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## Supporting Fathers Who Are Supporting Their Families

*One father is more than a hundred schoolmasters. – George Herbert*

I consider myself fortunate to know firsthand the awesome responsibility of being a father. However, according to recent figures from the U.S. Census Bureau, there are more than 13 million children under 18 years old that live with only their mother. Most of those children fall between the ages of 12 and 17 years old – a key demographic that we know can be positively impacted by a father's influence.

One of the best ways we can help these fathers and their children within the St. Louis area is through the nationally recognized Fathers' Support Center (FSC) at 4411 N. Newstead Avenue.

The FSC closes the gap between fathers who have had responsibility issues in the past and their new future of cohesive family relationships. They challenge men to turn their family lives around, no matter what type of family situation they may have had.

This is done through several programs, like the Family Formation Program, which teaches personal development skills for effective parenting, spiritual and emotional development, and substance abuse prevention. Fathers can also participate in the Employment Development and Mentoring Program, which teaches job readiness and retention skills so financial stability can be achieved for their children. There are also programs that teach youth leadership so that children can make responsible behavior choices. A father's mental and physical health is benefited through support groups and wellness assistance. There is even a legal clinic to ensure that men have access to the resources pertaining to child custody, legal visitation, and child support payments.

Since the Father's Support Center has been in operation, they have helped more than 3,297 fathers get re-involved in the lives of more than 7,000 kids. They are in the planning stages to present the annual conference, annual dinner and the 14th annual Fatherhood Walk and Rally, which is designed to bring health services to fathers and strengthen fatherhood awareness.

To find out more or to volunteer with the FSC, find them on the web at [www.fatherssupportcenter.org](http://www.fatherssupportcenter.org) or call them at (314) 333-4170.

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