

FACT SHEET

FATHER'S DAY RALLY AT LINCOLN MEMORIAL



“A NATIONAL RALLY FOR RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD ON BEHALF OF AMERICA’S CHILDREN: A CALL TO PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY”

One Hundred Years of Father’s Day in America

The year 2009 will mark 100 years since the idea of celebrating Father’s Day was created. The idea for creating a day for children to honor their fathers began in Spokane, Washington by a woman named Sonora Smart Dodd who thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Ms. Dodd wanted the world to know how special her father was to her and all the parental sacrifices he made to raise her after her mother’s death. She described her father as a courageous, selfless, and loving man. Research has shown that father presence matters in the lives of children in many positive ways including increased confidence, resilience, and leadership. Fatherhood is such a critical matter for families and children that President Barack Obama, as a Community Organizer and Senator, championed legislation that supports responsible fatherhood and made it signature issue of his successful Presidential campaign.

As the nation celebrates 100 years of Father’s Day, father absence in families is a big problem. Well over half of all African-American and Latino children are born to unmarried parents, typically a marker for periods of short and long-term father absence. According to recent census data, 24 million children live in father absent homes.

The consequences of father absence on children are many including: poverty, low-self-esteem, low-academic achievement, juvenile delinquency, and early pregnancy. To respond to the crisis, Congress passed legislation that authorized 50 million dollars in funding for fatherhood programs as part of the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act. While the results of these efforts have yet to be determined, it was clear that something needed to be done to abate the father crisis.

Event Goal: The overall goal of the rally is to raise awareness across America regarding the importance of responsible fatherhood in recognition of the 100 year anniversary of Father’s Day.

Event Convener: The National Partnership for Community Leadership

Event Organizers: The National Father's Day Rally Planning Committee and local organizing committees in every state

Honorary Co-Chairs(To Be Confirmed):

Vice-President Joe Biden, Former Vice-President Al Gore, Senator Evan Bayh, Colin Powell, Bill Cosby, Congressman Danny Davis, Tony Dungy, Eddie Levert, Forrest Whitaker, Martin Luther King, III and Mike Tomlin

Event Date and Time: 1PM-3PM, Saturday June 20, 2009

Event Location: Lincoln Memorial, Washington, DC

RALLY OBJECTIVES:

1. Mobilize more than one million fathers, fatherhood organizations, and supporters across America to participate in the national rally at the Lincoln Memorial or convene their own state/local rally in celebration of 100 years of Father's Day in America.
2. Promote action oriented father engagement in families by getting fathers from across America to take a pledge of personal responsibility for their parenting behavior.
3. Promote father and family focused initiatives at the national, state and local level.
4. Encourage and promote federal, state and local policies that strengthen father connections to children and families whenever possible.

POTENTIAL SPEAKERS:

- President Barack Obama
- Evan Bayh, Senator, State of Indiana
- Martin Luther King, III
- Adrian Fenty, Mayor, District of Columbia
- Will Smith, Actor
- Herman "Skip" Mason Jr., General President, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
- Forrest Whitaker, Actor
- Michael L. Thurmond, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Labor
- Marc Morial, President, National Urban League
- John Hammond, CEO, 100 Black Men of America
- Alonzo Mourning, National Basketball Association Player
- Jeff Canada, Community Activist
- Darryl Green, Football Hall of Fame
- Art Monk, Football Hall of Fame
- Harry Carson, Football Hall of Fame

- Tony Dungy, Former National Football League Coach
- Mike Tomlin, Coach, Pittsburgh Steelers
- Congressman Danny Davis
- Ronald Mincy, Professor, Columbia University, Director, Center for Research on Fathers, Children and Family Well-Being
- Roland Warren, President, The National Fatherhood Initiative
- Carey Casey, President & CEO, The National Center for Fathering
- Charles J. Saylor, President, The National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Eleanor Holmes Norton, D.C. Delegate
- Roland Martin, Journalist
- George Garrow, Executive Director, National Organization of Concerned Black Men
- Vivian Gasden, Professor, University of Pennsylvania and Director of the National Center for Fathers and Families
- Vicki Turetsky, Senior Staff Attorney, Center for Law and Social Policy
- Jerry Tello, Co-Founder, National Compadres Network and the Director of the National Latino Fatherhood and Family Institute
- James Rodriguez, President, Arizona Fatherhood Coalition
- Joseph Jones, Chairman, The National Fatherhood Leaders Group
- Jeffery Johnson, President, The National Partnership for Community Leadership
- Judge David Gray Ross, former U.S. Commissioner for Child Support