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## **\$10 Million Grant Will Support Young Fathers**

COLUMBUS, OHIO— Ohio will receive nearly \$10 million over the next five years to help new and expectant low-income fathers ages 16 to 24 become more effective and nurturing parents, improve their long-term economic stability, and build strong, lasting relationships with their children.

The grant, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will fund the "New Beginnings for New Fathers" program in Franklin, Clark, Cuyahoga, Hamilton and Montgomery counties. Participating fathers will receive job training, parenting classes, and healthy marriage and relationship education.

"This grant will allow us to reach fathers early, just before or after their first children are born," said Kim Dent, executive director of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood. "It will allow us to break the cycle of father absence before it begins by giving new and expectant fathers the tools they need to become and remain responsible fathers. We also expect the program to help reduce infant mortality in Ohio, by educating fathers about the importance of not smoking, safe sleep environments and other important health concerns."

Research shows that children with fathers who are present in their lives require less special education, repeat grades less often, have fewer behavioral problems in school, are more likely to graduate, and are less likely to be involved in the criminal justice system.

The Ohio Commission on Fatherhood will administer the grant and will partner with the following local programs to recruit and serve fathers:

- Action for Children - Franklin County
- Passages Connecting Fathers and Families - Cuyahoga County
- Talbert House - Hamilton County
- Urban Light Ministries - Clark and Montgomery Counties

The commission seeks to improve the well-being of Ohio's children by helping fathers become better parents, partners and providers. Commissioners include the directors of state agencies, bipartisan members of the Ohio House and Senate, and citizens appointed by the governor. The commission is housed within the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and strengthens vulnerable families by funding programs that serve low-income fathers.

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