

What do dads have to say?

“The Fatherhood Group is giving men a chance to **understand who we are** in our homes, communities, and within society. The group is allowing men to have a place where they can come and take off the superman cape, not feel ashamed or unworthy [...]

Simply put, the group renews life for men.”

“[The group facilitators] have given us **the gift of hope** and a belief that someone cares about our success.”

“The group helped me to do things the right way and helped me take one step at a time to getting my kids back. Now, **I see life and the way I do things more clearly** and react to problems differently.”



What can I do next?

The Fatherhood Group meets weekly. To learn more about the group, contact:

- **Rashaun Smith**
rsmith@albemarle.org
434.972.4010 x3239
- **Jay Chowdhry**
jchowdhry@albemarle.org
434.305.8896 (call/text)

Contact Jay Chowdhry to learn more about fatherhood engagement at Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail.

Citations:
<https://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/father-engagement-and-father-involvement-toolkit>
<https://www.fatherhood.org/father-absence-statistic>
<https://www.fatherhood.gov/content/father-presence>
<https://www.kidsoutdoorzone.com/fatherless-statistics>



Fatherhood Engagement at ACDSS





What is an engaged father?

An engaged father is one who **feels responsible** for and **behaves responsibly** toward his child, is **emotionally engaged**, is **physically accessible**, provides **material support** to sustain his child's needs, is involved in **child care**, and exerts influence in **child-rearing decisions**.

(Pruett 2010)

At ACDSS, our goal is to give fathers tools, support, and resources to be engaged and active in their children's lives.

Why does an engaged father matter to a child?

Approximately 24 million children live apart from their fathers.

Children **without** an actively involved father are:

10x more likely to abuse chemical substances

20x more likely to have behavioral disorders

20x more likely to become incarcerated.

Children **with** an actively involved father are:

2x less likely to drop out of high school

4x less likely to grow up in poverty

7x less likely to have a teen pregnancy

They are also more likely to develop **healthy relationships** as adults, to have **greater self-acceptance**, and to **fare better economically**.



What is ACDSS doing differently?

Historically, public social services have a poor reputation for dissolving families and excluding fathers from their children's lives. This narrative presents a strong barrier for families to access the full range of benefits and services available to them through our programs.

ACDSS challenges this narrative through being a leader in our region for family engagement, particularly for incarcerated parents—many of whom are fathers.

At ACDSS, we offer the following programs and supports to fathers:

- Weekly group for fathers in the Charlottesville/Albemarle area
- Warm hand-off to benefits and community resources
- Supportive attendance at court hearings, school meetings, and other meetings
- Support for parents reintegrating into the community after incarceration