Children from fatherless homes are more likely to: become involved in drug and alcohol abuse, to become involved in crime, especially boys and become pregnant as teens. NPCL is offering a unique training opportunity to learn the theory and the practice of working with men and fathers. The three-day Institute will train interested individuals and agencies in the history of the responsible fatherhood movement; best-practices in working with men and fathers including recruitment, retention, and evaluation; integrating relationship and marriage education; and how to implement effective peer support groups.

The Fatherhood Development Curriculum was developed in 1990 as part of The Young Unwed Fathers Pilot Project. The curriculum was field tested over a three year-period before it was made available to the public. The curriculum was developed in consultation with fathers, curriculum trainers and case managers. Extensive sites visits were conducted during the initial stages of the curriculum development process to observe trainers and participants. All data collected over this period was incorporated into the curriculum to insure maximum relevancy to fathers. Fathers vary by age, income, marital status and community conditions.

All Fatherhood Development activities were developed utilizing an experiential learning approach. This proven training technique enables participants to engage in activities where they learn about each other’s challenges and successes, reflect and gain critical insight into their own attitudes and behaviors about fathering. Facilitators conduct activities that allow fathers to identify their own problems and solutions through self-discovery and peer-learning.

The Fatherhood Development Curriculum is divided into five modules Personal Development; Life Skills; Responsible Fathering; Relationship Skills, Health and Sexuality. Researchers have identified these areas as critical in working with young and expectant fathers. This curriculum is based on real experiences and challenges of fathers in fragile family settings. Through 25 streetwise group sessions, the curriculum offers practitioners a field-tested guide to working with fathers in providing support, information and motivation in areas of life skills, parenthood, relationships (including marriage and team parenting), and health. The Fatherhood Development Curriculum also offers a methodology for training and learning, and assessment tools.

The Institute training will be led by Dr. Jeffery M. Johnson. For two decades, Dr. Johnson has served as a Master Trainer and has conducted hundreds of workshops on men and fathers based on The Fatherhood Development Curriculum which, he co-authored. He has been directly involved in the nation’s largest projects involving men and fathers and served as lead consultant in the Ford Foundation’s Strengthening Fragile Families Initiative.