

# FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION: PREPARING FOR TOMORROW



7/13/2015

Event Report

On June 27<sup>th</sup> 2015, the Ebenezer Baptist Church Social Action Committee (SAC) hosted a Father's Day Celebration in collaboration with Vital Village Network and several community-based organizations.



**Financial Summary:**

Over **\$900** was raised in the form of donations and gift cards that fathers could use to spend time with their families

Fatherhood Project: \$150  
Duck Tours

Gallows Restaurant: 2 x \$50 Dinner Gift Cards

Boston Police Department: \$300 Longhorn Steakhouse

Haley House: 4 x \$15 Gift Cards

Lamberts: 2 Fruit Platters

Stop & Shop: Cake

Ebenezer Baptist Church: Location and Food

\$75 Movie Tickets

\$250 Anonymous money order

**Partners:**

A few years ago, the Social Action Committee (SAC) of the Ebenezer Baptist Church started an initiative to recognize and appreciate fathers during Father's Day. According to the *Fatherlessness in Massachusetts* report released in 2014, "The consequences of fatherlessness do not stop at the door of the family home, but radiate out to the surrounding community." The SAC aimed to recognize the fathers that were present in the lives on their children irrespective of the challenges before them and their communities. By understanding the value of fatherhood to the home and community, Ebenezer Baptist Church embarked on a journey to create spaces and opportunities for fathers and families to develop healthy relationships.

During the months leading up to the event, Vital Village Network hosted planning meetings for network partners to share ideas and resources. A cross-sector approach brought new partners to the table that included domestic violence and child development practitioners and financial and educational institutions.

The speakers for this event were representatives from Primerica, One Family Inc., Jane Doe Inc., The Fatherhood Project, and Santander Bank. A guiding beacon for this event was to address the question of "what's next". Rather than discussing techniques for better parenting, *Preparing for Tomorrow* aimed to engage fathers and families on two key topics: continuing/completing education and creating a financially stable home.

**Participant Feedback:**

Over 30 people attended the event. Of the attendees present, 15 of them were fathers and we were able to collect 8 surveys from these individuals. 100% of participants found the presentations useful. The majority of fathers in attendance currently participate in or have previously completed fatherhood groups. Several fathers attended the event with their sons and partners.

**Father's Day Celebration:**

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The presentations were as follows:

- Primerica- Saving on utilities and establishing life insurance
- One Family Inc. – Accessible higher education opportunities
- Jane Doe Inc. – Actively participating in the conversation to end violence against women
- The Fatherhood Project – The role Dad plays in the family
- Santander Bank – Using financial institutions generating savings

The content of the Fatherhood Project presentation emphasized the value and importance of a father in a child's development and how they learn to navigate the world around them. Primerica discussed the importance of life insurance for individuals and families as well as establishing regular financial habits such as credit checking. Santander Bank emphasized the value of banking and developing financial security. Participants also had the opportunity to have a free budgetary assessment on their expenses as well as the opportunity to open a bank account.

*Over 75% of participants would recommend the Fatherhood Project to a family member or friend.*

*"It was important to learn about all the different resources we have available that I didn't know about."*

The surveys also indicate that there was a strong interest to learn/participate in voter registration. Due to time constraints, we were unable to have the presentation on voter registration which 38% of those surveyed indicated they would recommend to family and friends.



Following the presentations, participants were able to converse with the presenters and learn more about their programs and the resources available to them. The *Planning for Tomorrow Event* created a unique opportunity for fathers to interact with professionals. A majority (75%) of participants are interested in attending another dialogue.

*I was impressed with the information and pleasantly surprised with some of the presentations*

The topics identified for further dialogues are: Life Insurance, Financial Management, Financial Security, Mass Incarceration, How to be a Better Father, and Developing Healthy Father-Child Relationships. The range of these topics indicate a willingness by participants to engage and develop their life skills.

#### Further Engagement:

*75% of participants were interested in attending another dialogue.*

The next step following *Preparing for Tomorrow*, is to create space for dialogue to continue. Starting July 15<sup>th</sup>, Ebenezer Baptist Church will make their space available on Wednesday nights from 6:00pm – 8:00pm. Network Partner Mike Sanders volunteered to facilitate dialogues. Other Network Partners who gave brief presentations have expressed an interest in conducting extensive workshops in their various fields. *Preparing for Tomorrow* laid the

groundwork to begin deliberate engagement with fathers and the community to develop skills which can be utilized in planning for the unforeseeable future. In addition, "Back to School" season is fast approaching and network partners will mobilize to provide donations and skill-development workshops for parents and caregivers. The emphasis on skill development in community based settings reinforces positive behavior role modeling.