

U.S. Government Funding Marriage, Fatherhood

Amid a heavy push for gay marriages in some states, the U.S. government is doing something a little more traditional: funding responsible fatherhood and healthy marriages.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services just announced \$150 million in funding for Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood grants. The grants aim to help fathers meet their parenting and financial responsibilities and assist married couples or people considering marriage in building strong relationships with each other and their children.

“To invest in the success of fathers is to invest in the future of our children, our economy, and our communities,” says HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. “This funding provides organizations in underserved communities with the tools they need to promote responsible parenting, to encourage healthy marriage and relationships, and to remove barriers to financial security and self-sufficiency.”

The Responsible Fatherhood program has \$75 million in new funding intended to promote or sustain responsible parenting, marriage and economic stability. The Healthy Marriage program has \$75 million in new funding intended for pre-marital education, marriage enhancement programs, divorce reduction programs, marriage mentoring programs, and skills programs that may include parenting skills, financial management, conflict resolution, and job and career advancement.

“We recognize the need for fathers to be present in their children’s lives,” says George Sheldon, HHS acting assistant secretary for children and families. “These funding opportunities bring us closer to preparing more fathers to nurture and take full responsibility for their children and

for couples to sustain healthy relationships.”