



New FRPN Research Brief and Quality Measures

Our latest brief, [Measures of Father-Child Relationship Quality for Fatherhood Programs](#), describes how fatherhood programs can measure relationship quality.

To-date, most studies focus exclusively on the amount of father-child contact and involvement when they consider the father-child relationship. FRPN examined the utility of [two short measures](#) that focus on father-child closeness and conflict to assess the quality of father-child relationships. The measures are: the Child-Parent Relationship Scale – Short Form developed by Driscoll and Pianta, and the Parent-Child Relationship Scale (PCRS) adapted from Stattin and Kerr. The FRPN brief discusses their strengths and limitations.

FRPN Grantee Spotlight

Many fatherhood programs struggle to engage and retain participants. Anna Hayward, PhD, MSW, associate professor, Stony Brook University School of Social Work, and Ms. Romarie McCue, director of the [Suffolk County Fatherhood Initiative](#) (SCFI) are collaborating on an [FRPN-funded](#) randomized control trial to explore whether cell phones and text messages are effective ways to “hook” fathers to participate in program services more wholeheartedly.

As their project begins, Dr. Hayward and Romarie have offered some insight into the challenges and opportunities associated with this type of evaluation research.

Dr. Anna Hayward

What do you hope to learn from your FRPN study?

This study explores the impact of cell phones on engagement and retention in a fatherhood program. Using a randomized experimental design, we will explore the impact of cell phones and text messaging on program participation, engagement and retention. From these findings we hope to help inform the development of future programs using this type of technology.

What makes evaluation research in the fatherhood field interesting? What do we still need to learn?

While we have a good understanding of the challenges faced by fathers, questions remain about the most effective methods to engage and retain them in services. With a deeper understanding of engagement and retention, we can better learn how to tailor holistic services to fathers and families.



The SCFI and SBU research teams.

Ms. Romarie McCue

What does your program hope to learn from its current evaluation with FRPN?

The SCFI fatherhood program has struggled with client retention and engagement in the past. We have tried several strategies to make improvements including front-loading services to create a “hook” and increasing efforts to secure contact information from participants, but it was not enough. We are excited to find out if using cell phones will help increase client engagement and retention in our program.