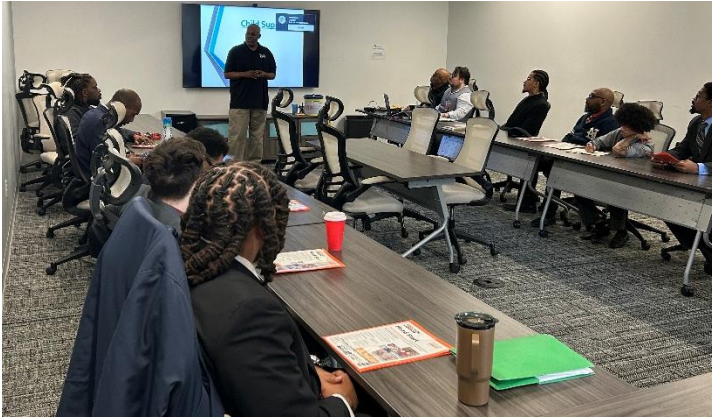


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FFSC: Over \$5.9 Million in Child Support Collected, Empowering St. Louis Fathers This Child Support Awareness Month



ST. LOUIS, MO – July 31, 2025 – August is **Child Support Awareness Month**, a critical time to highlight the profound impact of involved fathers on children's lives. **Fathers & Families Support Center (FFSC)** is proud to lead this observance, having helped the State of Missouri **collect over \$5.9 million in child support from its program participants since 2019**, helping thousands of families, an impact CEO Cheri Tillis proudly acknowledges.

"Every child deserves the chance to reach their full potential," asserts Cheri Tillis, CEO of Fathers & Families Support Center. "And consistent child support isn't just a helping hand; it's a fundamental building block for that future. Our [Employment Development & Mentoring Program \(EDMP\)](#) is designed precisely for parents who've faced employment challenges, guiding them toward successful, full-time careers that empower them to consistently support their children and truly invest in their futures."

Furthermore, in 2024 alone, **298 EDMP participants agency-wide obtained or maintained employment, resulting in \$10.7 million reinvested back into the local economy.**

Take Desmond Sutton, a proud FFSC graduate and father of three. He found more than just a job through the program; he found a path to a sustainable career. "FFSC prepared and guided me to jobs that I could make a long-time career with and better support my three boys," Desmond shares.

Research consistently proves the positive effects of active father involvement: **children are twice as likely to attend college, 80% less likely to spend time in jail, 75% less likely to experience teen pregnancy, and more likely to achieve academic success.** Despite this, nearly 1 in 4 U.S.

children live without a father figure in the home. **While national child support programs provide vital financial stability, FFSC emphasizes that true child well-being requires consistent, positive parental involvement beyond just payments.**

FFSC's acclaimed **EDMP** is at the forefront of this mission. It goes beyond job readiness, focusing on comprehensive development:

- **Employment & Financial Stability:** Connecting participants to in-demand jobs (2024 graduates averaged **\$18.16/hour**), providing job skills, resume development, mock interviews, career fairs, and legal assistance for child support modifications.
- **Parenting & Co-Parenting Education:** Teaching effective communication and strategies for healthy co-parenting relationships (in 2024, **72% of participants reported improved co-parenting skills**).
- **Personal Development:** Addressing past trauma and building resilience for responsible parenting.

“Child support is more than just a financial transaction; it’s a commitment to a child’s future,” adds Lisl Williams, FFSC's Director of Legal Services. “Our EDMP helps parents understand their obligations and the profound impact their contributions have.”

FFSC alumnus and Community Outreach Coordinator, Reginald Slaughter, powerfully illustrates the program’s impact: “Fathers want to be there for their kids. Once they’re employed and understand how co-parenting works, they are more than willing to pay their share. FFSC gave me the tools and confidence to be that responsible father.”

This Child Support Awareness Month, FFSC calls on communities to recognize and support programs that empower involved fathers, investing in a brighter future for countless children.

About Fathers & Families Support Center:

Celebrating 27 years, Fathers & Families Support Center is a leading, nationally recognized non-profit empowering men and women toward responsible parenthood and strengthening families in the St. Louis bi-state region. Through its comprehensive [Employment Development & Mentoring Program \(EDMP\)](#), FFSC provides job skills, career resources, and placement assistance.

To date, FFSC has supported nearly 22,000 men, impacting over 53,000 children who now benefit from more responsible, involved parents.

Media Contact: Sid Officer Development & Communications Manager sofficer@fatherssupport.org
314-351-2818 (text/call)