



# Washington Fatherhood Council – Monthly Meeting

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February 6, 2026: 10:30am-12:00pm

## Welcome, Introductions and Group Norms and Mission – 10:30-10:40am

Jose Romo and Joey Charlton initiated introductions and welcomed attendees to the space. The group reflected on the Fatherhood Council norms and mission.

## Fatherhood Council 2026 Planning Continued – Jose Romo & Laura Alfani, 10:40-11:10am

Laura Alfani reviewed key takeaways from the January meeting discussion on Council priorities for 2026. Members went into breakout rooms based on their priority area of interest to identify specific actions and people involved in next steps.

- *Fatherhood Summit*
- *Leadership Engagement*
- *Regional/Local Systems Engagement*

*Breakout Room Discussion Prompt: What next steps are needed to advance this priority in the coming months. Please be as specific as possible. What are one or two immediate next steps for this topic/priority?*

*Key takeaways from Breakout Room Discussions:*

### ***Fatherhood Summit***

- Pulling together a planning committee
- Need to find a free venue
- Incorporating automation or Artificial Intelligence (AI) into fundraising/outreach
- Funding – some minimal funding might be available
- Summit planning committee: Davida, Michelle, Bobby, Jim
- Space in King County – Nelson, Dmitry
- Helping with technology - Laura

### ***Leadership Engagement***

- Compare the agencies listed in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with current Council membership to confirm whether all agencies are represented.
- Conduct outreach to state agency representatives to understand recent organizational and leadership changes. Identify strategies for revisiting the MOU and re-establishing leadership buy-in with the commitments included in the [State of Fatherhood in Washington Study](#).
- Consider a temporary work group to support outreach and planning with state agency representatives, including securing commitments to participate in Council meetings.

### ***Regional/Local Systems Engagement***

- Connecting local organizations with DCYF regional administrators to help connect dads with

local resources, connect for referrals for court ordered services and find advocacy support.

- We need to identify contacts for fatherhood engagement in each region
- Nelson (Pierce County) owns a consulting business, currently developing programming for Agencies to use to engage with fathers directly and how to improve outreach
- Skagit county does not have a lot of resources or support for fathers. This conversation is new in Skagit county and Kristen is looking for partners for referrals and collaboration
- Shawn Silvey connecting Kristen and Raymond with their regional program managers for fatherhood engagement

## Planning, Communications and Support: 11:10-11:25am Angie Funaiole & Laura Alfani

### **Group Discussion: What topics would you like to see brought to the Council meetings for the next few months?**

- Support for adolescents and young adults in the transition to fatherhood
  - e.g. resources for young fathers re: postpartum depression
- Support for fathers during perinatal period
  - Learn about new parent resource packets available at birthing hospitals and promote the inclusion of father-friendly resources.
- Engaging with Agencies and Orgs involved in education
  - Engaging with Early Learning and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)
  - Special education
  - Education Ombuds
- More classroom-based ways for fathers to learn about fatherhood and where to turn for support
- Legislative Updates
- Identify strategies to provide more direct access to resources instead of linking to multiple additional web pages.

### **Communications and Support Update**

Communications: [www.wafatherhoodcouncil.org](http://www.wafatherhoodcouncil.org) is not working now. DCYF is working on a fix. The web site can be accessed via [www.wafoi.org](http://www.wafoi.org). Most, not all, content has moved to the DCYF web site here: <https://dcyf.wa.gov/services/engaging-fathers/washington-fatherhood-council>.

Change Communications: DCYF will be sending out communication to clarify and build understanding that the Fatherhood Council is still meeting and work is still underway.

## Partner Share out – Steven Thibert, 11:25-11:45am

- We are getting inquiries from fathers looking for resources, particularly legal services and support.
  - “I need legal advice to support my attempt to gain custody. Where can I obtain

- free/low coast legal help”
- [Washington Law Help](#) is a good resource
  - [2026 Unsung Heroes: Celebrating Caregivers in Washington State](#)
  - **Provider Learning Series: [Register Here](#)**
    - **Partnering with the Division of Child Support and the Prosecuting Attorneys to Establish Parentage in Washington State**  
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Thursday, February 19, 2026
  - [Northwest Children’s Foundation Forum](#)
  - Update on [HB 2401](#) establishing the Boys & Men Commission: bill passed out of policy committee and is in appropriations committee – fate still unknown.
  - Which issues do you think Boys & Men Commission should focus on? Included among the answer options is “Fatherhood and Family connection”. That is quite noteworthy because it is the only answer choice for an issue that is not already specifically mentioned in the current version of Rep. Bergs Boys & Men Commission Bill [HB 2401](#).
  - [Boys & Men Commission Survey](#)
  - [HB 2461](#)
  - [SB 5446](#)
  - This org is doing a 50-state tour to bring awareness to these topics:  
<https://21stcenturydads.org/>
  - [www.TheDadProjects.com](http://www.TheDadProjects.com)
  - Big shoutout to the [“Conscious Fathering” courses available online](#) and in-person and at Swedish and Evergreen Hospitals.

## Closing – Raymond Gregson, 11:45am

Thank you for your time and wisdom! Our next meeting is Friday, March 6 10:30am-12:00pm.

## Attendance

Michelle Reid (COM), Darryl Laferte, Joey Charlton (DCYF), Nelson Rascon, Raymond Gregson, Davida Miller, Erin Kerrigan (DCYF), Kristen Ekstran (United General District 304), Jose Romo Ramirez (DOH WIC), Laura Alfani (DCYF), Nicholas Kasovac, Jennifer "JP" Personius (DCYF), Steven Thibert, Marie Preftes Arenz (DCYF), Dmitry Spiridonov, Jenni Olmstead (DCYF), Michelle Erickson, Shawn Sivly (DCYF), Angie Funaiolo (DOH), Devon Brim, Dieter Jacobs, Danielle Loman (DSHS), Michelle Erickson (DCYF), Jim Chambers (WELD), Bobby Greene (DOC)

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## About the Fatherhood Council

The Washington Fatherhood Council is a collaborative, transformational group of state and local providers, academics and — most importantly — fathers with lived expertise, which helps further the goals of reducing poverty and inequality through increased fatherhood access and belonging. The Council fosters service provider capacity, creates community for fathers, works for policy change and resource investment in fathers, and promotes their voices and experiences to transform family systems.

We know that:

- Child and family well-being improve when fathers are positively engaged in their children's lives.
- Fathers play a unique and important role in children's development.
- Fathers should have support and resources to become the fathers they aspire to be.