

## **Father to Father Georgetown and the SC Center for Fathers and Families Receive Federal Grant**



The South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families recently announced that it is a recipient of a Special Improvement Project grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Support Enforcement. The grant funds will be targeted to assist Father to Father Georgetown in implementing an alternative to incarceration for low-income fathers who are unemployed or underemployed and who owe child support. [Click here to read the rest of the article...](#)

“This project is the result of significant community collaboration to strengthen fathers so they can provide for their children,” comments Dwayne Edwards, executive director of Father to Father Georgetown. Under this project, eligible fathers may be court-ordered by a Family Court Judge to Father to Father Georgetown in lieu of incarceration for failure to pay child support. Fathers must obtain employment or enroll in job training, begin paying child support and participate weekly in the program for six months. As a result of the partnership between Waccamaw Workforce Investment Administrators, Georgetown One-Stop, Horry Georgetown Technical College and Father to Father Georgetown, fathers may receive welder certification training to develop a job skill that is needed in the area. Father to Father will also assist fathers in job readiness, financial management, managing child support and addressing barriers to employment. The program not only addresses the importance of a father providing financially for his children as a result of employment but also addresses all aspects of responsible fatherhood. Court-ordered fathers who fail to comply with the program requirements will be reported to Family Court and will be ruled back into court.

While incarceration is a necessary and workable approach for some delinquent child support payers, incarceration for others does not solve problems nor increases child support payments which is what the project aims to do. “Instead of spending tax dollars to incarcerate fathers, the project will help fathers get a specific job skill, secure livable wage employment, and provide for their family,” adds Edwards.

Father to Father Georgetown will work closely with the SC Center for Fathers and Families to evaluate the program and to help make the project one that can be replicated nationally.

Father to Father Georgetown, originally established in 1998 under the leadership of the United Way of Georgetown, aims to serve approximately 120 low-income fathers annually. Father to Father Georgetown is one of seven programs in 11 sites across the state and is part of a statewide fatherhood initiative supported and coordinated by the SC Center for Fathers and Families.

The cost of the project is \$294,319 and is funded in full by federal funding sources. Thirty percent (\$90,429) of project funding is from the Office of Child Support Enforcement at the US Department of Health and Human Services.