# ALAMEDA COUNTY FATHERS CORPS REPORT 2013-18

**CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF THE ALAMEDA COUNTY FATHERS CORPS** 

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# THE ALAMEDA COUNTY FATHERS CORPS IS CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF SERVICE

The Alameda County Fathers Corps (ACFC), established in 2013, is a collaborative effort of First 5 Alameda County, Alameda County Health Care Services Agency, and Alameda County Social Services Agency. The ACFC promotes and supports fathers and father figures to be meaningfully engaged with their children and families, and advocates for family service providers to provide father-friendly services and to assist fathers in strengthening their parenting skills.

### **FUNDING**

The Alameda County Fathers Corps is a jointly funded collaboration. Without the support of our partners and others, the work of the Fathers Corps could not have experienced such tremendous growth nor received the countywide visibility and support that it has from both systems and community-based partners. Funding for the Fathers Corps has increased from \$8,000 in 2013 to \$398,000 in 2018.

## **FATHERS CORPS FUNDERS INCLUDE**

- Alameda County Board of Supervisors
- Alameda County Health Care Services Agency
- Alameda County Public Health Department
- Alameda County Social Services Agency
- California Wellness Foundation
- First 5 Alameda County



# **LEARNING COMMUNITY**

### "[The Learning Community is] the backbone of the Fathers Corps... without those guys we wouldn't be where we are today."

Kevin Bremond Co-Founder of Alameda County Fathers Corps, Program Administrator, First 5 Alameda County

In 2013, the ACFC began as a Learning Community for male services providers. The ACFC convenes the Learning Community for 10 meetings over a nine-month period to provide networking and training opportunities. Participants receive training on early childhood topics and topics specific to the needs of fathers and father figures. Learning Community participants appreciate the opportunity to meet regularly, receive training, network with other male providers in the family service field, and discuss issues directly impacting Alameda County fathers. Fathers Corps Learning Community graduates use their training and peer support to become change agents and leaders within their own organizations, advocating for father-friendly practices. New father centered programming has been created by Learning Community graduates at BANANAS, Family Paths, Literacy Lab, the Juvenile Justice Center, and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland, just to name a few.

The Learning Community is jointly facilitated by First 5 Alameda County and the Alameda County Public Health Department. It began with the intention of strengthening families by training and supporting male providers to engage fathers/father figures and support their involvement in children's lives. These providers are trained on a variety of topics that improves their capacity to deliver father-friendly services at their home agencies. Many of the trainings include panel discussions with parents who provide valuable insight into the current experiences families face in the communities we serve. Many providers find these trainings engaging and helpful personally and in their work; several return year after year.

### "Through the work of the Fathers Corps, many lives are and will be changed in a very positive way."

**Fathers Corps Member** 



of Learning Community participants reported that the Fathers Corps helped them to be a more knowledgeable, skillful, and/or engaged provider.



of Learning Community participants reported that the Fathers Corps helped them to be a better father, grandparent, or caregiver.

### 2013-2018 LEARNING COMMUNITY TRAINING TOPICS

A Father's Role in Child Development & Understanding Temperament Nutrition and Wellness A Father's Role in Raising Children in Violent or Unsafe Environments Parental Depression/ Edinburgh Child Development 101: How Fathers Influence Children as They Grow Coming of Age: The Importance of Culture, Ritual & Community Acknowledgment Co-Parenting When the Relationship Is Fractured Discipline: A Father's Role in Teaching and Nurturing Children Exploring Different Approaches to Discipline Expulsion/ Suspension of Children of Color/ How to Advocate for Your Child at School Father-Friendly Services Fathers' Rights and Responsibilities (Child Support 101 & Custody 101) Introduction to the Strengthening Families Framework Making Relationships Work Meeting Fathers Where They Are Navigating the Alameda County Social Services Agency

Eligibility and Employment Services Systems

Parenting as a Team/Co-Parenting Rebuilding the Village: Community Resilience and Cultural Competence Safety and Law Enforcement Encounters Supporting Fathers of Children with Special Needs The Role of Fathers in Supporting Social & **Emotional Development** Trauma and Resilience: The Science of Hope Trauma's Impact on Child Development Understanding Current Immigration Policies, Practices, and Enforcement Understanding Gang Culture & Strategies to Keep Youth Safe Understanding Gangs, Law Enforcement and Popular Culture Utilizing the ASQ & ASQ-SE

Working with Teen Fathers

Through the commitment of Learning Community
members, the ACFC has created a trained pool
of male service providers who are available to
support Alameda County fathers/father figures
and providers serving families in Alameda County.

MEMBER STATUS	NUMBER	MINIMUM # OF TRAININGS ATTENDED
Fathers Corps Participants	113	3 trainings
Father Engagement Specialists	39	7 trainings
Father Engagement Mentors	11	14 trainings
Fathers Corps Ambassadors	21	21 trainings

## **DIVERSE POOL OF TRAINERS AND CONTENT EXPERTS**

Over its first five years, the Fathers Corps has identified a diverse group of subject matter experts who have provided multiple trainings to the Learning Community. Convening male providers to focus on early childhood and fatherhood is a unique approach. Many trainers have expressed interest in remaining connected to the ACFC. Below is a list of trainers who have provided multiple trainings to the Learning Community.

#### Mary Blackburn PhD, MPH

Nutrition and Wellness

#### Shawn Bryant MA Teaching Excellence Center

A Fathers Role in Child Development Brain Development Discipline and Temperament Exploring Different Approaches to Discipline

#### Ignacio Ferrey MPH, MA

Alameda County Center for Healthy Schools & Communities

Working with Teen Fathers

#### **Paul Flores**

#### Writer, Producer, Theater Maker

Coming of Age: The importance Culture, Ritual and Community Acknowledgment

Understanding Gang Culture and Strategies to Keep Youth Safe

#### Carlos A. Guerrero LCSW UCSF Benioff Childrens

Hospital Oakland

Child Development 101

Trauma and Its Impact on Brain Development

#### Tasha Henneman Ed.D.

#### Office of Senator Nancy Skinner

Expulsion/Suspension of Children of Color/How to Advocate for your Child at School

### David Inniss Ed.D.

#### The Koci Group

Co-Parenting When the Relationship is Fractured

### BeverlyKyer MSW, ACSW

#### The Kyer Group Corporation

Trauma and its impact on Brain Development

Trauma's Impact on Child Development/Raising Children in an Unsafe Environment

#### Macheo Payne Ed.D.

## California State University of the East Bay

Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Development

Normalizing and Treating Depression Among Fathers

#### Rona Renner RN

Discipline and Temperament

Exploring Different Approaches to Discipline

#### Vina Runnels

Alameda County Department of Child Support Services

Fathers Rights and Responsibilities (Child Support 101 and Custody 101)

#### Deb Turner PhD

First 5 Alameda County

How Fathers Support Social and Emotional Development

#### Jason Wright

Alameda County Department of Child Support Services

Fathers Rights and Responsibilities (Child Support 101 and Custody 101)



# JEFF GILLENKIRK FATHERHOOD ADVOCACY & COMMUNCATION AWARD

Jeff Gillenkirk was a co-founder of the Alameda County Fathers Corps (ACFC) who passed away in 2016. He strongly believed in the work of the Fathers Corps and what it could mean for children and families in Alameda County. In 2017, the ACFC established the Jeff Gillenkirk Fatherhood Advocacy and Communication Award. Each year, two Fathers Corps members who embody Jeff's spirit and passion for advocating and supporting the needs of fathers/father figures are acknowledged at the end-of-year celebration.



2017 Awardees, Fernando Jimenez and Harrold Scoggins (center), Gary Thompson (left), Kevin Bremond (right)



Jeff Gillenkirk

# 2017

- Fernando "J" Jimenez, Tandem, Partners in Early Learning
- Harrold Scoggins, City of Oakland Head Start

## 2018

- Shane Rogge, Department of Child Support Services
- Carlos Guerrero, UCSF Benioff's Children's Hospital Oakland

# **FATHER-FRIENDLY PRINCIPLES**

The Father Friendly Principles (FFP) were developed by the Fathers Corps Learning Community in 2014. The FFP provide a guide for agencies and programs to use to better serve and support the needs of Alameda County's fathers and father figures.

### IN 2015, THE ALAMEDA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FORMALLY ADOPTED THE ALAMEDA COUNTY FATHERS CORPS FATHER-FRIENDLY PRINCIPLES

by issuing a resolution that encouraged all social and family support programs to implement the FFP and participate in FFP training offered by the Fathers Corps. The Board's adoption of the FFP catapulted the work of the Fathers Corps to the forefront of our County's service system; it was a key accomplishment that helped to solidify the collaboration among First 5 Alameda County and Alameda County's Health Care Services and Social Services Agencies.

### TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTING THE FATHER-FRIENDLY PRINCIPLES

The Fathers Corps introduced its partners to, and supported partners with implementing, the Father-Friendly Principles (FFP) through a variety of trainings and meetings with key County stakeholders. In addition to the Fathers Corps Learning Community trainings, the ACFC has provided over 25 FFP trainings over the past five years. Since the Fathers Corps began, there has been an increased awareness throughout the County of the need to intentionally and effectively serve and support the needs of Alameda County fathers.



For Agencies & Organizations Serving Families

#### INCLUDE NEEDS OF FATHERS

Fathers, and the needs of fathers, are included in the structure and delivery model of all family services in agencies and organizations.

#### PROVIDE FATHER-FRIENDLY SERVICES

Agencies and organizations are open, supportive, helpful and inclusive towards the needs of fathers and further the goal of increasing fathers' involvement in their children's lives.

#### PORTRAY POSITIVE FATHER IMAGES

Materials, illustrations, posters, brochures and other collateral include positive, diverse images of fathers. Facilities provide father-friendly environments consistent with the needs of men and fathers.

#### CREATE POSITIONS THAT SERVE FATHERS

Agencies and organizations create positions that serve fathers and actively recruit men to fill those positions in order to better address the needs of fathers.

#### TRAIN STAFF ON FATHERHOOD ISSUES

Agencies and organizations working with families strive to provide training for all staff on working with men and on fatherhood issues.

#### EXPECT FATHER PARTICIPATION

Agencies and organizations develop program policies with a clear expectation that fathers should and will participate.

#### DESIGN PROGRAMS FOR FATHERS

Agencies and organizations make every effort to create the image that programs are designed for fathers as well as for mothers and children.

For more information go to www.First5Alameda.org/Fathers-Corps

## **DIVERSITY OF FATHERHOOD PHOTO BANK**

To support partners with the implementation of Principle Three of the FFP, the Fathers Corps created a digital photo bank that partners can access and download free images of fathers being fathers.



### FATHER-FRIENDLY PRINICPLE THREE:

That outreach materials, illustrations, posters, brochures, and other collateral materials include positive, diverse images of fathers being fathers, and that facilities provide father-friendly environments consistent with the needs of men and fathers.





## **FATHER-FRIENDLY PRINCIPLES IMPLEMENTATION TOOL**

ACFC has learned that service providers feel ill-equipped to meet the needs of fathers/father figures. As service providers and stakeholders know, Alameda County families are diverse, with fathers playing multiple and changing roles. To build the capacity of agencies to better serve fathers, the ACFC provides trainings to public and community-based organizations to introduce the FFP and discuss strategies for implementing the principles into the services they provide. To enhance the training and technical assistance that ACFC provides to agencies working on becoming more father-friendly, the ACFC has contracted with a consultant to create a step-by-step implementation tool for the FFPs. This tool can be used by any program or agency as a guide for implementing each of the seven Father-Friendly Principles.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF FATHER-FRIENDLY PRACTICES SURVEY**

To learn what agencies/programs are doing to be more inclusive of fathers/father figures, the ACFC administered a Father-Friendly Implementation and Practice survey in 2018. Survey results showed that partners are **presenting the Father-Friendly Principles to their leadership**. With external support from ACFC leadership, some agencies have taken the next step of **formally adopting the FFP**. Other agencies have even **changed their mission, vision, and/or their strategic plan** to reflect their commitment to being more inclusive of fathers/father figures.

### ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES PARTNERS REPORTED UTILIZING TO IMPLEMENT THE FFP

- Brainstormed strategies for implementing the FFP with staff.
- **•** Trained staff on working with fathers.
- Increased outreach to fathers.
- Created standardized intake or other data collection materials so they routinely include information about fathers as well as mothers.
- Applied for funding for a father-specific program or service.
- Hired male staff.



# **COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT**

A key component of the Alameda County Fathers Corps (ACFC) work is community-based research and assessment. Provided below is a description of ACFC's community-based research and assessment projects.

### **VOICES OF FATHERS AND THE PROVIDERS WHO SERVE THEM**

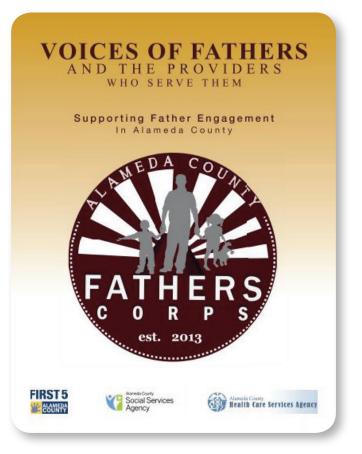
The strong role that fathers and/or father figures play in the life of a child has been known for decades. Every day, more information is gathered and presented that shows just how vital the father's role is to the health of a child and family. But what we didn't know as much about is how and why fathers become disengaged from their families. This report, based on surveys, interviews, and listening sessions with 31 fathers and 111 service providers, gives a glimpse into the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of uninvolved fathers and of the providers who serve them.

I don't know how to deal with being away from my daughter. I remember waking up every morning with her in my arms. I don't know how to deal with it. I love my daughter with all my heart. ??

- Latino 28, Father of 1

I have a child out there that I genuinely love that possibly doesn't even know me. To some people that may be okay, but that's unacceptable...

- African-American, 27, Father of 1



Based on the results from the provider survey, focus groups, interviews, as well as the lessons learned from the ACFC Learning Community, the ACFC Leadership Team drafted a set of policy and programmatic recommendations. ACFC Leadership Team members included representatives from Alameda County Public Health Department, Alameda County Social Services Agency, First 5 Alameda County, Through the Looking Glass, and UCSF Benioff's Children's Hospital.

### **Recommendations for Alameda County**

- OFFER family and father-specific services after hours to accommodate the work schedules of fathers
- TRAIN family service providers on how to engage fathers and father figures in a father-friendly manner that welcomes full participation, and increase the number of male staff within family service organizations at all strategic levels
- PROVIDE ongoing programs, through Alameda County Family Court and family service systems, that support fathers and mothers to develop and maintain healthy co-parenting relationships
- ADEQUATELY FUND and staff County expungement resources to remove barriers to employment and housing opportunities for eligible fathers and father figures with past criminal convictions

- ENSURE family service program models funded by and contracted out with County funds include a fatherhood component and are effectively engaging and supporting the needs of fathers/father figures
- REQUIRE that father friendly principles be reflected in measurable contract outcomes for family services providers doing business with Alameda County agencies
- CREATE an Inter-Agency Fathers and Families Council to monitor proposed and existing policies and practices within the family court system, Social Services Agency, Health Care Services Agency and Probation
- REVIEW the 'best-interest-of-the-child' standard utilized by Family Court staff and the judicial bench to ensure that irrelevant criminal histories are not given undue evidentiary weight by the staff against fathers or father figures

Efforts ha

### **ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT OF FATHER-FRIENDLY SERVICES**

Since the adoption of the Father-Friendly Principles (FFP) by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors in February 2015, a need arose for a tool to help agencies determine how well and to what extent they were serving fathers. An organizational self-assessment tool was developed which is aligned with the FFP and supports agencies with assessing their father friendliness; it also serves as a guide to integrating the Father-Friendly Principles into the delivery of services to families. The tool was piloted by the ACFC Leadership Team; users found the tool useful in provoking practice change and initiating a shift in providers' mindsets when working with families.

	Include Needs of Fathers	Not Applicable (N/A)	Haven't thought about this or don't know	think about this, but haven't made progress	Made good efforts, but have work to do	been successful/ Ongoing progress expected
		0	1	2	3	4
1.	All family services include a father- specific component.					
2.	Parenting groups have been designed with both mothers' and fathers' issues in mind.					
3.	Program hours accommodate the time constraints of working fathers.					
4.	Organization's mission, vision, and/or value statements explicitly state the importance of including fathers.					

# **BUILDING AWARENESS LOCALLY, STATEWIDE, AND NATIONALLY**

The ACFC has provided dozens of trainings on the implementation of the FFPs and effective father engagement. Those trainings were attended by over 700 unique providers. With support from its community and local County leaders, the ACFC has presented at state and national conferences and provided trainings to build awareness of the need for father-specific and father-friendly support services.

## **CONFERENCES:**

- California Women Infants and Children (WIC) Conference
- Fatherhood Solutions Conference
- First 5 California Child Health, Education, and Care Summit

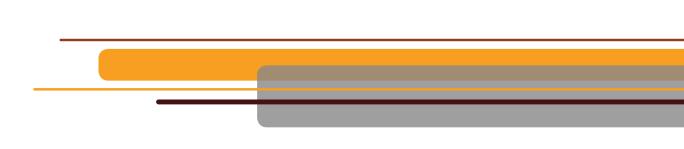
## **TRAINING @ FIRST 5 OFFERS FATHERHOOD TRAINING SERIES**

The Fathers Corps Learning Community convenes and trains male service providers. However, a majority of social and human service positions are staffed by women who may also benefit from the trainings offered by the ACFC. In 2016, First 5's training program, Training @First 5, which is open to all providers in the community, began to offer the same training topics offered by the Fathers Corps Learning Community.

## FATHERHOOD STRATEGY IN FIRST 5 ALAMEDA COUNTY'S 2017-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN

For the first time in First 5's almost 20-year history, Fatherhood is now a stand alone strategy in its strategic plan. The strategy is charged with incorporating "fatherhood and Father Friendly Principles into all programs, and... [the agency's] policy platform" and collaborating "with public systems to improve the experiences and representation of men and fathers. This strategy is a 'through line' and will be highlighted in all our strategies" (First 5 Alameda County Strategic Plan 2017-2021, page 25).





- National Healthy Start Association Conference
- Zero To Three Conference

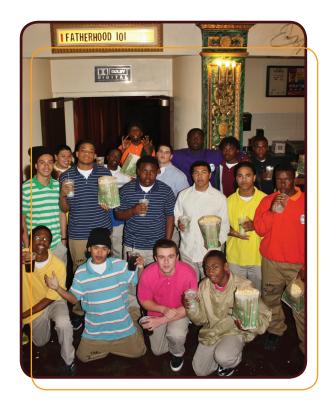
# **SPECIAL EVENTS**

To increase awareness of the need to intentionally and effectively serve fathers/father figures and to promote and honor fathers/father figures, the ACFC has partnered to host numerous community events throughout Alameda County. Events include film screenings of Fatherhood 101, Learning Community annual retreats, Daddy and Me events at Children's Fairyland, and the Fatherhood Action Summit held with County and community leaders. These events promoted the Father-Friendly Principles and the Fathers Corps program, and highlighted the critical role that fathers and father figures play in their communities and in the lives of children and families. Below is a brief description of some of these special events.

### **FATHERHOOD 101 SCREENING**

In February 2014, at the Grand Lake Theatre in Oakland, ACFC hosted its first screening of Fatherhood 101. The screening was attended by more than 500 people and was followed by a Q&A session with the film's director, Marquette Williams. Over the next two years, ACFC screened portions of the film throughout the county and used it to provoke discussion about how to better support fathers and father figures.





## **FATHERHOOD ACTION SUMMIT**

Jointly sponsored by the ACFC and the Interagency Children's Policy Council, the Action Summit was held in September 2017 and brought together leaders from public systems and community-based organizations to discuss strategies to increase and improve services and to identify needed policy shifts to better support Alameda County fathers.

The summit was attended by 84 people representing 38 agencies/programs. Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson provided opening remarks followed by presentations that covered the important role fathers play in supporting their child's development, and a presentation by Arnold Chandler on "The Life Course Approach to Improving the Lives of Boys and Men of Color." A key component of the summit was the Fatherhood Panel during which participants had the opportunity to hear directly from five fathers who shared their lived experiences and answered questions on the joys and challenges of fatherhood.





### **DADDY & ME EVENTS**

In partnership with the Alameda County Public Health Department, Children's Fairyland Oakland, Literacy Lab, and Tandem, Partners in Early Learning, the ACFC hosted three free Daddy and Me events for Alameda County families.

# **2017 - 2022 FATHERS CORPS EXPANSION**

In April 2017, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors approved the 2017-2022 Fathers Corps Expansion Plan.

Funding for 2017-2022						
Funder	Annual Funding Amount	Years Funded				
First 5 Alameda County	\$250,000	2017-2021				
Alameda County Health Care Services Agency	\$78,000	2017-2022				
Alameda County Social Services Agency	\$50,000	2017-2022				
California Wellness Foundation	\$20,000	2017-2019				

The Fathers Corps Expansion will build the capacity of systems and community-based partners to engage and effectively serve fathers/father figures, change the narrative of fatherhood in the County, create father-specific parenting education/support groups, and develop a County-wide approach to implementing the Father-Friendly Principles and collecting data on fathers and father engagement.

## **KEY COMPONENTS OF FATHERS CORPS EXPANSION PLAN**

### **Fatherhood Partnership**

The Fatherhood Partnership (FP) will use First 5's successful partnership contracting model which involves a combination of direct funding for services and capacity building to deliver and sustain best practices. First 5 Alameda County and public partners will identify up to 10 currently funded community-based organizations to modify and/or expand their scopes of work to include fatherhood support/education groups. FP participants will be required to participate in intensive capacity-building activities throughout the contract period designed to enhance the use of best practices and to foster agency level systems change in order to create a "new normal" for how participating agencies serve fathers.

### 2019 Fatherhood Summit

The 2019 Fatherhood Summit will celebrate and honor the critical role fathers/father figures play in the lives of their children. The summit will empower fathers/father figures, debunk myths and stereotypes around fatherhood, and offer workshops that provide critical information and sustainable strategies for strengthening families. The summit aims to attract up to 1,000 fathers and will be hosted in March 2019 at Merritt College in Oakland. The summit is not only an opportunity to provide educational workshops and resources but also an event that will launch a comprehensive collaborative effort to enhance and increase the availability and efficacy of father-centered services throughout Alameda County.

### Media Campaign

If successful in obtaining additional funding, the Fathers Corps plans to launch a County-wide media campaign that will change the narrative of fatherhood by highlighting the vital and positive role fathers play in the lives of their children. The campaign will also promote the availability of father-specific services funded by the Fatherhood Partnership. For a long time, the narrative about and imagery of fatherhood as it relates to Boys and Men of Color has revolved around negative associations: absenteeism, child support, conflict with mom, etc. The media campaign aims to change this narrative in Alameda County and within our systems and community-based organizations.

### Interagency Fatherhood Workgroup

To help monitor, guide, and institutionalize the various components of the expansion plan, the Interagency Children's Policy Council, in close partnership with the ACFC, has begun to convene the Interagency Fatherhood Workgroup. Membership includes representatives from First 5 and all major County systems. This group provides guidance and seeks to ensure that the ACFC is meeting the needs of member agencies. The workgroup will work to institutionalize father-friendly policies and practice throughout Alameda County public systems and community-based organizations.



# **STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

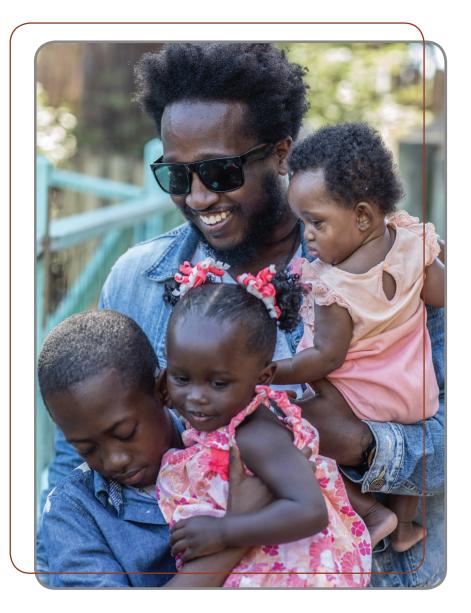
This work would not be possible without the support and buy-in of our partners. The Fathers Corps is a cross-system and community-based collaboration whose focus is systems change and capacity building.

## **STRATEGIC PARTNERS**

Alameda County Board of Supervisors Alameda County Department of Child Support Services Alameda County Health Care Services Agency Alameda County Probation Department Alameda County Public Health Department Alameda County Social Services Agency County Auditor's Office First 5 Alameda County First 5 California

### **THOUGHT PARTNERS**

Deborrah Bremond, Ph.D., Early Childhood Consultant Arnold Chandler, Ph.D., Forward Change Consulting Muntu Davis, M.D., MPH Alameda County Public Health Director and County Health Officer Frank Furtek, First 5 California George Halvorson, First 5 California David Inniss, Ed.D., The Koci Group Beverly Kyer, The Kyer Group Corporation



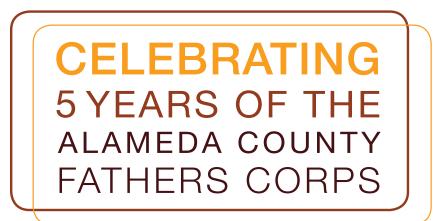
Over its first five years, and moving forward as the Fathers Corps model evolves, we have promoted reforms that support family service delivery systems to effectively integrate father-centered programming and services and have begun to change the narrative of fatherhood. It is our hope that through this collective approach, we will enhance and strengthen the existing system of care and provide more opportunities for Alameda County families to thrive and reach their fullest potential.







We extend our most sincere thanks to: the fathers and father-figures who participated in focus groups, one-on-one interviews, panel discussions, and special events; our system and funding partners, Alameda County Health Care Services Agency, Alameda County Public Health Department, Alameda County Social Services Agency, The California Wellness Foundation, and First 5 Alameda County; the dedicated members of the Alameda County Fathers Corps Learning Community and Leadership Team; the Alameda County Board of Supervisors; and all of the organizations and individuals listed who have supported the Fathers Corps' work and the implementation of the Father Friendly Principles.



For more information about the Alameda County Fathers Corps visit:

www.first5alameda.org/alameda-county-fathers-corps

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