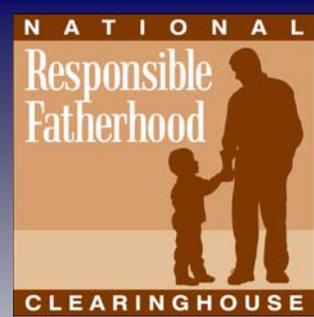


Promising Practices: Working With Incarcerated Fathers.

Ken Gosnell

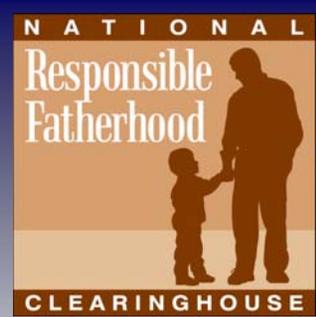
**Senior Director of Corrections Programming
*National Fatherhood Initiative***



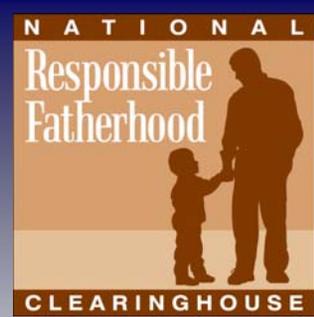
The Promise of Working with Incarcerated Fathers

The Promise:

To help fathers reconnect with their children so as to reduce recidivism and to break the intergenerational cycle of crime.

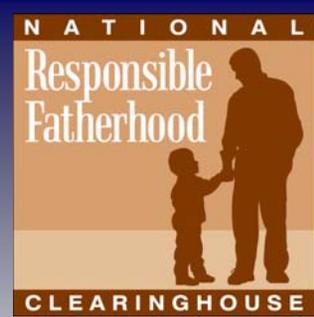


Understanding the Incarcerated Father



Profile of an Incarcerated Father

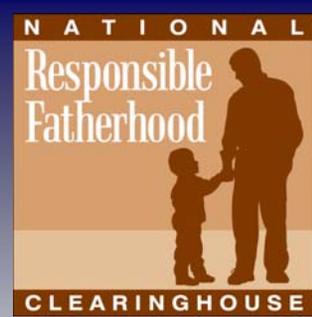
- The average incarcerated father is between 25 – 35 years old.
- The average incarcerated father:
 - 30 percent Married/
20 percent Divorced
- The average incarcerated father:
 - 11 grade education;
6 grade reading level



Profile of an Incarcerated Father

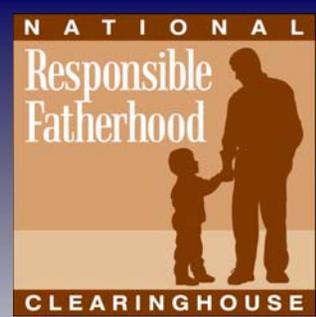
Startling Facts:

- Nearly half of all imprisoned parents are Black; about a quarter are white.
- Over 60 percent of incarcerated men are more than 100 miles away from their family.
- Average sentence for an incarcerated man is 80 – 100 months.
- Over half of incarcerated men are in prison for a violent offense or drug trafficking.

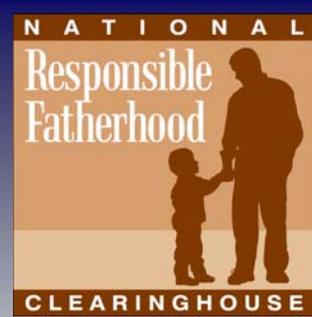


What About the Children?

- Nationwide, over ten million children have parents who have been imprisoned at some time in their lives.
- African-American children are 9 times, Hispanics are 3 times more likely to have parent in prison.
- The ever growing problem of the “intergenerational cycle of crime.”

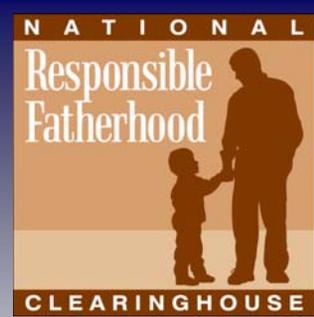


The Importance of Reentry for Incarcerated Fathers



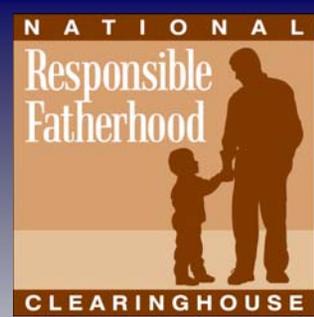
Facts about Recidivism

- Fact: 90 percent of all inmates will be released.
- Fact: 70 percent of inmates come back to the community where they were arrested.
- Fact: 600,000 men are released from prison every year – about 1,600 a day.
- Fact: 2/3 of released inmates are rearrested within 3 years.



Transition Back Home Is Difficult

- Inmates frequently “fantasize” about what life will be like on the outside, unwilling to face the real problems that will confront them.
- Inmates develop an unrealistic view of what home life will be like when they return.
- “Institutionalization” - many former inmates are often unaware, or even unwilling to admit just how much prison life has affected them.
- Cognitive readjustment comes through awareness and training.

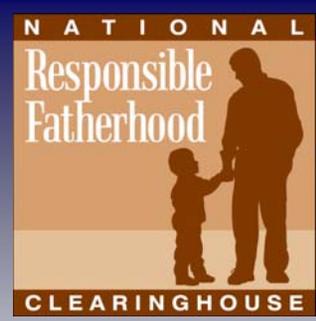


Family Reunification is Key

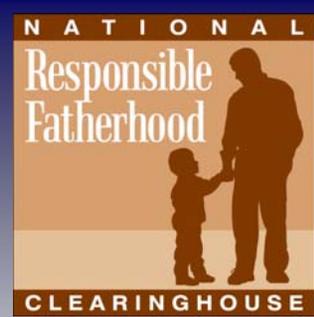
“The most significant resource for supporting prison families consists of the prisoners and ***families themselves***. Both logic and research suggest that families are the ***reentry program of first and last resort***. At least one study has found that people who have family ties during incarceration do better when released than those without such ties.”

Annie E. Casey Foundation study

“Re-Entry: Helping Prisoners Return to Communities”



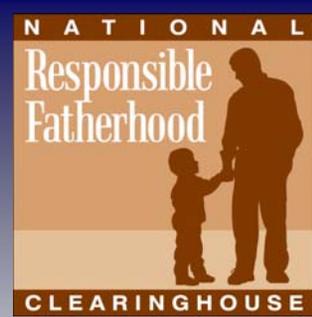
Summary of Successful Programs



Successful Programs

4 Keys to Successful Programs:

- Recruitment
- Reentry as a main emphasis
- Reconnection to the family unit
- Responsibility of the father emphasized

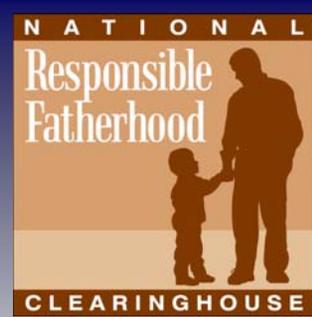


Successful Programs

Key Factor:

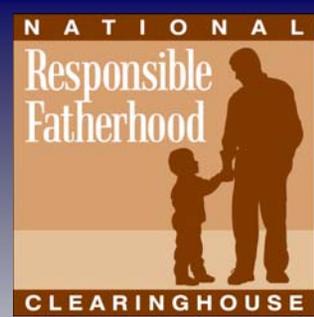
Father Specific

Programs that are successful are specifically tailored to fathers and especially incarcerated fathers.



Successful Programs

- Most inmates are fathers.
- Most inmates grow up in father absent homes or with poor fathering role models.
- Family and community connections are the keys to reducing recidivism.
- Fatherhood Programming strengthens family and community connections by providing the inmate purpose for other educational and rehabilitative initiatives.

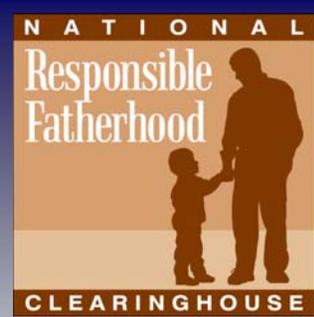


Successful Programs

Key Factor:

Early Implementation

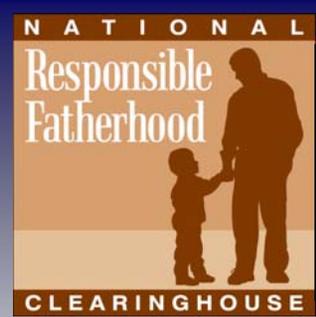
Programs that are successful will be ones that assess fathers early and address family reunification issues.



Key Factor:

Evaluation

Programs that are successful are ones that are evaluated on the basis of fatherhood and fatherhood attitudes.

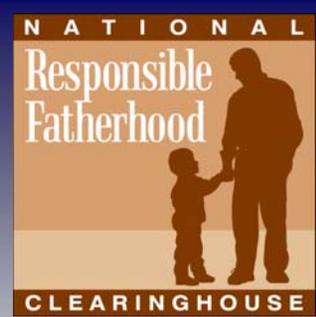


Successful Programs

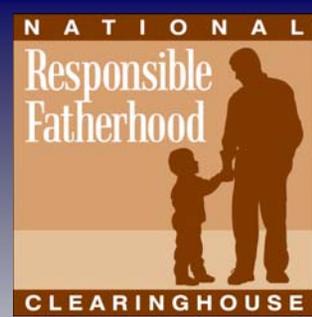
Key Factor:

Encouragement
through Coaching and
Mentoring

Successful Programs are ones that will allow the father to reconnect to their Children in safe ways.

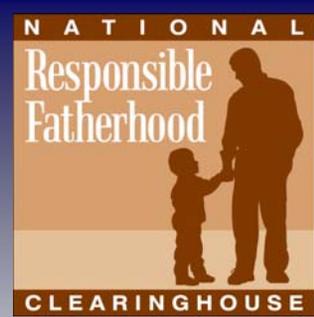


Summary of Essential Components of an Incarcerated Program



Essential Components: Facilitator

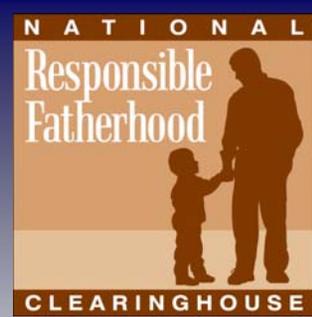
- To be an effective agent for change, the program has to be implemented by quality facilitators.
- As facilitators go, so goes the effectiveness of the program.
- The facilitator and the effectiveness of the program are inseparable.



Essential Components: Facilitator

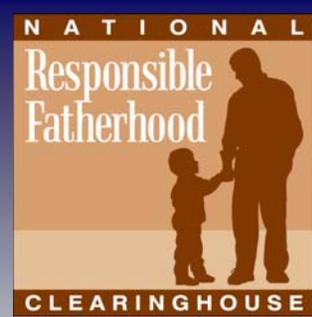
- Is Empathic
- Is Emotionally Stable
- Knows Appropriate Fathering and Parenting
- Is Dependable
- Accepts own Background
- Is a Professional
- Is a Team Member
- Acts Responsibly
- Knows the Specific Goals of a Program
- Establishes Relationships with Fathers
- Works Well in Groups

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT US AT
1-800-4-A-FATHER



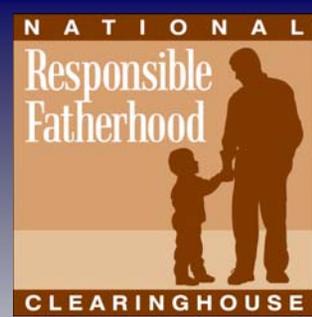
Essential Component: Conceptual Development

- Flexibility
- Easy to Read and Participate: manuals and objectives
- Standardization of Program concepts
- Both skills and attitudes taught and addressed



Essential Component: Weekly Learning Concepts

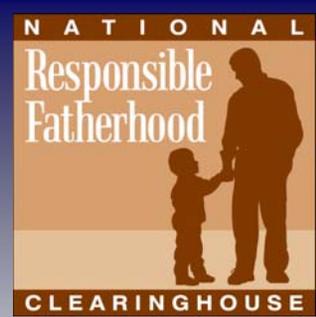
- Highlights of the major learning concepts should be discussed at the beginning of each session.
- The major concepts should also be presented in some form of Homework that the father does on his own time.
- Major concepts should be put into action as reintegration and reentry back into the family unit is practiced.



Essential Component: Evaluation

A successful fatherhood program should evaluate the following areas:

- Fathering as a concept
- Parenting as a concept
- Child-rearing knowledge
- Fathering attitudes
- Skills of the father
- Father and child interaction
- Relationship Skills



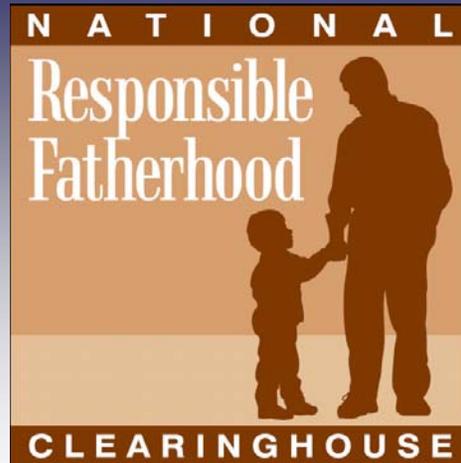
Thank You!

Kenneth Gosnell

Senior Director of Corrections Programming

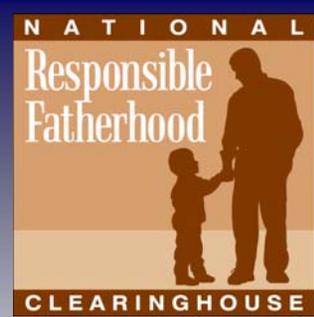
(240) 912-1283

Email: kgosnell@fatherhood.org



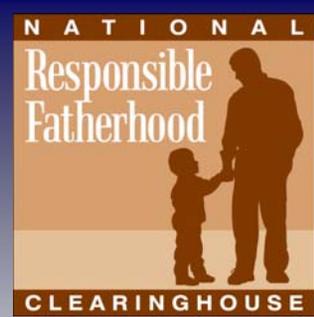
Making The Difference

RON TIJERINA
THE RIDGE PROJECT



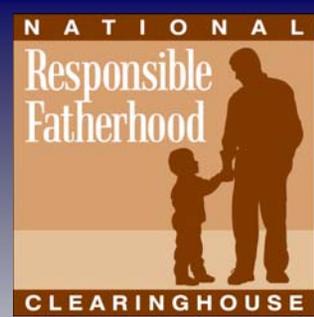
Personal Experience

- Married 21 years.
- Father of three.
- Served 15 years for a crime I did not commit.
- Wife and family visits



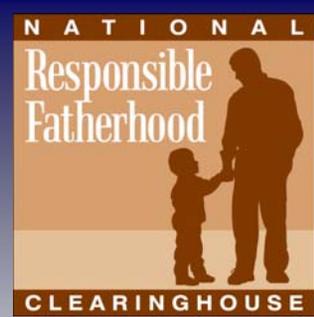
Personal Exp. Cont.

- Worked with Fathers from the inside
- Facing Past and Current Failures
- Facing the Truth
- Control Issues
- Fear for safety for self
- Fear of losing Family



Personal Exp. Cont.

- Enhance wife/family connections
- No more goodbyes
- RelationSHIP-Find the best vehicle to build a friendship with my wife and kids.
- Finding ways to communicate love and commitment from inside

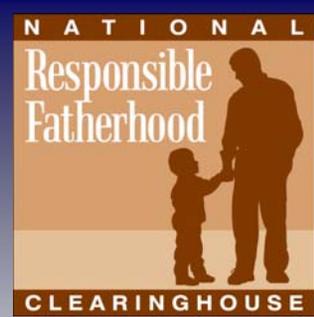


Keeping FAITH

- Keeping Families And Inmates Together in Harmony

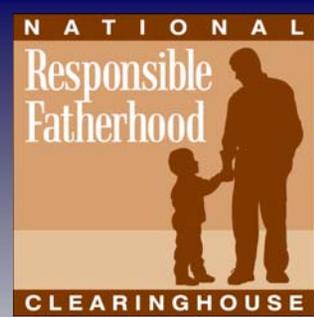
A four component program focused on building Healthy Marriages in order to produce healthy families/fathers

1. Couple Communication-(9 hours)
2. Keeping FAITH Module 1-(18 hours)
3. Couple Communication II (12 hours)
4. Keeping FAITH Module II (23 hours))



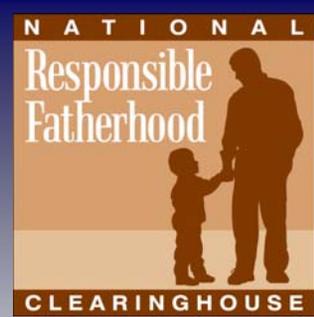
Keeping FAITH cont.

- Entire Program is 50 weeks in length
- Program Components can stand alone to meet client needs
- Prospective Clients fill out an application to determine eligibility naming partner with contact info.
- Partner must agree to participate as well



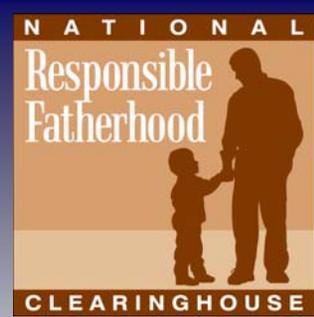
Keeping FAITH cont

- Implementation Model
 - Send letters of inquiry to prospective clients and points of referral/entry
 - Follow up phone calls
 - Set face-to-face meetings
 - Follow up with Promotional Folder
 - Include brochures
 - Summary
 - Sample of letters of support
 - List of letters of support
 - Client testimonials



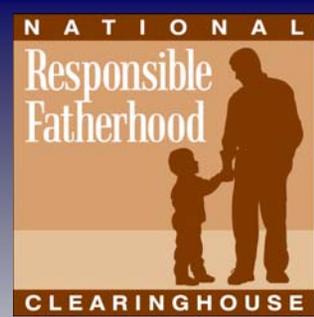
Moving Mountains

- What are the “Mountains”
 - Fear
 - Control
 - Denial
 - Selfishness
 - Separation
 - Lack of Support for relationships
 - Lack of trust/dependability of other programs



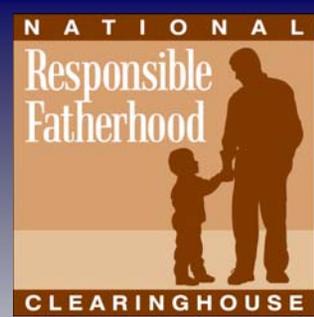
Moving Mountains cont.

- How to overcome those issues
 - Must REACH them to TEACH them
 - Understand the Issues
 - Variations of same issues for all fathers
 - Bringing all factors to the light
 - Normalize issues of incarceration
 - Deal with Reality of difficulties
 - Recognize the partners and families are the forgotten victims



Moving Mountains cont.

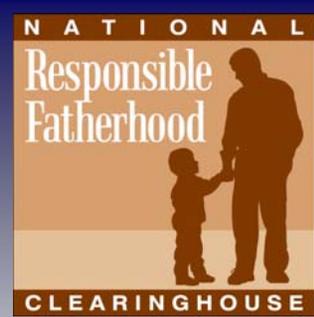
- Don't Minimize the struggles
 - Compassion and Wisdom
- Be Consistent
- Be Reliable
- Be REAL
- Make the Clients first
 - No “better thans”
 - Outreach with an office, not an office with an outreach



Getting IN!

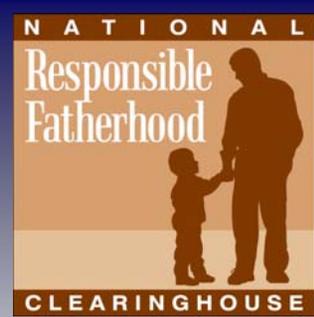
- Staff
 - Must be passionate
 - Must believe in the project
 - Must be REAL

- Sell, Sell, Sell
 - Public Relations
 - **Show off your previous successes**
 - **Be Persistent**
 - Make it relevant
 - **Find their priorities and address those**
 - **Know your stuff!!**



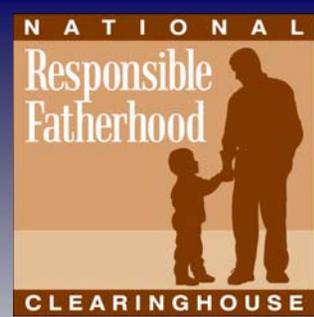
Getting In cont.

- Do exactly what you promise to do
 - Do not mislead the clients
 - Do not mislead the institutions, APA, Probation Depts. Etc.
 - Keep communication ongoing
- Be Consistent and Reliable!



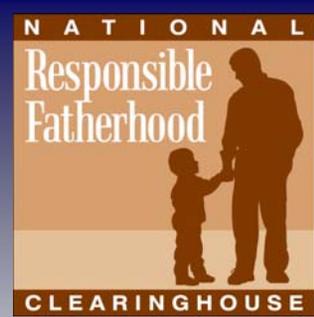
Getting In Cont

- Be Flexible
- Location
 - Safe places on outside
 - Client Friendly atmosphere (outside)
 - Convenient Places on outside



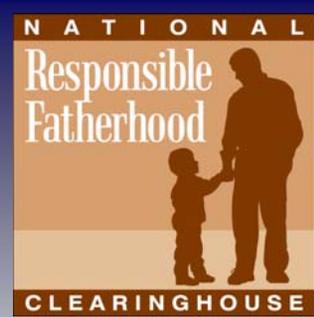
Don't Quit

- This is not a Project, This is about Saving People's Lives!!
 - The incarcerated
 - Their partner
 - Their children
 - Members of the Community, State and Nation



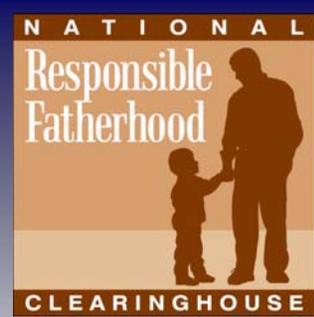
Don't Quit Cont

- Do not Start something you cannot finish
- Invest your hearts into these people
- Never accept defeat—there are only detours!



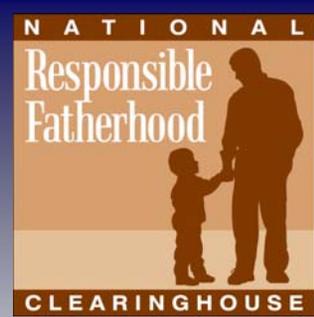
Don't Quit cont

- Expose them to Hope, Forgiveness and Opportunity
- Be prepared to do your job..... and then some!
- Mediocre services produce mediocre results



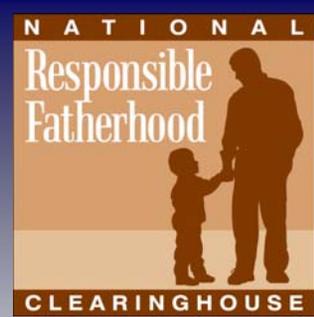
Don't Quit cont

- Many outreaches have made promises they don't deliver to this population.
- To ensure success for your project, you must sacrifice your ***SELF*** for the people you serve.



Know Your Job

- Our job is not to fix the people we serve, our job is to *Equip* the people we serve.



Contact Information

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