



PRESS RELEASE

DATE October 7, 2008

TFI Brings the Importance of Fatherhood to the Forefront in Child Welfare

Statewide, KS, October 7, 2008 - TFI Family Service's innovative one day symposium on "Fatherhood in Child Welfare" last Tuesday, September 30, 2008 drew a large statewide crowd from a multi-disciplinary professional group working with children and families. Featuring the internationally recognized professional speaker and author, Jaiya John, Founder of Soul Water Rising, the symposium brought the importance of fathers in children's lives to the forefront. The event was held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka.

The symposium on "Fatherhood in Child Welfare" was developed and hosted by TFI Family Services as a kick off initiative to enhance engagement and involvement of fathers in the lives of their children. Invitations went out to professionals involved in all areas of working with children and families bringing an unprecedented response for the symposium that a waiting list had to be created. The symposium was limited to 150 registrants; however, the all day event which included lunch was free to those who attended.

TFI Family Services recognizes involving and engaging fathers is important in increasing a child's overall well being. The Responsible Fatherhood Act of 1999 as reported by the U.S. Senate compiled research and found that children who have no contact with their biological father are twice as likely to be abused as children who live with their father. Studies have indicated that, overall, children are more successful in their endeavors when they have fathers who are actively involved in their lives. The past service delivery models have been focused on mothers and have not consistently involved fathers. TFI Family Services' Symposium on "Fatherhood in Child Welfare" provided education and training for the development of policies and practices for engaging and involving fathers in the lives of their children.

Jaiya John delivered the keynote address, *The Undeniable Purpose of Fatherhood*, during the general session. Workshops in the afternoon focused on including fathers through education,

skill building and outcomes development for child welfare workers and administrators. Jaiya John also conducted a book signing throughout the afternoon of his child and youth service-related books which included *Reflection Pond*; *Beautiful*; *Legendary* and his award-winning memoir, *Black Baby White Hands: A View from the Crib*.

The success of the event is evidenced in the unparalleled positive response from those in attendance. Peggy S. Martin, CEO of TFI Family Services, stated that, “Jaiya John’s presentation and personal experience hit a grand slam home run on the importance of engaging the total family unit, especially the fathers in order to ensure children grow up emotionally healthy and complete.”

To learn more about Jaiya John and Soul Water Rising’s global human relations mission, please visit www.soulwater.org.

ABOUT TFI Family Services – TFI Family Services is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for youth and families through Behavioral Health and Child Welfare Services. Their goal is always to build brighter tomorrows for families and children together.

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