



# News Release

Franklin County Board of Commissioners | Office of Public Affairs | (614) 525-3322

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Friday, August 17, 2012**

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**Franklin County Family Empowerment Day More than Effort to Collect Child Support**  
*Over 500 residents attend job fair, receive free legal assistance, community service referrals*

More than just an event to recognize national Child Support Awareness Month, the goal of Franklin County's Family Empowerment Day and Resource Fair is to connect both custodial and non-custodial parents to job opportunities, education and training, parenting assistance and community resources to help their children succeed.

Over 500 residents attended the event held on Wednesday at St. Stephen's Community House that provides legal guidance on issues of custody and visitation, as well as referrals financial counseling and work training, and a job fair.

Ninety-three non-custodial parents met with Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) staff to start the process to Withdraw Capiases, 89 met to have driver license reinstatement – 22 licenses were reinstated onsite, and over \$1100 in child support payments was collected.

Family Empowerment Day is part of the Commissioners' "Investing in our Next Generation" initiative - a year-long examination of the estimated \$343 million in total investments that County agencies will make in youth and child-oriented programs in 2012, and how these agencies and programs can work better together to increase their impact on Franklin County's young people.

"Dependable child support makes a real difference in managing food, shelter, clothing, and medical expenses," said Commission President Paula Brooks. "Though we have seen dramatic budget cuts from the Statehouse and from Congress, Franklin County and our community partners have been aggressive in seeking new tools to empower families and help our community's children reach their God-given potential."

Community partners and social service organizations that participated in the event include the Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC), Columbus State Community College, Franklin County Children Services and Domestic Relations and Juvenile Court, the Legal Aid Society of Columbus, among many others.

"I want to thank and encourage all of the parents that attended the Empowerment Day activities," said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. "Just by being there, they made a difference in their life, the lives of their children, and the life of our community. Empowerment Day is a great tool to help parents help themselves and their family."

Commissioner John O'Grady said, "Children need parents who are engaged and reliable. Events like Family Empowerment Day are great ways to access community resources to address barriers that may be keeping you from seeing your kids or getting a job to support them."

"When individuals are empowered, families are empowered and our community is stronger," said Domestic Relations and Juvenile Court Judge Elizabeth Gill.

Stephanie Hightower, President and CEO of the Columbus Urban League, said "Our role in this community is to support family stabilization and empowerment. Family Empowerment Day is that opportunity for single fathers and single mothers in our community, to come together on that goal, for the future of our children and our communities."

Family Empowerment Day is a collaboration of the Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA), the Columbus Urban League, and St. Stephen's Community House, and is held each August as a local celebration of Child Support Awareness Month.

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For more information on the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, log on to: [www.franklincountyohio.gov/commissioners](http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/commissioners).

# News Today

An online newsletter for ODJFS employees · Thursday, Aug. 30, 2012

## Child Support Open House, Amnesty Events Held

Director Colbert visited two Child Support Awareness Month events in August: an open house at the Lucas County Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA) and an amnesty event organized by the Summit County CSEA.

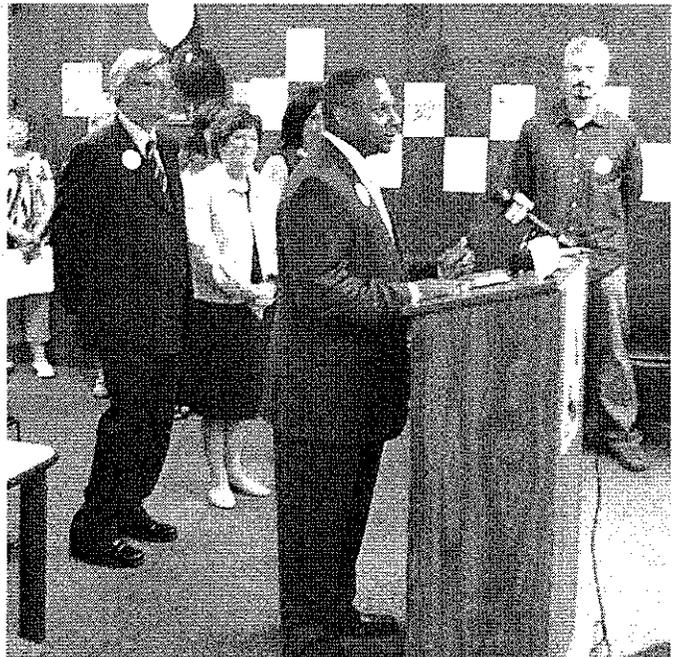
More than 100 people attended the Lucas event, held Aug. 13 in the lobby of the county office building on Adams Street in Toledo. Director Colbert and Lucas County commissioners joined CSEA staff in showcasing the Child Support Customer Service Web Portal, which gives customers 24-hour access to their case information, and which Lucas customers can use from the CSEA lobby.

"We are encouraging people who come in to take a minute, log on and have access to their own information," said Deb Ortiz-Flores, director of the Lucas CSEA and JFS.

Individuals who attended the open house shared their stories and expressed appreciation for being able to have their cases reviewed, Ortiz-Flores said.

"They had a chance to talk to Director Colbert and talk about some of the issues that keep them away from the agency," she said. "Having that input helps us shape our programs."

Director Colbert also spoke with individuals who attended the Summit County CSEA's "Child Support Solutions" amnesty event, held Aug.



Director Colbert and Lucas County commissioners joined Lucas County CSEA staff for an Aug. 13 open house to showcase the Child Support Customer Service Web Portal.

24-25 at The Job Center in Akron. The event offered participants an opportunity to resolve outstanding child support warrants, apply for

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## Huber Heights to Air Center Van Pool Forming

ODJFS employees who work at the 4020 and 4200 E. Fifth Ave. (Air Center) buildings are invited to participate in a new van pool that will originate in Huber Heights and stop in Springfield on the way to Columbus each weekday morning. The van pool will accommodate anyone who

works from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the Air Center.

For more information, call Patty Olmsted with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's RideSolutions program at (614) 233-4133 or email [polmsted@morpc.org](mailto:polmsted@morpc.org).

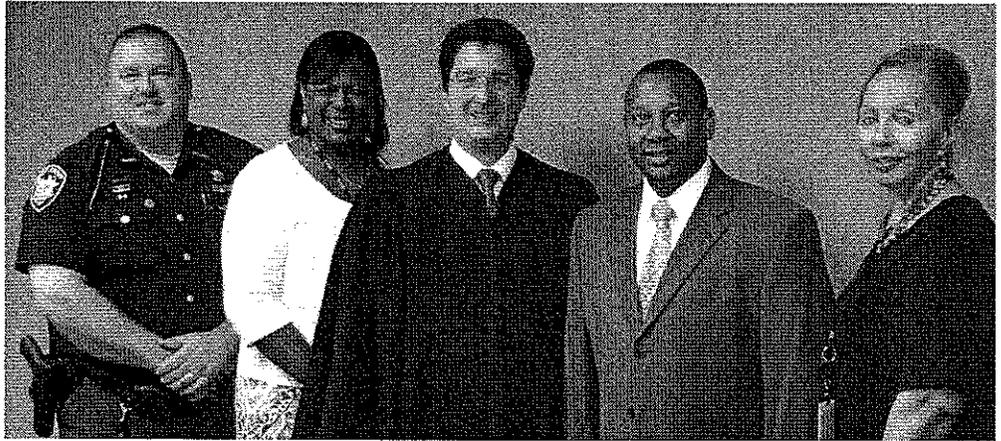
waivers or settlements of past-due child support owed to the state, make payment arrangements for back child support, undergo genetic testing to determine paternity, and reinstate driver's licenses.

Representatives from the Summit County Domestic Relations Court, Clerk of Courts, sheriff's office and other agencies helped participants address issues that have prevented them from making timely child

support payments. Kimberly Dent, director of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, and Athena Riley, ODJFS Office of Child Support program administrator, were on hand to meet with local fatherhood groups such as Fathers & Sons, Man 2 Man, Fame Fathers and the Fatherhood Initiative.

"It is extremely encouraging to see all of these agencies and organizations come together for the benefit of our children," said Summit County Prosecuting Attorney Sherri BevanWalsh, who helped organize the event.

The Stark County JFS also hosted an amnesty event, on Aug. 22. More than 60 people attended, representing more than \$500,000 in



(Left to right) Summit County Sheriff's Deputy Larry Peters; Kimberly Dent, director of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood; Summit County Court of Common Pleas Judge Thomas Teodosio; Director Colbert; and Athena Riley, ODJFS Office of Child Support program administrator.

arrears, said Rob Pierson, deputy director of the Stark County JFS Child Support Enforcement Division. Many of the individuals worked out payment arrangements at the event, which was co-sponsored by the Stark Family Court and the Interdenominational Ministerial Association of Stark County.

"The success of the event was not in the amount of support collected, warrants canceled or licenses reinstated, but in the opportunity these noncustodial parents were given, in a positive, nonthreatening environment, to get back on track in paying their child support obligations," Pierson said.

## Road Show Registration Deadline Is Sunday

ODJFS employees interested in participating in a Take Charge! Live Well! Road Show event Sept. 18-19 at the Air Center must register by Sunday, Sept. 2; no walk-ins will be accepted.

Take Charge! Live Well! is the state's health and wellness initiative that offers financial incentives to employees and spouses enrolled in state of Ohio health plans. Participants who complete a biometric screening at a Road Show event or their doctor's office will receive a \$75 gift card. Other incentives are

offered for completing an online well-being assessment, signing up for health coaching and for participating in other activities.

The Air Center event will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 18 and 19, at 4020 E. Fifth Ave.

To register, go to <http://www.tclw.das.ohio.gov>, click on "Wellness Events," and then click on the date you would like to attend. Then click on the link to make an appointment.

# News Today

An online newsletter for ODJFS employees · Wednesday, July 18, 2012

## Summit Offered Fathers Resources, Support



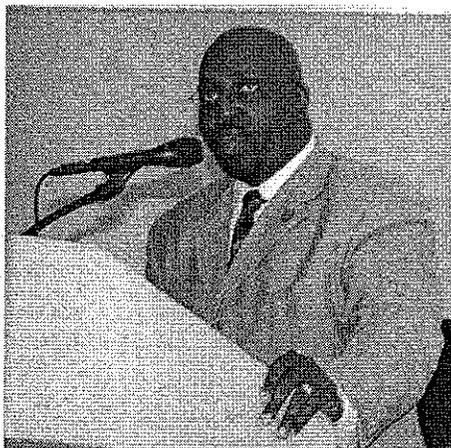
A panel discussion on the joys and challenges of fatherhood featured (left to right) Richard and Darren Lundy, founders of The Sacred Bond, which helps fathers and sons reunite; moderator Paul Strong, local radio personality; and former Ohio State basketball players Lawrence Funderburke and Scoonie Penn.

Despite the thunderstorm that blew through central and southwestern Ohio June 29 and knocked out power for tens of thousands of Ohio residents, more than 200 participants turned out for the 2012 Fatherhood Summit the day after the storm. Sponsored by the ODJFS Office of Child Support (OCS), the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood and the Columbus Urban League, the

event was held at the Columbus State Workforce Development Center in downtown Columbus.

The summit featured a resource fair with information booths hosted by community organizations. It also offered a variety of informational sessions, including "Give Yourself the Employment Edge" and "Ohio's One-Stop

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Vander Green, program specialist with the U.S. Administration for Children & Families office in Chicago, welcomed attendees.



State Rep. Tracy Heard spoke about pending legislation that will help ex-offenders catch up on child support.



Franklin County Children Services Executive Director Chip Spinning said children benefit from strong family ties.



Former Ohio State basketball players Scoonie Penn (second from left) and Lawrence Funderburke (right) congratulated attendees who received the Spirit of Fatherhood Awards, which recognize fathers who serve as role models for their children and communities.

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Job-Finding Service," which was presented by OhioMeansJobs representatives Tanya Calbert, Greg Warren, James Johnson and Paul Bounds.

"The summit is intended to provide fathers with information about everything from financial literacy, to understanding their rights and responsibilities in regard to child support enforcement, to parenting tips," said Kim Dent, interim director of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood.

"We want fathers to have good financial standing so they can be the best fathers they can be," said Glenn Harris, director of the Columbus Urban League's African American Male Initiative, which encourages fathers to take an active role in their children's lives.

Athena Riley, OCS program administrator, greeted participants as they arrived at the summit.

"It was refreshing to welcome and talk with fathers from several different countries who were in attendance," Riley said.

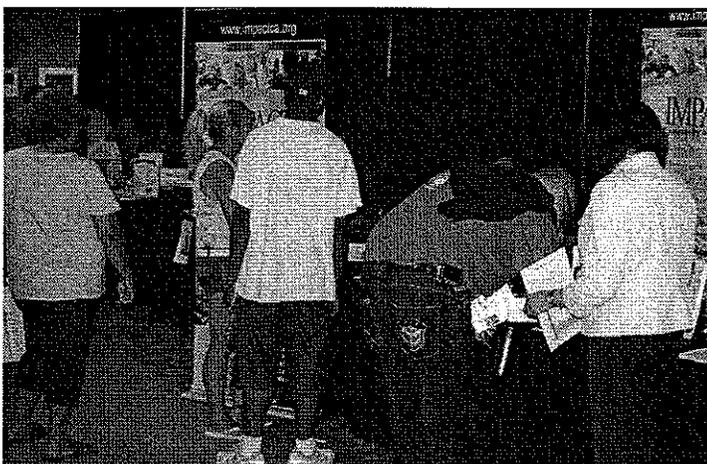
Riley said Ohio's child support program has built partnerships with fatherhood organizations around the state, and those collaborations helped make the summit a success.

"These partnerships have helped the child support program to reach out to fathers and gain their trust," she said.

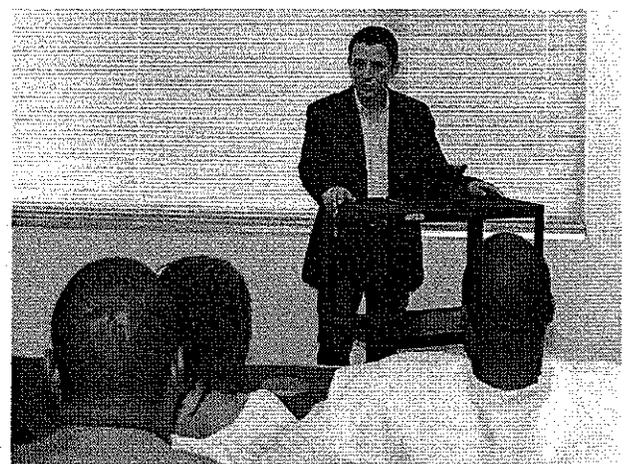
The summit also included a "Celebration of Fatherhood Luncheon," which featured remarks by Franklin County Children Services Executive Director Chip Spinning; State Rep. Tracy Heard; and Vander Green, program specialist with the U.S. Administration for Children and Families office in Chicago.

"Children have a much better outcome and

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The summit featured a resource fair with information booths hosted by community organizations and ODJFS programs, including OhioMeansJobs.



Presenter Robert Castillo led a workshop titled "Spirit of Fatherhood," which offered advice on how fathers can inspire their children to be the best they can be.



Members of the Fatherhood Summit planning committee, representing the ODJFS Office of Child Support, the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood and the Columbus Urban League.

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better well-being when they have connections to their fathers," Spinning said, "so we couldn't help but support the Fatherhood Summit."

Heard said she is working with her colleagues in the Ohio General Assembly on legislation that will give inmates who are reentering society an opportunity to catch up on child support arrears.

"Child support is critical," Heard said. She added that the pending legislation is designed to give former offenders an opportunity to find employment and clear up arrears "so that they're not penalized because of a financial obligation that they had no opportunity to realize (while incarcerated)."

The luncheon also featured a panel discussion on the joys and challenges of fatherhood. Local radio personality Paul Strong served as moderator, and panelists included former Ohio State basketball players Lawrence Funderburke and Scoonie Penn. Funderburke is a former NBA player with the Sacramento Kings and founder of the Lawrence Funderburke Youth Organization; Penn was a Final Four participant and played professionally in the European leagues.

"The most important thing you can give your kids is time," Funderburke said. "The number one

thing kids value is time with their families."

"More of us need to take a more positive role in our children's lives," Penn said. "As men, we need to be more involved. The more involved we are, the better our communities will be."

The panel also included Richard and Darren Lundy, a father and son who founded The Sacred Bond, a program that helps strengthen relationships between fathers and sons who were formerly estranged.

After the panel discussion, Richard Lundy received a "Village Father Award," which is presented to men who have been exemplary fathers and mentored young people in their communities. In addition, Tracy Robinson, former director of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, received an appreciation award for his years of service.

At the program's conclusion, 12 "Spirit of Fatherhood" awards were given to the following attendees for serving as role models to their children and communities: Charles Brown, Carl Chastang, John Garrett Sr., Jason Gregory, John Gustus, Marlon Hairston, David E. Johnson, Damon Minter, the Rev. Eddie Roberts, Bishop Tim Teague, Yohann Terrell and Dominic Townsell Sr.

### **GOT NEWS?**

To submit an article or idea to News Today, email [NewsToday@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:NewsToday@jfs.ohio.gov). Photos should be sent in JPEG or TIF format.

### **Feeling Stressed?**

Help is available through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by calling 1-800-221-6327.

# DAYTON DADS

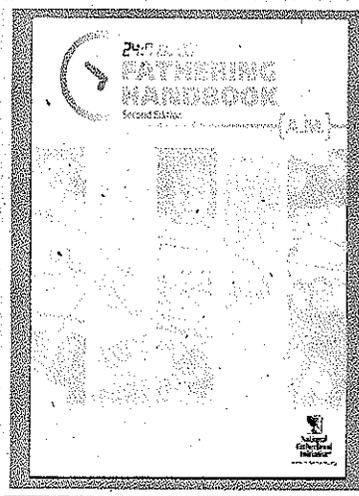
FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE

CHARMAINE AND LEONARD KIRBY

**DAYTON DADS CURRICULA:** We know that the children of many alcoholic/drug addicted and/or reentry adult participants are on the road to crime themselves. Spirit of Peace CDC has developed prevention efforts for these families using our best practice parenting curricula composed of both **24:7 Dad™** and **Inside Out Dad™** from the National Fatherhood Initiative.

## 24:7 DAD™ FATHERING HANDBOOK

The **24:7 Dad™** program – a proven best practices that is useful for ALL fathers - is a twelve-week fathering program. Fathers focus on five characteristics intended to help men be "a great dad 24 hours a day, 7 days a week." The five characteristics include self-awareness, caring for self, fathering skills, parenting skills, and relationship skills. **24:7 Dad™** focuses on key fathering characteristics – like masculinity, discipline, and work-family balance - and helps men evaluate their parenting skills. The program content was designed to be inclusive of different cultures, races, religions, and backgrounds.



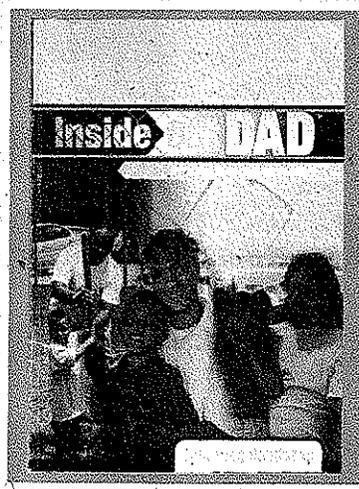
*"Combined with Spirit of Peace CDC's continuum of care program model to assist low-income fathers and their families move toward a better life..."*

Rev. Tommy Stewart  
Executive Director

24:7 DAD FATHERING HANDBOOK

## INSIDE/OUT DAD™ HANDBOOK

The **InsideOut Dad™** program is an evidence-based reentry program designed to connect incarcerated fathers with their families and prepare them for release. Standardized programming for 23 states and Washington, D.C., **InsideOut Dad™** helps reduce recidivism rates by reconnecting incarcerated fathers to their families, providing the motivation to get out and stay out. Popular among both inmates and ex-offenders, **InsideOut Dad™** has been proven to increase family contact and improve inmate knowledge and attitudes.



*"Combined with Spirit of Peace CDC's own best practice "ASTAR" reentry curriculum which has yielded under 5% recidivism over the last 10 years..."*

Rev. Tommy Stewart  
Executive Director

INSIDE OUT DAD HANDBOOK

**DAYTON DADS PROGRAM  
TESTIMONIALS FROM GRADUATES**

*"I've gotten a lot of good information from this class about fathering, family, marriage, and children.*

*I've talked with Leonard and Charmaine about my own struggles and was encouraged by them.*

*I feel this class will help me in my recovery process."*

- S. Ramos

*"I truly enjoyed the fatherhood program. The facilitators were very honest. Leonard and Charmaine kept the class interesting with fun and facts.*

*I think it should be a required phase of treatment.*

*Thanks for the motivation and help. I will continue working with the program after my release from treatment."*

- T. Brown

*"I went through the 24/7 DAD program during my treatment at Nova Behavioral Center. My experience was very positive, even though my children are now adults.*

*Charmaine and Leonard were very professional, helpful and informative. The information that was provided through the program was not only helpful with the parenting aspects of my life but other areas as well. The services of this program are an asset to the community"*

- C. Killen

*I really enjoy Charmaine and Leonard's dedication to come into the facility and take time to teach me not only how to be a better father, but also a better man.*

*I have recognized thoughts and feelings through this program that I have really never realized I was holding onto. This program has made me want to progress after I am out of treatment, so I can continue on the journey of being an awesome father and man.*

- J. Davidson