



VISIT US ONLINE!



CELEBRATING
10 YEARS

*of helping kids and communities
one dad at a time*

Why do *Good Dads* Matter for *Great Communities*?

Studies tell us that communities with a high percentage of responsible fathers have stronger schools, safer neighborhoods and a more robust economy. In short, everyone does better, even children without a dad in the home, when there are many good dads. Unfortunately, dads are by and large underestimated and under-appreciated. This stigma is particularly evident in the lack of father-focused programs in many U.S. communities.

Good Dads seeks to change that. It is the only organization in Missouri solely focused on increasing engagement among fathers and their children. We know how important fathers are, and we are committed to making sure this integral element of the family is not ignored, but rather, is encouraged and celebrated. We created the publication you're reading now to demonstrate just how important fathers are, and in the following pages, you'll learn how you can be a part of the solution.



Jennifer L. Baker, PsyD
Founder and Director

WHAT WE DO

Good Dads encourages all fathers to be more engaged in the lives of their children by providing inspiration and resources to help them be the best dads they can be.



AT-RISK DADS

equipping men with the tools they need to overcome fatherhood hurdles



STRONG SCHOOLS

a before-school program to spark connection between students and their dads



WEB RESOURCES

with podcasts, blogs, child support advice and mental health resources



CHAPTER NETWORK

spreading our vision so others can effectively serve their community's fathers



WORKPLACE RESOURCES

with courses for working dads and resources for trucking fathers



COMMUNITY EVENTS

offering opportunities for dads and kids to make memories and have fun together



TRAINING CAMP

resourcing individuals and groups who wish to improve their work to support men

"A good dad knows when to be strong and when to be sensitive!"

— Janice Reynolds, Good Dads Master Facilitator



Father Absence

A Persistent Problem

Nearly a quarter of American children—around 20 million—live in a home without a father.¹ These children are at a greater risk for...

- Poverty²
- Abuse and Neglect³
- Crime Exposure⁴
- Behavior Problems⁵
- Poor School Performance⁶
- Substance Use⁷
- Risky Sexual Activity⁸
- Dysfunctional Relationships⁹
- Limited Labor Force Success¹⁰
- Incarceration¹¹
- Poor Mental Health¹²
- Suicide¹³

Missouri Quick Facts



- Missouri has more than **280,000** active child support cases.¹⁴
- More than half (**55%**) of open child support cases in the state go unpaid.¹⁵
- The Department of Social Services Family Support Division hosts five, three-year contracts of \$162,000 a year to provide responsible fatherhood programs. Good Dads is the Region 4 contract holder.

“For some, a dad is only a memory, but his influence persists—driving us to become who we are, whether by following his example or forging our own path.”

— Joshua G. Wemple, Good Dads Board President

Where is Good Dads?

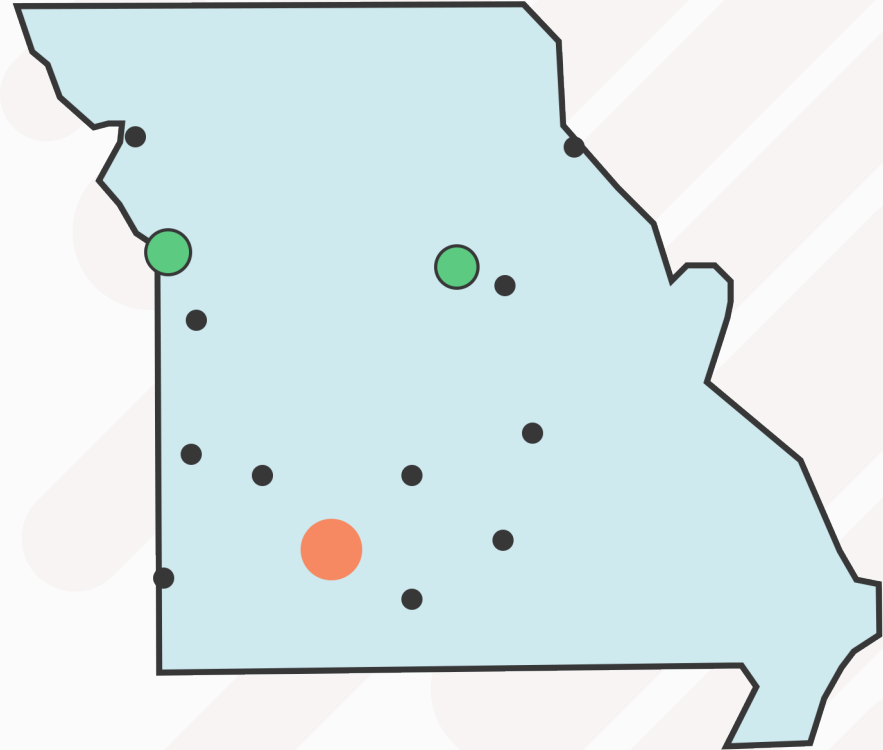
Headquarters
in Springfield

Regional Offices
in Kansas City and Columbia

Community Chapters

Ava	Lebanon
Cass County	Mark Twain Area
Cedar County	Nevada
Columbia	Rolla
Fulton	St. Joseph
Joplin	Texas County

More communities are joining the network soon!



"Dads are protectors and propellers. They instill confidence in their children to explore while sustaining a sense of security and belonging."

— D'Markus Thomas-Brown, Good Dads Regional Director - Columbia

When dads are involved in their children's lives...
students perform better in school.

ABSENT

*One study comparing father-adolescent relationships found that teenagers with absent fathers had lower academic performance and were at a higher risk of school and course failure. Adolescents who had never met their biological fathers were at the highest risk of all. Conversely, students living with biological fathers and mothers have higher grade-point averages and consistently outperform their peers in school.*¹⁶

PRESENT

Language Skills

Fathers tend to ask open-ended questions and engage in more conversationally challenging dialog with their children, expanding their language skills and aiding in linguistic development.¹⁷

When dads read to their children and engage in educational play, children's cognitive development benefits, including improved vocabulary and understanding the meanings of words.¹⁸

School Outcomes

When fathers are involved in their children's educations, students learn more, do better in school and exhibit healthier behavior, said the U.S. Departments of Education and Health & Human Services in a joint report.¹⁹

"A dad isn't someone who is perfect but someone who strives each day to create a better world for those he loves."

— Austen Korell, Good Dads Administrative Assistant

When dads are involved in their children's lives...
mental health and relationships flourish.

ABSENT

One study found a correlation between parents' marital problems and children's behavioral problems.²⁰

Father absence is generational. Men who grew up with absent fathers were more likely to become absent fathers. Likewise, women with absent fathers are more likely to have children with absent fathers.²¹

PRESENT

Parents Working Together

Parent couples say that positive communication, high-quality support systems and especially father involvement contribute to higher relationship/marital satisfaction.^{22, 23}

The Power of Play

Fathers' playful interactions with their children can translate to positive social, emotional and cognitive outcomes for youngsters.²⁴

More Optimism & Less Stress for Teens

Adolescents who have warm relationships with their fathers are more optimistic and have higher-quality relationships with others. They are less stressed and have fewer depressive symptoms.²⁵

"One of the greatest gifts our dad gave us was seeing how much he loved our mother. It taught my brothers to seek out someone they could love for life, and it showed me to look for someone who would look at me the way he looked at her."

— Lisa Strader, Good Dads Director of Programs for At-Risk Fathers

When dads are involved in their children's lives...
neighborhoods are safer.

ABSENT

Adult male scarcity in a community is a predictor for high rates of youth assault.²⁶

A 1% increase in the proportion of single-parent families in a neighborhood was associated with a 3% increase in an adolescent's level of violence.²⁶

PRESENT

Raising Responsible Citizens

When dads are positively involved with their children early on, children have fewer behavior problems in middle childhood and adolescence.²⁷

Crime, Violence and Drug Use

Responsible, engaged fathers and their children are less likely to abuse drugs and, in general, less likely to be involved in crime.²⁸

Teen boys who live with their fathers are less likely to carry guns and deal drugs.²⁹

Formerly incarcerated dads who participate in responsible fatherhood programs are less likely to recidivate.³⁰

"A dad is a man who teaches his children right from wrong, isn't afraid to make mistakes, is ready to forgive and loves them forever ... and a day."

— Rhonda Andersen, Good Dads Director of Education & Training

When dads are involved in their children's lives...
the economy is more robust.

ABSENT

One study found nearly \$6 billion a year is lost in decreased productivity stemming from relationship and marriage problems.³¹

Children in homes without their fathers make up half of all SNAP (formerly food stamps) recipients.³²

PRESENT

Job Satisfaction & Performance

Men who spend more time with their children are more likely to be satisfied at work and less likely to look for another job. These fathers feel more enriched both on the job and at home.³³

Community Ripple-Effects

When we invest in fathers, they earn more, pay more in taxes and are more involved in the community. They are less likely to go to jail. Their children see increased lifetime earnings, too.³⁴

Generational Impact

Children raised with fathers in their lives are less likely to experience poverty.³⁵ One study claimed children born poor and raised by both parents had an 80% chance of moving to the middle class or above.³⁶

"A dad is someone who is there for you whether you're right or wrong."

— David Schoolfield, New Pathways for Good Dads Facilitator



Good Dads Strong Schools

makes it fun and easy for dads to be more engaged with their children in an elementary setting.

By expressly targeting fathers and father-figures, we send the clear message that father involvement is vital to a child's education.



The monthly program provides an opportunity for fathers and father-figures to make meaningful connections with their kids and other dads in a low-risk, casual atmosphere. Each activity is focused on an important character-related skill, such as:

- **Cooperation**
- **Gratitude**
- **Listening**
- **Perseverance**
- **Kindness**
- **Winning & Losing**
- **And much more!**

Developed locally by educators, each lesson includes a Captain's Page, an Activity Page and a Parent Take-Home Page.

"A dad should be involved in every aspect of his child's life, especially their education. Nothing helped me more as a child than my dad reading to me."

— Justin Moody, Good Dads Case Manager Assistant



We believe fathers and father-figures are the critical ingredient for better grades, attendance and behavior regardless of a student's gender, ethnicity, age in the school year or household income.



"A dad is their child's model, coach, cheerleader and companion – 24/7/365."

— Jim Millsap, Good Dads Strong Schools Coordinator

When We Choose Our Path, We Choose Our Destination

New Pathways for Good Dads

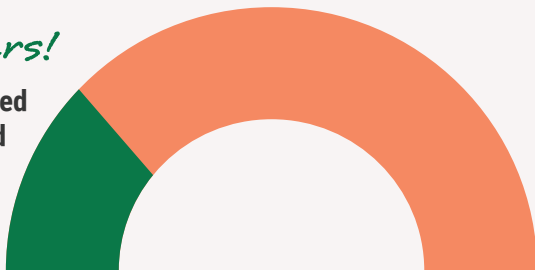
The program inspires, resources and encourages dads to be more actively engaged in the lives of their children. It is a guide for responsible fatherhood and a network

of companions to help dads reach their goals. It is designed to be especially useful for at-risk dads—fathers who face persistent poverty, child support

issues and have a history of incarceration and/or addiction. Over the last 10 years, the program served well over a thousand fathers.

Money Matters!

Program participants contributed more than **\$3.5 million** to their child support cases from 2018–2023, a more than 300% return on the state's **\$1,087,000** investment.



"A dad is a catalyst for growth in his children."

— Mike Weist, New Pathways for Good Dads Facilitator

Program Benefits

- Fatherhood skills
- Stress & anger management
- Job assessment & career resources
- Family budgeting
- Healthy relationship skills
- Co-parenting with confidence
- Advice for dads with past legal issues
- Child support training
- Father-to-father-mentoring
- Good Dads rewards & investments

A Success Story from a Dad in Recovery *Michael Fisher*



Michael and his wife, Mindy, have their three kids full-time at their house in the Joplin area, but it wasn't always this way. It wasn't until after drug treatment, a nine-month separation, visitations and a lot of work that the family finally reunited.

"Things are different after going through the recovery process," he told Good Dads. Michael celebrated one year of sobriety in August 2024. His kids have told him how proud they are of him.

He attributes much of his new parenting outlook to the fatherhood and healthy relationships skills courses he took as a participant in the New Pathways for Good Dads program. His classes gave him new tools and strategies, and he said he's learned so much about being a good parent and a good husband. Congratulations, Michael!

Dads in the NPGD Program ...



Pay more, and more consistently, to child support



Are more likely to be positively involved in their children's lives



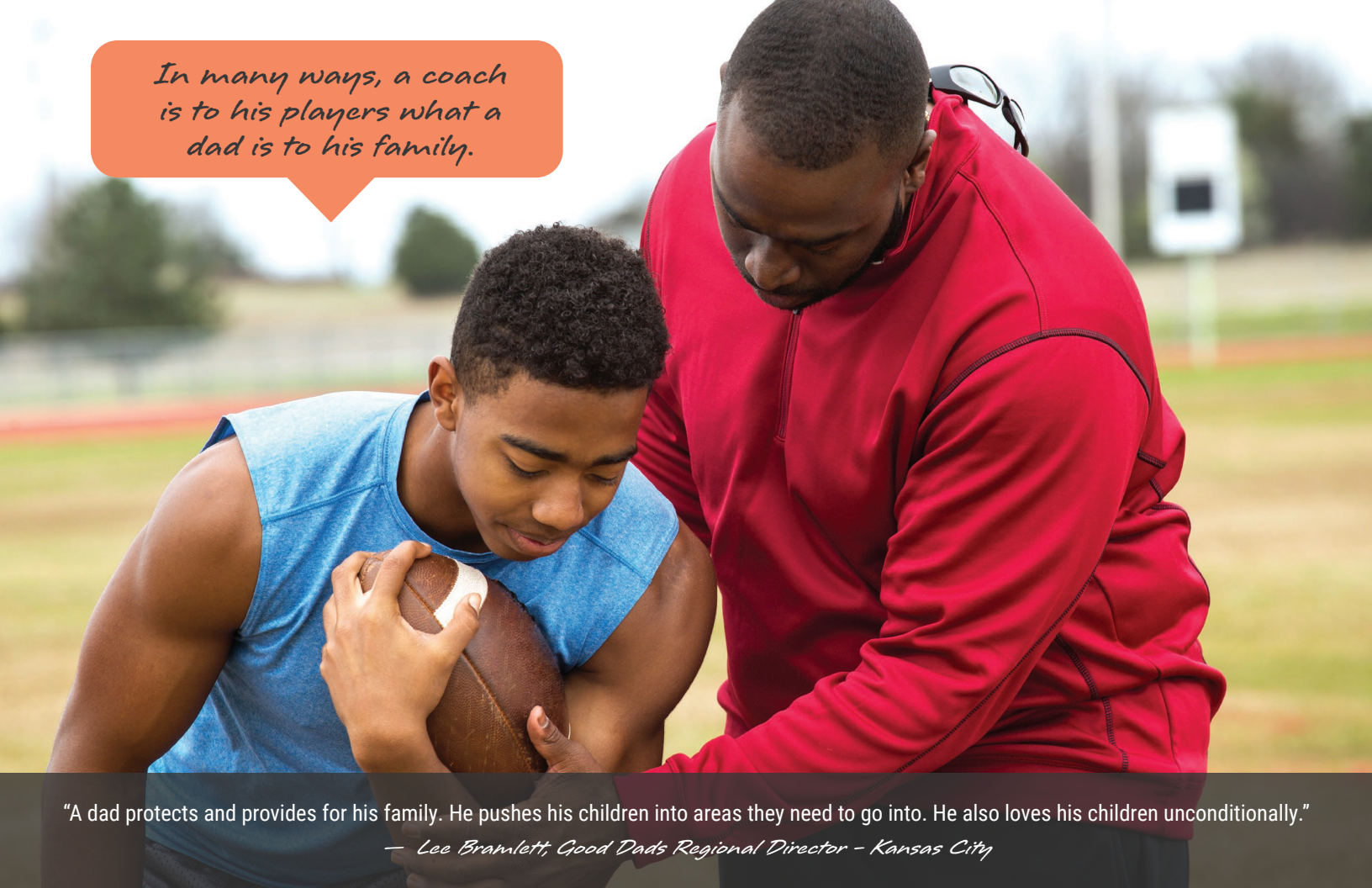
Learn conflict resolution and other healthy relationship skills



Have an 80% participation rate for both classes

"Dads give you such a sense of safety. I always knew the safest place in the world was next to my dad."

— Lisa Strader, Good Dads Director of Programs for At-Risk Fathers



*In many ways, a coach
is to his players what a
dad is to his family.*

"A dad protects and provides for his family. He pushes his children into areas they need to go into. He also loves his children unconditionally."

— Lee Bramlett, Good Dads Regional Director - Kansas City

Playbook for Success

In this course, participants experience the perfect blend of impactful activities and facilitator-led discussion. They use multimedia expert testimonials from professional coaches chiefly relevant to twenty-first century fathers to cover big-picture topics like healthy masculinity, discipline, conflict resolution, playing to one's strengths and managing emotions.

FUNDAMENTALS FOR GOOD DADS

This eight-part course is designed to inspire positive involvement in any dad. The essential Good Dads playbook is the perfect way for fathers (including step-dads, grandfathers and father-figures) to become more engaged with their children and is particularly effective as a workplace benefit.



The course paves the way to forging connections by using familiar language and relatable examples common to any sports lover. It leverages coaching metaphors to illustrate that the winning habits successful coaches employ are many of the same strategies that good dads use to raise and lead healthy, happy families.

"Father-figures can be people who care for or look after someone as a father might – a biological connection is not always present."

— Denise Baumann, Good Dads Director of Operations

*When dads are inspired, resourced
and encouraged to be engaged
in the lives of their children...*

**SCHOOLS ARE
STRONGER**



**NEIGHBORHOODS
ARE SAFER**



**RELATIONSHIPS
FLOURISH**



**THE ECONOMY
IS MORE ROBUST**



"Dads are masters of timing—they will make you laugh, cry or roll your eyes just when you need it most."

— Diana Dudenhoeffer, Good Dads Director of Communications

Good Dads Great Communities

The newest program from Good Dads is a six-part video and discussion-based course designed to help organizations and communities address the needs of fathers.

The practical, time-tested program is a one-of-a-kind guide for building a robust, father-focused initiative and starting a Good Dads Community Chapter.

An *Intersectional* Effort



- Education
- Social Services
- Business Leaders
- Faith Community
- Local Government
- Justice

We know community programs are only successful when many disciplines, expertises and experiences can come together for a common goal. Our **Six Sectors** model ensures you won't need to champion fatherhood alone.

In Each Module:

Assessing
Fatherhood
Focus in your
Community or
Organization

Identity &
Values: Who
We Are, What
We Believe and
What We Do

Launching a
Good Dads
Initiative:
Where you
Begin Matters

Good Dads
Strong Schools

Reaching
At-Risk Fathers

Funding your
Good Dads
Vision



"A dad is someone who believes in you enough to let you fall, and then offer you a hand to get back up again."

— Dr. Jennifer L. Baker, Good Dads Founder & Director

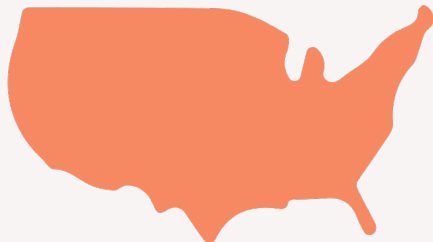
Looking to the *Future*

Good Dads is always growing because we know there will always be more communities who see the need to support engaged fatherhood. While we can't be certain what the future holds, our team is redoubling focus on our three most salient goals.



MORE LOCAL CHAPTERS

Even after establishing more than a dozen Missouri chapters, it's clear to us that many more communities in the Show-Me State will benefit from father-focused initiatives.



REACH MORE STATES

You don't need to live in Missouri to benefit from our programs and services! By broadening our horizons, we hope to serve communities beyond state borders.



ENTER MORE SCHOOLS

Good Dads Strong Schools is the easiest and most effective way to strengthen community ties, which is why we're excited for even more schools to adopt the program.

GET INVOLVED WITH GOOD DADS



Donate

If you believe that engaged fathers are critical to their kids' wellbeing, now is the perfect time to make a gift to Good Dads.



Business Sponsorships

We rely on the generous support of our business partners to help us host events, start new classes, pay our staff and more.



Volunteer

Find opportunities that fit a variety of skills and ambitions as we strive to serve all kinds of dads in Missouri and beyond.



Facilitate

Support our classes by mentoring program participants and leading a New Pathways for Good Dads class.



Check out our Merch

By rocking our merch, you're spreading awareness of the work we do while supporting real change in the lives of fathers.



Spread the Word

We want to keep growing! Share with others and help us keep building meaningful connections with dads and communities.



Helping Kids and Communities
One Dad at a Time

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References

Scan the QR code to find research
and additional reading.

