



FATHERTOPICSTM **COLLECTION** *For Non-Custodial Dads*

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FATHERTOPICS™ **COLLECTION** *For Non-Custodial Dads*





SESSION GUIDES



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT NFI AND OUR PROGRAMS:

TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS

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FIRST EDITION

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Workforce Readiness Session

SESSION DESCRIPTION:

This session provides Dads with information about the importance of being gainfully employed and emphasizes the balance needed to handle the demands of employment and parenting. Dads meet a local career or workforce readiness expert and discuss the issues and challenges related to finding and maintaining employment.

24/7 Dad® CHARACTERISTICS (3):

- Self-awareness
- Parenting Skills
- Relationship Skills

PRE-SESSION PROCEDURES:

1. Review the standard pre-session procedures in the *Instruction Guide*.
2. Write the name of the facilitator(s) on the flip chart as a reminder.
3. Identify and contact a local workforce or career readiness expert to be present during and assist with this session. When selecting an expert, be sure to find someone who understands the nature of the group and the experiences and status of the Dads as it relates to employment (or lack thereof), and who has a supportive demeanor about working with non-custodial fathers. Ask the representative to bring any materials he or she has available for the Dads, including: informational brochures; contact information for workforce readiness offices or programs; and samples of actual forms, model resumes, or job applications used in different employment settings. Share the content of the session so the expert knows what to expect and what is expected of him or her. Give the expert the list of questions he or she needs to speak to during Activity 3.3. You will need to purchase a copy of the movie if you don't have it.
4. Watch the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness* and encourage the workforce readiness expert to watch it as well. Prepare the clip for the group session by cueing the DVD to the scene indicated in Activity #2. You will need to purchase a copy of the movie if you don't have it.



NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

If you aren't familiar with the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness* (2006), it is based on the true story of Chris Gardner who is played by the actor Will Smith. It is an incredible story about the drive of a father, Chris, to find success so that he can care for and become a good model for his son. You can purchase the movie at online retailers, such as Amazon (www.amazon.com), and retail outlets that sell previously-viewed/owned movies.

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NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

If some of the Dads have been incarcerated—especially recently—they will likely have very difficult challenges with employment because of the stigma many employers place on hiring formerly-incarcerated men. Younger and older fathers will also have their own unique employment challenges.

ACTIVITY #2

The Pursuit of Happyness

TIME:

40 Minutes

MATERIALS:

Flip chart, markers, The Pursuit of Happyness DVD, TV and DVD player

FACILITATOR'S GOAL:

To show Dads an example of a highly determined Dad, demonstrating the positive consequences of extreme hard work and commitment. To identify and solve problems regarding the competing demands of employment and parenting.

LEARNING COMPETENCIES:

1. Dads increase their awareness and knowledge of the importance of balancing work and parenting demands.
2. Dads increase their capacity to balance work and parenting.

PROCEDURES:

1. Share with the Dads that they will watch a 5-minute clip from the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness*, which is based on a real story. Ask if anyone has seen the movie. If so, have someone volunteer to briefly explain what the movie is about. If no one has seen the movie, explain that it is about a single dad named Chris who faces possible job loss, eviction from his apartment, and homelessness with his son. The clip that will be shown is Chris' interview for an unpaid internship with a prestigious stock brokerage firm, which he hopes will ultimately land him a job with the firm. He shows up for the interview in clothes covered in paint, having come from painting his apartment from which he was evicted and serving a few hours of jail time for unpaid parking tickets.
2. Play the DVD from 41:20 to 45:58 (running time: 4:38 minutes; stop the DVD immediately following the line "you can call me Jay"). After showing the clip, spend about 10 minutes gathering reactions and feedback from the Dads. Use the following questions to guide the discussion as needed.
 - What can you relate to from this clip?
 - What did Chris do *right* in his interview?
 - What did Chris do *wrong* in his interview?
 - What do you think is the most important thing you can take away from this part of the movie?
3. After discussing these questions, share with the Dads that what they did not see in this clip, but what takes place throughout the movie, is Chris balancing his role as a Dad with his drive and hard work to get and keep a job.
4. Ask the Dads the following question.
 - In addition to all your other life activities, what activities will you need to do to achieve balance as a worker and a dad and, if living with someone, as a husband/partner?



ACTIVITY #2

Dad's Rights and Responsibilities

TIME:

50 Minutes

MATERIALS:

Flip chart, markers, blank pieces of paper, tape, "A Non-Custodial Dad's Legal Rights and Responsibilities" portion of the handout for this session

FACILITATOR'S GOAL:

To explore with the Dads their legal, moral, emotional, and financial rights and responsibilities as a parent.

LEARNING COMPETENCIES:

1. Dads increase their awareness and knowledge of their rights and responsibilities from a holistic perspective.
2. Dads increase their capacity to identify their specific moral, emotional, financial, and legal rights and responsibilities.

PROCEDURES:

1. Tell the Dads that there are many ways that fathers without custody can be involved with their children and that they are going to spend some time exploring the responsibilities of dads, including how they are morally, emotionally, and financially responsible to and for their children.
2. Divide the Dads into three groups. Consider having them count off 1, 2, and 3 with all the 1s forming one group, the 2s another group, and the 3s a third group. Then assign each group one of the following three questions that you prepared on the flip chart papers and posted ahead of the session. Encourage the Dads to brainstorm and write down as many meaningful answers as they can think of to answer their assigned question. Tell each group to choose someone to record their answers and someone else to report back to the larger group. Let them know that they will have 10 minutes and then each group will share their responses. Before you cut them loose, ask if they need you to explain what any of the questions mean.
 - In my role as guide or mentor, what are my moral responsibilities to my child?
 - In my role as nurturer, what are my emotional responsibilities to my child?
 - In my role as provider, what are my financial responsibilities to my child?
3. After 10 minutes, ask each group to share their question and answers. Take about 10 minutes for sharing. After each group reports back, invite the Dads in the other two groups to add anything that they think is missing from that group's list.
4. Next, ask the Dads to go stand in the part of the room where you posted the blank pieces of paper with the numbers 1 through 10. Tell the dads to think about the lists they just completed and that they will rate themselves on each aspect of being an involved dad.

5. Starting with “guide or mentor,” ask the Dads to stand underneath the rating on the wall that best represents how they think they do with that part of being involved in the lives of their children. Tell them that 1 means “they can do a whole lot better” and 10 means “I’m an All-Star Dad” in that area. Before moving on to the other two areas, explore their ratings by posing the following questions to the Dads. You can ask the entire group and wait for Dads to respond or ask each Dad in a round-robin fashion.

- **Why did you give yourself that rating (or if asking Dads individually, insert the number they chose)?**
- **Has there ever been a time when you would have rated yourself higher? What was different about that time in your life?**
- **What would it take to move just one point higher on the scale? What do you need to move that one point higher?**

6. Now move on to the other two areas—nurturer and provider—and take the Dads through the same rating process and ask them the same questions.
7. After the group moves through all three areas, have the Dads return to their seats and applaud them for being willing to explore these areas and for their honesty.
8. Ask the Dads how many of them think they know, by a show of hands, most of their legal rights and responsibilities when it comes to their children. Then ask the Dads to share what they know about their legal rights and responsibilities and write their responses on the flip chart.
9. Now have the Dads turn to the “A Non-Custodial Dad’s Legal Rights and Responsibilities” portion of the handout. Spend the remaining time for this activity having the Dads review the handout and asking any questions they might have.



NOTE TO FACILITATOR

The authors obtained the information in the handout from the following source: Lawyers.com™. Obtained July 1, 2011, from <http://family-law.lawyers.com/child-custody/Your-Rights-As-A-Noncustodial-Parent.html>. You should check this source periodically just in case this information changes in the future.

If some of the Dads have limited literacy skills, consider reading the handout aloud to them or ask a Dad(s) with good literacy skills to volunteer to read it/parts of it.





ACTIVITY #3

What Children Need During a Visit

TIME:

40 Minutes

MATERIALS:

Flip chart, pencils or pens, “Visiting with My Children” and “Planning a Visit with My Child” portions of the handout for this session

FACILITATOR’S GOAL:

To help the Dads see that their ability to read their children’s feelings will help them be good dads and that knowing what to do with children of various ages helps visits go well.

LEARNING COMPETENCIES:

1. Dads increase their awareness and knowledge of what their children need from them during a visit.
2. Dads increase their capacity to identify age-appropriate activities to do with their children during a visit.

PROCEDURES:

1. Share with the Dads that the key to successful visits is watching for and responding to their children’s needs and doing things with them that help them feel safe and comfortable.
2. Ask the Dads to answer the following questions on the flip chart that you prepared ahead of the session.
 - **What might be some of the things your children are thinking and feeling during a visit?**
 - **What could you do to respond well to your children’s thoughts and feelings?**
3. Share with the Dads that it is a good idea to think about and plan ahead what to do during the visits with their children. Tell the Dads to turn to the “Visiting With My Children” portion of the handout for this session. Ask the Dads to form groups based on the ages of their children (group those with small children together, those with teenagers together, etc.; it is okay if they all fall into the same age group). After they are in these groups, ask the Dads to read over the list of activities for their children’s age group and brainstorm some more ideas for activities, writing them on the handouts. Then ask each Dad to come up with a plan of activities for a two-hour visit with one of his children in this age group and to write the plan on the “Planning a Visit With My Child” portion of the handout. Have the Dads share their plans within their small group. Then ask for a few examples to be shared with the larger group.



ACTIVITY #3

Myth or Truth: The Realities of Child Support

TIME:

25 minutes

MATERIALS:

“Myth or Truth” portion of the handout for this session,
“Myth or Truth: The Realities of Child Support Facilitator’s
Answer Guide” (located at the end of this session)

FACILITATOR’S GOAL:

To help the Dads identify factual information about child support and enforcement, distinguishing truth from myth.

LEARNING COMPETENCIES:

1. Dads increase their awareness and knowledge about the purpose of child support and enforcement.
2. Dads increase their capacity to see the value in providing child support.

PROCEDURES:

1. Refer the Dads to the “Myth or Truth: The Realities of Child Support” portion of the handout. Have the Dads take turns reading each statement aloud and then as a group. Collectively determine whether the statement is a myth or a truth. (Use the “Myth or Truth: The Realities of Child Support Facilitator’s Answer Guide” that appears at the end of this session for the correct answers.) If the Dads’ literacy levels are good enough, consider asking them to complete this portion of the handout on their own or with a partner and then go through it question by question and ask the Dads to volunteer answers. Invite the dads to share any experiences and insights related to each statement. If questions related to the child support system arise during this activity, have the Dads write them on the handout and ask them of the child support expert later in the session (during Activity #4.)
2. Consider asking the child support expert for feedback or to comment on what the Dads shared.



NOTE TO FACILITATOR

If some of the Dads who can’t read or can’t read well enough, consider reading the statements aloud to the Dads and ask them to follow along in the handout so they aren’t embarrassed that they can’t read or read well enough.



NOTE TO FACILITATOR

It could become apparent to you that some of the Dads don’t know what is expected of them in paying child support and what can and can’t be done to enforce payment. Encourage them to share their experiences and to challenge one another’s assumptions. The presence of the child support expert will help ensure that the Dads have the most accurate information about what is expected of them and how child support and works. Remind the Dads that as they share their personal experiences with one another, what is shared in the group stays in the group. It is also important to help the Dads, both in this activity and throughout the session, to see and understand the difference between “formal” and “informal” child support. Some of the Dads who provide financial support by giving the mother(s) of their children cash or buying things for her or the children might not realize that this is not a substitute for paying on a child support order.

Money Management Session

SESSION DESCRIPTION:

This session helps the Dads understand the costs associated with raising a child. Dads learn how to access and best use/leverage government assistance (e.g. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)--[formerly known as food stamps] and Medicaid) as a means to provide for their children now and in the future and as temporary assistance during times of unemployment or underemployment. A money management expert discusses with the Dads the value of creating and maintaining a budget and planning for their children's future. The Dads also have the opportunity to complete a budget as a way to become a better money manager and provider for their children.

24/7 Dad™ CHARACTERISTICS (3):

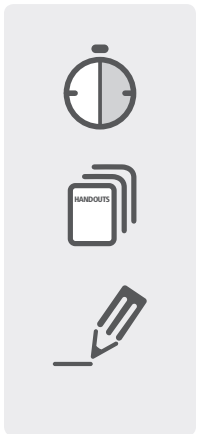
- Self-awareness
- Parenting Skills
- Relationship Skills

PRE-SESSION PROCEDURES:

1. Review the standard pre-session procedures in the *Instruction Guide*.
2. Prepare a single piece of flip chart paper and divide it into four sections for Activity #1. Write the following headings for each section following the "What Costs So Much? The Costs of Raising Children" handout in the *Fathering Handbook*: **UNBORN BABY, BABY/TODDLER, SCHOOL-AGED CHILD, TEENAGER**. You can also write each of the titles on four separate sheets of paper if you want more room in which to write the Dads' responses.
3. Write the questions you will ask the Dads during Activity #2 on the flip chart.
4. Identify and contact a local money management expert who will be present and assist with this session. When selecting an expert, be sure to find someone who understands the nature of the group and the experiences and status of the Dads as it relates to money management, raising children, and maintaining a budget. **This expert should be familiar with federal, state, and local government-assistance programs available to low-income populations and how to leverage those programs in providing financially for children.** This experience is critical for the expert to be an effective and credible resource. Ask the expert to bring any materials (e.g. handouts, forms related to budgeting, saving, credit counseling, credit reporting, obtaining a

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ACTIVITY #4

Closing and Comments

TIME:

10 Minutes

MATERIALS:

“What I Learned Log” portion of the handout for this session, pencils or pens

FACILITATOR’S GOAL:

To bring the session to a close by evaluating whether the Dads acquired the learning competencies of the session and allowing the Dads to comment on and end the session.

LEARNING COMPETENCIES:

Dads demonstrate the capacity to complete the “What I Learned Log” entries for this session.

PROCEDURES:

1. Ask each Dad to take five minutes and complete the following statements in the “What I Learned Log” portion of the handout.
 - One thing new I learned today is _____.
 - On a scale from 0 - 5, how likely am I to use what I learned?
(0 = Not at all likely; 5 = Very likely)

0 1 2 3 4 5

 - The “Action Steps” I need to take are: _____.
2. Ask some of the Dads to share what they learned and to give you their rating on how likely they’ll be to use it. If a dad gives you a rating of 3 or lower, ask him why he chose that rating. His response can give you insight into barriers that will prevent him from using what he learned. Consider helping the Dad outside the group to address the barrier or ask other dads as you close the session for suggestions on how to address it.
3. Spend the remaining time asking each Dad if he has any comments on the session.
4. Thank the Dads for attending the session and remind them of the time and date of the next session if you will conduct one.

NOTES

FatherTopics™ Collection for Non-Custodial Dads

Five 2-hour sessions your organization can run for non-custodial fathers to help them succeed as involved fathers.



FATHERTOPICS™ COLLECTION *For Non-Custodial Dads*

In 2011, the City of New York's Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) contracted with National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) to create a version of 24/7 Dad® that organizations in the city would use with non-custodial fathers. The resulting DYCD version of 24/7 Dad® included new session content to provide information on some of the most critical issues faced by non-custodial fathers that don't directly address pro-fathering knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

Consequently, NFI decided to use that newly designed content to create **FatherTopics™ Collection for Non-Custodial Dads**, so that facilitators and organizations across the country could provide these well-received sessions to non-custodial fathers wherever they reside, and regardless of location. The reaction to these field-tested sessions, from facilitators and non-custodial fathers in New York City, has been overwhelmingly positive.

Please refer to the back of this page for details on the five sessions in The Collection.

- ✓ Workforce Readiness
- ✓ Rights and Responsibilities
- ✓ Visitation
- ✓ Child Support
- ✓ Money Management

Session Uses:

- Run one or all five sessions with non-custodial fathers you serve.
- Use whichever sessions you need, when you need them.
- Add one or more sessions to an existing fatherhood program.
- Substitute one or more sessions for sessions in your current programming for non-custodial fathers.

Collection Kit Includes:

CD-ROM with Instruction Guide and Session Handouts

Binder-Ready, 3-Hole Punched Sessions (listed above) with Divider Tabs

**ONLY
\$219**
5-Session Pack
+ CD-ROM



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Sessions In The Collection



FATHERTOPICS™ COLLECTION *For Non-Custodial Dads*

Non-custodial fathers will learn about and explore their knowledge, attitudes, emotions, and behavior in the following five areas, which are critical to their success as fathers:

Workforce Readiness

Provides fathers with information about the importance of being gainfully employed and emphasizes the balance needed to handle the demands of employment and parenting. Fathers meet a local career or workforce readiness expert and discuss the issues and challenges related to finding and maintaining employment.

Rights and Responsibilities

Helps fathers to understand their legal rights as fathers and, specifically, their rights as non-custodial parents. Fathers learn to appreciate their parental responsibilities from a moral, legal, financial, emotional, and holistic perspective, and to assess their ability to serve as both a nurturer and guide to their children.

Visitation

This session focuses on the purpose and goals of fathers' visits with their children, what the fathers should look for to evaluate the success of visits, and what the fathers can do to have successful visits with their children.

Child Support

This session helps fathers to better understand the importance of providing child support, what this type of support means for their children, and for their self-identification as a father. This session emphasizes the value of all types of support given by a father (e.g. financial, emotional, and physical). Fathers meet a local child support expert/representative and learn about child support enforcement and how to navigate the child support system.

Money Management

This session helps fathers to understand the costs associated with raising a child. Dads learn how to access and best use/leverage government assistance (e.g. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—[formerly known as food stamps], and Medicaid) as a means to provide for their children as temporary assistance during times of under/unemployment. A money management expert discusses the value of creating and maintaining a budget, planning for their children's future, and fathers can complete a budget.

The Collection covers some of the most critical issues faced by non-custodial fathers.

Topics Covered

24/7 Dad® focuses on key fathering characteristics such as masculinity, discipline, and work-family balance - and helps men evaluate their parenting skills.

Topics Include:

- Workforce Readiness
- Rights & Responsibilities
- Visitation
- Child Support
- Money Management

What's Included

- CD-ROM with Instruction Guide and Session Handouts
- Binder-Ready, 3-Hole Punched Sessions (listed above) with Divider Tabs

Order your kit today!



FatherTopics Collection for Non-Custodial Dads - Order Now!

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