

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Beyond the Blue Ribbon: St. Louis Fathers Tackle Child Abuse Prevention Through the Power of Presence and Education



**ST. LOUIS, MO** — This National Child Abuse Prevention Month, [Fathers & Families Support Center](http://FathersSupportCenter.org) (FFSC) is highlighting a critical but often overlooked tool in the protection of children: the educated and emotionally present father. Through its rigorous 6-week [Family Formation](#) program, FFSC is transforming the landscape of family safety in St. Louis by equipping men with the tools to break cycles of trauma, addiction, and reactive parenting.

Research shows that children with involved, nurturing fathers are significantly less likely to experience neglect or abuse. FFSC's comprehensive curriculum includes dedicated modules on child abuse awareness and prevention, helping fathers move from survival-based parenting to stable, protective leadership.

“Prevention is more than just a campaign; it’s a commitment to changing the blueprint of manhood,” says CEO, Cheri Tillis. “By providing fathers with therapy, co-parenting skills, and a safe space to process their own histories, we ensure that the next generation is raised in homes defined by patience rather than anger.”

The stories of eight FFSC graduates—the “Blueprints of Manhood”—serve as a testament to how this education creates a shield for the children of St. Louis:

- **Breaking the Cycle of Rage:** [Anthony Palmer](#), who grew up without a roadmap, used FFSC to pivot from a history of anger to listening-based parenting. “*I used to only speak*

*through arguments,” Anthony reflects. “FFSC taught me how to communicate without the anger. It’s allowed us to be a family again.”*

- **Replacing Addiction with Presence:** [David Hrabovsky](#) outran a family legacy of substance misuse to secure full custody of his son. *“I didn’t want my son to grow up remembering me not sober,” David says. “FFSC gave me the emotional tools to replace a legacy of addiction with a future of patience.”*
- **The Power of Accountability:** [Devion Hurse](#) and [Antonio Davis](#) both transitioned from the "street provider" mindset to stable, nurturing fatherhood. *“I learned that you have to approach any situation with an open mind,” says Devion. Antonio adds, “I realized it wasn’t just about me. I learned to choose conversation over walking away.”*
- **Safe and Collaborative Households:** [Malcome Henderson](#) and [Todd Williams](#) successfully navigated high-conflict custody battles to establish healthy co-parenting environments. *“Child support is only a portion of the responsibilities of a father,” says Malcome. “It’s about being there daily.” Todd, who once felt “defeated,” now uses creative play to bond with his twins: “I’m fully present now—doing homework and making up songs to make learning fun.”*
- **A Legacy of Stability:** For Navy Veteran [Gibran Irving](#) and "Gold Standard" graduate [Larry Williams](#), the program provided the structure needed to lead with kindness. *“Seeing my dad find his voice taught me that the strongest thing a man can do is ask for help,”* reflects Gibran’s son, Kahlil. Larry continues to mentor others, stating, *“I moved from a ‘street provider’ mindset to a stable father mindset.”*

In 2025, **81% of FFSC participants** reported an immediate increase in parenting skills, directly contributing to the agency's goal of breaking the cycle of child neglect and abuse.

Fathers & Families Support Center invites the community to join the conversation this April as we recognize that the best way to protect a child is to empower a father.

## **About Fathers & Families Support Center (FFSC)**

FFSC is a nationally recognized agency dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty and child neglect by preparing fathers and mothers to be financially and emotionally present. **Since its first class in 1998, FFSC has supported 23,000 men on their journey to responsible fatherhood, benefitting over 57,000 children** with parents who can support them emotionally, developmentally and materially. As a United Way Member Agency, FFSC provides "full

immersion" parenting education, legal services, and employment mentoring to foster healthy, cohesive families.

- [Agency Programs and Outcomes](#)
- [2025 Annual Report](#)
- [Watch what we do!](#)
- [Antwane White video](#)

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