



STEP ONE: IDENTIFY QUESTIONS ABOUT FATHER ENGAGEMENT and FATHER INVOLVEMENT

Counties may be concerned about one or more aspects of father engagement and /or father involvement, what impact father engagement and/or father involvement is having on social work practice and organizational efficiency and effectiveness. In order to conduct an evaluation, counties should know what they are interested in knowing or acquiring about fathers. If, for example, counties do NOT know or need help to identify questions, some examples are provided here. You'll notice that some of the questions are directly related to the federal and state outcome measures.

Demographics of Fathers

1. How many fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) are being served in the following programs:
 - a. ER
 - b. FM
 - c. FR
 - d. Court
 - e. LT
2. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) who have been identified in each service component?
3. What, if any, is the increase in the number of fathers being served pre and post father engagement activities?
4. What percentage of fathers are living in the homes with their child(ren)?

Father visits

1. What is the averaging number of visits between fathers and their children within a certain time frame?
2. Number of (scheduled, attempted, completed) father/child(ren) visits that were:
 - a. In-person
 - b. By telephone
 - c. Written communication
 - d. By email
 - e. By fax
3. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) who scheduled, attempted or completed visits with their child(ren):
 - a. In-person
 - b. By telephone
 - c. Written communication
 - d. By email
4. Number of (scheduled, attempted, completed) father/social worker visits that were:
 - a. In-person
 - b. By telephone
 - c. Written communication
 - d. By email

- e. By fax
- 5. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) who scheduled, attempted or completed visits with their social worker:
 - a. In-person
 - b. By telephone
 - c. Written communication
 - d. By email
- 6. What is the average number of visits between fathers and their children in:
 - a. ER
 - b. FM
 - c. FR
 - d. Court
 - e. LT

Child Abuse and Neglect Allegations

- 7. Number of allegations that involve fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) as the alleged perpetrators
- 8. Number of recurrence of allegations that involve fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) as the alleged perpetrators
- 9. Number of recurrence of allegations after exit that involve fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) as the alleged perpetrators
- 10. How many fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) are identified in cases where allegations were:
 - a. Substantiated
 - b. Not substantiated
 - c. Unfounded
- 11. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) who are identified in cases where allegations were:
 - a. Substantiated
 - b. Not substantiated
 - c. Unfounded
- 12. Following the substantiation of an allegation, how many fathers are contacted by CPS within a certain timeframe (same day, two weeks, 1 month)?

Entry

- 13. For those children who enter CPS, how many fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) have been identified
- 14. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) whose children have entered CPS?

Reunification

- 15. For children who reunified within twelve months (entry cohort vs. exit cohort):
 - a. Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
 - b. Did they reunify with a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step)?
 - c. Did they reunify with a member of the father's family?
 - d. What was the average number of visits between fathers and their child(ren)?

16. What is the median time to reunification for children who have participated in visits with their fathers infrequently, moderately frequently or regularly frequent (as determined by the county)
17. For children who reentered CPS following reunification:
 - a. Was the father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) the perpetrator
 - b. Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
 - c. Were they subsequently re-removed from a household where a father was presumed to be living?

Adoption

18. For children who have been adopted (12 months vs. 24 months):
 - a. Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
 - b. Were they adopted by a member from the father's family?
 - c. What was the average number of visits between the father and child(ren) pre-adoption services?

Permanency

19. When children exit to permanency (reunification, adoption, guardianship):
 - a. Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
 - b. Is the permanent placement with a father?
 - c. Is the permanent placement with a member from the father's family?
20. How many youth have a permanent connection identified and the permanent connection is a father and/or someone from the father's family?
21. For those youth aging out of foster care, how many reside with their fathers or father families post CPS intervention?

Placement Stability

22. For children in care during a specific time period (to be determined by the agency):
 - a. What percentage of the cases had a father identified in the case file in which the children had less than 2 placement changes
 - b. What percentage of the cases had a father identified in the case file in which the children had more than 2 placement changes

Siblings

23. Do fathers visit with sibling groups at the same rate as single children?
24. What is the percentage of fathers with sibling groups in CPS? How many children live with their bio mother(s) versus bio father(s)?

This list by no means includes all of the possible questions that counties or organizations may have about father engagement and/or father involvement. In fact, this section provides lots of suggestions for descriptive statistics (i.e. things that describe or provide a better explanation about a particular phenomenon by providing frequencies, distributions, means, etc.). If you are the one tasked with developing your questions, you may want to develop them in collaboration with others in your county.

Counties might also have questions about father engagement and father involvement that require inference about variables. A few examples are:

1. Do fathers with high levels of involvement in the lives of their child(ren) display high levels of engagement with social work staff?
2. Are fathers who are more involved with their children more likely to have shorter times to reunification?
3. What is the relationship between father engagement and child health and well-being outcomes?
4. What is the relationship between low, medium and high levels of father involvement and placement stability?
5. When fathers are involved in decision making matters involving their children, how involved are they in their children's lives?
6. Are father friendly organizations predictive of better outcomes for children and families?
7. Are engaged fathers more likely to participate in service activities?