

## **City of New York and HRA Encourage Fathers to Take Part in Their Children's Lives**

On June 17, Mayor Bloomberg launched the first-ever citywide fatherhood initiative, directing city agencies to work to strengthen NYC families and make sure to include fathers in their policies and practices. Commissioner Doar and HRA are proud to be part of this initiative. Promoting responsible fatherhood and strengthening families are important parts of the Agency's mission.

"We want more children in our city to experience the encouragement, support and love of their fathers," said Mayor Bloomberg. "And that's why all city agencies will work to seize every opportunity to help fathers be a part of their children's lives."

"To further reduce poverty, we need to focus on fathers, too," said Commissioner Doar on the Mayor's fatherhood initiative. "A father is vital to his children's emotional and financial stability – and men who father children have a fundamental duty to provide for their children. Their financial support can lift children from poverty, and their advice, love and encouragement is essential as well. I am extremely grateful to Mayor Bloomberg and Deputy Mayor Gibbs for making this issue a high priority."

HRA's commitment was clearly on display on Sunday, June 20, when hundreds of fathers, mothers and children came to Prospect Park for HRA's NYC DADS Fathers Day BBQ. There were hamburgers and hot dogs, carnival games, face painting, prizes and giveaways and music provided by HOT 97 FM, who have partnered with HRA's Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) for the Man Up to Child Support campaign.

"One might think that for Fathers Day, a dad would choose to sleep in the whole day. Or watch the game," said Tom Roston, editor of the NYC DADS website. "But these dads chose to be with their families, and chose to be great fathers to their children."

Fathers at the BBQ shared meals and played games with their children, or watched them as they played on the pirate slide. Prospect Park's Bartel-Pritchard Square was full of happy families despite the intense summer heat. HRA also had an assortment of children's and young adult books to give out to attendees.

NYC DADS hosts a number of other events for dads and children throughout the year, including Halloween and Holiday parties and sports outings. Both NYC DADS and Man Up to Child Support encourage fathers to take an active role in their children's emotional, as well as financial well being.