

**REPORT OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Report on the Healthy Marriage  
and Stable Families Initiative**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



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**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
RICHMOND  
2005**



**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

November 30, 2005

TO: The Honorable Mark R. Warner

and

The Honorable Vincent F. Callahan, Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee

and

The Honorable John H. Chichester, Chairman  
Senate Finance Committee

and

The Honorable Harry B. Blevins, Chair  
Virginia Commission on Youth

The enclosed report is submitted pursuant to Item 360 G of the 2005 Appropriations Act, which allows the Department of Social Services to continue the Healthy Marriage and Stable Families Initiative grants, contingent upon federal funding. Item 360 G directs the Department to report on Initiative grant activities by November 30, 2005.

Additionally, the Commission on Youth requested by letter that the Department encourage localities to utilize "family-to-family" mentoring to help low-income families move toward financial self-sufficiency. They requested that the Secretary of Public Safety and Secretary of Health and Human Resources support Virginia's participation in the National Governor's Association Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy, and incorporate messages about the benefits of healthy relationships in reentry planning.

This report outlines Healthy Marriage and Stable Families Initiative activities. It also summarizes mentoring and reentry activities designed to strengthen marriages and families.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony Conyers, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anthony Conyers, Jr.  
Commissioner

# REPORT ON THE HEALTHY MARRIAGE AND STABLE FAMILIES INITIATIVE

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# REPORT ON THE HEALTHY MARRIAGE AND STABLE FAMILIES INITIATIVE

## Executive Summary

Through the Healthy Marriage and Stable Families Initiative, the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) awards grant to projects that provide community-based family preservation and supportive services designed to strengthen marriages and stabilize families. Grantees include public agencies, domestic violence prevention programs, faith-based organizations, and other non-profit or community-based groups. Awards were originally issued for a nine month grant period from October 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004 and a no-cost extension was given which extended the projects through September 30, 2004. The first round of grant awards ranged from \$12,000-35,000. Twenty-six (26) proposals were received and twelve (12) grants awarded.

This initiative is interested in innovative approaches to locally identified needs and funded projects must demonstrate measurable positive changes in the lives of the participants and their families. Projects could include concrete activities such as classes, seminars, workshops, inventories, conferences, support groups, and preventive counseling designed for use before or after a marriage or at any stage in a marriage. Organizations were encouraged to develop creative plans to address local challenges but the initial grant announcement provided the following examples of potential activities:

- Developing an effective community network or marriage task force to promote better public understanding of what healthy relationships require and better public access to related resources
- Establishing support groups or activity nights to focus on promoting healthy marriages
- Training to provide participants the knowledge and skills necessary to form and sustain a healthy marriage
- Conducting communication and problem solving skills workshops for single individuals that will help them form healthy relationships
- Developing and implementing a community-wide curriculum that provides support for the newly married
- Developing (or enhancing) community-based parenting programs to incorporate a marriage component and topics such as communication, conflict resolution, and relationship-building skills
- Offering programs to ensure that local teenagers will be better prepared for healthy dating relationships and marriage
- Assisting single parents with forming constructive relationships that are conducive to building a healthy relationship for the child and the non-custodial parent
- Providing individuals that have experienced abuse, rape, or domestic violence with training for building healthy relationships and marriages

This project is continuing in FY06 and is funded at \$250,000 through the Safe and Stable Families grant to Virginia. In the 2006 project, fatherhood programs have been added as a focus area and four pilot prisoner reentry programs that include family to family mentoring are being developed.

# REPORT ON THE HEALTHY MARRIAGE AND STABLE FAMILIES INITIATIVE

## Study Mandate

This report is required by Item 360 of the 2005 Appropriations Act, as follows:

*G. Contingent upon the availability of federal funding, the Virginia Department of Social Services may continue funding for the Healthy Marriage and Stable Families Initiative grants which provide community-based family preservation and supportive services designed to strengthen marriages and stabilize families. A report on these activities shall be submitted by November 30, 2005, to the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees as well as to the Chairman of the Virginia Commission on Youth."*

## Overview and Summary of Activities

Through the Healthy Marriage and Stable Families Initiative, the Division of Community Programs at the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) awarded grants to organizations for projects that provide community-based family preservation and supportive services designed to strengthen marriages and stabilize families. Grantees included public agencies, domestic violence prevention programs, faith-based organizations, and other non-profit or community-based groups. Grant awards ranged from \$12,000 - \$35,000.

A unique feature of the Healthy Marriage and Stable Families Initiative was the technical assistance and training for the grantees provided by the Community Programs' Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI) staff during the award period. Training was provided on outcome-based service delivery, recruiting and managing volunteers or mentors and a wrap up session in which program representatives shared challenges, lessons learned and best practices from their projects.

Awards were originally issued for a nine month grant period from October 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004 and a no-cost extension was given which extended the projects through September 30, 2004. The initiative focused on innovative approaches to locally identified needs and grant applicants were asked to develop proposals for strategies to strengthen healthy marriages, to help troubled marriages or to help single individuals develop skills that will lead to healthy relationships and/or marriages. The following examples of potential project activities were included in the grant announcement:

- Developing an effective community network or marriage task force to promote better public understanding of what healthy relationships require and better public access to related resources
- Establishing support groups or activity nights to focus on promoting healthy marriages
- Training to provide participants the knowledge and skills necessary to form and sustain a healthy marriage
- Conducting communication and problem solving skills workshops for single individuals that will help them form healthy relationships

- Developing and implementing a community-wide curriculum that provides support for the newly married
- Developing (or enhancing) community-based parenting programs to incorporate a marriage component and topics such as communication, conflict resolution, and relationship-building skills
- Offering programs to ensure that local teenagers will be better prepared for healthy dating relationships and marriage
- Assisting single parents with forming constructive relationships that are conducive to building a healthy relationship for the child and the non-custodial parent
- Providing singles that have experienced abuse, rape, or domestic violence with training for building healthy relationships and marriages

Twenty-six (26) proposals were received and twelve (12) grants awarded. The following summary lists the grantees, the amounts awarded, the focus and results of their projects.

**Mental Health Association of the New River Valley, Inc., Blacksburg - \$30,955**

The Mental Health Association of the New River Valley (MHANRV) proposed an expanded divorce education program, *One Child, Two Homes*, based upon the successful "Children of Divorce Seminar (CODS)" program developed by the agency in 1996. The program was designed to stabilize one-parent families by teaching collaborative problem solving skills. The target population included parents who were separating or recently divorced with children under the age of eighteen and living in the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski.

The program had forty-seven (47) graduating participants across sixteen seminars. The project provided 364 units (one unit equals one hour per participant) of non duplicative education. All had reported difficult, often protracted, conflicts with the other parent of their children. The project coordinator stated, "Seeing 78 percent of the exhausted working parents come week after week to learn techniques and skills in Collaborative Problem Solving was incredible." In pre-and post testing, all participants (100 percent) showed increased self rating of their levels of knowledge (low, medium, or high) in collaborative parenting. More than one in three parents (36 percent) said that their knowledge had increased significantly. All participant evaluations (100 percent) reported increased or significantly increased use of the "Collaborative Problem Solving" techniques presented during the seminars.

One-month follow-up surveys were sent to seminar participants in order to evaluate the impact that the program may have had on increasing the ability of participants to reach agreements without going to court. The results of these surveys indicated that 60 percent of the participants reported that they had reached an agreement related to the "business" of parenting out of court and 73.3 percent had not been back to court on custody-related issues in the 30 days following completion of the seminar. In addition, the MHANRV Executive Director feels that their participation in the HMSFI grant significantly enhanced their ability to secure a \$20,000 grant (VA Access and Visitation) from VDSS Division of Child Support Enforcement, thus enabling them to continue funding this project for a second year.

### **Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Parenting Program, Richmond - \$18,333**

Initially, VCU proposed to develop a parenting education curriculum to use with families living in the Carver Community of Richmond. The project was re-designed to use an existing curriculum and to focus on training of professionals who run or work in existing programs providing services to children and parents. The curriculum selected was the award-winning *Effective Black Parenting Program*<sup>TM</sup> that teaches parenting skills in a culturally affirming manner and acknowledges African-American patterns of communication and the African roots of the Black extended family. The professionals who attended the program represented the VCU Head Start Program, the VCU Center for Psychological Services, the AmeriCorps Program, and a shelter for battered women. Also represented were college students interested in the human services field from VCU, Old Dominion University, John Tyler and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community Colleges. Parents represented 38 percent of the participants.

Grant funds were used to purchase the *Effective Black Parenting Program*<sup>TM</sup> curriculum and enabled the project's director to become a certified trainer. The curriculum was presented through two full-day seminars to 41 participants. Of these, 90 percent were female, 88 percent African American, 66 percent were between the ages of 19 and 29, and 33 percent were 30 years or older. Participant surveys showed 97 percent with increased knowledge of parenting, 87 percent with improved confidence in being an effective parent and 80 percent reported improved parenting skills.

The professionals who attended the one-day seminars were asked to determine whether the program curriculum would be suitable and beneficial to the families they serve. All of the professionals who attended the sessions expressed overwhelming support for the substantive content and curriculum of the *Effective Black Parenting Program*<sup>TM</sup> and expressed interest in either becoming certified trainers themselves or having someone on their staff trained. Since the end of the grant period, the project director presented two additional one-day sessions in spring 2005 for parents and professionals and is planning two additional one-day sessions for fall 2005. In addition, she is applying for additional grant funding to provide certification training for at least 25 professionals and volunteers in the Greater Richmond area. As a result of the interest from the college student participants, VCU is developing a for-credit course on black parenting training that will include a service learning component.

### **MotherNet/Healthy Families Loudoun (INMED) Sterling - \$24,714**

This family strengthening and support project provided Spanish-language education and support services to help Loudoun County Hispanic parents and families develop communication, conflict resolution and relationship building skills in order to make healthy relationship choices, develop stable families and establish constructive parent-child bonds.

The project included 41 educational sessions supplemented by intensive case management and in-home support for families at highest risk for instability and/or domestic violence. Total attendance at the group sessions was 278 adults and 369 children. Participation in the groups supplemented by case management reached 131 unduplicated adult participants and 151 unduplicated children. A total of 30 adults attended a total of three or more group sessions. Educational topics included child abuse prevention, positive discipline strategies, dealing with anger in children, conflict resolution, domestic violence prevention, anger management among

adults, and home safety. In post participation surveys, 97 percent of the participants self-reported positive changes in their behavior toward their children and 81 percent reported positive behavior changes in the children.

**Northern Virginia Family Service (NVFS), Oakton - \$34,796**

This project proposed to train 50 linguistically and culturally competent facilitators in the *Prevention Relationship Enhancement Program*® (PREP), a research-based, educational approach to teach couples (premarital/marital) skills to enhance and preserve their relationships. The target areas were the counties of Arlington, Loudon, Prince William, and the City of Alexandria. One of the project objectives was to equip organizations with the tools and autonomy to train couples within their own cultural context/community, while also allowing them to stay connected through the emerging network of professionals interested in healthy marriage initiatives.

Through the grant project, the PREP facilitator training was provided and successfully completed by 55 individuals (5 more than proposed) from the following groups: 15 individuals representing eight (8) faith-based organizations; 16 individuals from nine (9) ethnically-oriented community groups; 17 individuals from 13 ecumenical, nonprofit community organizations; and six (6) individuals from university, local government and military organizations. By the end of the grant period, over half of the trained facilitators had implemented a one to six-week program for 156 individuals in their communities. Seventy (70) of these participants were couples who attended a PREP workshop together. In addition one organization conducted group training for thirteen mentor couples as coaches for other couples.

Many of the faith-based organizations are currently implementing a Christian PREP model within their congregations and will offer on-going classes designed to enhance marriage and decrease divorce. NVFS has successfully partnered with Fairfax County Schools Adult Education to offer the PREP program as part of their regular catalog offerings to the general public.

**City of Radford Dept of Social Services, Beans and Rice, Inc, and Women's Resource Center of New River Valley, Radford - \$15,000 Planning Grant**

The project focus was on providing life skills training for women at a transitional housing facility for women and their children who are homeless due to domestic violence.

Eight workshops totaling 20 hours of education were held. Workshop topics included communication, conflict resolution, money management, and nutrition and healthy lifestyles. Seven families representing seven women and ten children were served. The impact of these workshops is being tracked through a long term study focusing on what factors make for success in moving from crisis to self sufficiency. The long-term study is being conducted by Radford University Professor of Sociology/Anthropology, Dr. Jeanne Mekolichick and the results will be shared with VDSS when the study is completed in January 2006.



### **Henrico Department of Social Services (HDSS), Richmond - \$15,000 Planning Grant**

Workshops were provided in Henrico County to students, youth and adults served by HDSS and staff of HDSS. The emphasis was on specific communications skills, strategies for resolving conflicts and other interpersonal behaviors considered to be important for the success of intimate relationships.

The project included three county wide healthy marriage community events including “How to Pick a Partner” workshop at the University of Richmond, as well as a Healthy Marriage East Conference and Healthy Marriage West Conference. The target population was foster parents, foster youth, fatherhood groups, and TANF parents. The primary objective was for participants to develop practical interactive skills in communication, which is the basis for all successful life relationships. In addition, participants were encouraged to increase their awareness of specific areas of importance within the marriage relationship. Of the 540 participants, 90 percent reported a positive change in their attitudes toward healthy relationships.

In addition, the Henrico County Healthy Marriage Initiative was recognized by the National Association of Counties (NACo) as a “County Model Program” in the social services category through their 2005 annual Achievement Award Program, which recognizes innovative county government programs.

### **Boaz and Ruth, Inc, Richmond - \$32,000**

Boaz and Ruth, Inc. proposed using HMSFI grant funding to increase the number of participants served through their existing program, Project SUCCESS (Successful, Understanding, Compassionate Coaching Encouraging Stability and Self-Sufficiency). Using a holistic approach, Boaz and Ruth helps individuals, most of whom were formerly incarcerated, and their families move from chaotic poverty to economic and family stability by providing opportunities for change through their on-site, 12-month, 50+ hours/week paid trainee program that intensively focuses on life skills instruction, and development of emotional and relationship competencies and on-the-job training. During the “year of opportunity,” the trainees are provided a safe, family-like environment in which to re-program and transform their lives and develop a circle of supportive relationships. The daily “family” meetings held on-site provide the trainees with opportunities to model real life situations and practice working through relationship challenges like anger, forgiveness and teamwork.

The six trainees who completed the program prior to the beginning of the grant period served as mentors to twelve (12) new trainees. The HMSFI grant funding provided for the following: 50 percent of the trainee stipends and FICA for the 12 participants; 18 hours of extensive training for all program participants on cognitive restructuring to change negative core beliefs; 61 hours of individual and/or family counseling sessions; 20 hours of Healthy Family educational sessions. All participants reported improved family relationships as a result of the counseling and training activities.

By the end of the extended grant period, one participant in the program chose to marry, one participant is discussing marriage with the mother of his 14 year old son, and two others report more positive attitudes toward marriage. In addition, four of the trainees graduated from the program, obtained and maintained jobs (one graduate is self-employed and runs his own lawn

care and home services business). Two of three graduates who came into the program without driver's licenses have obtained them and both own cars. The other graduate paid off outstanding fines and was on track to obtaining a driver's license.

### **Marriage Builders Alliance - First Things First of Richmond - \$15,000 Planning Grant**

The project goal was to develop and implement a "Community Marriage Initiative" for the Richmond Metropolitan Area to increase resources and marriage education capacity and to raise public awareness of the benefits of healthy marriages for those who choose marriage for themselves.

The project staff conducted two community forums attended by 169 participants. Forum themes included community unity to strengthen marriage and the African American Healthy Marriage Initiative. Other activities included "Celebrate Marriage Richmond 2004," a series of healthy marriage education and awareness programs and two clergy /community leader forums that brought together leaders from government, social service agencies and faith communities. Both Governor Warner and former Richmond Mayor, Rudy McCollum issued proclamations citing the importance of healthy marriages and this community initiative.

### **Freedom Fellowship Ministries, Virginia Beach - \$31,532**

Freedom Fellowship sought to increase healthy marriages & stable families through implementation of PREP couples workshops in the Tidewater area. The target group was engaged and married couples.

Freedom Fellowship conducted nine twelve hour PREP seminars involving 114 participants. They also hosted three community date night events targeting married couples to encourage them to set aside priority time for their relationship and learn marriage enriching techniques. Couples were given the Enrich Relationship Scale prior to and one-month following the workshops and 86 percent showed improvement in recognition and ability to respond to negative factors in their relationships.

### **NIA, Inc – St. Paul's Baptist Church, Richmond - \$15,000 Planning Grant**

Using the *Married for a Lifetime* curriculum, NIA implemented an educational intervention series designed to help couples improve skills necessary to sustain health marriages. Developed by a coalition of staff and volunteers at St. Paul's Baptist Church, *Married for a Lifetime* was designed to assist couples with addressing the issues of marriage mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually, and sexually.

Forty couples (80 people) who completed the *Married for a Lifetime* series reported relationship improvement and ten additional couples (20 people) started and completed the program after the end of the grant period. Eight couples (16 people) received crisis counseling and seven of the eight reported strengthened marital relationships that moved them away from the brink of divorce.

In addition, two couples were trained to become mentors for other potentially troubled couples using the PREP and FOCUS/REFOCUS curriculum and since the end of the grant, one of these couples has started a relationship strengthening support group and is mentoring four additional couples.

During the grant period, four of the couples who completed the *Married for a Lifetime* series conducted a planning retreat for FY2004-2005 to create other activities to promote the lessons learned from the *Married for a Lifetime* program to other couples. They have currently recruited 42 additional couples (84 people) to participate in activities which will include the presentation of the *Married for a Lifetime* program.

### **The Alliance for Families and Children, Lynchburg - \$28,279**

Collaborating with the Marriage Before the Carriage Coalition, high school youth received education to prepare them for healthy dating relationships and marriage. Also, in collaboration with the Pastoral Counseling Association, the Great Start premarital counseling curriculum was offered to couples planning to marry.

Educational sessions reached 667 youth throughout Central Virginia (cities of Lynchburg and Bedford, counties of Appomattox, Amherst, Bedford and Campbell). Pre-and post tests revealed an 18 percent increase in understanding the differences between love, romance, and infatuation. Of the youth participating, 78 percent reported an understanding that current relationship decisions can affect the rest of their lives and 80 percent showed a positive change in attitude about abstinence prior to marriage.

### **Partners in Prevention Coalition, Richmond - \$22,800**

The Richmond City Department of Public Health's Partners in Prevention Coalition (RPIP) proposed holding a community conference on healthy relationships and marriages in order to stimulate dialogue between academics/researchers and community practitioners regarding barriers to the development of stable families and healthy marriages in the Richmond area, and to offer skill building interventions to community residents. By generating interest in the subject of stable relationships and healthy marriages, the intent was to produce change in community attitudes and practices. Prior to the conference, focus groups were held to gather information about the perceptions of community residents regarding the barriers to the establishment and maintenance of healthy relationships in the Richmond community.

The two day conference entitled "Can We Talk – A Conference on Healthy Relationships," attracted over 250 participants and was held at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. The conference keynote speakers included national authorities on healthy relationships, Dr. Ronald Mincey from Columbia University and Dr. Orlando Patterson from Harvard University. All of the conference speakers utilized information gained from the focus groups to inform participants about local barriers to developing healthy relationships. Breakout sessions included Problems/Barriers to Healthy Relationships, Public Policy and Practice Changes Needed to Foster Healthy Relationships and Services Needed. Outcomes of the conference included policy recommendations that will be used to develop a three-year plan for strengthening healthy marriages in the Richmond community.

## **Project Continuation**

The Healthy Marriage & Stable Families Initiative is continuing in FY06 and is funded at \$250,000 through the Safe and Stable Families grant to Virginia. In the 2006 project, fatherhood programs have been added as a focus area and four pilot prisoner reentry programs that include family to family mentoring are being developed.

## **Reentry & Family to Family Mentoring**

In July of 2003 the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices announced that Virginia was one of seven states selected to participate in its Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy. Through the academy, NGA assisted state teams in developing effective prisoner reentry strategies designed to reduce costly recidivism rates by improving pre-and post-release services. Other participating states included Georgia, Idaho, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey and Rhode Island. This intensive program included an in-state policy workshop, policy academy meetings, and customized technical assistance.

An initial step in Virginia's participation in the academy was to bring together representatives of the agencies and organizations that deliver services to ex-offenders and their families. This included: Office of the Secretary of Public Safety, Virginia Departments of Corrections, Correctional Education, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, Health, Social Services, Housing and Community Development, Criminal Justice Services and Juvenile Justice, the Parole Board, and the Virginia Employment Commission. Additional participants included staff from the General Assembly, the Virginia Sentencing Commission, the state's non-profit Pre and Post Incarceration Services providers, and representatives of inmate and family support groups, as well as other departments and organizations that provide services at the state and local levels.

Over two years, the Virginia Reentry group met together and as sub-committees to identify the specific causes for reentry failure in the state and develop strategies to address these. The overall reentry group identified and prioritized reentry barriers and needs. Subcommittees were then established, based on broad categorizations of need or barriers to successful reentry. These included:

- Financial Obligations, Housing, and Financial and Community Resources
- Employment and Education
- Social Reintegration
- Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse

Each subcommittee developed a list of roadblocks to successful reintegration, and proposed actions to address those. The sub-committees continue to meet to adjust strategies as new data becomes available. However, in order to test the impact of the strategies that have been developed, four pilot programs will be conducted in 2006.

Virginia Reentry Pilot Programs will be established in four localities of the state. These pilot programs will allow for testing and evaluating the implementation of the recommendations

and strategies developed from Virginia's participation in the NGA Policy Academy on Prisoner Reentry. Pilot program results will assist in decision making on the most cost effective methods to approach delivery of reentry pre- and post- release services that support decreased recidivism and quality of life improvements for released offenders, their families and communities.

Pilot programs will be developed around two primary principles, integrated service delivery and interagency collaboration. Local departments of social services will serve as convening agencies in the pilot localities and will bring together representatives of public and private agencies, businesses, community-based service providers and faith-based organizations to form a local reentry council. These local councils will develop a reentry plan for their locality that identifies resources available, methods for interagency coordination and implementation of policy academy recommendations. Each locality will have an assigned state correctional facility from which a minimum of 25 and a maximum of 50 offenders will be referred for participation in the pilot program.

The pilots will include a reentry preparation phase and a return to the community phase. A unique feature of the pilots will be a family to family mentoring component in which trained mentors will walk with the ex-offenders and his or her family during the re-entry process. Mentors will serve as concerned adults who provide support and help bridge positive connections with communities. Additionally, fatherhood programs that promote positive involvement of fathers in the lives of their children will be offered prior to and following release. Appendix C addresses Virginia Prisoner Reentry Project.

## **Conclusion**

Strong families are a vital component to creating a nurturing environment for children to grow and thrive. The Healthy Marriage and Stable Families Initiative along with the Family to Family Mentoring and Fatherhood programs at the Department of Social Services support families in developing skills and identifying resources to equip them for positive parenting and healthy relationships.

# Appendices

## **Appendix A**

### **REPORT ON THE HEALTHY MARRIAGE AND STABLE FAMILIES INITIATIVE**

#### **Study Mandate**

Item 360, 2005 Appropriations Act

“G. Contingent upon the availability of federal funding, the Virginia Department of Social Services may continue funding for the Healthy Marriage and Stable Families Initiative grants which provide community-based family preservation and supportive services designed to strengthen marriages and stabilize families. A report on these activities shall be submitted by November 30, 2005, to the Chairmen of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees as well as to the Chairman of the Virginia Commission on Youth.”





## Virginia Prisoner Reentry Project

### Fatherhood Initiative

The goal of Virginia Fatherhood Initiative is to improve the emotional, social, mental and physical health of children through positive father involvement. Its focus is to get and keep fathers involved with their children and to improve the quality of fathering.

### Family to Family Mentoring *Mentoring with a Purpose*

Mentors work with the ex-offender, or the ex-offender and his/her family, during reentry to the community.

- **Team Approach**  
Mentor Team – Two to Three Mentor Families
- **Family to Family Mentor Training**  
Mentor Sponsor Organization  
Mentor Supervisor  
Mentors

Mentoring With a Purpose – As well as relationship building and support, mentors will promote and facilitate ex-offender and family member skills building in the following areas:

- **Parenting**  
Assist parents to enhance their parenting skills
- **Strengthening Marriages**  
Communication  
Conflict resolution  
Problem Solving
- **Education**  
Support ex-offender and family members in achieving education goals  
Facilitate communication between home and school  
Facilitate links with education resources in community – Race to the GED, etc
- **Financial Literacy**  
Support ex-offender and family members in basic skills in the management of personal financial affairs including income, banking, savings, consumer protection, Earned Income Tax Credit