



The Coalition of Fathers and Families NY, Inc.
The NY affiliate of the American Coalition of Fathers and Children

“Working to Keep Fathers and Families Together”

Presidents Annual Report 2004 State of the Coalition of Fathers and Families NY, Inc.

The Board of Directors for FaFNY continued work on the ambitious agenda we had in place for 2004. I am proud to announce that our 2004 goals have been met. We have strengthened our organizational structure which supports our objective of providing services to fathers and families in need by developing a County Coordinator project to provide services to families in need on a local statewide basis. We have continued our research into family social and legal issues which supports our objective of providing unbiased educational information to the public and policy makers. We have continued our meetings with policy makers, including our Legislative Education and Awareness Day (LEAD) which supports our objective of advocacy for families. We have coordinated all of the aforementioned activities to support our objective of fostering social and political change for the benefit of families and our communities. Above all we have provided aid and assistance to families in need through community service through the County Coordinators and individual and group assistance they provide.

In 2004 we saw the use of the www.FaFNY.org web site take off. Recognizing the difficulty of providing timely information in paper format on a statewide basis which is combined with reduced financial capabilities of those in need, FaFNY decided to provide its family help information free of charge to all who ask for it free of charge or regardless of membership. To this end we have posted the information on the web site under “self help resources”. By December of 2004 the web site was receiving about 100 hits a week with about 2500 information hits (individual downloads or page reviews). This leads us to believe that the information is timely and important to the community at large with each person on the site reviewing/downloading about 25 postings each for their use.

FaFNY strengthened our affiliation with ACFC, the American Coalition of Fathers and Children, a leader in the father and family policy arena, to better provide service to the community on a statewide basis. Mr. James Hays, FaFNY President is sitting on an advisory committee to ACFC (AALAC) and is participating in monthly national phone conference meetings with representative across the US to enhance services provided to families. Our membership dues include membership in ACFC thus ensuring member representation at both the State and National levels.

FaFNY is providing services to the community at no charge through distribution of accurate, unbiased, well researched materials and information. The Family Help Packet, in addition to its web distribution is available in electronic format in Adobe Acrobat on CD for ease of distribution to the public and is sent free of charge upon request. FaFNY provided 400 phone contact requests for information and 500 e-mail contact requests for information through various volunteers. Contact with the public is maintained by the internet including our web page and postings on other list serves, e-mail contact, a local contact phone number (518-383-8202), mailing address (PO Box

FaFNY.org (518) 383-8202 PO Box 782 Clifton Park, NY 12065 DaDLobby@localnet.com
ACFC.org (800) 978-DADS 22365 El Toro Rd. #335 Lake Forest, CA 92630

782 Clifton Park, NY 12065), in addition to contact through our national affiliate, ACFC, at their 800 number (1-800-978-Dads) or web site (ACFC.org).

FaFNY has laid the groundwork for opening and operating a Fatherhood Institute in the Capital District. We have secured an oral commitment for funding and have applied for public funding through member item funds with NYS Senator Joseph Bruno's office through the Office of Children and Family Services. Funding for this project is again delayed due to budget difficulties in New York but we have been assured that application for funding is to continue this year.

FaFNY continues its research into family issues and the impact on society. FaFNY reviews information from many policy areas such as law, politics, psychology and sociology. This unbiased, non sectarian, non denominational research is used to produce information which is distributed to enhance families, our communities and society. Mr. Hays, FaFNY President is the primary researcher and is assisted in this endeavor by networking with kindred organizations and individuals such as Stanley Green with Stop Abuse For Everyone (SAFE) on domestic violence issues, Elizabeth Schnee with the NYC Children's Rights Council on non custodial mothers and children's issues and Deborah Fellows with the New York Civil Rights Council on federal legal and constitutional issues. This unbiased research is the cornerstone of FaFNY's public educational endeavors.

Member services in the Association have been streamlined. Renewal notices were sent to individuals who have shown an interest in helping families in the past. Memberships continue to come in on a consistent basis with no loss of support. We seek a core group of between 100 to 200 individuals who will maintain their memberships over time and serve as a foundation for both financial support and as a pool of volunteers to continue providing services to the community. Members in FaFNY-ACFC receive the FaFNY intake packet (140 pages of NY related information) and the ACFC Shared Parenting Manual. Members also receive mailings of the "Capital News", the newsletter of FaFNY, and access to reference listings. Membership in ACFC also affords members access to the "members only" section of the ACFC web site which contains studies and reports relative to families.

As an educational and advocacy organization our public focus is representation of disenfranchised parents and separated families as a class and not on an individual basis. The practice of providing individual case management and "intake counseling" has been distributed to our county coordinators and is provided through various venues across the state. Most help requests are in the form of requests for legal advice or free legal assistance. Many are desperate cries for help from fathers who had no idea of the biases in the system and are so appalled that they want assistance to "fix" their personal case. We do not now have the resources to assist with individual cases and maximize our limited resources by working for a fair and equitable system for all family members with services through the county coordinators. To this end the web site is invaluable as it

provides consistent information to both the public and the county coordinators. Upon opening of the Fatherhood Institute it is hoped that we can further develop programs for those in need free of charge and to provide individual case assistance.

FaFNY continues to advocate for social and political change for the benefit of families and community, through educational and lobbying activities (consistent with IRS "h" designation) at all levels and branches of State Government. Meetings continue with the Governors Office, Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (Child Support), NYS Legislators in the Senate and Assembly and Administrative Judges in the Unified Court System. Lobbying activities are designed and conducted to lessen the burdens of government in supporting healthy families in NY by maintaining healthy families that need no support and are conducted consistent with the "h" designation with the IRS. Lobbying activities center on providing unbiased information to policy makers not available to them otherwise.

In looking towards 2005, the Association has the following goals; to maintain current levels of service to the community; to *expand* our levels of service to the community; to continue our research into developing healthy families; to strengthen and expand the membership of the Association so as to maintain a core group of people supportive of the Association both financially and through active participation; and last but not least, to find and secure funding sources so that community services and programs can be provided to the public without charge to those in need, to expand upon the County Coordinators looking to provide services in even rural (low population) counties who currently need to travel to obtain assistance.

To this end, FaFNY offers membership to all who would join us to help families in need, with no discrimination on membership, and we pledge to help those families in need, at little or no charge, to the best of our abilities.

/s/ Mr. James Hays, FaFNY President
January 31, 2004.