diseases, such as ear infections, asthma, and childhood obesity.
- Breast milk is easier to digest. Breastfed babies have less diarrhea, constipation, and colic.
- Breastfeeding provides important physical contact that makes your baby feel safe, secure, and loved.
- Breast milk contains vitamins, minerals, antibodies, and nutrients to help your baby grow healthy and strong.
Let’s hear from you

• What are your thoughts on what you heard?
• What do the fathers in your communities need?
• Your next steps for action!

1/30/19
Involved Fathers = Stronger Families

Stronger Families = Healthier Communities
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