Father to Father Project, Inc.

**“Before starting the fatherhood program, I felt like I was drowning.”**

***Fatherhood Program Participant***

Our Program

The Father to Father Project, Inc. offers education and services uniquely tailored for fathers trying to rebuild their lives and their families. We are devoted to helping men heal broken spirits and family relations, practice healthy parenting and gain productive stable employment. For we know that when fathers succeed in their fathering role, their children thrive.

**A Lifeline for Fathers**

The program is free thanks to support from the local community providing resources and financial donations. Most fathers learn of the program by word-of-mount or referrals from community partners. Some fathers are court-ordered to participate in the program as an alternative to incarceration for non-payment of child support.

We have a goal-oriented program. Fathers and program staff work together to fashion a personalized One Man Plan. Services are offered weekly in peer support groups and one-on-one meetings to address individual needs and goals are scheduled daily. Father/child events are planned to provide opportunities for fathers and families to spend time together. Read more about our Program Services.

See our Success to learn more about the fathers successes and benefits to their families and our community.

**Resource to Businesses and the Community**

We are a resource not only to fathers, but also to businesses seeking able-bodied men to work. We can help identify a father who is ready to work and has the skills you need in a reliable employee. Our staff can even provide on-going job coaching to help a father deal with issues that arise at work and transportation until he can find reliable transportation on his own. Contact our office to meet our job recruiter and to discuss your employment needs.

What’s more, we are a resource to our community. We have worked with fathers for more than a decade and understand their situation and how to work with them to achieve success. We are available to discuss impact of father absence in our nation and community, the challenges fathers face to being engaged and responsible fathers and how community organizations, churches, and government can offer father-friendly services and create a positive community that supports fathers. Contact our executive director to schedule a presentation or individual meeting to learn more about this unique community resource.

The community, our volunteers, partners, and the fathers in our program believe in what we have created and look forward to continuing to transform our vision of fatherhood engagement into reality.

**Peer Support Groups meet:**

**Father to Father – North Charleston**, has weekly group sessions on Thursday evening’s beginning at 6:30 pm.  Meetings are held at:

4731 Mixson Avenue

North Charleston, SC 29405

OUR PROGRAM – Program Services

Fathers Can Find a New Life

At a local fatherhood program you will find a complete approach to overcoming the very obstacles to becoming an engaged, responsible father. You will find a respectful, non-judgmental environment and a staff who understands where you are — some of them have been in your very situation. They have helped hundreds of guys just like you. At a fatherhood program you will also meet other fathers facing the same challenges and willing to help each other find a better life for themselves and their families. You will be encouraged and motivated even when you feel like giving up; however, you will not find any crutches in a fatherhood program. You will get out of it exactly what you put in to it. The staff will provide information to increase your knowledge and skills linking to resources to execute your personal plan for a better life.

Fathers are encouraged to join and fully participate in the entire program rather than simply patching up the problem-of-the-day. Fathers are invited to attend weekly peer support meetings where they join other fathers to learn about and share the process of building new personal support networks with men who want to do better and be better. The fatherhood curriculum addresses a wide range of topics aimed at improving employment, parenting, family relationships and much more. Topics include:

Responsible Fatherhood

Spiritual Development

Effective Communication

Education, Job Readiness and Employment

Understanding Child Support and the Legal System

Financial Management

Parenting and Co-Parenting

Healthy Relationships

Domestic Violence

Men’s Health and Education

Fatherhood program staff members provide one-on-one assistance to help participants achieve their individually set goals in a One Man Plan. Staff members assist in multiple ways including: receive guidance to navigate the child support system, mediation with the child’s mother and other family members, access to healthcare, record expungement, transportation, finding a job and stable housing. Parent/child activities are planned so that fathers and their children can spend together and make positive memories. Make no mistake, a fatherhood program can not address every problem especially when specialized help is need for serious issues like drug and alcohol problems, violent behavior and mental illness; but, fatherhood programs have direct links to other organizations known and trusted for delivering excellent services.

Fatherhood programs change lives and help men become the fathers they have always wanted to be.

See more details about all program components below. **Components of the Program**

**Peer Group**   
Peer group sessions address some of the fundamental issues that prevent men from having the stability in their lives that is necessary to be a responsible, caring father. There are classes in anger management, building self-esteem, communication skills and relationship building.  Participants are taught how to manage their anger effectively and how to cope with the emotional stressors that interfere with couple and family relationships.  Participants also learn effective communication skills so that they can communicate better with their children and the mothers of their children. Participants grow to understand their self-worth and their value to not only their children, but the community as a whole.

**Parenting**Fathers are taught some of the basics of child development, including the physical, emotional and spiritual changes that occur in children at different stages.  Communication skills between parents and children and the complexities of parental discipline are addressed and father/child relationship building activities are offered to allow fathers to spend quality time with their children.

**Job Readiness Boot Camp and Employment**  
With the help of the program’s job coach, each participant develops a career goal along with a realistic plan to reach that goal.  The program features a new Job Readiness Boot Camp; an intensive job readiness component that addresses attitudes about work, expectations of employers, positive work habits and supportive networks as well as resume preparation, job seeking tools, and interviewing skills.  Career Booster sessions are offered in weekly group session for those employed fathers who want to improve their employment status and seek a longer term career goal. The program supports fathers as they seek to secure employment, education, and training.

**Legal Education, Rights and Responsibilities**  
Participants are taught their legal rights and responsibilities as fathers. Fathers learn how to navigate the Child Support system in order to overcome the barriers preventing them from being a viable part of their children's lives. Topics include how to mediate a meaningful visitation agreement; resolving child support issues in family court; how to modify child support payments and the importance of paternity establishment.

**Individualized Services**

The program offers transportation, referrals for services not offered by the program, and mediation.

**Our Program – Programs Services – Jobs Not Jail: Alternative to Incarceration**

A major barrier to father-involvement among low-income men is incarceration due to non-payment of child support.  These fathers are often seen as deadbeat when in fact they are dead broke.  When they are incarcerated, they cannot work, pay child support, or parent their children.  The Alternative to Incarceration Program offers Family Court judges a responsible and much less expensive alternative to sending those men to overcrowded detention centers.

Fathers who are behind in child support may be court-ordered to the fatherhood program for six months in lieu of incarceration. The Jobs Not Jail Alternative to Incarceration has experienced soaring success while saving tax payers.

Eligibility for the alternative to incarceration program is determined by examining the following criteria:

* Low-income father
* Father is 18 years or older and has children 18 years or younger
* Work history indicates that during the period of missed child support payments he was either unemployed, underemployed, laid off, medically unable to work, had other extenuating circumstances which prevented the consistent payment of his child support
* No current criminal charges pending
* CDV history is consistent with domestic violence policy of center
* Father was ordered by state agency or court or voluntarily entered into program prior to the court date for the Rule to Show Cause
* Father is not actively engaged in illegal drug use
* Indicates a desire to play an active role in the life of his child

Fathers who participate in a Fatherhood Program as an alternative to incarceration must consent to successfully comply with program requirements.

Program requirements for alternative to incarceration participants include:

* Attend all weekly fatherhood peer support classes during the 24 week period;
* Follow all fatherhood program recommendations related to securing livable wage employment including, attending GED classes if necessary, employment training and interviews, and related drug screens;
* Pay consistently ongoing child support and arrearage\* during the 24 week period; and
* Maintain a current home and work address and telephone numbers with both the Clerk of Court and the Fatherhood Program during the 24 week period.

If a low-income father is unemployed at the Rule to Show Cause hearing, the Fatherhood Program staff request that the father have 30 days to seek and secure employment and 45 days to make the first support payment.  Judges will often give consideration to extending the requirement for paying child support if the father is actively enrolled in a job training class that will provide him with skills to improve his opportunity for employment.

Staff

Our staff understands fathers and families and is among some of the most experienced and knowledgeable fatherhood practitioners in our state. Father to Father Project, Inc. emphasizes the interaction between staff and the men in the program. We believe that bonding among the men and between them and staff facilitates their appreciation of new ideas as well as their willingness to accept new challenges.

Call or come by our office to meet our staff and to discuss how we can help.

**Phone: (843) 744-2126**

**Email: gewilson@fathertofather.comcastbiz.net**

**Location: 4731 Mixson Ave., North Charleston, SC 29405**

**William M. Jenkins –** Executive Director

**St. Julian Stewart –** Intervention Specialist I

**Kalen Milford –** Intervention Specialist III

**Gwendolyn Wilson –** Program Assistant

**Elmore Ragland –** Job Recruiter