



Merced County Human Services Agency

# ALL DADS MATTER

**Merced County Human Services Agency All Dads Matter** offers encouragement, support and education to the fathers and families of Merced County. In its 10th year, the All Dads Matter fatherhood program is recognized as a model program for serving families in a rural community. All Dads Matter recognizes the tremendous impact an involved, caring, and competent dad has on a child's growth and development. Research shows that children with an involved father have greater positive outcomes socially, developmentally, and academically.

## ALL DADS MATTER RESOURCE CENTER

The Resource Center is a one-stop shop providing support and direct services, and connecting fathers with resources within the community.

## BOOT CAMP FOR NEW DADS

Boot Camp for New Dads is a three-hour workshop taught by fathers to soon-to-be or new fathers. Utilizing a man-to-man approach, veteran dads and their babies orient rookie dads who are expecting their first baby. This combination—rookies, veterans, and babies—in a room for three hours makes for great chemistry. The rookies are all eyes and ears as they watch the veterans feed, burp, change, and care for their babies while hearing their experiences and advice. A strong sense of solidarity quickly develops between these men and peaks when the veterans give their babies to the rookies for hands-on training. There are few other opportunities for new dads to obtain the insights of other men on the challenges of becoming a father.

## MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

Men's Support Groups offer a safe space for men to address any traumas or concerns that may create barriers to being the fathers they want to be. In this supportive environment, men explore and discuss issues of parenting, healthy relationships, and effective communication. Support Groups are offered in Spanish and Hmong, weaving through the discussions relevant cultural component from each respective culture. Teen Dads Support group are held on campus at a local continuation school and provides safe space for encouragement and support.

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## LEADERSHIP FOR LIFE

Leadership for Life teaches men how to navigate, communicate, and advocate for themselves and their families. By providing a series of weekly workshops dads learn to navigate such systems as: Child Support, Education, Health, Nutrition and Employment. A combination of presenters, hands on experience and fields trips helps dads to build the competence and confidence to successfully advocate for themselves and their families.

## HELPING MEN RECOVER

Helping Men Recover is the first gender-responsive, trauma-informed treatment program for men. The materials are grounded in research, theory, and clinical practice. The 18 week sessions provide an understanding of the impact of male socialization on the recovery process, a consideration of the relational needs of men, and a focus on the issues of abuse and trauma.

## MALE ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

Male Engagement workshops introduce fun and interactive ways dads can enhance a child's education experience. Workshop include: Man Play with Food, Men and Kids Moving and Learning, Silly Slimy Science and Guys Diggin' in the Dirt. Workshops are made possible through a collaboration with the Merced County Office of Education Head Start.

### All Dads Matter YouTube links:

<https://youtu.be/zqLYrARqdBO>

<https://youtu.be/sFwCw-1Nizo>

## ALL DADS MATTER AWARDS/ RECOGNITION

2008 California Association of Counties (CSAC) Innovative Program of the Year

2010 Harvard University School for Human Services Bright Idea Award

2012 Presidents Award for Volunteer Service (Cesar Vera and Lamar Henderson)

2013 California Association of Counties "Smart Justice" Recognition for Leadership for Life Probation

2014 California State Department of Child Support "Positive Collaboration" Award

### Published Article:

Spring 2016: Emotional & Behavioral Disorders in Youth

**Supporting Youth to Experience the Benefits of Fatherhood Involvement: Implications for Child-Serving Professionals**

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## Key Partners:

Merced County Office of Education, Dignity Health Mercy Medical Center, Livingston Community Health, WIC, Castle Family Health Centers, Golden Valley Health Center, First 5, Merced County Department of Child Support, Merced Union High School District, Livingston Union School District, Merced Superior Court-Juvenile Dependency

## Presentations:

2016 County Welfare Directors Association Conference, **“Integrating Fatherhood and Motherhood programs in Human Services”**

Lamar Henderson served as a panelist at the National Responsible Fatherhood Initiative 2016 **“Understanding Trauma-Informed Programming: A Primer for Responsible Fatherhood Programs”**

All Dads Matter strives to offer a trauma-informed comprehensive approach to delivering support and services relevant to the specific needs of our families.

All programs are offered in English and Spanish.

Please like us on facebook or go to our website at:  
<http://www.co.merced.ca.us/981/All-Dads-Matter>

We can be reached by phone at (209) 385-7521, or feel free to visit at 3376 North Highway 59, Suite D, Merced, CA 95348.

