

TIP SHEET FOR INVOLVING FATHERS

- In the event that a father is determined to be legitimately unavailable through absent search, paternal relatives are to be considered for placement and case involvement.
- Workers should discuss the importance and requirement of involving fathers with other members of the case, even when mothers are resistant to their involvement.
- Ensure that services are appropriate and support the father's understanding of the child's development and care needs.
- Workers are required to make face to face contact with the father to verify case progress and document accordingly. If the father has objectives on the case plan, contact must be made to ensure his progress.
- Allow visitation for fathers in accordance to visitation policies for parents, regardless of what the schedule may be for the mother. Each parent must be afforded equal opportunity for visitation unless contrary circumstances exist.
- Workers are required to advise the courts of the father's involvement and progress. If child support has not been ordered, request that the court establish a support order.
- Encourage positive interaction of the child with father and refer for joint counseling if the child is age appropriate. This will allow child and father to process issues of separation and provide additional positive interaction.
- Ensure that the child is including the father and paternal family in life book development.

- In concurrent planning situations, ensure that the foster family is engaging the father and encouraging his participation in the child's life.
- Workers should keep fathers informed of the child's activities and encourage his attendance in these activities outside regular visitation.
- For incarcerated fathers, check with the correctional facility to see if they have fatherhood programs that will assist with visitation and maintaining contact.
- There are several fatherhood initiative programs across the state so check within your region or contact Central Office Staff at for more information.
- There are also paternity establishment initiatives within the state so please seek assistance by contacting Central Office Staff for additional information.