



*An Advocate for Greater Father Involvement  
in the Lives of Children & Families  
And the Systems that Serve Them*



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## **MEDIA ALERT**

### ***From Practitioners to Policy Makers: The Launch of a Statewide Campaign for Greater Father Involvement in the Lives of Pennsylvania's Children and Families***

**When:** Wednesday, March 27, 2019 – 2:30 P.M.

**Where:** Pennsylvania Capitol Building Main Rotunda

**PHILADELPHIA** – Today's release of a final report, "*From Practitioners to Policy Makers: A Statewide Call to Action for Greater Father Involvement in the Lives of Pennsylvania's Children and Families*" is the result of a three-year effort spearheaded by The Strong Families Commission, Incorporated (THE COMMISSION) in collaboration with the Symposium Organizing Committee (SOC) to investigate the unintended and often adverse consequences of father absence or non-involvement in the lives of Pennsylvania's children and families.

In Pennsylvania, nearly 900,000 or 34% of the state's minor-age children are currently residing in single-parent households, usually headed by mothers. While many children of single parents undoubtedly can and often do become exceptional adults, far too many other children are denied the critical financial, emotional, and social support by not having access to one of their parents – typically fathers. This situation is exacerbated when public service systems established to help those in need fail to include fathers as an important factor in child and family well-being programs and policies.

The report contains recommendations for all three branches of Pennsylvania's government based on the need to remove systemic barriers that impede fathers' greater involvement in the lives of children and families. The report is also the culmination of the input of an inter-disciplinary group

of national, state, and local practitioners and scholars concerned with improving outcomes for children and families through the provision of father-inclusive services and policies.

A major recommendation of the report includes the introduction of proposed legislation that calls for establishing the Commonwealth's policy to promote greater father involvement in the lives of children and families; creating the **Pennsylvania Commission on Greater Father Family Involvement** to implement said policy; establishing the Commission in the Office of the Governor; defining its functions, powers, duties, and membership; and making an appropriation.

An additional highlight at the Press Conference will be the introduction of Dr. Joel N. Myers, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of AccuWeather, who has accepted the appointment as Advocate and Champion of the 2019 Launch of a Statewide Campaign for Greater Father Involvement in the Lives of Pennsylvania's Children and Families.

THE COMMISSION and the SOC are proud to partner with Dr. Myers, who is considered one of the greatest entrepreneurs in American history; equally important to us is his philanthropic work at Penn State University, American Cancer Society, and most of all his commitment to the Dad's Resource Center in Centre County Pennsylvania, an organization that he founded to provide education, resources and advocacy for single fathers, and one that he continues to develop to this day, by serving as Chair of the Board of Directors

#### **Featured Speakers of the **Press Event** Include:**

- The Reverend Dr. W. Wilson Goode, Sr., President AMACHI, Inc., former Mayor of Philadelphia
- Dr. Catherine Lobaugh, Allegheny Intermediate Unit Assistant & Executive Director for Early Childhood, Family and Community Services
- Mr. David A. Wyher, President/CEO, Delta Community Supports, Inc.
- Dr. Joel N. Myers, Founder of ACCUWEATHER

#### **Legislative Supporters of a Statewide Campaign to Increase Father Involvement:**

- State Senator Patrick M. Browne, Allentown, Lehigh County
- State Representative Austin A. Davis, City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
- State Senator Jay Costa, Jr., City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
- State Representative Edward C. Gainey, City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
- State Representative Joanna McClinton, Philadelphia County
- State Senator Anthony Hardy Williams, Philadelphia County

#### **About the Symposium Organizing Committee**

[Symposium Organizing Committee](#) (SOC) works with Commonwealth leaders to eliminate systemic barriers that impede greater father involvement and their contributions to the well-being of their children and families. SOC encourages executive opinion leaders, policy makers, and child and family service providers to embrace and support the contributions that fathers can make to their children, families and communities.

## **About The Strong Families Commission, Incorporated (THE COMMISSION)**

The mission of [The Strong Families Commission](#), a private, nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization based in Philadelphia, is to strengthen families and improve developmental outcomes for children by advocating for greater father involvement in the lives of children and families and the systems that serve them. THE COMMISSION's vision is that children and youth in Philadelphia, across the state of Pennsylvania, and around the country will benefit from and grow up with the support of both of their parents in a healthy and supportive environment.

THE COMMISSION's advocacy calls for 1) greater father presence and involvement in the daily lives of children; 2) the elimination of policy and program barriers that affect family stabilization and successful reunification of families, including Fathers, especially when there is or has been unintended family disruption; 3) leveraging resources to contribute to the well-being of child development; and 4) collaboration among Philadelphia organizations, and beyond, that are family-focused and recognizes the importance of a Father's contribution to the welfare of every child.

**Copies of the report and proposed legislation will be available at the Press Conference.**