

Father-Friendly Environmental Assessment

The Father-Friendly Environmental Assessment is designed to help prepare you for participation in the National Head Start Institute on Father Involvement. Advance consideration of these issues will especially be useful during the planning session on the last day.

Your responses to these questions will also help Institute speakers and presenters have a better understanding of where participants are in the process of creating father friendly environments. Therefore, we would appreciate your submitting your scores on the online assessment form at www.hsnrc.org. The information provided will be used only in the aggregate. ***Participants completing the online assessment will receive a token of appreciation at the Institute, so please include your name.*** If you have any questions, please call the Institute Information Hotline at 888-747-8709, or send an e-mail to fatherhoodinstitute@pal-tech.com.

Lastly, please bring this worksheet with you to the National Head Start Institute on Father Involvement. Thank you for your cooperation!

Directions: Walk through your center and complete the following assessment. *If you are a woman, it might be useful to take a man with you.*

Scoring: 2 points for having achieved this goal
 1 point for some progress made
 0 points for no action taken yet

A. First Impressions _____

The initial reception area is free of signs or posters that would be possibly intimidating for men, e.g., domestic violence posters that target men as batterers. The name of the agency is neutral or inclusive of men. The receptionist is warm, friendly, and comfortable with men and fathers participating in program activities.

B. Physical Landscape _____

All visual materials include men and fathers of varied racial and ethnic backgrounds in positive roles; posters have positive, non-stereotypical messages. Magazines and brochures are relevant to both men and women. Materials are available in the home languages of the families.

C. Role Models _____

There are men present in the agency, including male staff working with parents and children in roles other than as van driver, cook, janitor, or accountant.

D. Linguistic Landscape _____

Verbal and nonverbal language and cues avoid stereotyped generalizations about men; there is no joking or humorous conversation where men/fathers are the butt of the joke; there are no informal negative conversations about men to be overheard.

E. Materials/Activities for Parents _____

Equipment, resources, and types of parenting activities are diverse and relevant for both fathers and mothers. Specific brochures/publications are provided for fathers, and non-custodial fathers are recognized. Referral lists include services for fathers as well as mothers. Fathers are involved in planning and implementing fatherhood involvement programs and other activities for the agency.

F. Communications and Roles _____

Men in the agency, whether staff or fathers, are listened to with open minds; their ideas are considered thoughtfully. Differences in male/female communication styles are understood and respected – men are not expected to communicate exactly like women. Men are appreciated in both traditional and nontraditional roles. They are not asked to do all of the heavy labor tasks (but are appreciated if they volunteer to do these things). Their ability to be effective and appropriate in their interactions with young children is recognized.

G. Interaction with Parents _____

Mothers and fathers get equal respect and attention from staff. Fathers are addressed by name in their primary language, if possible. The staff expects fathers to be involved, welcomes them warmly, recognizes and respects differences in male and female parenting styles, and avoids “correcting” fathers as they interact with their children.

H. Classroom Environment _____

Father-friendly children’s books, including non-fiction, are available. Pictures, posters and other visual materials show fathers at work and at home. Materials are available that fathers might enjoy using with young children. Curriculum topics and learning experiences are chosen that appeal to men. Stereotypic presentations of men in books, posters, toys, or conversation are avoided.

TOTAL SCORE _____

RATING: 0-5 Just beginning 6-10 In process 11-14 Almost there 15-16 Congratulations!

PARTICIPANT NAME: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this self-audit.

Please visit www.hsnrc.org to submit your scores on the online form. Your scores will be added to those of programs across the country to provide Institute speakers and presenters with a national “snapshot” of father-friendliness in Head Start.

We appreciate your cooperation, and we look forward to seeing you in June!