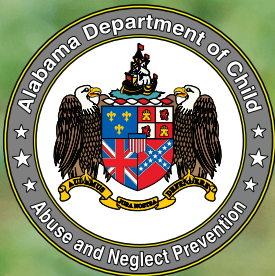


2022-2023

# Fatherhood Program Evaluation Report

*Alabama Department of Child Abuse  
and Neglect Prevention*



The Children's Trust Fund  
Sallye R. Longshore, M.S. ED.S., Director

# Strengthening Families Through Fatherhood Initiative

Programs utilized the evidence-based curriculum 24/7 DADS

“

I gained confidence and motivation.

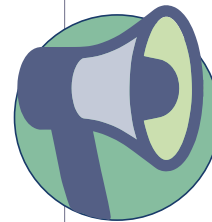
The confidence you get from going is life changing.

”



20

fatherhood programs for parents were provided across the state of Alabama



Over **8,800** individuals impacted by public awareness activities



Nearly **\$3 million** awarded through a competitive grant process to community-based agencies to support fatherhood programs



**The three most common barriers to finding employment are:**

1. transportation
2. criminal history/background
3. lack of education or experience

1033

participants enrolled in a new educational or skills training

414

participants who were referred by the court system



291

participants received a **vocational training certificate**

## Partnerships

Alabama Community College System

Alabama DHR Child Support Division

Alabama Bureau of Pardons and Paroles

Alabama Career Center System

Alabama Department of Mental Health

AlabamaWorks!

Auburn University College of Human Sciences

Additionally, volunteers in roles such as tutors, mentors, and counselors provide services to program participants.



392

participants received other **educational or skills certification**



40

participants **earned a GED**

109

participants were **incarcerated or in a prison re-entry program** at time of participation

64

participants acquired **employment** before completing the program

“

My son is reaping benefits from this program you know, not just me and I hope y'all keep it going because it's changing lives, changing families, it certainly has changed mine.

”



**The Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention (ADCANP), also referred to as the Children’s Trust Fund (CTF), and the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR), acknowledges the significant roles of mothers and fathers in childrearing.**

**The mission of ADCANP is to seek and secure resources to fund evidence-based community programs committed to the prevention of child maltreatment. They are an advocate for children and enhance the strengthening of families. The mission of DHR is to provide for the protection, well-being, and self-sufficiency of children and adults, as legislated by various state and federal codes. The mission and vision of both state agencies are aligned: to strengthen and enhance the lives of children and families across Alabama. ADCANP and DHR are at the forefront in both funding and the evaluation of fatherhood programs developed to strengthen families in the state.**

Twenty programs around the state funded through a partnership between DHR, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and ADCANP, provided support and services targeting nonresidential fathers that emphasized job skills training, employment, compliance with child support payment obligation, as well as skills for effective parenting and coparenting relationships. Fathers met with facilitators or case workers one-on-one and in groups with other fathers. Mothers were also welcomed to attend. Group meetings were educational sessions that included family activities that promote better father-child relationships.

Participants completed programs between October 2022 and September 2023 and responded to evaluation surveys that assessed information about the participants, their adverse and positive childhood experiences, their current functioning, and their experiences in the program. We provide here the results of the analyses of the data collected.

Central to the evaluation of program effects we provided on the survey a list of 29 possible perceived benefits that fatherhood program grantees target for impact. These potential benefits are grouped within the protective factors of the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factor Framework that suggests the benefits for children when parents have parent resilience, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, social and emotional competence of children, and social connections.

# Fatherhood Demographics

**Average Age:** 35

**Gender:**

Male: 59% (n=774) | Female: 41% (n=539)

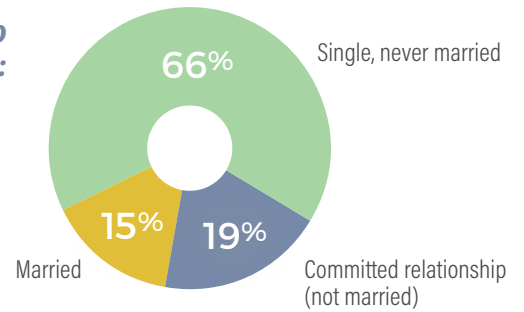
**Incarceration:**

14% of fathers in the programs are currently incarcerated

**Child Support Obligation for Fathers:**

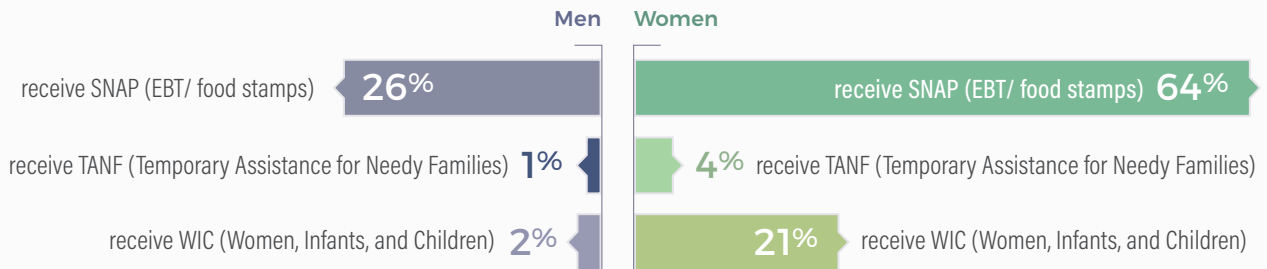
36% of fathers reported paying child support

**Relationship Status:**



Additionally: 24% have been divorced

**Public Assistance:**



**Race & Ethnicity:**

- 58% are African American/Black
- 36% are European American/White
- 2% are Bi-racial
- 1% are Native American
- 1% are Asian American
- 2% identify as some other race

3% identified as Hispanic/Latino

**Education Level:**

- 26% Did not finish High School
- 58% High School/GED
- 9% Trade/Technical
- 4% Associate's degree
- 2% Bachelor's degree
- 1% Master's degree/advanced Degrees

**Number of Children\*:**

- 12% have 0 Children
- 22% have 1 Child
- 22% have 2 Children
- 17% have 3 Children
- 10% have 4 Children
- 17% have 5 or more Children

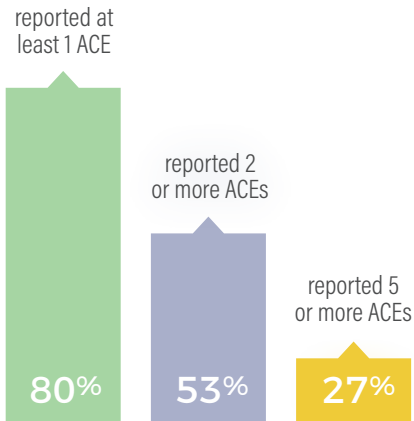
Of those who reported having children, 12% indicated having at least one child with special needs.

\* Includes biological, step, adopted, foster, and grandchildren - 16% reported having stepchildren - 9% reported having grandchildren - Less than 1% reported having foster children - 1% reported having adopted children

## ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur before the age of 18, and include events such as abuse, neglect, parental incarceration, and household challenges (CDC, 2022). These experiences can make it more challenging in adulthood to maintain mental and physical health, stable relationships, and economic self-sufficiency. A national survey suggests that 27% of children in Alabama experienced 2 or more ACEs; however, participants in CTF-funded fatherhood programs represent an even more vulnerable population, with 52% reporting 2 or more ACEs.

### ACEs Score Totals:



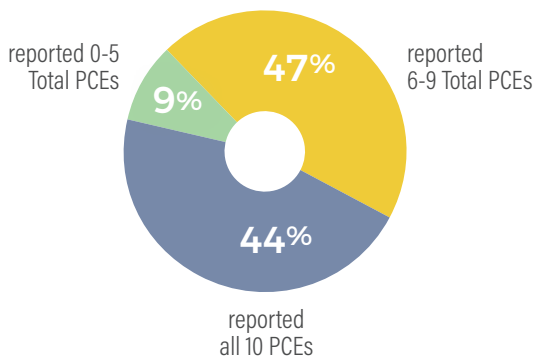
### Using the standard 10-item Adverse Childhood Experiences Scale, we found that:

- 64% experienced parental divorce
- 32% experienced verbal abuse
- 28% experienced emotional abuse
- 23% experienced physical abuse
- 16% experienced sexual abuse
- 16% experienced neglect
- 23% experienced witnessing family violence
- 32% experienced exposure to substance abuse
- 28% experienced family member with mental health challenge
- 27% experienced a family member being incarcerated

## PCEs (Positive Childhood Experiences)

While it is valuable to document the challenges that fatherhood program participants have experienced, it was recognized by the evaluation team that completing the Adverse Childhood Experiences Scale (ACEs) can be difficult for individuals and requires focus on past challenges, trauma, and deficits. Using a strengths-based approach, the evaluation team also expected that participants experienced important positive experiences in childhood as well. Participants responded to items on the Positive Childhood Experiences Scale (PCEs) and reported on childhood experiences that foster growth and well-being and serve as a protective factor in the prevention of ACEs for their own children (CDC, 2022).

### PCEs Score Totals:

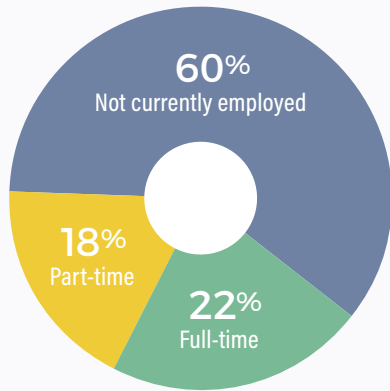


### Using the standard 10-item Positive Childhood Experiences Scale, we found that:

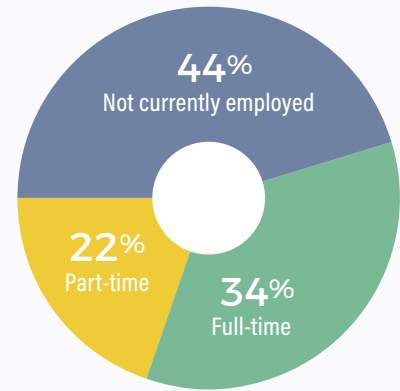
- 90% had at least one parent or caregiver with whom they felt safe
- 92% had at least one good friend
- 87% had beliefs that gave them comfort
- 76% liked school
- 89% had at least one teacher who cared about them
- 87% had good neighbors
- 90% had opportunities to have a good time
- 81% liked themselves or felt comfortable with themselves
- 81% had a predictable home routine, like regular meals and a regular bedtime
- 82% had another adult (not a parent or caregiver) who could provide them with support and advice

# Quantitative Results

**Pre-Program Job Status:**



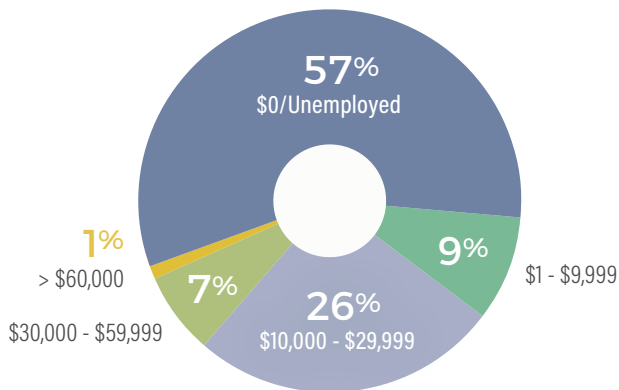
**Post-Program Job Status\*:**



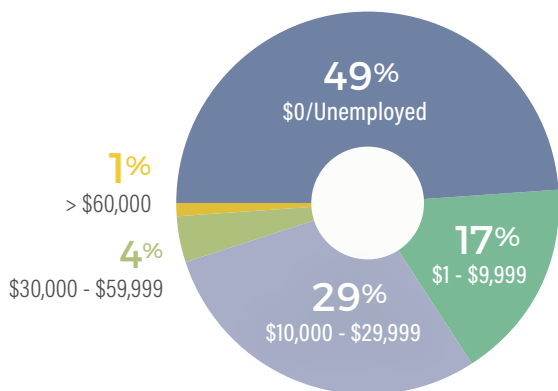
\* Job Status Improved Significantly from Pre-Program to Post-Program

**Pre-Program Annual Income:**

**Men**

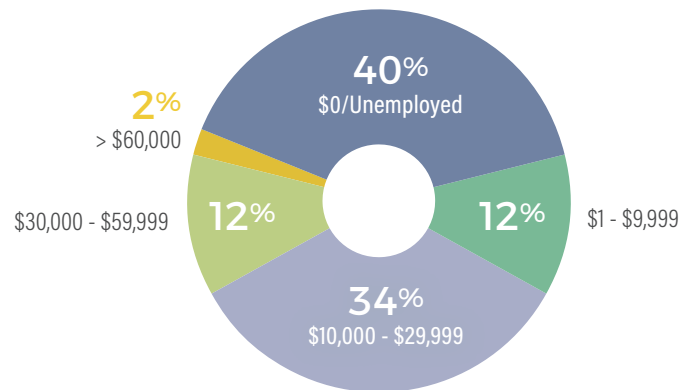


**Women**

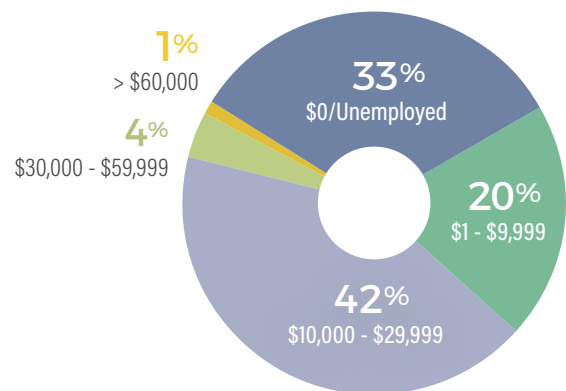


**Post-Program Annual Income\*\*:**

**Men**



**Women**



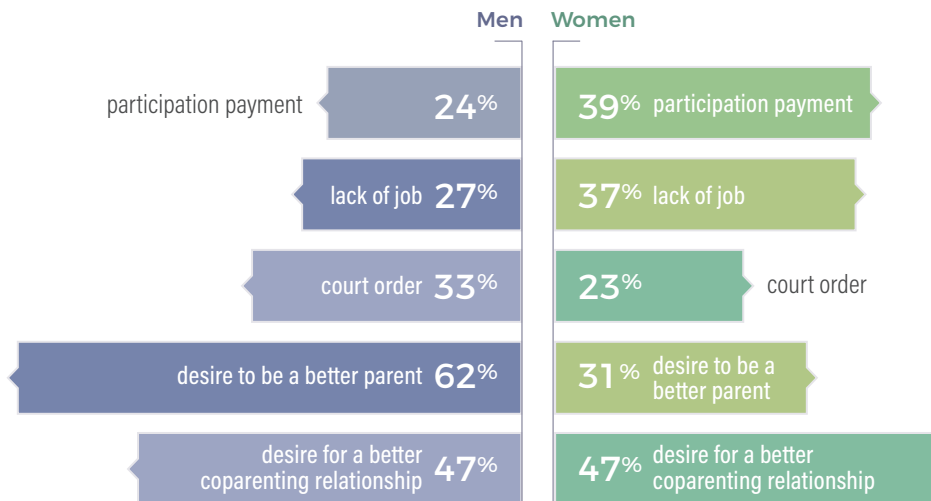
\*\*Income Increased Significantly from Pre-Program to Post-Program for the Average Participant



After program completion, participants were asked to select from a list of possible benefits received from the program.

Factors that Influenced  
**Participants' Decision to Participate in Program**

(respondents could pick more than one)

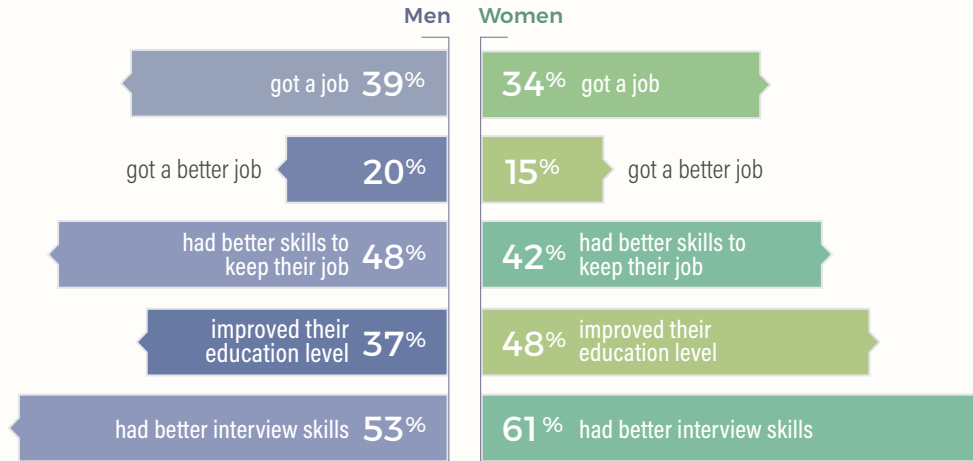




## Workforce Development Improvement

**80% Fathers & 80% Mothers**

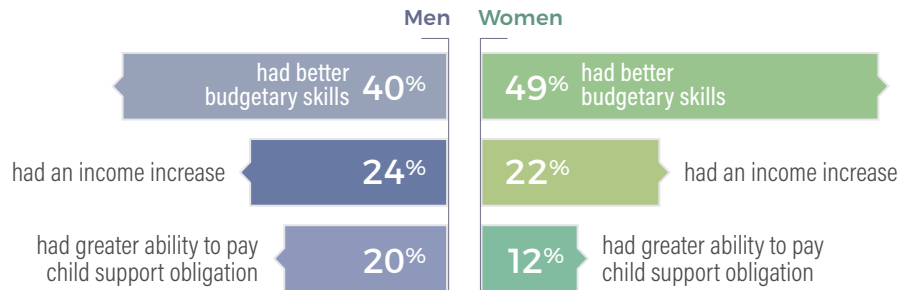
Experienced Workforce Development Improvement. Specifically:



## Financial Benefit

**53% Fathers & 57% Mothers**

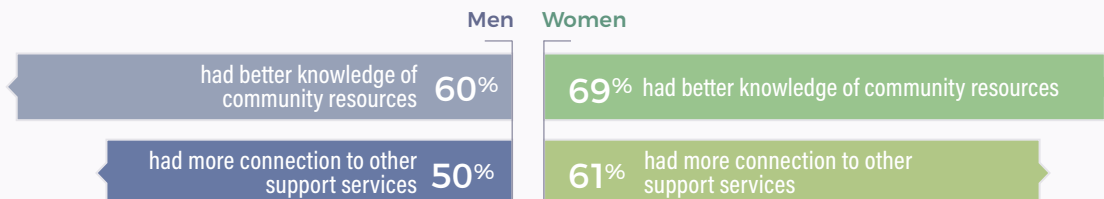
Experienced Financial Benefit. Specifically:



## Greater Access to Community Resources

**70% Fathers & 76% Mothers**

Experienced Greater Access to Community Resources. Specifically:



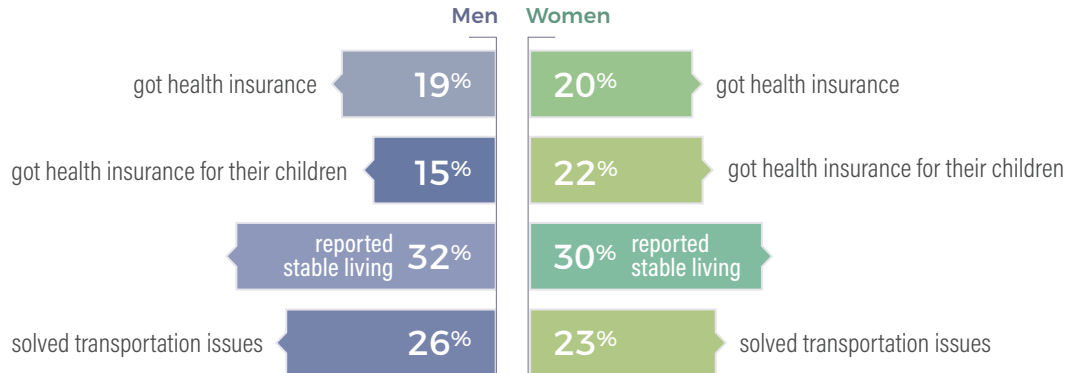




## Improved Basic Needs

**45% Fathers & 40% Mothers**

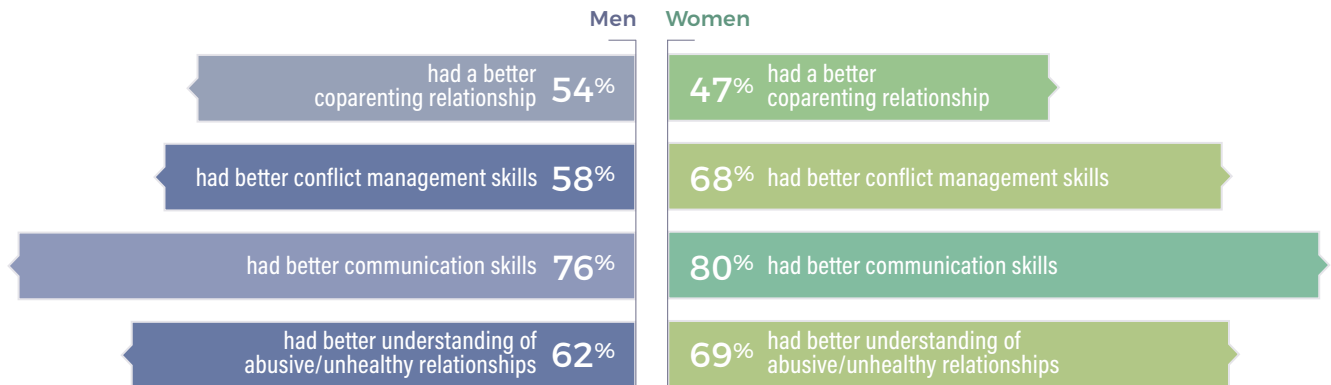
Experienced Improved Basic Needs. Specifically:



## Better Adult Relationship Skills

**92% Fathers & 92% Mothers**

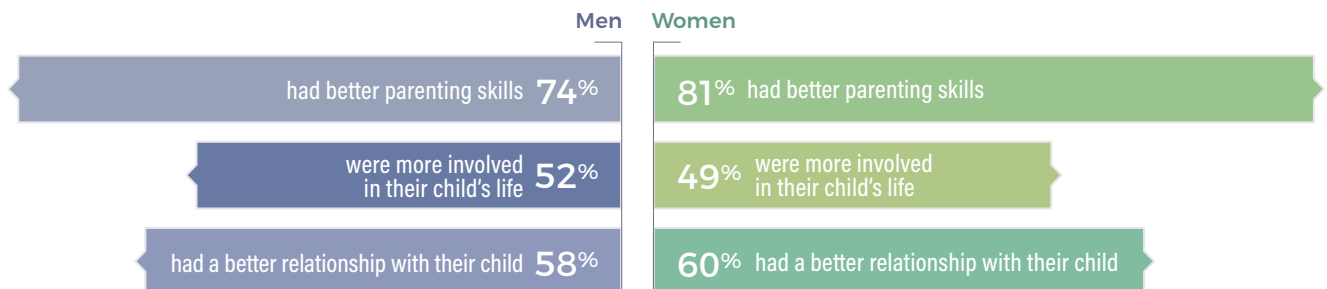
Experienced Better Adult Relationship Skills. Specifically:



## Improved Parenting

**87% Fathers & 88% Mothers**

Experienced Improved Parenting. Specifically:

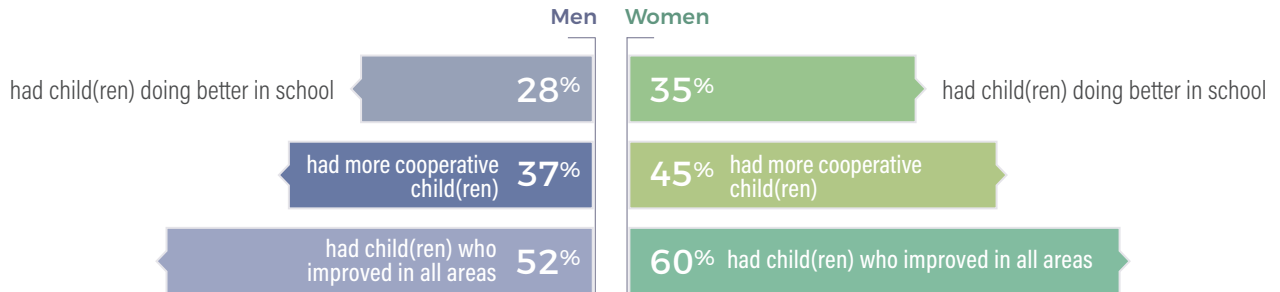




## Improved Child Functioning

**66% Fathers & 72% Mothers**

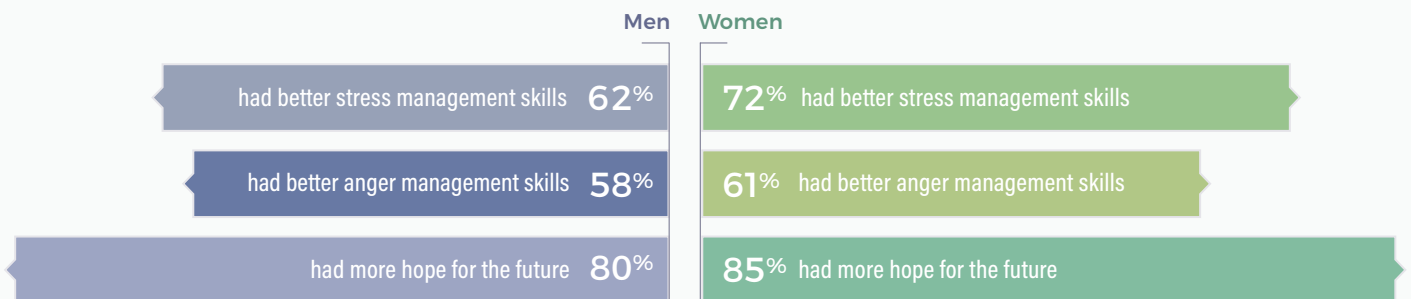
Experienced Improved Child Functioning. Specifically:



## Better Coping Skills

**92% Fathers & 93% Mothers**

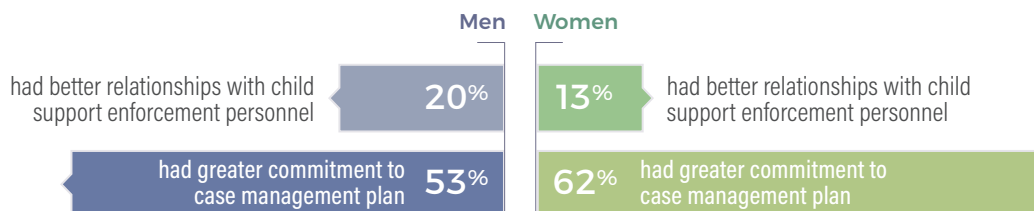
Experienced Better Coping Skills. Specifically:



## Cooperation with Court System

**58% Fathers & 64% Mothers**

Improved Cooperation with Court System. Specifically:



# Qualitative Results



The qualitative exploration of fatherhood program participants' experiences consisted of seven focus group discussions in which a total of 54 participants shared their lived experiences, explained and discussed the benefits of participating in a fatherhood-based program and their perception of their parental role. These discussions were captured by digital recordings and individual note-takers. Once captured, the audio was transcribed in transcription software and later coded into key and reoccurring themes. The utilization of thematic coding allowed the primary coder to develop themes across participants' responses.

Our results indicate six focus areas:

- Unemployment Repercussions
- Workforce Development
- Parenting Skills
- Support System
- Individual Growth
- Self-awareness

Additional themes emerged within each focus area.



## *Unemployment Repercussion*

### **Theme 1: Maternal Gatekeeping**

Participants explained the consequences of not being employed which consisted of their co-parent gatekeeping their child.

“You ain’t got no money, you can’t see your child. And it hurt. Because not only was our relationship as a father and a mother going downhill, my relationship with my child was going downhill, because I couldn’t see them more and couldn’t even speak to them.”

“Not being employed she will not let me be around my kids, not as much, I gotta go through my mom to get my child”.

### **Theme 2: Lack of Time with Child**

Participants discussed how not being employed resulted in a lack of time with their children. One participant connected their addiction to a lack of both time with their children and employment.

“When I wasn’t employed, I was doing everything else to get money. So, I wasn’t spending much time with them like I should have”.

“Well, I think my addiction led to my lack of employment. And so having an addiction especially if you have multiple things and you’re trying to achieve all at once, you have your hands full trying to get your hands on everything that you think you need to not be sick or you know it becomes a very selfish endeavor. So that’s always going to lead to a lack of spending time with your child”.



## *Workforce Development*

### **Theme 1: Resume Building**

Participants discussed the development of the resume skills they learned while they participated in the program. Some built on prior knowledge of resume building, others gained initial knowledge on the skill.

“They provide you with the training and the knowledge of being and knowing how to do a resume, it’s wonderful for me.”

“Before I took this program, and in high school, they taught us resume builder, but I never caught on to it. But now I could do it without having assistance. I could do it by myself. But I did take it in high school, it just didn’t make sense to me.”

“The program is tremendous, and it helped me out with rebuilding my resume to get the job and how to know the applications are correct and so forth.”

## Theme 2: Professionalism

The participants discussed developing a professional identity as a result of participating in the program.

“I always liked to work but what they showed me here was being aware of other people, the surroundings and the ways to present yourself at a job.”

“They have classes on different job skills and interview skills. They even provide resources and proper clothing.”

“It made me prepare better professionally.”

## Theme 3: Certification Attainment

Participants described the different certifications they attained and how those certifications provided them with more job opportunities.

“I started phlebotomy and CNA and I have the opportunity now to take a job or look for a job in the field of healthcare.”

“Because of the program, next Tuesday, I go fill up all my information to get into the CDL classes.”

“Because it’s given us certifications that we can now take out into the job field and use.”

## Theme 4: Job Search Assistance

Participants discussed the help they received from the program for searching for a job.

“The program is going to help you find a job, whereas before I didn’t have that hookup.”

“The program gives you a list of all types of jobs.”



## *Parenting Skills*

### Theme 1: Communication and Comprehension

Participants describe the important aspects of communication and comprehension gained from the program. Examples of successful healthy communication with their co-parent or children were shared. Participants explained the importance of listening and communicating in a healthy manner.

“I had to learn and listen to what he’s saying and what he’s not saying and comprehend, and kind of detangle it, sometimes teenagers, we all know that teenagers say something but mean something else.”

“But it showed me that they learned a little bit better when you talk to them instead of screaming at them.”

## Theme 2: Respect

Participants discussed the significance of respecting their children and giving their child a healthy space to communicate and learn.

"I learned to respect my kids, not just expect them to respect me. Not because I said so because that's not respecting them as a person either. They need a reason why you're telling them. You learned that you have to give respect to receive respect even though it is your children."

"I feel that you learn in this class that no matter the situation you're always going to be a parent first and you learn not necessarily there's a right or wrong way to parent but you learn the appropriate way to parent, and you learned that you have to give respect to receive respect even though it is your children."



## *Support System*

### Theme 1: Genuine Care

Participants described the genuine care they received from the facilitators and program staff. Many participants felt deep support and encouragement from the staff and felt as though they would not give up on them.

"They care, that's a biggie for me. The facilitator gives you the courage to speak and talk about things you are going through and acknowledge it and find new ways to handle it and she is persistent about it. A few times I have not shown up or not called and she'll call me and check on me and make sure I'm together."

"They don't look at you for your past, they look at you for your future. This program gives you a second chance in life."

"The people you have here, they'll go out of the way to help you when they really don't have to. They'll help you, as long as you are willing to help yourself."



## *Individual Growth*

Participants explained the various areas of individual growth they have experienced since beginning their program: education, confidence, happiness, relationships, knowledge, job skills, etc. Many participants described their program as life changing.

### Theme 1: Growth

"I think you leave with more confidence in every aspect, whether it be your education or your parenting or your relationship."

“It takes you from being a consumer to a producer.”

## Theme 2: Knowledge

“They showed me how to start something and finish it”.

“If I can say self-knowledge, that’s the most important thing because once you learn something nobody can take it away from you, it’s yours to keep”.

## Theme 3: Better Individual

“I get out of the program, knowing how to be a man teaching me the things I need. Being a better father, being a better citizen.”

“It just helped me become a better person than I am right now.”



## Self-awareness

Participants describe changes in their reactions to stress and anger. Rather than being reactive, many participants have learned how to step away, breathe, think, and then handle the issue.

### Theme 1: Self-regulation

“The program taught me to just take a minute, when you do get angry or stressed out, take a minute.”

“I just take a walk for a minute, go outside refresh, come back, and the majority of the time I’m way better.”

“When I came here, I learned how to manage my mental being and learn how to walk away, not to say nothing.”

“I might go for a walk, instead of throwing stuff around the house. Instead of doing all that I’m going outside for a walk and I’m just taking a breath and I’m thinking about what I can do better.”

### Theme 2: Positive Reappraisal

“But when I came here, when I got to analyzing things and seeing things a different way than how I was seeing, I just calm down, now when I get angry, I go into silence mode.”

“I used to let stuff build up. But now, I think about it and talk about it. I ain’t scared to talk about it.”

# TANF 2022-2023 Report

submitted in January 2024 by:

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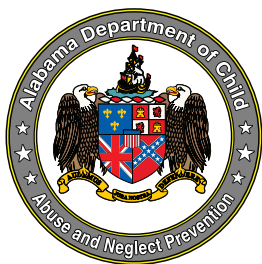
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