PennState

father forward

Present. Engaged. Supportive.

Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Manual

This material is the result of partnership funded by the Department of Defense between the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy and the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture through a grant/cooperative agreement with Penn State University.

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR MILITARY FAMILY READINESS

Table of Contents

Overview 1

Web-Based Thrive Initiative Universal Parenting Programs 3
Thrive Initiative Universal Supplemental Parent-Education Modules 4
Purpose of the Father Forward Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Manual 5
Objectives of the Father Forward Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Manual 5

Training 7

Hybrid Facilitation Training 9
Supplemental Module Training 10
Use of the Father Forward Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Manual 10

Planning 11

Roles of Facilitator(s) 13
Initial Preparation 13
Format 13
Location 13
Recruitment and Attendance for Hybrid Implementation 14
Recruitment and Advertising Strategies 14
Registration 15
Attendance 15
Program Preparation 15
Prepare and Disseminate Meeting Information 15
Check Your Supplies 16

Implementation 17

Overview of Hybrid Implementation of the Supplemental Module 19
Online Supplemental Module – ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** 19
Supplemental Module Meetings 19
Overview of the Types of Hybrid Implementation for Supplemental Module Meetings 20
Meeting Agenda 23
Facilitators' Meeting Guide 25
Delivery Type 1: Supplemental Extension 27
Introduction to the Supplemental Module 29
Overview: Introduction Meeting 31
Supplemental Module Meeting 1 35
Supplemental Module Meeting 2 47
Delivery Type 2: Supplemental Stand Alone 61
Introduction to the Supplemental Module 63
Overview: Intake and Introduction Meeting 65
Supplemental Module Meeting 1 73
Supplemental Module Meeting 2 85

Appendices 99

Appendix A – Father Forward Recruitment Poster ..... A 1
Appendix B – Father Forward Participant Recruitment and Tracking Sheet ..... B 1
Appendix C – Father Forward Parent Welcome Letter ..... C 1
Appendix D – Father Forward Screen Share Text Example ..... D 1
Appendix E – Best Practices for Online Learning ..... E 1

Overview

Web-Based Thrive Universal Parenting Programs

The Thrive Initiative, which is a collaboration between the Department of Defense's Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy (DoD MC&FP) and the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State (Clearinghouse), is a portfolio of evidence-informed parenting programs that are designed to empower parents (and caregivers) as they nurture children from the prenatal period through 18 years of age.

There are four developmentally age-appropriate core, universal parenting programs within the Thrive Initiative—Take Root, Sprout, Grow, and Branch Out—that are available in a web-based format at no cost to military and civilian parents. Each of the Thrive Initiative parenting programs convey knowledge, skills, and strategies within three overarching learning domains: positive parenting practices, stress management, and child physical-health promotion.

Parents and caregivers can register and complete a Thrive program by visiting the Thrive website at https://thrive.psu.edu. Anyone who requires assistance can contact the Clearinghouse Thrive Team at thrive@psu.edu or call the Clearinghouse Technical Assistance Team at 1-877-382-9185.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Thrive Initiative Program Areas</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="4">Universal Parenting Programs</th></tr>
<tr><th>Take Root</th><th>Sprout</th><th>Grow</th><th>Branch Out</th></tr>
<tr><td>Infants
(0 to 6 months)</td><td rowspan="3">Preschool
(3 to 5 years)</td><td rowspan="3">Grades K–5
(5 to 10 years)</td><td rowspan="3">Grades 6–12
(10 to 18 years)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infants
(6 to 12 months)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infants & Toddlers
(1 to 3 years)</td></tr>
</table>

Thrive Initiative Universal Supplemental Parent-Education Modules

The Thrive Initiative's supplemental parent-education modules explore a variety of topics and offer families opportunities to build on information and strategies they have learned in any of the Thrive Initiative's four core, universal parenting programs. The supplemental modules are available in a web-based format at no cost to military and civilian parents, and each module takes approximately 2 hours to complete. Participating in an age-appropriate universal parenting program before engaging with any of the supplemental modules may help parents attain the most benefits as they work to reach the goals they set for their families.

As a professional, you can incorporate supplemental modules into your educational outreach for military or civilian families by using this manual. The manual should be used as a guide as you engage with families in the hybrid implementation of a supplemental module. This implementation can involve group-based, synchronous facilitation (i.e., face-to-face or virtual) while parents complete a supplemental module online. A description follows that explains how a supplemental module can be offered to participants in a hybrid implementation format.

Regardless of the type of delivery selected, facilitators must receive training, as outlined in this facilitation manual, prior to hybrid implementation.

Delivery Type 1: Supplemental Extension

If you are offering group-based, hybrid implementation of one of the Thrive Initiative's core, universal parenting programs, a supplemental module can be added as an extension to the existing virtual or face-to-face sessions. Just add two additional meeting times.

Delivery Type 2: Supplemental Stand Alone

You may have previously offered one or more of the Thrive Initiative's core, universal parenting programs to various groups. If so, you can recruit participants who have completed any of the four core, universal parenting programs to become part of a new group. These participants may have completed one or more universal parenting programs as a member of a hybrid implementation group(s), or they may have completed programming online independently. As a result of your recruitment efforts, a new group will be formed to complete the supplemental module online. This group will meet three times, face-to-face or virtually, to discuss the supplemental module's content.

Purpose of the *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Manual

This facilitation manual offers professionals guidance regarding how to coordinate and deliver the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module in a hybrid implementation format. Specifically, this manual will provide the facilitator with implementation instruction for group-based—face-to-face or virtual—synchronous interactions while parents complete the supplemental module online asynchronously.

The ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module includes a introduction, seven sessions, and a Wrap-Up session. The supplemental module can be accessed by parents on the Thrive Initiative's website: https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental/.

Objectives of the *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Manual

- Outline the components of the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module.
- Provide guidance to professionals as they implement face-to-face or virtual group meetings with parents as the parents complete the supplemental module.
- Offer templates that can be used as or part of recruitment tools, parent workbooks, scheduling examples, and preprinted resources.

Training

Hybrid Facilitation Training

The Thrive Initiative provides general facilitation training to prepare you, the facilitator, for hybrid implementation of a supplemental module.

☐ If you have previously delivered a Thrive Initiative universal program or supplemental module in a hybrid implementation format, you likely completed the recommended *Hybrid Facilitation Training*. Please proceed to the next section in this facilitation manual titled ***Supplemental Module Training***.

☐ If you are a new facilitator who has not facilitated a core, universal Thrive Initiative parenting program, you will need to complete the *Hybrid Facilitation Training* in order to offer a supplemental parent-education module in a hybrid format to parents and caregivers who have previously participated in a core, universal Thrive Initiative parenting program.

If you have not already done so, please complete the online *Hybrid Facilitation Training* to learn about the following aspects of quality facilitation:

- Fidelity;
- Program reach;
- Participant responsiveness;
- Logistics, dosage, and content adherence;
- Delivery quality; and
- Facilitation skills to assist during challenging situations encountered with parents.

To register for the *Hybrid Facilitation Training*, visit the Thrive Initiative's Facilitator Portal at https://thrivefacilitator.lms.militaryfamilies.psu.edu

Enter (or create) a user name and password to log in. Under "Thrive Facilitator Training," you will see a row titled "Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Training." Click on it, and select "Hybrid Facilitation Training" to access the course.

The *Hybrid Facilitation Training* takes approximately 2 hours to complete. You can complete this course at your own pace. It does not need to be completed all at once. You can take breaks as the online management system will recognize where you are in the completion process upon your return to the course.

Supplemental-Module Training

The next step in this training is to complete each web-based supplemental module that you wish to facilitate in a hybrid implementation format. This manual will guide you as you complete the web-based ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module and will help prepare you to implement the supplemental module to a group of program participants using a hybrid approach.

When you are logged in to the Thrive Facilitator Portal, you are automatically enrolled in and have access to the Thrive Initiative's web-based universal parenting programs and supplemental parent-education modules. Click on the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module, and select "Go to course" to begin. As you complete the supplemental module, download the tools and resources provided. You can use these resources to learn more about a topic and to support your discussions during your face-to-face or virtual meetings with the group of participants you enroll in hybrid implementation of the supplemental module.

Use of the Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Manual

After you complete the online *Hybrid Facilitation Training* and the online ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module, continue to use this facilitation manual as your guide to prepare for hybrid implementation of the supplemental module to a group of program participants.

Do not move forward until you have completed the Hybrid Facilitation Training and the Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive. supplemental module.

Planning

Roles of Facilitator(s)

In the *Hybrid Facilitation Training*, you learned about two roles that a facilitator may fulfill—the coordinating facilitator and the delivery facilitator. These roles may be fulfilled by two separate individuals, or you may perform both roles.

If an individual is the designated ***coordinating facilitator***, this individual will likely support the following aspects of coordination for hybrid implementation of the supplemental module:

- Participant recruitment;
- Participant registration;
- Participant attendance tracking; and,
- General preparation for delivery of the face-to-face or virtual group meetings that will discuss the supplemental module, such as scheduling meeting times, conducting marketing efforts, setting up a meeting space (e.g., reserving a location, scheduling a teleconferencing platform like Zoom), preparing or purchasing supplies, providing technical assistance on the day of meetings, and offering general support for the delivery facilitator.

If an individual is the designated ***delivery facilitator***, this individual will likely do the following:

- Prepare for each meeting according to this facilitation manual, which is specific to the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module.
- Facilitate the discussion at each hybrid implementation meeting.

Initial Preparation

Format

Determine if you will be offering face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, or a combination of the two. When group-based hybrid programming is offered for supplemental modules in any format, the participant groups are intended to include 10 – 12 families. Depending on your organization's specifics and limitations, unique factors may influence your planning (e.g., limits on a face-to-face group size due to space restrictions). This facilitation manual provides a framework for small, multi-family group meetings. Remain flexible so you can focus on serving your families in the best way possible.

Location

- If you are offering face-to-face meetings in a group format, you will need to find a meeting space that can accommodate a group comfortably (e.g., ample tables and chairs; a safe, accessible location).

- If you are offering virtual meetings, choose a virtual or video conferencing platform (e.g., Microsoft Teams) that does not require paid access for your families and offers adequate privacy protection. Ensure that the individual(s) who assume the role(s) of coordinating facilitator and delivery facilitator have ample training on utilizing the platform and/or they understand how to access technical support.

Recruitment and Advertising for Hybrid Implementation

Recruitment and Advertising Strategies

For hybrid implementation of the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module, recruit parents who have children between the ages of birth to 18 years. Recruitment will vary depending on the way you plan to offer hybrid programming. Consider the following delivery types:

Delivery Type 1: Supplemental Extension

If group-based, hybrid implementation of the supplemental module is being added as an extension of existing virtual or face-to-face sessions of one of the Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting programs, you will form your group at the time you recruit participants for that identified universal parenting program. Follow the recruitment guidance in the *Hybrid Implementation Facilitation Manual* for the selected core, universal parenting program, and proceed to page 27 of this facilitation manual to learn how to add two additional meeting sessions for this supplemental parent-education module.

Delivery Type 2: Supplemental Stand Alone

If you previously offered one, or more, of the Thrive Initiative's core, universal parenting programs to various groups, your recruitment efforts for facilitating this supplemental parent- education module will result in a new group being formed. Participants of this group will complete the web-based supplemental module independently and engage with you, the facilitator, as a group in three face-to-face or virtual meetings. The meetings will involve interactive discussions of the supplemental module's content. To recruit participants, use the contact information you have collected from previous program participants to market the parent-education module and create the new group. Consider creating a flyer and disseminating it and other invitational messaging via email, paper mail, or social media. You may also extend your marketing to families who have independently completed one or more of the Thrive Initiative's universal parenting programs.

In addition, you could consider mass marketing strategies like advertising in child care centers, local schools, youth centers, gyms, shopping centers, grocery stores, family centers, community centers, websites, social media pages, local newspapers, and organizational newsletters.

Before you start recruiting and advertising, confirm how the group will meet (i.e., virtually or face-to-face), and secure the dates and the times you will be meeting. When recruiting and advertising, share how the group will meet and the location (if meeting in person); explain some basic information about the dates, times, structure, and time commitment; and list a Point of Contact (POC) for questions. Other information that you may want to consider adding could include whether child care will be provided, whether snacks or refreshments will be available, or whether there is a registration requirement (e.g., must have previously participated/completed a Thrive core, universal parenting program).

Registration

A participating parent should have completed one (or more) of the Thrive Initiative age-graded core, universal parenting programs (i.e., Take Root, Sprout, Grow, or Branch Out) prior to engaging in any of the Thrive Initiative supplemental modules. Therefore, the participants you recruit will have already created a Thrive account prior to your first hybrid implementation meeting for the supplemental module, and they will understand the expectations of hybrid implementation. Upon registration, ensure parents have already participated in a Thrive core, universal program.

Note: Participants who participate in a Thrive Initiative core, universal program receive a Certificate of Completion upon finishing the program.

To help with any organizational paperwork that may need to be completed as you recruit and register participants, the Thrive Initiative has created a template for tracking participant recruitment. *See Appendix B.*

Attendance

During hybrid implementation meetings for the supplemental module, you are encouraged to take attendance in accordance with your organization's policies.

Program Preparation

Prepare and Disseminate Meeting Information

Whether your hybrid implementation is face-to-face or virtual, you will need to provide your participants with the following:

- The Parent Welcome Letter for the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module.

Note: There is a Parent Workbook and Syllabus for each delivery type (i.e., Supplemental Extension or Supplemental Stand Alone). Please be sure to access, download, and share the appropriate Parent Workbook and Syllabus with your participants.

Planning

This workbook provides detailed information on how to access the supplemental module on the Thrive Initiative website and specific information about the dates, times, location, topics, and homework for each meeting.

Prior to hosting the first session of your hybrid implementation meetings, prepare and disseminate a welcome letter to the registered participants. Include information such as the name and contact information of the facilitator(s), the dates and times of the meetings, and the meeting location (i.e., physical address or web link). *See Appendix C: Parent Welcome Letter template.*

In addition, list the specifics of your implementation, such as the dates and times of each meeting and homework due dates, in the *Parent Workbook and Syllabus*. After the file has been personalized with your delivery information, decide whether you will print and mail copies or share the file electronically with participants. Ensure all participants receive a copy of the *Parent Workbook and Syllabus* upon registration or before the first meeting.

Check Your Supplies

Hybrid implementation of the supplemental module in a **face-to-face format** will require the following:

- Computers for participants to sign in to the Thrive Initiative website and to use to complete the supplemental module,
- Internet access for participants and the facilitator(s),
- A physical meeting space with tables and chairs,
- A flip chart or whiteboard/blackboard with markers or chalk, and
- Pencils/pens for participants.

Hybrid implementation of the supplemental module in a **virtual format** will require the following:

- Computers for participants to sign in to the Thrive Initiative website and to use to complete the supplemental module;
- Internet access for participants and the facilitator(s) for the online meetings; and
- Access for participants and the facilitator(s) to a virtual or video-conferencing platform that includes shared workspaces such as screen sharing or a whiteboard feature.

Note: For virtual hybrid implementation, the facilitator or designated support person should have a telephone available and should have provided the telephone number to participants prior to the meetings in case they encounter technical difficulties in joining the virtual platform.

Implementation

Overview of Hybrid Implementation of the Supplemental Module

During the hybrid implementation of a supplemental module, parents independently complete portions of a supplemental module online, and, then, they meet with you (or the delivery facilitator) either virtually or face-to-face to discuss the content and further their knowledge gains and skill acquisition.

Online Supplemental Module – *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*

The ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module includes an introduction, seven sessions, and a Wrap-Up session. The supplemental module can be accessed on the Thrive Initiative website at https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental/.

- **Below is a brief summary of the supplemental module content:**
  - **Session 1: Introduction**
    This session includes an overview of the module that includes a welcome and learning objectives.
  - **Session 2: Fathers' Experiences as a Father**
    This session describes the factors that can influence how a father experiences his role as a father and introduces the fictitious module families that are used to help participants understand the concepts, principles, and strategies discussed in throughout the module.
  - **Session 3: Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes**
    This session describes how positive father involvement in children's lives has been shown to have a positive impact on many child outcomes and on maternal well-being.
  - **Session 4: Benefits of Father Involvement for Fathers**
    This session explores the benefits fathers may experience from their involvement with their children and the many ways in which fathers can be involved in their children's lives.
  - **Session 5: Divorced and Unmarried Fathers**
    This session includes information about how coparenting and custody arrangements can impact father-child relationships and describes the factors that can impact how much time non-resident fathers spend with their children.
  - **Session 6: Parental Absence**
    This session explores how fathers can be involved in their children's lives during times when they are absent from their child's life for an extended period, such as during a military deployment.
  - **Session 7: Challenges Fathers May Face**
    This session examines the many challenges fathers may face as they parent their children such as sex-based expectations, maternal gate-keeping, and mental health issues.

- **Session 8: Self-Care for Fathers**
  This session provides examples of self-care practices fathers can engage in to remain physically and mentally healthy.
- **Session 9: Wrap-Up**
  This session includes additional resources and a Wrap-Up of the module.

Supplemental Module Meetings

Interactions with parents related to the supplemental module can be completed in two or three group-based meetings, depending on the delivery type (i.e., in person, virtually, or a combination of the two).

In this facilitation manual, the schedule of events, potential discussion questions, and activity prompts are provided for the two types of groups that can be formed for hybrid implementation meetings.

Overview of the Types of Hybrid Implementation for Supplemental Module Meetings

An outline follows that discusses the two hybrid supplemental module implementation delivery types covered in this facilitation manual.

Please note, the agenda and delivery instructions for each type of implementation are color-coded in this facilitation manual. Delivery Type 1 is color-coded as ***green.***

Delivery Type 1: Supplemental Extension

After the hybrid implementation of one of the Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting programs has occurred, a supplemental module can be added as an extension of the existing virtual or face-to-face sessions of that universal parenting program by adding two additional meeting times.

- In this delivery type, the facilitator introduces the supplemental module meeting content during the final session of hybrid implementation of the offered core, universal parenting program. Allow approximately 20 additional minutes to explain the supplemental module and provide instructions on how to access the module. At this time, also assign participants homework that includes the *Introduction Sessions 2, 3, and 4* of the Father Forward supplemental module.
- Supplemental Module Meeting 1: Discuss the *Introduction* and *Sessions 2, 3*, and *4* (45- to 60-minute meeting). Assign *Sessions 5, 6, 7, 8*, and the *Wrap-Up* as homework.
- Supplemental Module Meeting 2: Discuss *Sessions 5, 6, 7, 8*, and the *Wrap-Up* and Resource Sharing (60-minute meeting).

Please note, the agenda and delivery instructions for each type of implementation are color-coded in this facilitation manual. Delivery Type 2 is color-coded as ***purple*****.**

Delivery Type 2: Supplemental Stand Alone

This delivery type encompasses the formation of a new group of families that consists of individuals who previously participated in a Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting program. These participants may have completed one or more universal parenting programs as a member of a hybrid implementation group(s), or they may have completed programming online independently. As a result of your recruitment efforts, a new group will be formed to complete the supplemental module online. This group will meet three times, face-to-face or virtually, to discuss the supplemental module's content.

- Participants are recruited based on their completion of any of the Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting programs (i.e., group-based or independent completion). *Note: Participants who participate in a Thrive Initiative core, universal program receive a Certificate of Completion upon finishing the program.*
- Intake Meeting: Overview of the Supplemental Module (45- to 60-minute meeting). Assign participants the *Introduction* and *Sessions 2*, *3*, and *4* as homework.
- Supplemental Module Meeting 1: Discuss the *Welcome and Introduction* and *Session 1* (45- to 60-minute meeting). Assign *Sessions 5*, *6*, *7*, *8*, and the *Wrap-Up* as homework.
- Supplemental Module Meeting 2: Discuss *Sessions 5*, *6*, *7*, *8*, and the *Wrap-Up* and Resource Sharing (60-minute meeting).

Meeting Agenda

Facilitator's Meeting Guide

The next section of the facilitation manual will guide you through the meeting agendas, so you can engage participants in processing and practicing skills from each of the sessions of the online supplemental module. Before each meeting, read the appropriate meeting agenda thoroughly, and prepare to use the prompts to lead discussions.

There are two parts for this section. You only need to review the part that reflects the hybrid implementation delivery type you have selected.

Delivery Type 1: Supplemental Extension

Content begins on page 27

This is an extension of a hybrid implementation of one of the Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting programs that should be delivered to an existing group.

Delivery Type 2: Supplemental Stand Alone

Content begins on page 61

This encompasses the formation of a new group of families that consists of individuals who have participated in a Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting program.

Delivery Type 1: Supplemental Extension

This is an extension of a hybrid implementation of one of the Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting programs that should be delivered to an existing group.

Introduction

Delivery Type 1: Supplemental Extension

The following instructions are only relevant to *the Supplemental Extension* of hybrid implementation of the supplemental module. Because your group is currently formed and already participating in active sessions, you will need less time to explain the meeting process or engage in participant introductions. Include the following steps in your final session of the hybrid implementation of the universal parenting program you are offering. Allow 20 additional minutes for these steps to be covered.

Introduction *(20 minutes)*
Homework

Overview: Introduction Meeting

(20 minutes added to last universal program session)

Step 1: Provide Overview of the Supplemental Module

Step 2: Review Syllabus

Step 3: Share Expectations

Step 4: Registration and Check for Online Content Access

Step 5: Assign Homework

Step 1: Provide an Overview of the Supplemental Module
(10 minutes)

Discuss the following topics with your participants:

____ ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** is an online supplemental module for fathers or father figures who have childrearing responsibilities and those who parent alongside fathers or father figures.

____ This module is designed to help participants gain a better understanding of the value fathers can bring to a child's life. It offers insights into the challenges fathers may face as they parent their children, strategies coparents can use to support their child's father and foster the parent-child relationship, and suggestions fathers can consider as they strive to be involved in their child's life. In addition, key takeaways are highlighted throughout the module to demonstrate how fathers and coparents can apply these concepts in real-life situations as they support their children and family.

____ During the online supplemental module sessions and throughout the hybrid implementation meetings, information and parenting strategies that parents can use and adapt, as necessary, to fit their individual circumstances and family needs will be disseminated. The supplemental module content is designed to help parents and caregivers build on their existing skills and strategies, so they can effectively care for their children and support the fathers in their children's lives.

____ Some of the content that is read and practiced in the supplemental module and discussed in the hybrid implementation meetings may be familiar to the parents, and they may already know about and use the disseminated information. Therefore, they may use the meeting time as an opportunity to realize, appreciate, and share what already works for them, their child, and their family.

____ ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** includes an introduction, seven sessions, and a Wrap-Up.

After participating in the online supplemental module sessions and the hybrid implementation meetings, parents and caregivers should be able to do the following:

- Understand factors that can influence fathers' experiences.
- Examine fathers' impact on their children's cognitive and social-emotional outcomes.
- Explore the benefits of father involvement for fathers.
- Identify ways that fathers are, or can be, involved with their children.
- Understand the unique experiences of divorced and unmarried fathers, and discover ways to foster and support their involvement.
- Explore strategies for fathering around parental absences, such as work-related commitments or military-service obligations.
- Examine challenges that fathers may face while parenting their children and strategies to help fathers navigate challenges.
- Identify self-care activities fathers can use to incorporate healthy practices into their daily routines.

Step 2: Review the Syllabus *(5 minutes)*

Provide copies or screen share a copy of the Parent Workbook and Syllabus for the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module. Review the Summary of Training, and highlight the section where the participants can find pertinent information.

Step 3: Set Expectations *(1 minute)*

Set realistic expectations with your participants. Let them know they will be asked to independently complete the online supplemental module and come to meetings ready for discussion. Because the participants will be independently completing the module sessions, you must ensure your participants complete the supplemental module in its entirety. By completing the module, participants will gain valuable knowledge from the content and interaction activities.

In the two following meetings, you will use content, covered in the supplementalmodule, to facilitate interaction that provides participants opportunities for communitybuilding, reflection, and discussion with you and other participants who are trying to successfully navigate parenting.

Step 4: [If needed] Registration and Check for Online Content Access *(1 minute)*

Explain how participants can access the supplemental module online. Offer support to help with any technological questions. All participants will have previously set up a Thrive account, but you need to ensure they can log in and find the information they need to get started or progress in the supplemental module.

Step 5: Assign Homework *(3 minutes)*

Ask participants to complete the following module sessions from the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module in advance of the second meeting:

- Session 1: Introduction
- Session 2: Fathers' Experiences as a Father
- Session 3: Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes
- Session 4: Benefits of Father Involvement for Fathers

If possible, show the pages in the Parent Workbook and Syllabus for the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module. Encourage your participants to complete all of the exercises and discussion questions for the assignments **prior to each of the meetings.**

Supplemental Module Meeting 1 should be scheduled **at least 1 week** after the *Wrap-Up* and *Resource Sharing* meeting from the Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting program hybrid implementation has been completed. Using this timing allows your participants 1 week to complete the supplemental module content for the *Introduction, Session 2 (Fathers' Experiences as a Father), Session 3 (Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes),* and *Session 4 (Benefits of Father Involvement for Fathers)* and gives them time to practice some of the strategies they have learned.

Meeting 1

Discuss the Module's Introduction and Sessions 2, 3, and 4

Meeting *(60 minutes)*
Homework

Overview of Meeting 1

Step 1: Provide Reintroduction

Step 2: Restate the Ground Rules

Step 3: Start Discussion

Step 4: Assign Homework

Step 5: Adjourn

Meeting 1 | Discuss the Module's Introduction and Sessions 2, 3, and 4

Step 1: Allow Families an Opportunity to Reintroduce Themselves *(3 minutes)*

Lead a quick, fun, or positive icebreaker for additional community building. Revisit the list from the Intake Meeting section of the Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting program Hybrid Implementation Manual (i.e., Take Root, Sprout, Grow, Branch Out) that was implemented, and incorporate a new icebreaker that was not used during those meetings.

Step 2: Restate the Ground Rules *(2 minutes)*

Review the ground rules previously brainstormed, and ask if any new rules need to be added.

Step 3: Start Discussion *(50 minutes)*

During Supplemental Module Meeting 1, discuss the following questions as a group.

Introduction *(10 minutes)*

Provide an overview of the supplemental module using the following points that are taught in the supplemental module:

- Over the past several decades, the role of fathers has evolved significantly and has shifted from primarily being providers to actively participating in all aspects of caregiving and child-rearing. Even as roles have altered, a wide variability in how father roles are defined remains.
- This module intends to teach two main concepts. First, fathers can be nurturant, effective caregivers to their children from infancy through adulthood. Second, fathers' parenting practices impact their children's development.

Meeting 1 | Discuss the Module's Introduction and Sessions 2, 3, and 4

After completing this learning module, you will be able to do the following:

- Understand factors that can influence fathers' experiences.
- Examine fathers' impact on their children's cognitive and social-emotional outcomes.
- Explore the benefits for fathers of father involvement.
- Identify ways that fathers are, or can be, involved with their children.
- Understand the unique experiences of divorced and unmarried fathers, and discover ways to foster and support their involvement.
- Explore strategies for fathering around parental absences, such as work-related commitments or military-service obligations.
- Examine challenges that fathers may face while parenting their children and strategies to help fathers navigate challenges.
- Identify self-care activities fathers can use to incorporate healthy practices into their daily routines.

Ask the participants the following questions to generate discussion:

____ What place do you occupy in the family system (e.g., Married to or living with child's other parent, single parent, stepparent)?

____ What challenges or successes are you currently experiencing while you are raising your child(ren)?

Ask the following question, and solicit answers from a few participants to generate discussion:

____ What is one goal you hope to achieve by completing this supplemental module?

Session 2: Fathers' Experiences as a Father
Factors that Influence Fathers' Experiences: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(7 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers play an important role in their children's lives. However, fathers do not have one unified experience. Their experiences depend on many factors that may range from the characteristics of each father to the broader society in which they live. These factors include the following:
    - o Fathers' individual characteristics (e.g., temperament, health status, relationship with own father, beliefs about the father role)
    - o Children's individual characteristics (e.g., temperament, developmental stage)
    - o Relationship with child's other parent (e.g., relationship status, coparenting relationship, maternal gatekeeping [restricting fathers' involvement] or gate-opening [facilitating fathers' involvement])
    - o Co-parenting role agreements (e.g., presence of agreement on roles, nature of the agreement on roles)
    - o Work requirements and workplace norms (e.g., working long hours, having [or not having] parental leave)
    - o Relationships within the community (e.g., neighbors, extended family, social network)
    - o Community resources (e.g., availability of neighborhood parks, availability of child care, safety of neighborhood)
    - o Community expectations (e.g., sex-based norms, traditional norms)
    - o A father's place within the family system (e.g., married to or living with child's other parent, not living with child's other parent, single father, step-father, social father)
- Sometimes, a father's experience may temporarily change due to factors such as an illness or military deployment. Experiences may also permanently change due to factors like moving to a new city or getting a divorce.
- You were also introduced to five fictitious fathers and their stories to help you understand the concepts, principles, and strategies discussed in the module.

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

- ____ What factors seem to have the most significant impact on your experience as a father?
- ____ Which factors help you be the kind of father you want to be to your child(ren)? Which factors make it difficult for you to realize your desired fatherhood experience?
- ____ Thinking about the scenario families in the module, which module father do you most identify with? Why?

Session 3: Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes

Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Positive father involvement (e.g., engagement, responsiveness, sensitivity, autonomy support) in children's lives has been shown to have a positive impact on many child outcomes, such as cognitive (e.g., language, academic, IQ) and social-emotional (e.g., attachment, empathy, self-worth, self-regulation) development.
- The impact of positive father involvement often extends to positive outcomes during children's adult years in areas such as educational achievement, marital satisfaction, engagement in risky behavior, and psychological distress.
- Fathers matter! Fathers can have a positive impact on their child's well-being by being present, supportive, and responsive to their child and their needs.
- Coparenting partners can positively impact their child's well-being by encouraging positive father involvement and being supportive of the father-child relationship.

Generate discussion among participants using the following question:

- ____ What are some of the ways you have seen your own fathering involvement positively impact your child(ren)?

Fathers' Support of Child's Mother: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers can be a positive influence in their child's life by being present and by supporting the mother, or coparent, of their child.
- Father involvement may protect children from potential negative effects of mothers' depression, enhance maternal responsiveness, and reduce power-assertive maternal child-rearing attitudes. In addition, father engagement is related to less maternal physical aggression and less spanking.
- The module gave two examples of fathers who are providing support to their child(ren)'s mothers. Mike, a divorced father, paid for a cleaning service to help his ex-wife, Rachel, adjust to working outside of the home following their divorce. Tony took turns with his wife, Sadie Ann, waking up with their infant, Henry, on the weekends to allow each one of them to get rest and to provide quality alone time with Henry.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

____ Consider how you currently provide support to your child(ren)'s mother. How do you think this support helps your child(ren)?

____ What is one way in which you can offer additional support to your child(ren)'s mother/coparent this week?

Session 4: Benefits of Father Involvement for Fathers Benefits of Father Involvement: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(3 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers who are more involved with their children report numerous benefits:
  - o Better life satisfaction
  - o More socializing
  - o More involved in community groups

o More involved with service organizations

o More connected to families (giving and receiving assistance)

o Better general self-efficacy

o Less psychological distress

Generate discussion among participants using the following question:

____ In what ways has your involvement with your child(ren) benefitted you as a father?

Types of Father Involvement (Cognitive): Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers are involved in their children's lives in a variety of ways, even when they do not live with their children (e.g., divorced) or when they are away from their children for an extended period (e.g., military deployment).
- Father involvement can fall into three broad categories: cognitive, affective, and behavioral.
- Fathers can support their children's development by actively engaging in the cognitive aspects of child-rearing, such as worrying, monitoring, planning (e.g., birthdays, vacations, appointments), problem solving, and hoping.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

In the module, you were shown examples of how the module scenario fathers demonstrate cognitive involvement with their children. For example, Tony worried about his infant son and sought advice from their family's pediatrician. Mike monitored his children's technological devices (cell phones and tablets) and encouraged his children to consent to a technology agreement.

____ How are you cognitively involved with your child(ren)?

____ In what ways could you be more involved in the cognitive aspects of parenting?

Types of Father Involvement (Affective): Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- When fathers demonstrate affection, this expression can meaningfully impact a child's attitude about their self-worth.
- Fathers can help their children feel loved and accepted by displaying warmth, demonstrating responsiveness, showing patience, giving emotional support, offering praise, showing affection, and providing encouragement.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

In the module, you read about fathers who show affective involvement with their children. For example, Mike demonstrated responsiveness with his daughter, Grace, by consistently checking in with her each evening. Cameron showed patience with Bentley as Bentley experimented with solid foods.

____ How do you show love and affection to your child(ren)?

____ In what new or different ways could you show love and affection to your children?

Types of Father Involvement (Behavioral): Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- By being actively involved in everyday interactions and nurturing care, fathers can serve as positive role models, encourage healthy risk-taking, and help children learn to manage their emotions. Some examples of parenting behaviors include the following:
    - o Caregiving (e.g., changing diapers, bathing)
    - o Setting limits and providing discipline
    - o Playing
    - o Engaging in shared activities and interests
    - o Teaching

- o Going on outings
- o Developing interests
- o Reading
- o Attending school activities
- o Helping with homework
- o Doing housework
- o Providing necessary protections (e.g., babyproofing, ensuring child wears a helmet)

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

In the module, you read about fathers' behavioral involvement. For example, Tony takes turns with his wife providing the night feedings for their baby. Ali offers to serve as an assistant coach for his stepson's soccer team.

____ In what ways do you interact with and provide nurturing care to your child(ren)?

____ Since participating in the module, have you identified any additional ways you could provide nurturing care to your children?

Facilitator Tip

- Review the scenarios from the module to share some examples of father involvement (if needed).

Spending Time with My Child: Interaction and Discussion Questions

(5 minutes)

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- When fathers spend time with their children, this interaction provides opportunities for fathers to get to know their children, strengthen bonds, and enjoy shared experiences.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

In the module, you had the opportunity to participate in an exercise that asked you to think about your child's interests and identify ways you could be involved with your child(ren).

____ What new activities did you identify that you could participate in with your child(ren)?

____ Would anyone like to talk about a new activity they participated in with their child(ren)?

Step 4: Assign Homework *(3 minutes)*

Ask your participants to complete the following supplemental module sessions before your next meeting:

- Sessions 5, 6, 7, and 8
- Wrap-Up

Step 5: Adjourn *(2 minutes)*

Supplemental Module Meeting 2 should be scheduled **at least 1 week after *Supplemental Module Meeting 1* has occurred.** This timing allows your participants 1 week to complete the supplemental module content for *Session 5 (Divorced and Unmarried Fathers), Session 6 (Parental Absence), Session 7 (Challenges Fathers May Face), Session 8 (Self-care for Fathers),* and the *Wrap-Up* section.

The *Wrap-Up* section provides time for participants to practice some of the strategies they have learned and reflect on their progress in achieving their parenting goals. In addition, during this meeting, the supplemental module content is wrapped up, and additional resources are provided.

Meeting 2

Discussion of Sessions 5, 6, 7, and 8 and the Wrap-Up and Resource Sharing

Meeting *(60 minutes)*
Homework *(none)*

Overview of Meeting 2

Step 1: Provide an Icebreaker

Step 2: Restate the Ground Rules

Step 3: Start Discussion

Step 4: Direct to Additional Resources/Register for Additional Thrive Initiative Programming

Step 5: Thank and Adjourn

Step 1: Engage Families in an Icebreaker Activity *(4 minutes)*

Lead a quick, fun, or positive icebreaker for additional community building. Revisit the list from the Intake Meeting section, and incorporate an icebreaker that was not used during the earlier meetings.

Step 2: Restate the Ground Rules *(1 minute)*

Review the ground rules previously brainstormed, and ask if any new rules need to be added.

Step 3: Start Discussion *(50 minutes)*

During Supplemental Module Meeting 2, discuss the following questions as a group.

Session 5: Divorced and Unmarried Fathers: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers may not live with their children for various reasons (e.g., separation from the child's other parent, never married to the child's other parent). In these types of situations, the father and his child(ren) will likely have less access to each other, and the living arrangements may vary based on legal custody agreements or informal arrangements made among the decision-making adults in the child's life.
- For non-resident fathers, there are several factors that are related to establishing and maintaining better father-child relationships, such as having more contact; making formal child-support payments; and using informal support methods, like buying food, clothing, or school supplies.
- Coparenting may be more challenging after a divorce or separation. Parents can learn about and incorporate strategies to help them work together as a team. In the module, additional Thrive supplemental modules were shared that can be helpful in these situations: ***Coparenting: Coordinated. Cooperative. United.*** and ***Stepfamilies: Blending Bonds, Building Harmony.***

Invite non-resident fathers or stepfathers to answer the following questions:

____ For non-resident father's, how do you remain involved in your child(ren)'s life when they are not with you?

____ For stepfathers, what are some ways that you are involved with your stepchild(ren)?

Facilitator Tip

- Review the scenarios from the module to share examples of father involvement as needed.
- If participants cannot relate (i.e., not divorced or unmarried fathers), adjust time devoted to this section.

Session 6: Parental Absence

Parental Absence: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- A parent may be absent from a child's life for an extended time period for several reasons, such as employment- or family-related commitments. For example, some parents are employed in professions that require extended travel, seasonal labor (e.g., oil workers, farming or fishing industries), or military service. Parents may also be away from their children for long periods due to relocation (sometimes after a break-up or divorce) or to assist extended family or friends in need.
- Although parenting from afar can be difficult, it is possible to remain a supportive and involved parent. Some of the strategies described in the module include the following:
    - o Thinking about and talking with their children
    - o Offering advice and support
    - o Giving encouragement
    - o Participating in child care-related decision-making
    - o Sending information about where they are
    - o Being emotionally supportive of parenting partner

- o Reading fathering and baby-care websites (for fathers who are away during their child's birth)
- o Watching videos of their children
- o Using instant messaging, and participating in video calls
- o Sending packages, letters, and emails

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

____ Who has experienced or experiences periods of parental absence from their child(ren)?

____ The module described ways in which fathers can be involved with their children during a parental absence, for example, due to military deployment. For those who have experienced a military deployment as a father, how did you remain involved with your child?

____ Many of the strategies shared in the module to help fathers remain involved in their child(ren)'s life during deployment can be used by fathers who are separated from their child(ren) for other reasons. What strategies have you used?

____ What new strategies might you use during a future period of parental absence?

Fathering Around Military Deployment (Returning from Deployment): Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- When fathers return from deployment, they may notice many changes in their family. The family will likely have adjusted to routines that did not include the father, and the father may not be aware of all of the details of the family's life while he was away. Further, children will likely have developed new skills or interests during the time the father was absent.
- Fathers may need to slowly but steadily move back into routines and responsibilities when they return from deployment.
- Fathers may have to renegotiate roles and adjust to changes in children's developmental stages and/or abilities.

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

- ____ When returning from a period of parental absence, such as a military deployment or another circumstance, how have you reintegrated into your child's daily life?
- ____ What challenges did you experience when you returned from a period of parental absence?
- ____ What strategies or supports have helped you overcome those challenges?

From a Military Father's Perspective Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- In the module, you learned about how Ronald, Karissa, and their family navigated a 9-month military deployment. They shared their thoughts leading up to the deployment, worries and concerns about their children, and some strategies they used to maintain their children's connection to Ronald during this period of parental absence.

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

- ____ How did the pre-deployment activities help prepare each member of the family for the pending parental separation?
- ____ A military deployment is a unique type of parental absence; however, some of the thoughts and feelings experienced by fathers, at-home parents, and children can be similar for families who are experiencing a different kind of parental absence. What aspects of Ronald and Karissa's situation did you identify most with?
- ____ Are there any strategies used by Ronald or Karissa that you could use during a future deployment or other type of parental absence?

Facilitator Tip

To assist with discussion, review the following strategies Ronald and Karissa used to help their children adapt to his absence:

- Sought advice from individuals who had experienced a military deployment.
- Showed children recordings of Ronald reading books to the children.
- Gave children stuffed bears with Ronald's photo attached.
- Communicated with Ronald via video chat.
- Sent care packages to Ronald.
- Ronald sent photos to the family and drew pictures and wrote stories back and forth with Lamont.
- Karissa talked to the children about their father.
- Karissa and Ronald provided updates and wrote down thoughts and messages using an online journal app.
- Karissa and the children made a paper chain to count down the days until Ronald came home.
- Karissa attended a redeployment workshop led by Ronald's unit chaplain.
- Karissa and Ronald managed expectations for all family members by talking with children and each other about the adjustment period after Ronald returned from deployment.
- Ronald practiced self-care by maintaining his workout routine.

Session 7: Challenges Fathers May Face Traditional Roles: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers may encounter challenges that can affect their interactions with their children and their approach to parenting. These challenges, which may be influenced by internal and external forces, can hinder fathers' abilities to reach their full parenting potential and meet their child's needs effectively.
- Fathers can be involved in and engaged with many aspects of child-rearing; however, fathers often face many sex-based expectations related to their role as a father that may suggest otherwise. These expectations may exist at a broad level or at a smaller community level. The expectations may be overt or covert.

- A few examples of how these expectations may be communicated to fathers follow:
  - o Media portrayals of fathers being bumbling, uninvolved, or absent
  - o Strangers assuming a father needs help with routine tasks when he is out with his children
  - o Backhanded compliments given to a father related to being involved with his children
  - o Referring to a father being with his children outside the presence of their mother as "babysitting"
  - o Moms receiving a phone call from school even though the father is listed as the primary contact
  - o Being judged solely on their ability to provide financial support

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

____ What, if any, sex-expectation challenges have you faced?

____ The module included an activity in which you could respond to sex-based comments. Have you been in a situation in which you were not sure how to respond to a specific comment? Did this activity help you think through possible responses?

Parental Leave and Representation: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Additional challenges for fathers may include the lack of parental leave or social pressure to not use the parental leave for which they are eligible.
- There exists a lack of representation of fathers and their parental role in information related to child development or parenting programs. This lack of representation may make fathers feel unwelcome or as if the material is not intended for them.

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

- ____ Were you eligible for parental leave upon the birth of your child, and, if so, did you use it? Why or why not?
- ____ Has there been a situation in which you were interested in an event or program, but you felt it was meant for mothers and not fathers? If so, what changes in the advertisement or event/program itself could have been made to help you feel included as a father?

Maternal Gatekeeping: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- There are instances in which mothers, intentionally or unintentionally, can become barriers to father involvement. This is called maternal gatekeeping and can include mothers engaging in the following: criticizing how the father performs activities or routine tasks, setting unnecessarily high standards, or holding and projecting the belief that mothers should be the primary caregiver. These behaviors and attitudes can affect fathers' levels of confidence and how they engage with their children.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

- ____ Have you experienced maternal gatekeeping behaviors? If so, how have these behaviors impacted your confidence in your parenting ability?
- ____ Have you experienced maternal gate-opening behaviors? If so, how have these behaviors impacted your parenting confidence?

Mental Health: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Mental health challenges, such as depression and anxiety, can affect how fathers interact with their child and, subsequently, their child's outcomes.
- In some instances, fathers may not realize they are experiencing mental health symptoms, and their symptoms may not follow standard diagnostic criteria. Their behaviors may manifest as angry outbursts or substance-use problems when they are actually experiencing depression or anxiety. In these situations, fathers may not realize they need help or they may be misdiagnosed, which can result in them not receiving appropriate, or any, treatment.
- Men may face additional barriers to treatment for mental health concerns, and they may be less likely to engage in help-seeking due to sex-based norms and masculine expectations.
- A father's mental health is important for their well-being, their children's well-being, and their family's well-being. Advocating for themself and for appropriate treatment may impact a father's and their children's and family's outcomes.
- The module provided the following safety alert:
    - If you are thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, contact professional help immediately. You can talk to your healthcare provider, find a mental health professional in your area, or contact crisis services. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline can be reached by anyone, at anytime, in the United States by calling or texting 988. Learn more here: https://988lifeline.org/.
    - **In case of emergency, contact 911 immediately.**

Generate discussion among participants using the following question:

____ Engaging in regular physical health and mental health check-ups, where you have the opportunity to express any concerns, is important to your wellbeing, and your well-being can impact the well-being of your child. How long has it been since your last health/wellness check-up?

Facilitator Tip

If a participant is concerned about their own health or welfare, or that of a family member, encourage them to seek support from a healthcare provider, mental health professional, or crisis services. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline can be reached by anyone, at anytime, in the United States by calling or texting 988.

Session 8: Self-care for Fathers

Self-care for Fathers: Interaction and Discussion *(4 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Societal norms often place a significant burden on fathers to fulfill their work responsibilities without exception. When it comes to physical and mental health, many parents do not think about how the outcomes of bad health will impact their families or even themselves. Individuals often fail to consider the ripple effects of maintaining a healthy lifestyle—mentally and physically—until they are confronted with unavoidable health issues.
- By prioritizing their health and incorporating self-care practices into their daily routines, fathers can set a positive example for their children and equip themselves to more effectively navigate the complexities of parenthood.
- The module described several healthy physical practices, such as the following:
    - o Get adequate sleep.
    - o Eat healthy, nutritious foods.
    - o Exercise regularly.
    - o Seek support for health concerns.
- The module also discussed healthy social and emotional habits, such as the following:
    - o Schedule self-care time.
    - o Participate in activities you enjoy.
    - o Delegate and say "no" when possible.
    - o Manage your stress.
    - o Foster your coparenting relationships.
    - o Develop and maintain social connections.
    - o Build awareness of and connect to concrete support when needed.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

____ What kinds of activities do you participate in for self-care?

____ In the module, you had the opportunity to practice a breathing exercise and a visualization technique. Would anyone like to share how one or both of the exercises made you feel?

Wrap-Up *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- You are commended for completing the supplemental module and participating in these group meetings. Your participation reflects your commitment to learning and being the best father you can be! Navigating this responsibility can be overwhelming. There may be many hurdles along the way, but you and your child can overcome these obstacles. Present, engaged, and supportive fathers can make a positive difference in the lives of their children. Remember, take time each day to care for yourself and enjoy time with your children.

Wrap-Up Module Discussion: Summary Questions *(5 minutes)*

Indicate to participants that you are wrapping up, and generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

____ Which topic discussed in the supplemental module was the most beneficial to you as a father/caregiver? Why?

____ What strategies or skills did you learn in the supplemental module that you can use to help you achieve the goals you have for you, your child, and/or your family?

____ What has changed with your interactions with your child or family since before you started to complete the supplemental module?

____ Have you noticed a difference in the way your child responds to your parenting?

Step 4: Direct to Additional Resources and/or Register for Additional Thrive Initiative Programming *(4 minutes)*

Provide support and encouragement to your participants to explore other Thrive Initiative programming. Share and/or register participants for any additional hybrid implementation options that you plan to offer. Thrive Initiative programming may include any of the following:

Universal Programs

- **Take Root** is available for parents and caregivers of children who are between 0 and 3 years old.
- **Sprout** is available for parents and caregivers of children who are between 3 and 5 years old.
- **Grow** is available for parents and caregivers of children who are between 5 and 10 years old.
- **Branch Out** is available for parents and caregivers of children who are between the ages of 10 and 18 years old.

Supplemental Modules

Additional supplemental modules are available on a variety of topics and can be accessed online at https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental/.

Encourage participants to continue to visit the Thrive website, https://thrive.psu.edu, as their child develops and grows. They can access additional resources and materials like mini-booster modules, blog postings, parenting handouts and guides, and newsletters.

Step 5: Thank and Adjourn *(1 minute)*

Thank the participants for their involvement in the hybrid implementation group program.

Delivery Type 2: Supplemental Stand Alone

This encompasses the formation of a new group of families that consists of individuals who have participated in a Thrive Initiative core, universal parenting program.

Intake and Introduction

Delivery Type 2: Supplemental Stand Alone

The following instructions are only relevant to the Supplemental Stand Alone hybrid implementation of the supplemental module. Because you are forming a new group, the participants will meet for three sessions, which begin with an Intake and Introduction Meeting. This meeting time will allow for rapport-building activities at the beginning of implementation, such as engaging in participant introductions and setting ground rules. Two overarching goals of implementing Thrive programming in a hybrid format are setting a positive tone and warmly engaging participants in the process.

Intake and Introduction *(60 minutes)*
Homework

Overview: Introduction Meeting *(60 minute session)*

Step 1: Welcome

Step 2: Provide Overview of the Supplemental Module

Step 3: Complete Introductions and /or Ice Breaker(s)

Step 4: Set or Remind Participants of the Ground Rules

Step 5: Review Syllabus

Step 6: Share Expectations

Step 7: Offer registration and Check for Online Content Access

Step 8: Assign Homework

Step 1: Welcome your Families *(10 minutes)*

Face-to-Face Meetings

- Welcome family members or families as they walk in the door. Smile, be friendly, and take a genuine interest in each participant and their comfort level.
- Consider preparing reusable name tags so you can call each person by name. You can collect the name tags at the end of the meeting for use at the second meeting or ask the participants to bring them back to the second meeting.
- Help each person get settled and comfortable in the space. Be certain to prepare in advance. For example, have ample tables/desks and chairs, and set them up in an arrangement that will promote eye contact and ease of conversation.
- Track attendance if needed.

Virtual Meetings

If you (acting as a delivery facilitator) choose to complete group meetings virtually, you should partner with a coordinating facilitator or a co-host. Your partner can help you with technological issues and serve as an additional point-of-contact for your families in case they have any technological issues when joining or participating in the virtual meeting. This assistance will allow you to fully focus on interacting with your families during the meetings, and it will ensure adequate support is available for those families who may need extra help with technology.

Open the virtual meeting space early so participants can test their computer technology (i.e., video and audio) before the start of the meeting. Consider using music and a simple message via screen share as a digital waiting room so families can troubleshoot their audio as they enter the virtual space. A screen share example can be found in *Appendix D*.

Welcome your families as they join the virtual platform. Encourage each participant to have their camera on and to enter their preferred name in the platform so you can call each individual by name. You might also have a Chat box prompt available to encourage friendly interaction (e.g., ask participants to share the name and age of their child).

If you are tracking attendance, let your coordinating facilitator help you with this task.

Step 2: Provide an Overview of the Supplemental Module
(15 minutes)

Take time to discuss the following topics with your participants:

____ ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** is an online supplemental module for fathers or father figures who have childrearing responsibilities and those who parent alongside fathers or father figures.

____ This module is designed to help participants gain a better understanding of the value fathers can bring to a child's life. It offers insights into the challenges fathers may face as they parent their children, strategies coparents can use to support their child's father and foster the parent-child relationship, and suggestions fathers can consider as they strive to be involved in their child's life. In addition, key takeaways are highlighted throughout the module to demonstrate how fathers and coparents can apply these concepts in real-life situations as they support their children and family.

____ During the online supplemental module sessions and throughout the hybrid implementation meetings, information and parenting strategies that parents can use and adapt, as necessary, to fit their individual circumstances and family needs will be disseminated. The supplemental module content is designed to help parents and caregivers build on their existing skills and strategies, so they can effectively care for their children and support the fathers in their children's lives.

____ Some of the content that is read and practiced in the supplemental module and discussed in the hybrid implementation meetings may be familiar to the parents, and they may already know about and use the disseminated information. Therefore, they may use the meeting time as an opportunity to realize, appreciate, and share what already works for them, their child, and their family.

____ ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** includes an introduction, seven sessions, and a Wrap-Up.

After participating in the online supplemental module sessions and the hybrid implementation meetings, parents and caregivers should be able to do the following:

- Understand factors that can influence fathers' experiences.
- Examine fathers' impact on their children's cognitive and social-emotional outcomes.
- Explore the benefits of father involvement for fathers.
- Identify ways that fathers are, or can be, involved with their children.
- Understand the unique experiences of divorced and unmarried fathers, and discover ways to foster and support their involvement.
- Explore strategies for fathering around parental absences, such as work-related commitments or military-service obligations.
- Examine challenges that fathers may face while parenting their children and strategies to help fathers navigate challenges.
- Identify self-care activities fathers can use to incorporate healthy practices into their daily routines.

Step 3: Complete Introductions and Icebreakers *(10 minutes)*

Start with a brief and modest introduction of yourself. Share any expertise you have regarding child development and include any other relevant characteristics about yourself that can help you relate to your participants (e.g., community member, organization, military affiliation). Then, engage the group in a strengths-based icebreaker to build relationships. Have the participants introduce themselves and answer an icebreaker question.

Examples of introduction and icebreaker questions follow:

- ____ Tell me your name, your coparent's name(s), your child's name, your child's age, and (pick one of the following):
  - ____ what you enjoy most about parenting,
  - ____ a word you could use to describe one of your child's strengths,
  - ____ one aspect of your parent-child relationship that is working well,

____ a skill you use effectively in your parenting, or

____ an activity you enjoy doing with your child.

Facilitator Tip

- You can also start future meetings with an icebreaker if you find the families you are working with are reserved or quiet or would benefit from rapport building. Use your judgment, and avoid controversial topics. Note, for future meetings, consider using new or unused icebreakers from the list above.

Step 4: Set Ground Rules *(5 minutes)*

Stating some ground rules and, then, brainstorming a few together as a group may help families feel safe and supported as they share their parenting journey. You can start the brainstorming by offering a few sample ground rules, such as the following:

- **You will always start on time.**
- **You will always end on time.**
- **You will turn your cell phone on vibrate and would like everyone else to do the same.**
- **If a group member must take a call, let them know they may quietly excuse themself from the room (mute themself if in a virtual meeting).**

Other rules you may come up with, as a group, include the following:

- Adopt an open and supportive stance. Avoid judgment about other participants' parenting. We are all learning new parenting strategies and gaining new knowledge!
- One person speaks at a time.
- Assume positive intent.
- Use a respectful tone.
- Celebrate small wins when practicing new parenting skills!

This is also a good time to discuss with your participants your organization's confidentiality clauses. Briefly explain how mandated reporting requirements apply to statements made by participants related to child abuse or neglect.

Things to Cover:

Enter your notes here

Ground Rules Set at Meeting:

Enter your notes here

Step 5: Review Syllabus *(5 minutes)*

Provide copies or screen share a copy of the *Parent Workbook and Syllabus* for the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module. Review the Summary of Training, and highlight the section where the participants can find pertinent information.

Step 6: Set Expectations *(5 minutes)*

Set realistic expectations with your participants. Let them know they will be asked to independently complete the online supplemental module and come to meetings ready for discussion. Because the participants will be independently completing the module sessions, you must ensure your participants complete the supplemental module in its entirety. By completing the module, participants will gain valuable knowledge from the content and interaction activities.

In the two following meetings, you will use content, covered in the supplemental module, to facilitate interaction that provides participants with opportunities for community building, reflection, and discussion with you and other participants who are trying to successfully navigate parenting.

Step 7: [If needed] Registration and Check for Online Content Access *(5 minutes)*

Complete any registration requirements for your organization. Then, explain how participants can access the supplemental module online. Offer support to help with any technological questions. All participants will have previously set up a Thrive Initiative account, but you need to ensure they can log in and find the information they need to get started or progress in the supplemental module.

Step 8: Assign Homework *(5 minutes)*

Ask participants to complete the following module sessions from the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module content in advance of the second meeting:

- Session 1: Introduction
- Session 2: Fathers' Experiences as a Father
- Session 3: Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes
- Session 4: Benefits of Father Involvement for Fathers

If possible, show the pages in the of the Parent Workbook and Syllabus for the ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** supplemental module. Encourage your participants to complete all of the exercises and discussion questions for the assignments prior to each of the meetings.

Supplemental Module Meeting 1 should be scheduled ***at least 1 week after the Intake/ Introduction Meeting has occurred.*** This timing allows your participants 1 week to complete the supplemental module content for the *Introduction, Session 2 (Fathers' Experiences as a Father), Session 3 (Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes)*, and *Session 4 (Benefits for Fathers of Father Involvement)*, and gives them time to practice some of the strategies they have learned.

Meeting 1

Discussion the Module's Introduction, Sessions 2, 3, and 4

Meeting *(60 minutes)*
Homework

Overview of Meeting 1

Step 1: Provide Reintroduction

Step 2: Restate the Ground Rules

Step 3: Start Discussion

Step 4: Assign Homework

Step 5: Adjourn

Step 1: Allow Families an Opportunity to Reintroduce Themselves *(3 minutes)*

Lead a quick, fun, or positive icebreaker for additional community building. Revisit the list from the Intake/Introduction Meeting section, and incorporate an icebreaker that was not used during that meeting.

Step 2: Restate the Ground Rules *(2 minutes)*

Review the ground rules previously brainstormed, and ask if any new rules need to be added.

Step 3: Start Discussion *(50 minutes)*

During Supplemental Module Meeting 1, discuss the following questions as a group.

Introduction *(10 minutes)*

Provide an overview of the supplemental module using the following points that are taught in the supplemental module:

- Over the past several decades, the role of fathers has evolved significantly and has shifted from primarily being providers to actively participating in all aspects of caregiving and child-rearing. Even as roles have altered, a wide variability in how father roles are defined remains.
- This module intends to teach two main concepts. First, fathers can be nurturant, effective caregivers to their children from infancy through adulthood. Second, fathers' parenting practices impact their children's development.

After completing this learning module, you will be able to do the following:

- Understand factors that can influence fathers' experiences.
- Examine fathers' impact on their children's cognitive and social-emotional outcomes.
- Explore the benefits for fathers of father involvement.
- Identify ways that fathers are, or can be, involved with their children.
- Understand the unique experiences of divorced and unmarried fathers, and discover ways to foster and support their involvement.
- Explore strategies for fathering around parental absences, such as work-related commitments or military-service obligations.
- Examine challenges that fathers may face while parenting their children and strategies to help fathers navigate challenges.
- Identify self-care activities fathers can use to incorporate healthy practices into their daily routines.

Ask the participants the following questions to generate discussion:

____ What place do you occupy in the family system (e.g., Married to or living with child's other parent, single parent, stepparent)?

____ What challenges or successes are you currently experiencing while you are raising your child(ren)?

Ask the following question, and solicit answers from a few participants to generate discussion:

____ What is one goal you hope to achieve by completing this supplemental module?

Session 2: Fathers' Experiences as a Father
Factors that Influence Fathers' Experiences: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(7 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers play an important role in their children's lives. However, fathers do not have one unified experience. Their experiences depend on many factors that may range from the characteristics of each father to the broader society in which they live. These factors include the following:
    - o Fathers' individual characteristics (e.g., temperament, health status, relationship with own father, beliefs about the father role)
    - o Children's individual characteristics (e.g., temperament, developmental stage)
    - o Relationship with child's other parent (e.g., relationship status, coparenting relationship, maternal gatekeeping [restricting fathers' involvement] or gate-opening [facilitating fathers' involvement])
    - o Co-parenting role agreements (e.g., presence of agreement on roles, nature of the agreement on roles)
    - o Work requirements and workplace norms (e.g., working long hours, having [or not having] parental leave)
    - o Relationships within the community (e.g., neighbors, extended family, social network)
    - o Community resources (e.g., availability of neighborhood parks, availability of child care, safety of neighborhood)
    - o Community expectations (e.g., sex-based norms, traditional norms)
    - o A father's place within the family system (e.g., married to or living with child's other parent, not living with child's other parent, single father, step-father, social father)
- Sometimes, a father's experience may temporarily change due to factors such as an illness or military deployment. Experiences may also permanently change due to factors like moving to a new city or getting a divorce.
- You were also introduced to five fictitious fathers and their stories to help you understand the concepts, principles, and strategies discussed in the module.

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

- ____ What factors seem to have the most significant impact on your experience as a father?
- ____ Which factors help you be the kind of father you want to be to your child(ren)? Which factors make it difficult for you to realize your desired fatherhood experience?
- ____ Thinking about the scenario families in the module, which module father do you most identify with? Why?

Session 3: Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes

Fathers' Impact on Child Outcomes: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Positive father involvement (e.g., engagement, responsiveness, sensitivity, autonomy support) in children's lives has been shown to have a positive impact on many child outcomes, such as cognitive (e.g., language, academic, IQ) and social-emotional (e.g., attachment, empathy, self-worth, self-regulation) development.
- The impact of positive father involvement often extends to positive outcomes during children's adult years in areas such as educational achievement, marital satisfaction, engagement in risky behavior, and psychological distress.
- Fathers matter! Fathers can have a positive impact on their child's well-being by being present, supportive, and responsive to their child and their needs.
- Coparenting partners can positively impact their child's well-being by encouraging positive father involvement and being supportive of the father-child relationship.

Generate discussion among participants using the following question:

- ____ What are some of the ways you have seen your own fathering involvement positively impact your child(ren)?

Fathers' Support of Child's Mother: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers can be a positive influence in their child's life by being present and by supporting the mother, or coparent, of their child.
- Father involvement may protect children from potential negative effects of mothers' depression, enhance maternal responsiveness, and reduce power-assertive maternal child-rearing attitudes. In addition, father engagement is related to less maternal physical aggression and less spanking.
- The module gave two examples of fathers who are providing support to their child(ren)'s mothers. Mike, a divorced father, paid for a cleaning service to help his ex-wife, Rachel, adjust to working outside of the home following their divorce. Tony took turns with his wife, Sadie Ann, waking up with their infant, Henry, on the weekends to allow each one of them to get rest and to provide quality alone time with Henry.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

____ Consider how you currently provide support to your child(ren)'s mother. How do you think this support helps your child(ren)?

____ What is one way in which you can offer additional support to your child(ren)'s mother/coparent this week?

Session 4: Benefits of Father Involvement for Fathers Benefits of Father Involvement: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(3 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers who are more involved with their children report numerous benefits:
  - o Better life satisfaction
  - o More socializing

o More involved in community groups

o More involved with service organizations

o More connected to families (giving and receiving assistance)

o Better general self-efficacy

o Less psychological distress

Generate discussion among participants using the following question:

____ In what ways has your involvement with your child(ren) benefitted you as a father?

Types of Father Involvement (Cognitive): Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers are involved in their children's lives in a variety of ways, even when they do not live with their children (e.g., divorced) or when they are away from their children for an extended period (e.g., military deployment).
- Father involvement can fall into three broad categories: cognitive, affective, and behavioral.
- Fathers can support their children's development by actively engaging in the cognitive aspects of child-rearing, such as worrying, monitoring, planning (e.g., birthdays, vacations, appointments), problem solving, and hoping.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

In the module, you were shown examples of how the module scenario fathers demonstrate cognitive involvement with their children. For example, Tony worried about his infant son and sought advice from their family's pediatrician. Mike monitored his children's technological devices (cell phones and tablets) and encouraged his children to consent to a technology agreement.

____ How are you cognitively involved with your child(ren)?

____ In what ways could you be more involved in the cognitive aspects of parenting?

Types of Father Involvement (Affective): Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- When fathers demonstrate affection, this expression can meaningfully impact a child's attitude about their self-worth.
- Fathers can help their children feel loved and accepted by displaying warmth, demonstrating responsiveness, showing patience, giving emotional support, offering praise, showing affection, and providing encouragement.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

In the module, you read about fathers who show affective involvement with their children. For example, Mike demonstrated responsiveness with his daughter, Grace, by consistently checking in with her each evening. Cameron showed patience with Bentley as Bentley experimented with solid foods.

____ How do you show love and affection to your child(ren)?

____ In what new or different ways could you show love and affection to your children?

Types of Father Involvement (Behavioral): Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- By being actively involved in everyday interactions and nurturing care, fathers can serve as positive role models, encourage healthy risk-taking, and help children learn to manage their emotions. Some examples of parenting behaviors include the following:
    - o Caregiving (e.g., changing diapers, bathing)
    - o Setting limits and providing discipline
    - o Playing
    - o Engaging in shared activities and interests
    - o Teaching

o Going on outings
o Developing interests
o Reading
o Attending school activities
o Helping with homework
o Doing housework
o Providing necessary protections (e.g., babyproofing, ensuring child wears a helmet)

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

In the module, you read about fathers' behavioral involvement. For example, Tony takes turns with his wife providing the night feedings for their baby. Ali offers to serve as an assistant coach for his stepson's soccer team.

____ In what ways do you interact with and provide nurturing care to your child(ren)?

____ Since participating in the module, have you identified any additional ways you could provide nurturing care to your children?

Facilitator Tip

- Review the scenarios from the module to share some examples of father involvement (if needed).

Spending Time with My Child: Interaction and Discussion Questions

(5 minutes)

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- When fathers spend time with their children, this interaction provides opportunities for fathers to get to know their children, strengthen bonds, and enjoy shared experiences.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

In the module, you had the opportunity to participate in an exercise that asked you to think about your child's interests and identify ways you could be involved with your child(ren).

____ What new activities did you identify that you could participate in with your child(ren)?

____ Would anyone like to talk about a new activity they participated in with their child(ren)?

Step 4: Assign Homework *(2 minutes)*

Ask your participants to complete the following supplemental module sessions before your next meeting:

- Sessions 5, 6, 7, and 8
- Wrap-Up

Step 5: Adjourn *(3 minutes)*

Thank the participants for their involvement in Meeting 1 and reiterate the date and time of Meeting 2.

Supplemental Module Meeting 2 should be scheduled **at least 1 week after *Supplemental Module Meeting 1* has occurred.** This timing allows your participants 1 week to complete the supplemental module content for *Session 5 (Divorced and Unmarried Fathers), Session 6 (Parental Absence), Session 7 (Challenges Fathers May Face), Session 8 (Self-care for Fathers),* and the *Wrap-Up* section. The *Wrap-Up* section provides time for the participants to practice some of the strategies they have learned and reflect on their progress in achieving their parenting goals. In addition, during this meeting, the supplemental module content is wrapped up, and additional resources are provided.

Meeting 2

Discussion of Sessions 5, 6, 7, 8, and the Wrap-Up and Resource Sharing

Meeting *(60 minutes)*
Homework *(none)*

Overview of Meeting 2

Step 1: Provide an Icebreaker

Step 2: Restate the Ground Rules

Step 3: Start Discussion

Step 4: Direct to Additional Resources/Register for Additional Thrive Initiative Programming

Step 5: Thank and Adjourn

Meeting 2 | Discussion of Sessions 5, 6, 7, 8, and the Wrap-Up and Resource Sharing

Step 1: Engage Families in an Icebreaker Activity *(4 minutes)*

Lead a quick, fun, or positive icebreaker for additional community building. Revisit the list from the Intake Meeting section, and incorporate an icebreaker that was not used during the earlier meetings.

Step 2: Restate the Ground Rules *(1 minute)*

Review the ground rules previously brainstormed, and ask if any new rules need to be added.

Step 3: Start Discussion *(50 minutes)*

During Supplemental Module Meeting 2, discuss the following questions as a group.

Session 5: Divorced and Unmarried Fathers: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers may not live with their children for various reasons (e.g., separation from the child's other parent, never married to the child's other parent). In these types of situations, the father and his child(ren) will likely have less access to each other, and the living arrangements may vary based on legal custody agreements or informal arrangements made among the decision-making adults in the child's life.
- For non-resident fathers, there are several factors that are related to establishing and maintaining better father-child relationships, such as having more contact; making formal child-support payments; and using informal support methods, like buying food, clothing, or school supplies.
- Coparenting may be more challenging after a divorce or separation. Parents can learn about and incorporate strategies to help them work together as a team. In the module, additional Thrive supplemental modules were shared that can be helpful in these situations: ***Coparenting: Coordinated. Cooperative. United.*** and ***Stepfamilies: Blending Bonds, Building Harmony.***

Invite non-resident fathers or stepfathers to answer the following questions:

____ For non-resident father's, how do you remain involved in your child(ren)'s life when they are not with you?

____ For stepfathers, what are some ways that you are involved with your stepchild(ren)?

Facilitator Tip

- Review the scenarios from the module to share examples of father involvement as needed.
- If participants cannot relate (i.e., not divorced or unmarried fathers), adjust time devoted to this section.

Session 6: Parental Absence

Parental Absence: Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- A parent may be absent from a child's life for an extended time period for several reasons, such as employment- or family-related commitments. For example, some parents are employed in professions that require extended travel, seasonal labor (e.g., oil workers, farming or fishing industries), or military service. Parents may also be away from their children for long periods due to relocation (sometimes after a break-up or divorce) or to assist extended family or friends in need.
- Although parenting from afar can be difficult, it is possible to remain a supportive and involved parent. Some of the strategies described in the module include the following:
    - o Thinking about and talking with their children
    - o Offering advice and support
    - o Giving encouragement
    - o Participating in child care-related decision-making
    - o Sending information about where they are
    - o Being emotionally supportive of parenting partner

- o Reading fathering and baby-care websites (for fathers who are away during their child's birth)
- o Watching videos of their children
- o Using instant messaging, and participating in video calls
- o Sending packages, letters, and emails

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

____ Who has experienced or experiences periods of parental absence from their child(ren)?

____ The module described ways in which fathers can be involved with their children during a parental absence, for example, due to military deployment. For those who have experienced a military deployment as a father, how did you remain involved with your child?

____ Many of the strategies shared in the module to help fathers remain involved in their child(ren)'s life during deployment can be used by fathers who are separated from their child(ren) for other reasons. What strategies have you used?

____ What new strategies might you use during a future period of parental absence?

Fathering Around Military Deployment (Returning from Deployment): Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- When fathers return from deployment, they may notice many changes in their family. The family will likely have adjusted to routines that did not include the father, and the father may not be aware of all of the details of the family's life while he was away. Further, children will likely have developed new skills or interests during the time the father was absent.
- Fathers may need to slowly but steadily move back into routines and responsibilities when they return from deployment.
- Fathers may have to renegotiate roles and adjust to changes in children's developmental stages and/or abilities.

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

- ____ When returning from a period of parental absence, such as a military deployment or another circumstance, how have you reintegrated into your child's daily life?
- ____ What challenges did you experience when you returned from a period of parental absence?
- ____ What strategies or supports have helped you overcome those challenges?

From a Military Father's Perspective Interaction and Discussion Questions *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- In the module, you learned about how Ronald, Karissa, and their family navigated a 9-month military deployment. They shared their thoughts leading up to the deployment, worries and concerns about their children, and some strategies they used to maintain their children's connection to Ronald during this period of parental absence.

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

- ____ How did the pre-deployment activities help prepare each member of the family for the pending parental separation?
- ____ A military deployment is a unique type of parental absence; however, some of the thoughts and feelings experienced by fathers, at-home parents, and children can be similar for families who are experiencing a different kind of parental absence. What aspects of Ronald and Karissa's situation did you identify most with?
- ____ Are there any strategies used by Ronald or Karissa that you could use during a future deployment or other type of parental absence?

Facilitator Tip

To assist with discussion, review the following strategies Ronald and Karissa used to help their children adapt to his absence:

- Sought advice from individuals who had experienced a military deployment.
- Showed children recordings of Ronald reading books to the children.
- Gave children stuffed bears with Ronald's photo attached.
- Communicated with Ronald via video chat.
- Sent care packages to Ronald.
- Ronald sent photos to the family and drew pictures and wrote stories back and forth with Lamont.
- Karissa talked to the children about their father.
- Karissa and Ronald provided updates and wrote down thoughts and messages using an online journal app.
- Karissa and the children made a paper chain to count down the days until Ronald came home.
- Karissa attended a redeployment workshop led by Ronald's unit chaplain.
- Karissa and Ronald managed expectations for all family members by talking with children and each other about the adjustment period after Ronald returned from deployment.
- Ronald practiced self-care by maintaining his workout routine.

Session 7: Challenges Fathers May Face Traditional Roles: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Fathers may encounter challenges that can affect their interactions with their children and their approach to parenting. These challenges, which may be influenced by internal and external forces, can hinder fathers' abilities to reach their full parenting potential and meet their child's needs effectively.
- Fathers can be involved in and engaged with many aspects of child-rearing; however, fathers often face many sex-based expectations related to their role as a father that may suggest otherwise. These expectations may exist at a broad level or at a smaller community level. The expectations may be overt or covert.

- A few examples of how these expectations may be communicated to fathers follow:
  - o Media portrayals of fathers being bumbling, uninvolved, or absent
  - o Strangers assuming a father needs help with routine tasks when he is out with his children
  - o Backhanded compliments given to a father related to being involved with his children
  - o Referring to a father being with his children outside the presence of their mother as "babysitting"
  - o Moms receiving a phone call from school even though the father is listed as the primary contact
  - o Being judged solely on their ability to provide financial support

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

____ What, if any, sex-based expectation challenges have you faced?

____ The module included an activity in which you could respond to sex-based comments. Have you been in a situation in which you were not sure how to respond to a specific comment? Did this activity help you think through possible responses?

Parental Leave and Representation: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Additional challenges for fathers may include the lack of parental leave or social pressure to not use the parental leave for which they are eligible.
- There exists a lack of representation of fathers and their parental role in information related to child development or parenting programs. This lack of representation may make fathers feel unwelcome or as if the material is not intended for them.

Generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

____ Were you eligible for parental leave upon the birth of your child, and, if so, did you use it? Why or why not?

____ Has there been a situation in which you were interested in an event or program, but you felt it was meant for mothers and not fathers? If so, what changes in the advertisement or event/program itself could have been made to help you feel included as a father?

Maternal Gatekeeping: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- There are instances in which mothers, intentionally or unintentionally, can become barriers to father involvement. This is called maternal gatekeeping and can include mothers engaging in the following: criticizing how the father performs activities or routine tasks, setting unnecessarily high standards, or holding and projecting the belief that mothers should be the primary caregiver. These behaviors and attitudes can affect fathers' levels of confidence and how they engage with their children.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

____ Have you experienced maternal gatekeeping behaviors? If so, how have these behaviors impacted your confidence in your parenting ability?

____ Have you experienced maternal gate-opening behaviors? If so, how have these behaviors impacted your parenting confidence?

Mental Health: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Mental health challenges, such as depression and anxiety, can affect how fathers interact with their child and, subsequently, their child's outcomes.
- In some instances, fathers may not realize they are experiencing mental health symptoms, and their symptoms may not follow standard diagnostic criteria. Their behaviors may manifest as angry outbursts or substance-use problems when they are actually experiencing depression or anxiety. In these situations, fathers may not realize they need help or they may be misdiagnosed, which can result in them not receiving appropriate, or any, treatment.
- Men may face additional barriers to treatment for mental health concerns, and they may be less likely to engage in help-seeking due to sex-based norms and masculine expectations.
- A father's mental health is important for their well-being, their children's well-being, and their family's well-being. Advocating for themself and for appropriate treatment may impact a father's and their children's and family's outcomes.
- The module provided the following safety alert:
    - If you are thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, contact professional help immediately. You can talk to your healthcare provider, find a mental health professional in your area, or contact crisis services. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline can be reached by anyone, at anytime, in the United States by calling or texting 988. Learn more here: https://988lifeline.org/.
    - **In case of emergency, contact 911 immediately.**

Generate discussion among participants using the following question:

____ Engaging in regular physical health and mental health check-ups, where you have the opportunity to express any concerns, is important to your wellbeing, and your well-being can impact the well-being of your child. How long has it been since your last health/wellness check-up?

Facilitator Tip

If a participant is concerned about their own health or welfare, or that of a family member, encourage them to seek support from a healthcare provider, mental health professional, or crisis services. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline can be reached by anyone, at anytime, in the United States by calling or texting 988.

Session 8: Self-care for Fathers

Self-care for Fathers: Interaction and Discussion *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- Societal norms often place a significant burden on fathers to fulfill their work responsibilities without exception. When it comes to physical and mental health, many parents do not think about how the outcomes of bad health will impact their families or even themselves. Individuals often fail to consider the ripple effects of maintaining a healthy lifestyle—mentally and physically—until they are confronted with unavoidable health issues.
- By prioritizing their health and incorporating self-care practices into their daily routines, fathers can set a positive example for their children and equip themselves to more effectively navigate the complexities of parenthood.
- The module described several healthy physical practices, such as the following:
    - o Get adequate sleep.
    - o Eat healthy, nutritious foods.
    - o Exercise regularly.
    - o Seek support for health concerns.
- The module also discussed healthy social and emotional habits, such as the following:
    - o Schedule self-care time.
    - o Participate in activities you enjoy.
    - o Delegate and say "no" when possible.
    - o Manage your stress.
    - o Foster your coparenting relationships.
    - o Develop and maintain social connections.
    - o Build awareness of and connect to concrete support when needed.

Generate discussion among participants using the following questions:

____ What kinds of activities do you participate in for self-care?

____ In the module, you had the opportunity to practice a breathing exercise and a visualization technique. Would anyone like to share how one or both of the exercises made you feel?

Wrap-Up *(5 minutes)*

Review this section of the module with the participants by offering the following information:

- You are commended for completing the supplemental module and participating in these group meetings. Your participation reflects your commitment to learning and being the best father you can be! Navigating this responsibility can be overwhelming. There may be many hurdles along the way, but you and your child can overcome these obstacles. Present, engaged, and supportive fathers can make a positive difference in the lives of their children. Remember, take time each day to care for yourself and enjoy time with your children.

Wrap-Up Module Discussion: Summary Questions *(5 minutes)*

Indicate to participants that you are wrapping up, and generate discussion among participants using all, or some, of the following questions:

____ Which topic discussed in the supplemental module was the most beneficial to you as a father/caregiver? Why?

____ What strategies or skills did you learn in the supplemental module that you can use to help you achieve the goals you have for you, your child, and/or your family?

____ What has changed with your interactions with your child or family since before you started to complete the supplemental module?

____ Have you noticed a difference in the way your child responds to your parenting?

Step 4: Direct to Additional Resources and/or Register for Additional Thrive Initiative Programming *(4 minutes)*

Provide support and encouragement to your participants to explore other Thrive Initiative programming. Offer information about and/or register participants for any additional hybrid implementation options that you plan to provide. Thrive Initiative programming may include any of the following:

Universal Programs

- **Take Root** is available for parents and caregivers of children who are between 0 and 3 years old.
- **Sprout** is available for parents and caregivers of children who are between 3 and 5 years old.
- **Grow** is available for parents and caregivers of children who are between 5 and 10 years old.
- **Branch Out** is available for parents and caregivers of children who are between the ages of 10 and 18 years old.

Supplemental Modules

Additional supplemental modules are available on a variety of topics and can be accessed online at https://thrive.psu.edu/modules/supplemental/.

Encourage participants to continue to visit the Thrive website, https://thrive.psu.edu, as their child develops and grows. They can access additional resources and materials like mini-booster modules, blog postings, parenting handouts and guides, and newsletters.

Step 5: Thank and Adjourn *(1 minute)*

Thank the participants for their involvement in the hybrid implementation group program.

Appendices

Appendix A

Father Forward Recruitment Poster

thrive

father forward

Present. Engaged. Supportive.

A supplemental parent-education module that is designed to provide support to fathers or father figures who have childrearing responsibilities for a child or children, and those who parent alongside them.

Gain knowledge, skills, and strategies in the following areas:

- positive parenting practices,
- stress management, and
- child physical-health promotion.

Learn more about *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* and other Thrive programs at:
https://thrive.psu.edu/

Meet with us!

Date: Tuesday, August 3rd

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: (Link if virtual)

Point of Contact: Name and Contact Information

Appendix B

Father Forward Participant Recruitment and Tracking Sheet

Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.

Hybrid Implementation Participant Recruitment and Tracking Sheet

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Participant Name	**Email Address**	**Child's Date of Birth**	**Today's Date**	**Child's Calculated Age (Years)**	**Father Forward Parent Welcome Letter - Date Sent**	**Thrive Account Registration Confirmed (Y/N)**	**Registration in Hybrid Implementation Confirmed (Y/N)**	**Parent Workbook and Syllabus Sent**
Example, Participant	*email@address.com*	*3/11/19*	*5/30/25*	*6 Years*	*4/14/25*	*Yes*	*Yes*	☑

Instructions for Completing the *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* Participant Recruitment and Tracking Sheet

The goal of this tracking sheet is to track individuals who would like more information about the hybrid implementation of *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* and to provide information about the dates and times for meetings.

Download the Participant Recruitment and Tracking Sheet

Ensure you are following your organization's privacy protocols with all of the information that is collected and stored. You can complete this form on a computer or print it to handwrite your responses. You may also choose to move the data to a spreadsheet.

Complete Columns 1-4

- Enter the potential participant's name, email address, child's date of birth, and today's date.
- If the potential participant has multiple children, enter the date of birth for the focal child (i.e., the child who the participant is focusing on with *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*).

Complete Columns 5 [Optional]

- To calculate the age, you can use an online age calculator.
- If the age is close to a cut-off, you may need to check in with the participant after they have registered for a Thrive account and have reviewed the introduction video to confirm that *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* is the correct program for their family.

Complete Columns 6-8

- Send the *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive. Parent Welcome Letter* to the email address provided, and enter the date the *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive. Parent Welcome Letter* is sent.
    - By sending the *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive. Parent Welcome Letter*, you are providing the potential participant the information they need to make a decision about attending the hybrid implementation, such as the date, time, and location of meetings. It also provides information about how to create an account on the Thrive website.
- Encourage participants to create a Thrive account and enroll in *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* supplemental module.
- Follow up with the potential participant to see if they would like to register and attend the hybrid implementation of *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*

Complete Column 9

Send the *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive. Parent Workbook and Syllabus.*

Appendix C

Father Forward Parent Welcome Letter

father forward
Present. Engaged. Supportive.

Welcome to Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.

Overview of Thrive Initiative

Thrive is a group of parenting programs that are designed to help you, a parent or caregiver, as you care for your child—from pregnancy until your child reaches 18 years of age. There are four online parenting programs that are part of the Thrive Initiative. The intent of the supplemental modules is to build on information and strategies discussed in the four universal Thrive parenting programs — Take Root, Sprout, Grow, Branch Out. Therefore, by participating in the age-appropriate Thrive parenting program before engaging with any of the supplemental modules, you will reap the most benefits.

Infants (0 to 6 months)	**Preschool (3 to 5 years)**	**Grades K–5 (5 to 10 years)**	**Grades 6–12 (10 to 18 years)**
Infants (6 to 12 months)			
Infants & Toddlers (1 to 3 years)			

All Thrive programs share knowledge, skills, and strategies within three areas:

- positive parenting practices,
- stress management, and
- child physical-health promotion.

Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive. Online

Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive. is an online supplemental module for fathers or father figures who have childrearing responsibilities and those who parent alongside fathers or father figures Since *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* is online, you can complete it at your own pace.

Hybrid Implementation of *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*

The hybrid implementation of *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* means you will complete the program based on a schedule. After you complete the assigned sessions, you will meet with a facilitator and, possibly, other families to discuss the information from the sessions.

There are 2 – 3 meetings with a facilitator. Each meeting will range from 45 – 60 minutes.

Father Forward - Date/Time/Location
Hybrid Implementation

ENTER OVERVIEW HERE (Example Shown)
FATHER FORWARD
June 1, 2025, through July 7, 2025
Every Monday from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. EST
Building 800 Room 15

Expectations

You will be asked to independently participate in online sessions of ***Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.*** and come to meetings ready for discussion. By completing the sessions and activities and answering provided questions, you will be prepared to engage in discussion regarding the content, ask additional questions, and learn from other parents and caregivers and their experiences.

How to Create a Thrive Account

- **Visit** https://thrive.psu.edu/ **➔ Navigate to "For Parents"➔ Go to "Register for THRIVE online" ➔ Click "Sign Up."**
- **Enter your name, create a username and password, and share your military affiliation (Yes/No).**
- **Log In ➔ Choose *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* by selecting *Father Forward: Present. Engaged. Supportive.* Overview and then selecting "Start Course."**

Still have Questions? Contact your Facilitator!

ENTER NAME HERE

ENTER CONTACT INFO HERE

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy (DoD MC&FP) and the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State (Clearinghouse).
All programs are available free of charge.

Appendix D

Father Forward Screen Share Text Example

Thank you for joining our meeting for

father forward

Present. Engaged. Supportive.

The meeting will start at **12:00 p.m. EST**

You should hear soft music playing.

Take this opportunity to test your microphone, video, and other settings.

If you need technical assistance:

Email **TA@email.com** *or*

Call **TA Person** at **X-XXX-XXXX**

Appendix E

Best Practices for Online Learning

Best Practices for Online Learning

You can enhance your experience during this training by doing the following:

Joining the meeting early to test settings.

Testing your technology with a friend or family member prior to your meeting.

Finding a quiet place to complete the meetings.

Using a headset or headphones for voice clarity.

Knowing who to contact, and how, if you cannot connect or are having technical difficulties.

Having a backup plan if your computer won't connect to the meeting. Perhaps there is a call-in number you could use so you can hear the meeting.