



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Milwaukee County Receives Nearly \$5 Million Fatherhood FIRE Grant to Support Healthy Father Engagement Activities

MILWAUKEE, WI - Milwaukee County Child Support Services (CSS) is the recipient of a nearly \$5 million Fatherhood – Family-Focused, Interconnected, Resilient, and Essential (Fatherhood FIRE) grant to support healthy father engagement activities over the next 5 years. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Family Assistance (OFA) established the Fatherhood FIRE program to fund fatherhood efforts designed to strengthen positive father-child engagement, improve healthy relationships (including couple and co-parenting) and marriage, and improve employment and economic mobility opportunities.

“As a parent, I know there is no greater joy in my life than having children and being in their lives as they grow into adulthood. I’m pleased to announce Milwaukee County is receiving more resources to bridge the gap and connect adult fathers in the county with a broad array of services to promote or sustain healthy relationships with their children,” said Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley. “The grant is another example of how we are implementing our vision to achieve racial equity and turn Milwaukee County into the healthiest county in the state. This kind of upstream investment in the lives of our residents help encourages positive child -parent engagement and improves economic stability to give parents and their children the best chance to avoid problems downstream and lead full, successful lives.”

Last month, CSS was awarded a 5-year FIRE grant by OFA to continue providing fatherhood services in Milwaukee County. The Milwaukee County Fatherhood – FIRE Project will provide fatherhood services to adult fathers, ages 18 and older living in the Milwaukee County community who have a dependent or young adult child up to 24 years of age. The program will be implemented and operated by experienced partner organizations Center for Self-Sufficiency and Community Advocates.

In addition to fatherhood core program services, employment and support services will be provided to fathers to assist them in reaching financial stability and independence. These services are available at no cost to participants and are administered through Milwaukee County partners. The Alma Center will provide trauma education, Employ Milwaukee will connect participants with jobs and job training programs, and Wisconsin Community Services will help with driver’s license reinstatement services.



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“Support in the form of grants like this one are critical to helping Milwaukee County sustain critical services in an unprecedented time where the pandemic is dramatically increasing the needs of Milwaukee County residents,” concluded Crowley. “Local governments are facing a fiscal crisis as a result of the economic downturn that has been brought on as a result of COVID-19 and we need more emergency relief for critical services. Milwaukee County has fully allocated all CARES Act funding, with millions of dollars allocated for life safety measures and emergency operating costs, as well as new programs. Without additional direct and flexible funding, Milwaukee County – the economic engine of Wisconsin – will not be able to address the needs of our businesses and residents.”

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