

# Process Analysis: Child Support Intervention Services with African American Men

The Center for Urban Families' Baltimore Responsible  
Fatherhood Program

Conducted by the Center for Research on Fathers, Children and Family Well-Being

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# Process Analysis of CFUF's Baltimore Responsible Fatherhood Program

## I. Introduction

### *Purpose of Process Analysis*

To strengthen its programmatic structure, develop ways of better serving its client base, and obtain empirical data that can be used to influence policy, the Center for Urban Families (CFUF) employed the Center for Research on Fathers, Children and Family Well-Being (CRFCFW) to conduct an evaluation of the services provided by its Baltimore Responsible Fatherhood Project (BRFP). The most rigorous design for such an evaluation, which would provide the most conclusive test of the effect of BRFP on participants, would randomly assign clients to these and other or no services. This is called an impact assessment. Less rigorous designs would begin with measures of critical outcomes for participants of BRFP services. In this case, participant outcomes would be compared with those of similarly situated people, including pre-program outcomes of the participants themselves, who had not received program services.

Thus, any evaluation depends upon clearly articulated program objectives. Evaluation also requires that CFUF understand and define what the BRFP is intended to do, what it is actually doing, how it is doing it, and why what it is doing might impact participants. Finally, to interpret impact or outcome findings, CFUF must also understand the various internal or external program events that participants experience from enrollment to completion that affect the degree to which program outcomes are achieved. Without this information it is virtually impossible to build program refinements from the lessons gleaned from impact and outcomes assessments. Therefore, CRFCFW conducted, not an impact evaluation, but a process analysis primarily focused on strengthening BRFP's programmatic structure.

### *Methodology*

A variety of methods were used to conduct the process analysis, including document reviews, interviews with staff and participants, observation of program sessions, and a review of CFUF's data management system. Documents reviewed included CFUF's proposal to the Open Society Institute describing BRFP, and the BRFP curriculum. Interviews were conducted formally with the two BRFP case managers, and informally with the BRFP Director. Additionally, interviews were conducted with nine BRFP participants. Two program sessions were observed, including a workshop and a curriculum session. CFUF's data management system was reviewed using the records of the participants who were interviewed (with their consent).

## II. Program Theory

### *Articulation of Program Theory*

The description of the Baltimore Responsible Fatherhood Program (BRFP) that CFUF presented to OSI within the proposal, "Advancing Responsible Fatherhood: Where Policy Meets Practice," clearly defines the program's goal. The proposal states: "The philosophy of BRFP is to assist fathers in

achieving their parental goals, with the understanding that employment is a key component to the development of the self-esteem that it takes to be a responsible father.”

The proposal also highlights the five core areas that the program is designed to address: recidivism, parenting, employment, child support, and healthy relationships. In consultation with CFUF’s Executive Director and Staff, CRFCFW identified child support services as the main target area for analysis.

Review of curriculum materials, conversations with program staff, and observation of program sessions elicited a better understanding of both the program theory behind BRFP’s child support services, and of the child support service flow (See Appendixes A and B). Both reflect a strong commitment to the Center for Urban Families’ stated philosophy of strengthening families through the provisions of workforce supports and program services.

### ***Theoretical Basis in the Social Sciences***

The document “BRFP Curriculum Introductions: Workforce and Relationship Essentials – A Course for Men” grounds BRFP in Afrocentric values. References to these values appear to be mentioned throughout program sessions. For example, the child support curriculum session that we observed began with a reference to the Nguzo Saba value of *ujima*, which is Swahili for collective work and responsibility. Afrocentric worldviews have been used for over a century to redefine and reaffirm African Americans’ sense of self and self-worth (Robinson & Howard-Hamilton, 1994).

Self-efficacy refers to “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 1995, p.2).” The concept of self-efficacy is an essential component of social cognitive, or social learning theory, developed by Albert Bandura. Social cognitive theory views individuals as active agents who both act on their environment, and react to their environment, based on their understanding of it (Sollod, Wilson, & Monte, 2009).

Hughes and Demo (1989) identified three distinct aspects of self-perception: self-esteem, racial self-esteem, and self-efficacy. They found that while self-esteem and self-efficacy were typically linked for white Americans, high self-esteem was often accompanied by low self-efficacy for African Americans. Family and social supports appeared to foster the high self-esteem, while the experience of racial inequality negatively impacted self-efficacy. Given the growth of paternity establishment rates and child support orders among nonmarital children and the high proportion of such children in the African-American population, a substantial proportion of underemployed and underemployed in the African-American fathers community have child support obligations that they cannot meet (Huang, Mincy, and Garfinkel 2005). Many of these obligations are for children who receive public assistance, on condition that custodial mothers sign their rights to child support over to state. Other child support obligations are to custodial mothers with whom fathers are no longer romantically involved. For all these reasons, family and friends are probably poor sources from which unemployed and underemployed African-American fathers can develop self-efficacy in child support matters. They are very likely to feel overwhelmed by these matters, resulting in growing child support debts, which they simply try to avoid. Building self-efficacy in child support matters thus emerges as a particularly salient issue for social interventions

with unemployed and underemployed African American fathers. Moreover, interventions that draw upon Afrocentric values are likely to be more effective with this population.

Although not overtly articulated as such, the theme of self-efficacy was infused throughout the child support curriculum session that we observed. The session focused on avoiding criminal behavior, not just as a responsibility, but as something men possess the ability to do by controlling their decisions. Bandura (1977) identified four main sources of self-efficacy expectations, two of which BRFP staff actively employed during the curriculum session: vicarious experience and verbal persuasion.

Vicarious experience can influence self-efficacy by presenting successful role models. Knowing that others in similar situations have succeeded can positively impact beliefs in one's own ability to do so. The facilitators used stories from their own lives, as well as an excerpt from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, to offer examples of African American men who overcame obstacles similar to the ones participants were facing. BRFP staff also utilized verbal persuasion to encourage participants and to reinforce their perceptions of their ability to avoid criminal activity, maintain employment, and provide for their children.

According to social cognitive theory, people act not only based on beliefs about what they are capable of doing, but also on beliefs about the expected outcomes of their behavior and the value they place on those expected outcomes (Bandura, 1969, 1995). Throughout the curriculum session that we observed, consequences (expected outcomes) were a major theme. The session openly confronted the consequences of criminal activity, and proposed a new decision making process based on consideration of the consequences of criminal activity for the men's children

In conclusion, based on review of curriculum materials, conversations with program staff, and observation of program sessions, the work that the BRFP does is strongly supported by social science theory. Indeed, Howard-Hamilton (1997) specifically recommends utilizing both Nguzo Saba principles and social cognitive theory in interventions with African American men.

### ***Literature Review of Child Support Services***

Ordinarily when evaluating a social service intervention it is useful to compare the services being evaluated with a body of literature describing similar services. However, very little substantive documentation exists regarding child support services in responsible fatherhood programs. A recent, comprehensive review of responsible fatherhood initiatives published by the Urban Institute found that child support services varied dramatically between agencies. Services ranged from direct involvement of child support officials to a complete lack of systematic services (Martinson & Nightingale, 2008). For example, several of the Welfare-to-Work responsible fatherhood initiatives did not directly address child support, and only provided child support services on an "as needed basis" through case management (Martinson, Trutko, & Strong, 2000).

In comparison, BRFP contains a much more well developed model of child support services, as outlined in the OSI proposal, including curriculum sessions, a skills-based workshop, a peer support group, and individual case management. As evidenced by Appendix B, the case management services also appear to be much more involved and intensive than those typically offered in responsible fatherhood programs.

Additionally, the most conclusive finding that emerged from the Urban Institute’s analysis of child support services provided by responsible fatherhood programs is that collaboration with child support enforcement agencies is crucial for effectively managing participants’ child support orders. Based on conversations with BRFP staff, it is apparent that BRFP services are enhanced by, and that participants benefit from, a close collaboration with local child support enforcement agencies. Due to this collaboration, BRFP staff members possess a depth of knowledge about the child support system uncommon in most responsible fatherhood programs. BRFP staff members also have the level of relationship with child support enforcement officials that enables them to contact child support directly regarding an individual participant’s child support case.

### **III. Evaluation of Service Delivery System**

#### ***Participant and Staff Interviews***

Interviews were conducted with program staff and participants to gain a better understanding of BRFP’s service flow, target population, the service needs of BRFP participants, and participant experiences with BRFP. Although the interviews addressed some general programmatic issues, they focused on child support services.

#### ***1. Service Flow***

Interviews with BRFP staff revealed that the service flow through BRFP is somewhat complicated by the fact that the program offers rolling enrollment. Participants may enroll at any point during the program rather than having to wait for the next cohort. Rolling enrollment is crucial for establishing and maintaining the involvement of potential participants. Otherwise, many participants would surely be lost during the several months before the next cohort.

Due to rolling enrollment, and due to the fact that BRFP is open to all clients enrolled in CFUF programs, participants enter the program at a variety of different stages and with a variety of different needs. However, regardless of when participants enter the program, or of their primary service need, participants who have child support orders will receive information about child support through case management. This flexibility ensures that participants receive valuable information about child support, even if they are not in a position to immediately act upon it. See Appendix B for a more detailed outline of BRFP child support services and their connection to CFUF’s overall structure.

#### ***2. Target Population***

The OSI proposal describing BRFP states that the program serves fathers with children between the ages of birth to thirteen years or middle school age. Although it continues to state the five core areas in which the program is designed to offer assistance (recidivism, parenting, employment, child support, and healthy relationships), the proposal does not offer additional specifics regarding the target population. Interviews with BRFP staff revealed that the decision to concentrate on those five core areas implicitly targets a specific population: low-income men (or fathers), with limited education, criminal record, limited work history, multiple partners, broken homes. Based on participant interviews, BRFP staff are extremely effective in reaching this population, especially through their door-to-door outreach. BRFP staff specifically target this outreach to low-income, high crime neighborhoods.

### *3. Service Needs of BRFP Participants*

Although not all of the men in this population are in need of child support assistance, BRFP staff and participants agreed that child support assistance is one of the main reasons men enroll in the fatherhood program. Of the nine participants who we interviewed, eight were currently struggling with child support arrears, ranging from \$1,000 - \$35,000. The ninth had recently closed his child support case after the mother forgave \$20,000 owed to her and he paid back \$12,000 in arrears owed to the state.

BRFP staff consistently identified the large amount of child support arrears participants owed as one of the biggest barriers the men were facing. Case managers began to address the arrears by first helping participants understand the child support system through individual case management and through the child support workshop. Many of the participants interviewed described difficulties they encountered because they did not understand the system. For example, before enrolling in BRFP, one participant lied and told a child support judge he was working full time, making up an hourly wage, simply because he did not know that he could tell the judge he was unemployed and that the judge could take unemployment into account when setting the child support order.

Additionally, BRFP staff note that many participants were unaware of how much child support they owed when they enrolled in the program. For example, one interview participant was unaware of how serious his child support situation had become until a sheriff hand-delivered a court summons. All of the previous letters from the office of child support enforcement had been mailed to an address where the participant no longer lived. BRFP case managers help participants maintain awareness of their child support cases by helping them register in Maryland's E-Child Support system, where they can view the current amount owed, as well as total arrears and a payment history for the previous six months.

Incarceration and unstable employment were the main reasons that the participants whom we interviewed identified for being unable to pay child support. They all stated that they were able to pay consistently while they were employed, particularly once wage withholding took effect. Hence BRFP's strong focus on employment is crucial to achieving its child support goals. Additionally, participants highly value the employment services. Several of the participants who were unemployed at the time of the interviews indicated that they were more concerned about managing their child support through finding employment than through other methods, such as attempting to file a petition for modification. Nonetheless, they appreciated the information they were gaining about child support through their case managers and through BRFP sessions. For example, some participants assumed that if they could not afford to pay their entire child support obligation for the month it was not worth paying anything. After learning that it was worthwhile to pay something, however small, to demonstrate that they were making an effort to pay, they were relieved to find that child support enforcement tended to "get off their back."

Overall, the BRFP seems to be successfully targeting essential child support service needs by focusing on understanding the child system in general, maintaining awareness of individual orders, and emphasizing the importance of employment. However, even with these services, many participants are still left with substantial amounts of child support arrears. Maryland's Child Support Payment Incentive Program, which eliminates 50% of arrears owed to the state after one year of on time

payments, and 100% after two years, could be extremely beneficial for these participants. Based on interviews with BRFP staff, it is apparent that there are significant difficulties associated with child support's administration of this program. None of the participants BRFP case managers have sent to apply for the program have been able to enroll. Although all of the BRFP case managers' efforts to enable participants to utilize the program have been fruitless, the BRFP should not abandon this program and should continue to work with child support on this matter.

In addition, advocacy efforts should be undertaken to encourage the Office of Child Support Enforcement to address underutilization of the Maryland's Child Support Payment Incentive Program. These efforts should be undertaken strategically, perhaps by CFUF's trustees or other supporters, and could be directed at key policymakers, such as sympathetic members of the state legislature who are working with CFUF on proposals to expand the EITC, or at Stacey Rodgers, Deputy Director of Programs, who is a strong supporter of fatherhood initiatives and who is responsible for the Child Support Enforcement Program in the State of Maryland.

The one other service need that BRFP should continue to develop is legal assistance. All but two of the men whom we interviewed had criminal records. Additionally, based on interviews with BRFP case managers, outstanding warrants emerged as a significant barrier to the delivery of services, particularly of child support services. If a participant has an open warrant and is avoiding the authorities, then he cannot enroll in e-child support or file a child support modification petition without coming to the attention of the authorities. He is also unlikely to be able to obtain legitimate employment. If legal assistance were available to help these clients face their outstanding warrants, BRFP's services might begin soon after release or prior to periods of incarceration. Though difficult, this outcome would be better than the outcome these clients currently experience, namely mounting arrears as long as they continue to avoid the authorities.

#### *4. Participant Experience with BRFP Services*

All nine participants whom we interviewed unequivocally expressed satisfaction with the BRFP services. What they appreciated most were the relationships they formed with BRFP staff and fellow participants – some even called them “like family.” Several participants described that the program fills a need unmet anywhere else. As one participant stated, “There are not a lot of options for men like me out there.” Participants also stated that they had learned a great deal about the child support system, both from the BRFP case managers, and from other participants.

Beyond offering a source of support and information, the BRFP also appears to be having a real impact on participants' child support payments and their relationships with their families. The participant whom we interviewed who had just closed his child support case was able to do so because BRFP case managers had counseled him to become involved with his children and later to discuss the case with the child's mother. As a result, she forgave \$20,000 worth of child support owed to her. The participant was also able to obtain a job through CFUF, which enabled him to pay off the remaining \$12,000 owed to the state. Another participant began his interview by offering a written statement he had prepared about the program. In it he stated, “Mr. White and Mr. Pitchford have been instrumental in helping me to get my child support issues in perspective from the modification aspect to the visitation rights. By talking with Mr. Pitchford and Mr. White and the group in general and sharing my situations that I encounter while dealing with my family they... help me to make proper judgment



calls. Now as of today I can honestly say that I have a healthy relationship with them both (ex-wife and son). My ex-wife trusts me enough to take my son out – unsupervised.”

## IV. Evaluation of Child Support Curriculum

### *Observation*

In order to gain a better understanding of BRFP’s group services related to child support, we observed the child support workshop and one of the curriculum sessions on “Responsibility to Avoid Criminal Behavior” taught within the child support section of the program.

#### *1. Fidelity to Treatment*

Based on our observation and interviews with BRFP staff and participants, the program being delivered adheres very closely to the structure outlined in the original proposal, including curriculum sessions, workshops, peer support groups, case management, and family activities. Of these program components, the one area in which it appears that fidelity to treatment could be improved is the curriculum. From our understanding, the curriculum sessions are taught by an outside facilitator who created much of the curriculum. However, CFUF ultimately intends the curriculum to be delivered by its case managers. While we did not have the opportunity to observe a curriculum session taught by this facilitator, we did observe a rescheduled curriculum session that was taught by the BRFP case managers. The BRFP case managers did not strictly utilize the curriculum format, but appeared to use pieces of curriculum materials to enhance their interpretation of the session’s core message. This method proved highly effective in engaging the men, and in creating an atmosphere that fostered group trust and dialogue.

Therefore, rather than adhering more closely to the original materials, we recommend that the BRFP case managers teach the curriculum sessions, and that CFUF document the material as it is interpreted and delivered by the BRFP case managers. Utilizing their many years of experience working with disadvantaged fathers, the case managers are able to translate textbook curriculum materials into a meaningful format with which participants connect and identify and which is well-grounded in social science theories of behavioral change. Interviews with BRFP staff and participants confirmed our perception of participants’ engagement with the case managers’ style of curriculum delivery.

If CFUF were to adopt this recommendation, a consultant would be needed to observe all curriculum sessions. In general, each session should have a list of process activities attached that describe the goals for each session and how those goals will be achieved. Based upon our observations, the Child Support Workshop and the Curriculum Session we observed would be outlined as follows:

### Child Support Workshop on 1.14.09

#### 1. Introduction

- Begin by having men share the names and ages of their children, and expressing their desire to take care of their children.
  
- Raise the issue of the gap between intentions and ability to actually provide for children.

2. Activity: “Mothers and Manhood” handout.
  - Have men identify positive parental values by discussing the strengths that their mothers exhibited raising them.
  - Have men contemplate how difficult it is for the mothers of their children to raise their children without them present
  - Have men contemplate how their children must feel without them present by remembering how they felt if they grew up without a father.
3. Theoretical introduction to child support
  - Distinguish between nurturing and financial (child support) responsibilities to children.
  - Emphasize why child support is important. The purpose of child support is to provide for your children; it’s not “a bad thing.”
  - Present understanding the child support system as a responsibility; lack of understanding is not an excuse for not paying
  - Review handout “What Child Support Means To Me – Three Actions I Can Commit To.”
4. Skill based review of child support
  - Have men explain the current status of their child support orders.
  - Outline the entire child support process: establishing paternity, modifications, wage withholding, arrears, visitation.
  - Elicit barriers to paying child support.
  - Identify consequences of not paying child support.
  - Explain options for managing child support: registering for e-child support, modifying an order, importance of paying something (however small), Maryland’s arrears program.
  - Encourage participants who have not yet met individually with a case manager about their child support to schedule an appointment before leaving
5. Conclusion
  - Have men identify personal child support goals using “What Child Support Means to Me” handout and share with group

## Child Support Curriculum Session on 1.26.09

### 1. Introduction

- Site Nguzo Saba value of *ujima*.
  - Briefly discuss importance of personal and collective responsibility.
2. Criminal History
- Ask participants to share their own criminal history.
  - Identify motives for engaging in criminal activity.
  - Identify consequences of criminal activity.
3. Decision making process and criminal activity.
- Have men describe their own decision making process leading to commitment of a crime, ie. financial, emotional, out of anger
  - Explain and emphasize why this decision making process is flawed.
  - Discuss “Decisions” Handout
  - Identify correct decision making process - thinking about consequences to self and children. What happens to your children when you are incarcerated? Who takes care of them? What would happen to them if you were to die as a result of engagement in criminal activity?
  - Ask men to describe a decision they have made, using this model: Describe what guided the decision, the consequences, and how decision making process would change if guided by thinking about consequences to self and children.
4. Control and self-efficacy
- Emphasize that you cannot control consequences; you can only control the decisions you make.
  - Emphasize that the decisions you make should be guided by your children.
  - Discuss that part of responsible decision making based on the best interest of children involves commitment to finding and maintaining employment in order to provide for children.
  - Read excerpt from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* included in the “Decisions” handout. Discuss Malcolm X as a role model who overcame significant barriers.
5. Conclusion
- Have participants share strategies for avoiding criminal activity in the future, using examples from their own lives

- Homework: ask men to use “Decisions” handout to think about the decisions they make during the next week

Completing this process for each session would create a meaningful and effective curriculum. Additionally, if CFUF were ever to expand the BRFP and/or hire new facilitators, such documentation would be crucial for maintaining consistency in program services. Once the content of each session has been documented, the information can then be used to develop quality assurance forms for ongoing program monitoring. The quality assurance forms we created consist of facilitator/observer feedback forms, and a participant feedback form. Further, such curriculum based quality assurance forms are a critical input to further outcome or efficacy assessments, which must be based upon the services that clients actually receive.

We recommend that facilitators complete a feedback form after every session. The same form can be used for observers, if any outside observers attend a session. If observers attend a session their report can be compared with the facilitator’s report for a fuller understanding of what happened during the session. We created Facilitator/Observer Feedback forms for the child support workshop and the child support curriculum session that we attended. (See Appendix C.)

We recommend that participants complete a feedback form after each month-long section of the program (child support/ criminal involvement, parenting, healthy relationships, and employability/ financial management). Participant feedback is crucial for documenting the impact of the program by demonstrating what participants are learning. We designed a participant feedback form for participants to complete after the child support/curriculum section. Because we only attended two sessions it would need to be supplemented by information from the other child support sessions before it can be used with participants. (See Appendix D.)

## 2. *Group Dynamics*

Overall, participants were highly engaged in the two sessions that we observed. The facilitators developed a good rapport with participants and created an environment that fostered honest discussions. As far as specific observations:

### Child Support Workshop on 1.14.09

- Beginning the session by asking men to share information about their children was a highly effective way of engaging participants. It set the proper tone for introducing child support by focusing on children.
- The “Mothers and Manhood” handout was also a powerful activity, as the majority of participants volunteered that they had grown up without their fathers.
- The “What Child Support Means to Me” handout was useful for encouraging men to think realistically about their own child support cases. This handout might have been more useful if it were introduced at the end of the session, after the practical components of child support had been discussed. By the end of the session participants would have a more realistic idea of the commitments they could make.

- The child support workshop clearly fulfilled the goal for the workshops as stated in the OSI proposal of providing hands-on skills. Participants walked away from the workshop feeling that they had learned information about child support that they did not know before. In the future, facilitators may want to leave more time to address solutions for overcoming barriers to paying child support, especially those barriers related to criminal records and employers' reluctance to hire individuals with criminal records, which was an issue that seemed to be of particular concern for many of the men.

#### Child Support Curriculum Session on 1.26.09

- Beginning the session by having men share their own personal history of criminal involvement was a highly effective way of initially engaging the men and introducing the topic.
- Getting men to recognize the consequences of criminal activity on their children was a pivotal moment in the group.
- Men responded well to the "Decisions" handout. The activity page, "Decision Types" might be more useful if it was changed to describe the process the group used to identify motives, consequences, and decision making processes.
- Men also related well to the example of Malcolm X from the "Decisions" handout.
- Closing the session by having men share their own struggles and strategies for avoiding criminal activity was an inspirational way to end the group.

## **V. Recommendations for Program Outcomes**

### ***Evaluation of Efforts to Outcomes Data Management System***

Based on conversations with BRFP staff, it appears that the Efforts to Outcome (ETO) data management system is an effective tool for gathering outcome information. Specifically ETO collects data from intake and assessment forms, as well as program attendance and participation, employment placement and retention, and case notes. Most importantly, the information being collected for BRFP relates directly to participants' progress in the five core program areas: recidivism, parenting, employment, child support, and healthy relationships.

The one downside of the system, however, is that so much information is being collected that it can be difficult to manage. The data seems to be particularly decentralized with regards to child support information. Child support information is collected from a variety of sources, including the Men's Services Pre-Assessment, Maryland's E-Child Support System, and case manager notes. However, as far as we are aware, ETO lacks a system for unifying all of this information into an easily accessible format.

Therefore, we recommend that BRFP develop a separate "Child Support Tracking Form" combining all sources of child support information to create a complete overview of each participant's child

support status. Additionally, BRFP should make a deliberate effort to track changes in child support payment over time. In order to document the program's impact on child support outcomes, it is important to be able to compare the initial pre-assessment data with child support data collected not just upon program graduation, but also from 3, 6, 9, and 12 month follow-ups. See Appendix E for an example of the information that should be tracked.

## **VI. Conclusion**

### ***Summary of Recommendations***

1. Create new curriculum
  - Have current BRFP case managers teach curriculum sessions.
  - Document BRFP case managers' delivery of curriculum.
  - Develop documentation of BRFP case managers' sessions into a new, formalized curriculum.
  - Create quality assurance forms to enable on-going program monitoring of new curriculum.
2. Create separate "Child Support Tracking Form."
3. Work with Maryland Child Support Enforcement Administration to clarify the process for and increase enrollment in the Child Support Payment Incentive Program.
4. Develop more direct referral system to Legal Aid to assist with warrants and other legal issues.

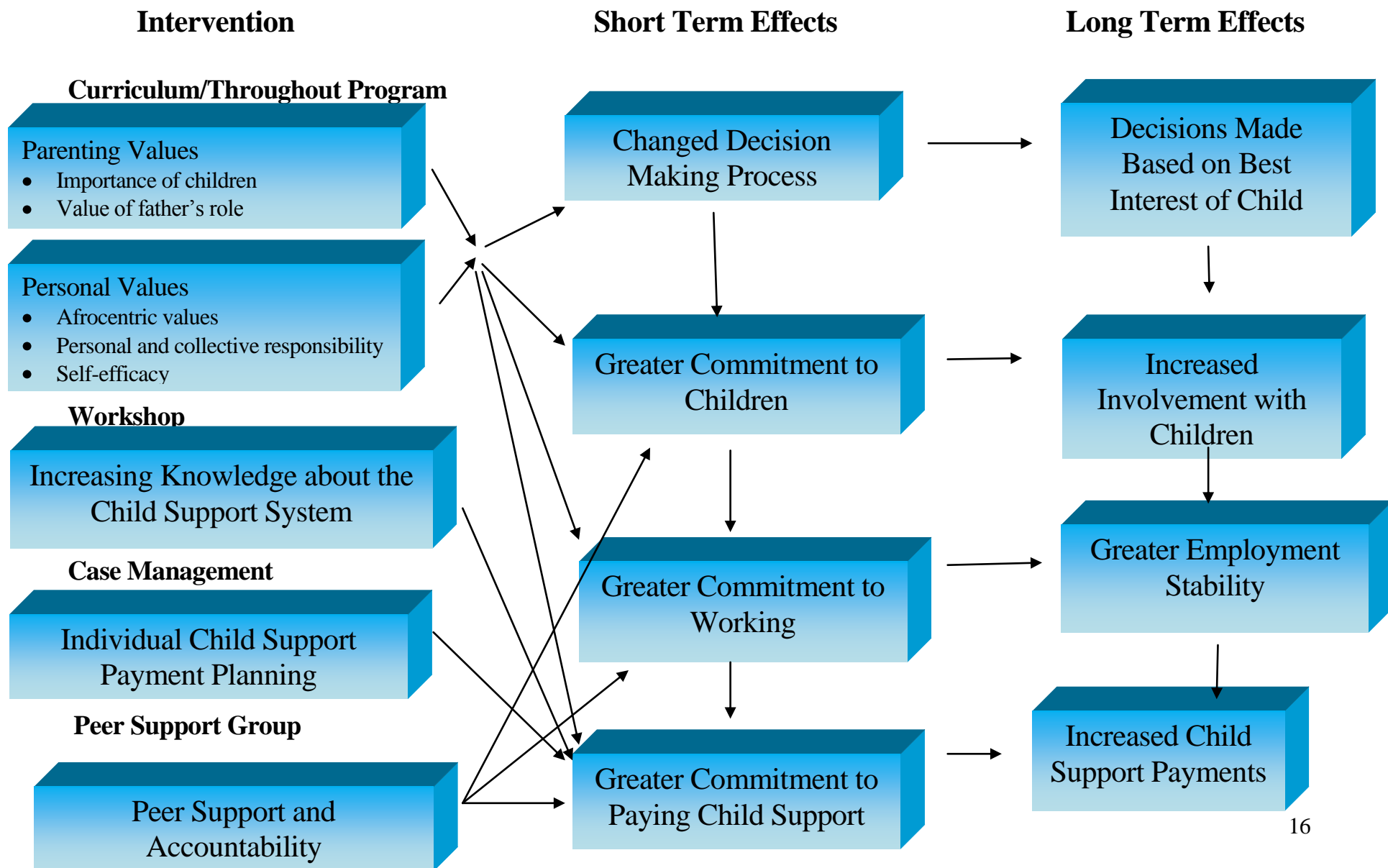
### ***Final Remarks***

According to a 2001 report, the responsible fatherhood field "lacks professional standards of practice," and significant knowledge gaps remain regarding the effects of interventions on fathers and their children (Sylvester & Reich, 2002). A process analysis such as this one documenting BRFP's service delivery system can be a useful tool for standardizing practice in the responsible fatherhood field. Once a clear understanding of what services are being delivered and how they are being delivered has been developed, an organization can conduct an impact evaluation to link participant outcomes to program services. By all accounts BRFP is doing meaningful work that positively impacts participants. It is hoped that this evaluation will benefit not only CFUF as it seeks to document the effectiveness of its services and inform responsible fatherhood policy, but also the field of responsible fatherhood as a whole, including the child support enforcement agencies with which it works.

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## Appendix A: Child Support Program Theory





## Appendix B: BRFP Service Flow

### Recruitment

- Door-to-door street outreach
- Participants from other CFUF programs
- Word of mouth
- Referrals from other agencies

### Assessment and Enrollment

- Individual interview with case manager to assess service needs and commitment to BRFP philosophy
- Completion of BRFP assessment forms
- Creation of service plan - “One Man Plan”
- Invitation to next BRFP session (rolling enrollment to avoid losing participants)

### CFUF Services

- Participants can be engaged in multiple CFUF programs simultaneously
- Majority of BRFP clients also go through the Strive employment program
- Can enroll in BRFP at any point during the program
- If participant initially enrolls midway through a four-month cohort, participant can re-enroll for next cohort

### BRFP Services<sup>1</sup>

- 16 Curriculum Sessions
- 4 Skills Based Training Workshops
- 4 Peer Support Groups
- 16 Hours (minimum) Case Management
- 1 Family Activity

1. Services address 5 core areas: recidivism, parenting, employment, child support, and healthy relationships.

## Breakdown of BRFP Child Support Services

### Group Sessions:

Week 1: Two Curriculum Sessions on Responsibility to Avoid Criminal Behavior/ Maintain Financial Stability and Pay Child Support  
Week 2: Workshop – Child Support 101  
Week 3: Two Curriculum Sessions (same topics as above)  
Week 4: Peer Support Group related to above topics

**Individual Case management:** Child support case management services are offered throughout the entire program. Regardless of what point in the program a participant enrolls in BRFP (even if it is after the other child support sessions), if the participant has a child support order then the following process occurs:

Assess whether or not father has any outstanding warrants

If no, enroll in e-child support

Create individual child support payment plan based on information from e-child support.

Advise to start paying something to child support, however small, to demonstrate effort.

### Other child support issues:

- Advise father to discuss child support order with custodial parent to see if she will forgive arrears owed to her.
- Assist with reinstating driver's license if suspended due to arrears.
- Assistance filing for visitation rights.

If yes, advise father to address warrants first. Any attempt to formally manage child support, such as by enrolling in e-child support, will bring father to the attention of authorities.

If father chooses to turn himself in, provide counseling to plan for possible time incarcerated; ie. advise father to contact family to arrange bail. If father does not choose to turn himself in, continue to engage in other BRFP services.

## **Child Support Modifications**

If child support payment plan involves filing a petition to modify child support order due to unemployment, the following steps are taken:

Send father to court to obtain:

1. Original child support order
2. Full payment history
3. Petition for modification paperwork

Modification paperwork can be completed and submitted immediately at the courthouse, or father can bring it back to CFUF for assistance

It typically takes 30 – 90 days to receive a court date. In the mean time:

1. Enroll in Strive (if not already)
2. Gather documentation of decrease in earnings
3. Make a child support payment, however small
4. If working, request child support be withheld from wages immediately

At court:

1. Provide documentation of decrease in earnings / unemployment
2. Provide documentation of full child support order, including arrears, to demonstrate entirety of debt
3. The custodial parent does not have to come to court, but is notified of court date and can protest the modification

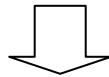
If approved, father should continue looking for a job or working. Once working he should monitor pay checks to ensure wages are being withheld and going to child support. After a history of consistent payments, refer to Maryland's Debt leveraging program.

If modification is denied, wait 3-6 months and apply again.

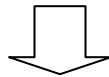
## Maryland's Child Support Incentive Program

Fathers are referred if:

1. They earn less than 200% of federal poverty level
2. They have been working consistently and demonstrate the capacity to make 12 consecutive full payments



Case managers must negotiate each case on an individual basis. Program requirements, etc. have not yet been formalized. So far no one has successfully been able to enroll.



After one year of consecutive on-time payments, 50% of arrears will be abated. After 2 years of consecutive on-time payments, the remaining 50% of arrears will be abated.

## Appendix C: Facilitator / Observer Feedback (Workshop)

**Session:** Child Support Workshop  
**Name of Facilitator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Number of Participants in Attendance:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Number of Participants Absent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Session Start Time:** \_\_\_:\_\_\_

**Session End Time:** \_\_\_:\_\_\_

*Please indicate the extent to which each topic was covered by checking the appropriate box in the second column. '1' indicates that the topic was fully covered; '2' indicates that the topic was mentioned briefly but not discussed; '3' indicates that the topic was not mentioned at all.*

Session Activities	Check appropriate box 1= Fully complete 2= Partially complete 3= Not completed	Overall, Most group members were highly engaged in this activity: 1 = Agree 2=Neither agree/disagree 3 = Disagree (check appropriate box)	Time spent in minutes
<b>Introduction</b>			
1. Facilitator had the group share information about their children and desire to care for them	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Facilitator discussed the gap between intentions and ability to provide for children	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Activity – “Mothers and Manhood” Handout</b>			
3. Facilitator helped men consider difficulty mothers face in raising children without them	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Group members identified positive parental values exhibited by men’s own mothers	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Facilitator helped men reflect on their experiences as a result of growing up without a father	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Theoretical Introduction to Child Support</b>			
6. Facilitator explained the difference between nurturing	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Session Activities</b>	<b>Check appropriate box</b> 1= Fully complete 2= Partially complete 3= Not completed	<b>Overall, Most group members were highly engaged in this activity:</b> 1 = Agree 2=Neither agree/disagree 3 = Disagree (check appropriate box)	<b>Time spent in minutes</b>
and financial responsibilities to children			
7. Facilitator described importance of child support and of providing for children	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Facilitator helped group understand that understanding the child support system is a responsibility 9. Handout: “What Child Support Means to Me”	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Skill Based Review of Child Support</b> 10. Facilitator had men share current status of their child support orders	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Review child support process: paternity, modifications, wage withholding, arrears, visitation	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Discuss barriers to paying child support	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Identify consequences of not paying support	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Explain options for managing child support: e-child support, modifications, Maryland’s arrears program	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
15. Encourage men who have not yet met with a case manager about child support to schedule appointment	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Conclusion</b> 16. Group members identify personal child support goals using “What Child Support Means to Me” handout and shared with group	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Comments:**

- 1. Were there any activities in which participants responded better to than others?
  - a. If so, name the activities and describe in detail how clients responded****
  
- 2. Were there any specific activities in which participants were not very engaged? If so, please list the activities, and describe what you believe did not appear to work well.**
  
- 3. Did anything unusual or unexpected happen during this session? (Please be as specific)**
  
- 4. Did any participant bring up any outside concerns that needed more attention than the group could offer?**
  
- 5. Do you have any additional comments or concerns about this session?**

**Observer Only:**

- 1. What did you observe the facilitator doing that was particularly helpful?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. What would you suggest as something the facilitator could do better?**

## Facilitator / Observer Feedback (Curriculum Session)

**Session:** Child Support Curriculum session  
**Name of Facilitator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Number of Participants in Attendance:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Session Start Time:** \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_

**Number of Participants Absent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Session End Time:** \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_

*Please indicate the extent to which each topic was covered by checking the appropriate box in the second column. '1' indicates that the topic was fully covered; '2' indicates that the topic was mentioned briefly but not discussed; '3' indicates that the topic was not mentioned at all.*

Session Activities	Check appropriate box 1= Fully completed 2= Partially completed 3= Not completed	Overall, group members were highly engaged in this activity 1 = Agree 2=Neither agree/disagree 3 = Disagree (Check appropriate box)	Time spent in minutes
<b>Introduction</b>			
1. Facilitator described Nguzo Saba value of <i>ujima</i>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Facilitator Described the importance of personal and collective responsibility	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Criminal History</b>			
3. Group shared their criminal history	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Identify motives for engaging in criminal activity.	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Identify consequences of criminal activity to self and children	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	



Session Activities	Check appropriate box 1= Fully completed 2= Partially completed 3= Not completed	Overall, group members were highly engaged in this activity 1 = Agree 2=Neither agree/disagree 3 = Disagree (Check appropriate box)	Time spent in minutes
<b>Decision Making Process and Criminal Activity</b>			
6. Group described their own decision making process that led to criminal activity.	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Explain why this decision making process is flawed.	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Discuss “Decisions” handout.	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Identify responsible decision making process based on consequences to self and children.	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Facilitator helped men remake decisions based on responsible decision making principles	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Control and Self-Efficacy</b>			
11. Facilitator explained control of consequences vs. control of decisions	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Facilitator described how decisions should consider consequences to children	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Discussed importance of employment to providing for children	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	

Session Activities	Check appropriate box 1= Fully completed 2= Partially completed 3= Not completed	Overall, group members were highly engaged in this activity 1 = Agree 2=Neither agree/disagree 3 = Disagree (Check appropriate box)	Time spent in minutes
<b>14.</b> Group read excerpt from <i>The Autobiography of Malcolm X</i> included in “Decisions” handout and briefly discussed	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Conclusion</b> <b>15.</b> Have participants share strategies for avoiding criminal activity in the future, using examples from their own lives.	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>16.</b> Homework: ask men to use “Decisions” handout to think about the decisions they make during the next week.	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	1. <input type="checkbox"/> 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 3. <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Comments:**

- 1. Were there any activities in which participants responded better to than others?  
b. If so, name the activities and describe in detail how clients responded**
  
- 2. Were there any specific activities in which participants were not very engaged? If so, please list the activities, and describe what you believe did not appear to work well.**
  
- 3. Did anything unusual or unexpected happen during this session? (Please be as specific)**
  
- 4. Did any participant bring up any outside concerns that needed more attention than the group could offer?**
  
- 5. Do you have any additional comments or concerns about this session?**

**Observer Only:**

- 6. What did you observe the facilitator doing that was particularly helpful?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 7. What would you suggest as something the facilitator could do better?**

## Appendix D: Participant Feedback

**Section:** Child Support / Criminal Activity

**Sessions Attended:** (please check off each session that you attended)

- Curriculum Session: Responsibility to Avoid Criminal Behavior #1 Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Curriculum Session: Responsibility to Avoid Criminal Behavior #2 Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Workshop: Child Support 101 Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Curriculum Session: Responsibility to Avoid Criminal Behavior #3 Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Curriculum Session: Responsibility to Avoid Criminal Behavior #4 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Learning Objectives:

1. The Baltimore fatherhood program helped me appreciate the importance of understanding the child support system and paying child support...
  - Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
2. The Baltimore fatherhood program helped me understand the consequences of not paying child support.
  - Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
3. The Baltimore fatherhood program helped me understand the entire child support process, including establishing paternity, modifying child support orders, wage withholding, arrears, and visitation.
  - Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
4. I registered in Maryland's "E-Child Support" in order to monitor my child support case.
  - Yes
  - No

- 4a. If yes, how often do you use E-Child Support?
- Less than once a month
  - Once a month
  - Once a week
  - More than once a week
5. I know what to do if I am unable to pay my child support due to unemployment.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Not sure
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
6. I met with a case manager to make a child support payment plan.
- Yes
  - No
7. I have a child support payment plan that is working for me.
- Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Not sure
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
8. The Baltimore fatherhood program helped me understand Maryland's Arrears Incentive Program...
- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Strongly disagree
9. Are you planning to apply for Maryland's Arrears Incentive Program?
- Yes
  - No
  - I would like to apply, but I don't think I qualify.
  - I already applied
10. The Baltimore fatherhood program helped me better understand the consequences of criminal activity.
- Strongly agree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat disagree

- Strongly disagree

11. The Baltimore fatherhood program helped me think more about the consequences of my decisions.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

12. The Baltimore fatherhood program helped me think more about the consequences decisions may have on my children.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

13. The Baltimore fatherhood program helped me think more about strategies for avoiding criminal activities.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

14. Thanks to the Baltimore fatherhood program, I now believe that I am able to avoid criminal activities.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

**Child Support:**

1. Approximately how much child support were you paying each month before attending this program?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. If different from above, approximately how much monthly child support are you paying, or do you plan on paying, now?

3. Roughly, how often did you see your children before attending this program?
  - a. Twice a week or more
  - b. Once a week
  - c. Bi-weekly
  - d. Once a month or less
  
4. Roughly, how often do you see your children now?
  - a. Twice a week or more
  - b. Once a week
  - c. Bi-weekly
  - d. Once a month or less
  
5. Would you recommend the child support section of this program to a friend? Why or why not?
  
  
6. What has been the most helpful part about the child support section of this program?
  
  
  
7. How has the child support section of this program impacted your life?
  
  
  
8. Do you have any additional comments or concerns?

## Appendix E: Information for Child Support Tracking Form

### Men’s Services Pre-Assessment

1. Number of child support cases currently open:
2. Total amount of monthly payment owed for current child support order(s):
3. Total amount currently paid each month in child support:
4. Does participant owe any back child support?
5. Amount of child support arrears:
6. Participant’s self-reported knowledge of the child support system (little to nothing, knows some basic things, average, above average, very knowledgeable):

### Case Notes

7. Did participant enroll in e-child support?
8. Has participant met with case manager to create a child support payment plan?
9. If so, what are the main goals of the child support payment plan?
10. Progress towards meeting child support payment goals:
11. Additional comments:

### E-Child Support Information (update monthly)

Total Monthly Obligation:	Total Balance:
Balance Owed for Month:	Last payment (date and amount):

### Child Support Status at Program Graduation

1. Participant’s self-reported child report status :
  - a. Total amount of monthly payment *owed* for current child support order(s):
  - b. Total amount currently *paid* each month in child support:
  - c. Amount of child support arrears:
2. Participant’s self-reported knowledge of the child support system (little to nothing, knows some basic things, average, above average, very knowledgeable):

3. E-child support status at program graduation:

Total Monthly Obligation:	Total Balance:
Balance Owed for Month:	Last payment (date and amount):

4. Were there any discrepancies between client’s report and e-child support?

### Follow Up (to be completed 3, 6, 9, and 12 months after program graduation)

Participant’s self-reported child support status:

- a) Total amount of monthly payment *owed* for current child support order(s):
- b) Total amount currently *paid* each month in child support:
- c) Amount of child support arrears: