



REEL FATHERS

Supporting Fathers and Families through Film, Dialogue, and Skill-building

Our Vision: We envision a society in which fathers of all ages are valued, honored and respected. Men enjoy being vibrantly engaged with their children and working with their partners as strong and nurturing co-parents. Children grow up to be healthy, productive members of a flourishing community.

Our Mission: We engage fathers -- in concert with children, youth, families and community – to build stronger, more vital relationships through a dynamic use of film and story.

Program Approach: REEL FATHERS offers programs that provide men with the encouragement and skills needed to become the father they wish to be. We do this in a fresh and compelling way – we tap the power of story told through film. That’s why we’re REEL FATHERS.

Showing a film or video appeals to dads – it’s non-threatening and it’s fun. So men come. It’s not unusual for us to have 35-45 dads (and as many children) at a program. We select the featured film because it contains a certain wisdom about fathers and families, literally or metaphorically...a wisdom to be discovered. The film injects energy into the event and serves as a touchstone for reflective dialogue among the dads. With the guidance of the REEL FATHERS facilitator, fathers share their insights about the film's meaning in relation to family life. They learn and practice positive new ways to communicate with their children and partners.

Goal and Objectives: The goal of REEL FATHERS (RF) is to support fathers in building closer, more fulfilling relationships with their children. Program objectives include fathers spending more dedicated time with their children at home and school, fathers gaining the skills to be equal and effective co-parents, and an increase in positive stories about fathers in the press and media.

Program Activities: REEL FATHERS has developed innovative program partnerships with community-based organizations serving fathers, youth and families in Santa Fe, central and northern New Mexico. Programs are organized along three tracks:

Fathers and Young Children: *Dads and Kids Movie Night* events for PMS-Head Start/Santa Fe County, YDI-Head Start/Albuquerque, Taos, and Rio Arriba Counties, Ramirez Thomas Elementary School/Santa Fe.

Incarcerated and Former Offender Fathers: *Phoenix Fathers* program for the New Mexico Department of Corrections and PB&J Family Services/Albuquerque.

At-Risk Youth: *Fathers in Focus* creative intensives -- partnerships with Warehouse 21 and NM Gear Up; Adelante/SF Public Schools; Youth Media Project; and Capital High School.

Outcomes: Over the past four years REEL FATHERS has observed the following outcomes for its programs and events:

1. Fathers see themselves anew – as honored, respected, and vitally important to their children and families;

2. Fathers use new communication skills to create more engaged, loving father-child relationships and a more positive family life;
3. The community gains a new appreciation for the fundamental importance of fathers, strengthening the web of father-child-family-community well-being.

Teen Fathers: REEL FATHERS is engaged in a planning process to create a fourth program track designed specifically for teen fathers. It will build on the success of RF's innovative program approach using film as a catalyst for attendance, dialogue and relationship skill-building.

By the end of 2014 we expect to have a curriculum/training package completed and available for program service providers working with teen fathers. This package will be distributed as a stand-alone resource and will also be a component in a real-time training program.

Project Contact:

If you would like more information on REEL FATHERS' work with teen fathers, or would like to be on our email list, please contact:

Deborah Boldt, Executive Director
REEL FATHERS
deborah@reelfathers.org
505-466-2295
6 Torneo Court, Santa Fe, NM 87508