

This year, Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) and its vital programs will reach nearly 4.5 million young people and their parents in 3,700 neighborhoods and rural communities. BGCA's professional staff will support and engage parents as their school-age children learn character and leadership development, vocational training, and healthy behaviors and benefit from a wide range of academic and cultural pursuits. "We not only change the trajectory of a young person's life today but also the trajectory of their children's lives tomorrow," says BGCA President Roxanne Spillet. "That's why we call our work family-strengthening and generation-changing."



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF PERRY/TAYLOR COUNTY, FLORIDA

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF PERRY/TAYLOR COUNTY, FLORIDA

Award-winning Program: Nurturing Fathers

Kevin L. Kidd, Executive Director

202 East Julia Drive

P.O. Box 1474

Perry, FL 32348-1474

850-838-2471

www.bgcperry.org

CHILDREN DO WELL WHEN THEIR FAMILIES
DO WELL, AND FAMILIES DO BETTER WHEN
THEY LIVE IN SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

2006 FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

ENGAGING FATHERS AND HELPING THEM SUCCEED

The Boys & Girls Club of Perry/Taylor County, Florida, serves 500 young people, 60 percent of whom come from homes headed by single mothers; yet the club has just three men on staff. Last fall, that startling ratio sent Executive Director Kevin Kidd on a mission: to find a way to strengthen fathers' involvement with their families.

A conversation with the local Head Start director turned Kidd on to the Nurturing Fathers Program, which helps fathers develop the tools they need to become positive forces in their children's lives. Together, the two directors attended a training session in Jacksonville and began offering the program locally—first at the Taylor County Jail, and then at the Boys & Girls Club and Head Start.

"I grew up in a single-parent home, and I know the impact that can have on a child," Kidd says. "At the Boys and Girls Club, we want to make a better community for our children—and to do that, we have to get our fathers involved."



WE ARE HELPING FATHERS BECOME NURTURERS
FOR THEIR OWN CHILDREN, AND BEYOND THAT,
GOOD ROLE MODELS FOR ALL OF OUR CHILDREN.

—Kevin Kidd, Executive Director, Boys & Girls Club of Perry/Taylor County, Florida

"THE FATHER I CHOOSE TO BE"

The Nurturing Fathers Program teaches men how to be effective fathers, focusing on topics such as discipline without violence, communication, problem-solving and teamwork with their partners. Over the course of several sessions, men examine relationships with their own fathers, discuss their fatherhood experiences and take part in group activities. So far, 36 men have completed the program through the Boys & Girls Club/Head Start effort.

"The program is powerful," Kidd says. "It changes how men think about fathering. In 'The Father I Choose to Be' exercise, for example, they write a job description of how they want to conduct themselves as fathers. They use TV dads as a frame of reference, discussing who does and doesn't have the qualities they want to emulate."

Kidd notes that the program is already making a difference. Two men married their partners soon after completing the program. Two teen fathers, who had been spending most of their free time at the Club, found jobs so they could start supporting their children. Kidd hopes to have at least 100 men participate in Nurturing Fathers.

"As one participant told me, 'We really need superheroes for our kids,'" Kidd says. "Our mission is to inspire and enable all youth to become productive and caring citizens. And to do that, we must give them strong male role models."

FAMILIES COUNT FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

Through a joint venture of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the FAMILIES COUNT Family Strengthening Awards recognize Club programs that work to give children what they need most—strong, capable and economically successful families. Responding to the varied needs of the families they serve, these organizations improve the economic prospects of working men and women and create the services and networks of support that all families need to realize their aspirations for themselves and their children.