

The STATE *of* FATHERHOOD

2019

IMPACT REPORT



SOUTH CAROLINA CENTER
FOR FATHERS AND FAMILIES

A Ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System



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A Home for Fatherhood

Building a statewide fatherhood initiative is akin to building a house, creating a home for our mission to better the lives of fathers and families. In 1998, The Sisters of Charity Foundation drafted the blueprint and provided firm ground on which to build. Our six regional fatherhood organizations, responsible for direct services, are our pillars.

Our long-standing partner, SC Department of Social Services, fortifies our walls and new partners enhance this structure with windows providing unique perspectives and doorways opening to new opportunities. The policies and practices of our government can be likened to a roof, defining and protecting the things we deem most valuable in our society.

In 2019, we reinforced our framework by leveraging our expertise locally and across the nation. We hosted community breakfasts to acknowledge the support of city, county and state elected leaders. We convened at the State House with government agencies who share a stake in strengthening services for fathers. A grant from the Fatherhood Research and Practice Network allowed us to explore mutually beneficial partnerships with 15 new organizations and we represented the voice of fatherhood at the Domestic Policy Council round table meeting at the White House.

Our statewide fatherhood initiative is expanding well beyond its original blueprint. 2020 begins the decade for strengthening services, linking resources, and crafting father-friendly policies to help families and communities prosper. The Center is poised to help build bridges between agencies, facilitate conversations, and bring the importance of fathers to the forefront.

We are deeply grateful for our tried and true partners and excited to embrace new ones. Together we can make South Carolina a welcoming home where families can dwell, thrive and belong.

Pat Littlejohn, *President*
SC Center for Fathers and Families

Tim Arnold, *President & CEO*
Colonial Life

In 2020, we are proud to celebrate the major milestone of having served 20,000 fathers since our beginning in 2002.

20,000
FATHERS
IN 2020

Amplifying the Voice of Fatherhood

As the state's longest running provider of father-focused services, we have created a national model for establishing a statewide network of fatherhood programs utilizing a common curriculum. We stay abreast of the latest research and advocate for policies which advance the fatherhood initiative. Our expertise positions us as the conveners of conversations that amplify the voices of fathers in local communities and across the country.



Governor's Meeting on Fatherhood Services

Governor Henry McMaster's office introduced the Center to cabinet agency leaders to spark discussion on opportunities to collaborate, pool resources and to build upon Department of Social Services partnerships to more effectively serve and support the needs of fathers in our state. The Center organized a schedule of follow-up meetings to expand this vision of collaboration with agencies including SC Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Probation Pardon and Parole, Department of Employment and Workforce, the Department of Health and Human Services, and SC Department of Alcohol and Other Abuse Services.

Better Together Network Initiative

The Center convened representatives from more than a dozen state agencies and public service institutions for a series of meetings to investigate opportunities for developing collaborative policies, programs and practices that promote father inclusion. Under the banner "Better Together," these meetings were funded by a grant from the Fatherhood Research and Practice Network.

Participating partners include Fact Forward First Steps, Foster Care Review Board, Department of Corrections, Department of Education, Department of Employment and Workforce, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Mental Health, School Improvement Council, State Housing Authority, State Library, Department of Social Services, Office of Rural Health, Commission on Minority Affairs, Children's Trust of SC, Commission on Prosecution Coordination, Community Health Work Institute (USC), Department of Probation, Pardon and Parole Services, and the Statewide Fatherhood Initiative.

National Conference of State Legislators

The Center had the opportunity to participate in two National Conference of State Legislatures sponsored events. At the Annual Legislative Summit the Center presented a nonprofit's view of the benefits of a public private partnership with child support based upon its longstanding relationship with SC Child Support Services. Child Support Commissioner Scott Lekan led the panel. State Senators Shane Martin and Katrina Shealy and Representative Pat Henegan also attending the workshop echoed the importance of the partnership. At a two-day NCSL forum, Pathways to Economic Success for Youth and Young Parents, the Center presented strategies for supporting young parents and addressing the disconnection of youth. The Center presented data gleaned from the Young Fathers program since 2014. This program is made possible through a partnership with Fact Forward, Children's Trust and the Office of Adolescent Health's Pregnancy Assistance Fund.

Kentucky Fatherhood Summit

The Center and the Statewide Fatherhood Initiative was prominently featured during the 2019 Kentucky Fatherhood Summit. The summit, sponsored by the Kentucky Cabinet of Health and Family Services, presented a collaborative opportunity for social service professionals, legislators, law enforcement agencies, academicians, grassroots non-profits, and faith-based organizations to focus on pathways to influencing the future of fatherhood in Kentucky. The vital role fathers play in the healthy development of children and the prevention of childhood poverty were key topics.

Following the summit, the Center hosted a two-day visit with leadership of Kentucky's emerging initiatives to provide consultation on developing statewide partnerships and infrastructure.

Impacts & Outcomes 2019



SOUTH CAROLINA CENTER
FOR FATHERS AND FAMILIES



TOTAL PARTICIPANTS
3155

CHILD SUPPORT
Paid by Participants
\$1,544,005

CHILDREN POSITIVELY IMPACTED
by Fatherhood Programs
6930

PARTICIPATED IN
Parent/Child Activity
1453

HEALTH SERVICES
Provided by Nurse Practitioners
1999

JOB READINESS
BOOT CAMP

SAVED IN TAXPAYER DOLLARS
Through Jobs Not Jail
\$7,257,600

Unemployed
Who Enrolled:
575

Unemployed
Who Enrolled
and Completed:
522

INCREASED TIME/
IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP
With Child
1256

Unemployed
Who Enrolled,
Completed, and
Gained Employment:
356

A Father's Story

Devin Bartos

Midlands Fatherhood
Coalition

*Devin with
his son Bryson*

"The positive environment at MFC, the positive mentoring... these people have become like family to me and my son."

Devin Bartos was 22 years old when his son Bryson was born six years ago. Although he was not informed about the birth of his son by the child's mother at the time, he says it was probably just as well.

"When Bryson was born, I was not only not ready to be a father, I was unfit to be a father," Bartos said, describing a period in his life of excessive alcohol abuse, drug usage and stints in prison stemming from his addictions. Devin found his life was on a repeating cycle of working construction jobs, excessive drinking and going to jail. He knew he had to get clean and stay sober.

Devin entered a rehab program. Part of the treatment plan included presentations from local service and support groups. One of those presentations was made by Midlands Fatherhood Coalition (MFC) about the resources they provide for fathers and their children. Devin made a mental note, but continued to focus on his sobriety and getting his life together.

"My freedom was the most important thing to me at that time. I did not ever want to be locked up again," Devin said.

That want for freedom helped Devin successfully complete his rehab program. After maintaining sobriety for six months, he was able to get his driver's license reinstated and he began working again. It was also about this time that friends told Devin his child was living in a volatile situation with his mother and her boyfriend.

Devin's wife Kayla, married since 2015, and his mother supported the decision to pursue custody of Bryson. Having only recently gotten his own footing, Devin had no idea how to proceed and much less how to be a father to a son he'd never known. Then, he remembered the

services of Midlands Fatherhood Coalition. He called them and enrolled in the program that same day.

Over the next six months, Devin attended every weekly session and completed all core programs including Parenting and Co-parenting, Healthy Relationships, Economic Stability, Employment Bootcamp and Men's Health. The staff provided Devin with resources and guidance on the proper way to go about obtaining custody of Bryson. Talking with other fathers during weekly group sessions helped Devin see he was not alone, that obstacles could be overcome and that being a responsible father was not easy, but essential to a child's well-being.

After more than a year of custody hearings and mediations, Devin and his son's mother reached an agreement to share joint custody. Last year, full custody was awarded to Devin and Kayla.

"My life has completely changed, mostly because of what I learned and the people I met in the fatherhood program," said Bartos. "The positive environment at MFC, the positive mentoring — these people have become like family to me and my son."

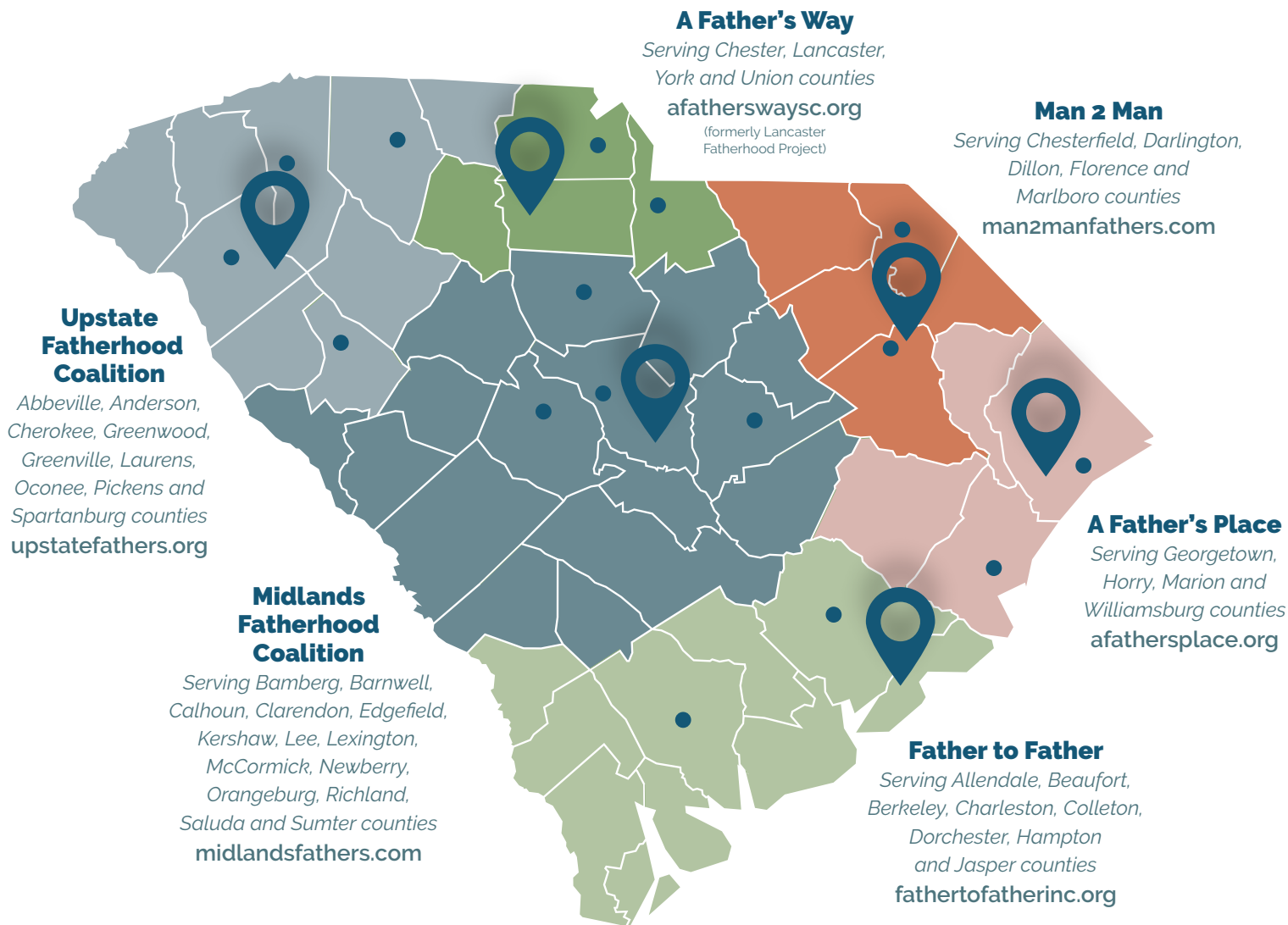
Devin has started his own construction business, True Touch, LLC, and strives to build what he calls a "normal life" for his family.

"I want to work and grow my business, work on being a happy and healthy family, eat dinner together, listen to each other and maybe even have some game nights together," said Bartos.

When asked what he liked most about his life now, he responded with no hesitation, "My son hugging me and telling me that he loves me. That's the thing. It's the best."



Serving Fathers and Families Across South Carolina



Visit our website to find the fatherhood program nearest you.

scfathersandfamilies.com

Fathers Matter

Our fatherhood programs help men become the responsible, engaged fathers they want to be for their children. With your continued support, we can make a difference in the lives of fathers and families in our state.

Donate online today.



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