

**Presentation to Ohio Commission on Fatherhood
Stark County Fatherhood Coalition's
"Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day Program"**

Year One: 2011

- **8 Canton City Elementary Schools**
- **180 Fathers Participate**
- **Info Folder for Fathers**

Year Two: 2012

- **11 Canton City Elementary Schools**
- **743 Fathers Participated**
- **Supplied Flyers to School for Students to Take Home**
- **Gave Lunch Box with School Supplies to First 25 Students Participating at each School**
- **Info Folders for Fathers**

Year Three: 2013

- **12 Canton City Elementary Schools**
- **805 Fathers Participated**
- **Supplied Flyers for Schools to Market Event**
- **Gave Draw String Bag with Crayons to First 30 Students Participating at each School**
- **Info Folder for Fathers**

Year Four: 2014

- **14 Canton City Elementary Schools and 1 Middle School**
- **Expanded to 4 Elementary Schools in Alliance**

- **867 Fathers Participate (970 Children)**
- **Supplied Flyer for Schools to Market Event**
- **Gave Draw String Bag with Children Book to First 50 Students Participating**
- **Info Folder for Fathers**

Year Five: 2015

- **15 Canton City Schools**
- **4 Alliance City Elementary Schools**
- **Expanded to 3 Elementary Schools in Massillon**
- **1,360 Fathers (1,595 Children)**
- **Supplied Flyer for Schools to Market Event**
- **Gave Draw String Back Pack with Sports Bottle to First 50 Students Participating**
- **Info Folder for Fathers**

Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day

Thursday, September 17th, 2015

When a father is involved in his child's education, the child performs better in school!

On this day fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers and other significant male caregivers are encouraged to walk or drive their children to school to show their support of their children's education and the important role fathers play in a child's life.

The first 50 participating children at each school will be given a Stark County Fatherhood Coalition draw string bag & a sports bottle to help start the school year off right!

Representatives from the Fatherhood Coalition will be present at each participating school to greet fathers and their children and distribute drawstring bags & sports bottles.

The goal of the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition is to encourage fathers to be active participants in the lives of their children and serve as positive role models.

Fathers and their children should arrive at school 15 minutes before the school bell.



Sponsored by Stark County Fatherhood Coalition and FameFathers.

Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day

Thursday, September 20, 2012

When fathers are involved in their child's education, children perform better in school!

On this day fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers and other significant male caregivers are encouraged to walk or drive their children to school to show their support of their children's education and the important role fathers play in a child's life.

The first 25 children at each school will be given a "Stark County Fatherhood Coalition" lunch box with school supplies to help start the school year off right! Representatives from the Fatherhood Coalition will be present at each participating school to greet fathers and their children and distribute lunch boxes.

The goal of the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition is to encourage fathers to be active participants in the lives of their children and serve as positive role models.

Fathers and their children should arrive at school 15 minutes before the school bell.



Sponsored by Stark County Fatherhood Coalition and FameFathers.

Stark County Job & Family Services

221 3rd Street S.E., Canton, OH 44702

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 17, 2015

Fifth Annual *Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day* a Success

Thursday, September 17th, marked the fifth annual *Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day*, sponsored by the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition, FameFathers, and Stark County Job & Family Services. More than 1,300 fathers and nearly 1,600 children participated in this year's event held in the Alliance, Canton and Massillon public schools.

The event is designed to provide male caregivers the opportunity to show their children how much they support and value their education. Research shows that children whose fathers are involved in their education perform better in school.

The first 50 children to arrive at each participating school with their fathers, or father figures, received a drawstring back pack and a sports bottle.

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AREA DADS WALK KIDS TO SCHOOL

Even grandpas, others
join in for special day

BY CHRISTINA MCCUNE
Independent staff writer

MASSILLON

Kyrre Geraghty had the best seat on his way to school Thursday morning. The 3-year-old looked perfectly comfortable perched atop his father's shoulders as they made their way to Franklin Elementary. The preschooler usually takes the school bus. His dad, Terry Geraghty, parked his car close by at work so the duo could walk into the school for the city's first Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day.

"I thought it was a good opportunity for me to get involved in the school," Geraghty said.

The first 50 students who arrived at each of the city's three elementary schools with a father or male relative or caregiver received a free drawstring sports bag and water bottle.

Only online

Hear what local dads had to say about why they walked, drove or carried their children to school Thursday and view a photo gallery at IndeOnline.com.



INDEPENDENT PHOTOS KEVIN WHITLOCK

■ Kyrre Geraghty, 3, gets a ride on dad Terry Geraghty's shoulders outside Franklin Elementary during the annual Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day.

Massillon
Independence
9-18-15

This was the first time the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition, FameFathers and Stark County Job & Family Services extended the event to Massillon's public elementary schools — Franklin, Gorrell and Whittier. Local dads responded with more than 200 men accompanying nearly 250 children to school for the event.

"This was a great turnout for Massillon, especially

SEE WALK A-8



■ Adant Ezzo, 6 (left), and his brother, Sean Ezzo, 7, are walked to school Thursday by grandfather Ed Burchell at Franklin Elementary in Massillon.

Number of participants

Massillon's participation in "Fathers Walk"

School	Men	Children
Franklin	40	60
Gorrell	82	93
Whittier	84	96
Total	206	249

SOURCE: ROB PIERSON, STARK COUNTY FATHERHOOD COALITION

Poll question: Do you think campaigns such as "Fathers Walk, Your Child to School Day" are effective in getting families involved in education? Visit VoteOnline.com to vote.

WALK

CONTINUED FROM A-1

when you take into consideration this was the school system's first year participating," said Rob Pierson, chairman of the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition.

The Fathers Walk is in its fifth year in Canton, and last year, all Alliance elementary schools participated in the event.

The annual Fathers Walk provides fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers and other significant male caregivers, the opportunity to walk or drive their children to school, and show children how much they support and value their education.

Research shows that children whose fathers are involved in their education perform better in school.

ACTIVE FATHERS

Michael Parsons walked his third-grader, Dylan, and kindergartner, Paityn, into the school. Parsons said that he tries to get around his work schedule and spend as much time with his kids as he can, and the Fathers Walk was one of those opportunities to do that.

"Taking them to school is exciting for them," he said.

Joseph Hye, who moved to Massillon two years ago from Long Island, took his 4-year-old son, Aiden, to school as he usually does. He was among some other fathers who didn't realize he was participating in the program until he got to the school, but he was pleased to hear about the event. He said he was aware statistically about the importance of fathers playing an active role in their children's lives.

Antonio Lackey walked his daughter, Tonye, 7, into the school aware of the programs through the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition.

"You've got to be in your kids' lives," he said. "You



■ Richard DeHeer, a representative of the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition, passes out backpacks and some literature to Shawn Arbuckle as he arrived at Franklin Elementary Thursday morning after walking his daughter Shirley Arbuckle, 6, to school.
INDEPENDENT KEVIN WHITLOCK

Impact of absent fathers

- 85 percent of youth in prison come from fatherless homes.
- 71 percent of youth who drop out of high school come from homes without a father involved in the child's life.
- 68 percent of youth who do not have an active father in their lives are more likely to

smoke, drink or use drugs.

- Children in homes without a father are three times more likely to commit suicide.
- Teenage girls in homes where the father is absent are more likely to become sexually active and become pregnant as a teen.

SOURCES: STARK COUNTY JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES, STARK COUNTY FATHERHOOD COALITION

should have this every week."

At Franklin Elementary School, greeting students and taking pictures were Principal Mike Medure, Olivia Bronczek, communications coordinator for Massillon City Schools, and Richard DeHeer, Stark County Family Court administrator, who also represented the Fatherhood Coalition. All 50 of the bags, bottles and informational folders were handed out at Franklin. Those who arrived too late for the bags received pencils as they entered the school.

The Stark County Fatherhood Coalition is made up of more than 16 agencies, nonprofits and organizations.

"The Fatherhood Coalition is about emphasizing to fathers in the community how important it is to have two parents involved," Pierson said. "We need fathers participating in a positive way in the lives of their

children whether they live in the home or not."

Pierson also is deputy director of the child support division at Stark County Job & Family Services. The event, he said, is to remind fathers about how important it is to value their children and what is important for them.

"Education is one of those things," he said.

Statistics show that children in a two-parent home, or a single-parent home where the noncustodial parent is actively involved in a child's daily life, have a greater chance to grow up to be happy, productive community members.

It's important to support children financially, Pierson said, and emotional support carries equal weight.

The coalition does different activities throughout the year to emphasize the various ways children need support from their fathers, Pierson said.

This fall, he would like to

schedule a showing of "Fatherhood 101" at a venue in Massillon. The coalition showed the feature film at the Canton Palace Theatre, as well as at high schools, churches and prisons. He said the documentary has a powerful message about a dad's role in his children's lives.

Reach Christina at 330-775-1133 or christina.mccune@indeonline.com.
On Twitter: @cmccuneINDE

Special morning with dad

Alliance
Review
9-18-15



LEFT: Matt Kelleher bends down to tell his daughter, Elena Hawkins-Kelleher, 5, goodbye as she enters the Early Learning School Thursday, which was Fathers Walk Their Students to School Day. **BELOW:** Roger LeMaster takes a bag containing information from the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition given to him by Ann Durkin outside of the Early Learning School Thursday. LeMaster walked his grandson, right, Lukas Yungens, 3, to school.

Fathers Walk Their Students to School Day held in Alliance

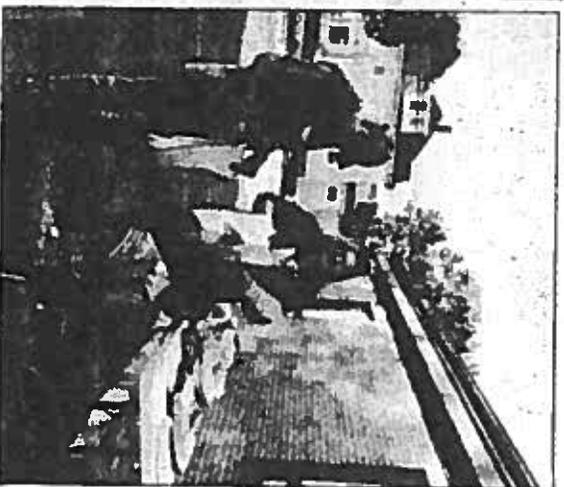
BY CHELSEA SNAR
csnar@the-review.com

Fathers and male father figures may have been a little late to work Thursday morning after taking part in Fathers Walk Their Students to School Day.

The day is sponsored by the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition. Ann Durkin, program administrator for the Right Path for Fathers Partnership Program of Stark Coun-

ty Job and Family Services, which leads the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition, was at the Alliance Early Learning School on Thursday. She and Buddy Gasparik gave students drawing backpacks with water bottles in them and fathers a folder full of resource material of social services offered to dads and the importance of male role models in a child's life.

See **Fathers** Page A3





Review Photo/Gayle Agnew

Several fathers and male role models walked children to school in Alliance Thursday as part of the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition's Fathers Walk Their Students to School Day.

Fathers

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This is the second year the program has come to Alliance. The program has existed for a few years in Canton and expanded to Massillon for the first time this year.

"It's important to encourage fathers to be an active part of their child's life. It's important to have two active parents involved in a child's life, and often the fathers are left out of things," Durkin said.

Durkin is head of the Right Path for Fathers program held at the Alliance Community Center, which offers parents support in finding a job and paying child support.

This year Durkin had 60 backpacks for students whose fathers or father figures walked them to school and signed them in, up 20 from last year.

By the end of the morning only a few backpacks remained.

John Hightland came dressed in his chef jacket to drop off his son Dylan, a kindergartner. He has two other children in Alliance schools, so they usually ride the bus, but Thursday morning he made an exception and took each of them to school.

"I think this is a good thing. ... It's nice

fathers get to do this with their kids," he said.

Jason Monk wrangled three kindergartners to the door on Thursday morning, his son and twin nephews, all in the same class.

He said usually the three ride the bus together in the mornings, but said he took advantage of the opportunity to bring them to school.

"It's important for kids to have good role models; I think this day is important," he said.

School Principal Tim Calfee said while it's important to involve fathers in school, the designated Fathers Walk Their Students to School Day is really symbolic.

"We had a great turnout. People wanted to show their support," he said.

Calfee described several dads he saw dressed for work, who clearly made Thursday morning an intentional time with their student.

Durkin added that it was nice to see so many dads supporting their kids.

"It's really nice to see fathers engaging with their children. Kids will remember this for a long time," she said.

@CShar_AR on Twitter

Fathers walk their children to school

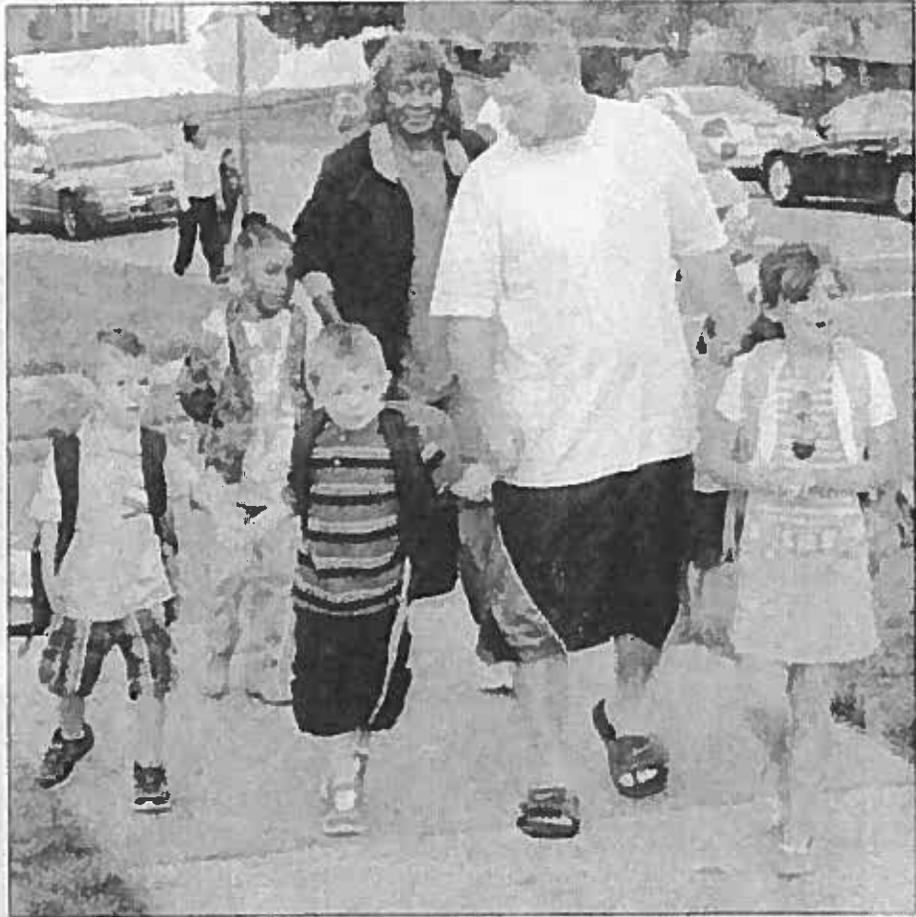
CANTON

Dads across Stark County participated in Thursday's annual "Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day."

It was sponsored by the Stark County Job & Family Services, FameFathers, the Stark County Fatherhood Coalition and elementary schools in Canton, Massillon and Alliance.

The annual event is designed to encourage fathers to show support for their child's education and to underscore the important role fathers play in children's lives.

REPOSITORY STAFF REPORT



REPOSITORY PHOTOS MICHAEL S. BALASH

■ **ABOVE** Kevin Letendre walks Wesley Rash, 6, Kayden Letendre, 4, and Karissa McIntyre, 7, to Belle Stone Elementary School in Canton on Thursday. They were participating in "Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day." **BELOW LEFT** Willie Clark walks his grandson Lorenzo Proffitt to Belle Stone. **BELOW RIGHT** Ted Robinson and his daughter Riley, 5 have their picture taken at Belle Stone.



Fathers Walk Your Child to School Day – September 17, 2015

School	Number of Fathers	Number of Children
Alliance Early Learning School	61	72
Northside	44	55
Parkway	38	50
Rockhill	50	60
Alliance Total	193	237
Arts Academy at Summit	29	41
Allen	54	65
Dueber	45	58
Harter	125	135
McGregor	66	81
Schreiber	38	48
Stone	89	106
Worley	71	76
Belden	31	35
Cedar	87	102

Clarendon	71	79
Gibbs	44	53
Mason	56	59
Youtz	108	115
Lehman	47	56
Canton Total	961	1,109
Franklin	50	70
Gorrell	82	93
Whittier	84	96
Massillon Total	206	249
Total for all 3 School Systems	1,360	1,595