



NRFC State Profile: Missouri June 2016

This profile describes state and federally funded programs and policies that aim to strengthen families. These programs and policies support parenting and father involvement, promote strong family relationships, enhance fathers' economic stability, and provide support during incarceration and reentry. The profile lists phone numbers and websites for the programs. This information was correct when the profile was written (in 2016) but may change over time.

Programs to Support Responsible Fatherhood and Strengthen Families

Responsible fatherhood programs focus on issues such as enhancing parenting and relationship skills, keeping fathers involved with their children, improving their economic stability, helping them pay child support, and generally helping to strengthen families.

The following state and federally funded programs are available in the state:

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri	Incarceration	State funded Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri provides <i>Amachi Missouri</i> , a mentoring program for children with an incarcerated parent.	Kansas City, Springfield, Columbia and Jefferson City. Website (855) 361-5900
Central Missouri Community Action (CMCA)	Fatherhood/Parenting Economic Stability Healthy Relationships	The state and federally funded CMCA has several programs for low-income families, including <i>Family Development</i> , which uses the <i>Building Strong Families</i> curriculum to build parenting/family strengths, communication, stress management, and other skills; <i>Financial Education</i> , which covers budgeting, credit, identity theft, and home ownership; and <i>Missouri Work Assistance (MWA)</i> , a program for families receiving TANF benefits.	Serves several counties in Central Missouri. Website (573) 443-8706

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Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
Child Abuse Prevention Association (CAPA)	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships	The state funded Child Abuse Prevention Association provides supportive education groups and home-based services for children and their parents. Programs such as <i>Strengthening Families</i> and <i>Healthy Family Connections</i> provide parenting skills, emotional support and coping skills, bonding and attachment, and healthy lifestyles services.	Independence. Website (816) 252-8388
Community Action Agency of St. Louis County, Inc. (CAASTLC)	Economic Stability Reentry Fatherhood/Parenting	The state and federally funded CAASTLC provides support services for low-income families. Programs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Life Skills Classes</i>, with services for parenting/child development, economic stability, and women’s abuse. • <i>Prison Reentry Program</i>, which uses the <i>Makin’ It Work</i> curriculum to improve job readiness, conflict resolution, and anger management. • <i>Family Support Case Management</i>, which provides in-home help with topics such as employment, education, budgeting, parenting, and community resource referrals. 	St. Louis County. Website (314) 863-0015
Community Action Partnership of Greater St. Joseph (CAP St. Joe)	Economic Stability	The state and federally funded CAP St. Joe provides support services for low-income families. This includes <i>Community Development</i> , which administers the <i>Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)</i> , an anti-poverty program. CSBG works with neighborhood organizations to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income neighborhoods, and empower low-income families to become self-sufficient. CAP St. Joe also provides <i>Head Start</i> , energy and housing assistance, and <i>Missouri Workforce Assistance</i> .	Andrew, Buchanan, Clinton and DeKalb counties. Website with phone numbers
Connections to Success	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships Economic Stability Domestic Violence	Connections to Success offers the federally funded <i>Family Connections (FC)</i> program for low-income, single parents, at-risk youth, active duty military and veterans, and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families. Services are designed to improve healthy relationships and positive parenting, prevent domestic violence, and help families reach economic stability.	St. Louis City and County and St. Charles County. Website (636) 940-8027

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
Family and Workforce Centers of America (FWCA)	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships Economic Stability Incarceration/Reentry	FWCA was awarded a federal grant from the Office of Family Assistance in September 2015. The organization is providing healthy relationships courses for low-income high school students, older youth, engaged couples, and married couples. FWCA also provides job training assistance and referrals to the Fathers' Support Center for fatherhood services.	St. Louis County. Website (314) 746-0807
Fathers' Support Center	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships Economic Stability Domestic Violence	The federally funded Fathers' Support Center runs the <i>Family Formation Program</i> , a six-week course for fathers focused on developing as a father, financial literacy, manhood and fatherhood, child development, effective parenting, family violence prevention, and conflict resolution. The Center also provides employment, mentoring, and economic stability services.	St. Louis. Website (314) 333-4170
Great Circle	Fatherhood/Parenting	Great Circle provides behavioral health services for children, individuals and families. The organization offers a number of state funded classes, workshops, and resources for parents.	Greene and St. Louis Counties. Website (844) 424-3577
Job Corps	Economic Stability	<i>Job Corps</i> is a federal job training program to help low-income young men and women ages 16 to 24 with educational and career goals.	There are three Job Corps centers in Missouri. They are located in Excelsior Springs, Puxico, and St. Louis. Website with phone numbers
Life Line Pregnancy Help Clinic	Preventing Unwanted/Early Fatherhood Fatherhood/Parenting	The state funded Life Line Pregnancy Help Clinic provides several free and confidential services for pregnant and parenting teens. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teen Parent Lifeline</i> is a weekly, one-on-one educational support program for mothers and fathers under 22. Parents also participate in group sessions with other parents once a month. • <i>DadLINE</i> offers new fathers one-on-one mentoring. • <i>Earn While You Learn</i> is a prenatal and parenting program with one-on-one pregnancy and parenting education. 	Kirksville. Website (660) 665-5688

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
Missouri State Park Youth Corps	Economic Stability	<i>Missouri State Park Youth Corps</i> is a state funded program for low-income youth ages 17-24. It runs from May to December. Participants have the opportunity to gain work experience and build career skills while preserving Missouri's state park system and historical sites.	Serves the entire state. Website 1 (800) 592-6020
Missouri Valley Community Action Agency (MVCAA)	Economic Stability Fatherhood/Parenting	The state and federally funded MVCAA has several workshops, classes and services for families. Services include a <i>Family Literacy</i> program, <i>Financial and Money Management</i> classes, life skills training, and <i>Family Development and Support</i> services.	Serves several counties in Missouri. Website (660) 886-7476
Missouri Workforce System	Economic Stability	The state funded <i>Missouri Workforce System</i> offers job-search assistance, job training, skills assessments, and other employment services at job centers throughout Missouri. The website includes additional employment resources and a state job bank.	There are 31 job centers in Missouri. Website of job centers (866) 506-0251
North East Community Action Corporation (NECAC)	Fatherhood/Parenting Economic Stability	The state and federally funded NECAC offers several Family Development services, including <i>Building Strong Families</i> , case management, budgeting, life skills, family self-sufficiency, and financial education.	Serves 12 counties in St. Louis. Website Website of service centers by county
Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation (OACAC)	Fatherhood/Parenting Economic Stability	The state and federally funded OACAC <i>Neighborhood Centers</i> offer workshops in parenting skills, money management, budgeting, case management, life skills classes, and other topics related to being a successful parent.	Ozarks area. Website (417) 862-4314
Preferred Family Healthcare (PFH)	Economic Stability	State and federally funded PFH provides employment services for at-risk youth and individuals with disabilities.	There are 30 employment offices in Missouri. Website (877) 869-8911

Organization	Services Provided	Description	Service Area and Contact Information
Pregnancy Care Center	Fatherhood/Parenting Preventing Unwanted/ Early Fatherhood	The state funded Pregnancy Care Center provides services and programs for young parents, including healthy pregnancy education and coaching through an unplanned pregnancy. The <i>Guys Only</i> program offers assistance with employment and classes to help guys transition into fatherhood.	Springfield. Website (417) 877-0800
Randolph County Caring Community Partnership (RCCCP)	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships Economic Stability	The state funded RCCCP offers <i>Focus on Fatherhood</i> , a program that offers parenting and healthy relationship classes, peer support group sessions, and life/employment skills development. <i>Focus on Fatherhood</i> helps fathers who are young, facing poverty, unemployed, have a familial history with legal issues or substance abuse, or have limited experience interacting with their children.	Randolph County. Website (660) 263-7173
United Services Community Action Agency (USCAA)	Economic Stability	State and federally funded USCAA provides services for low-income and homeless individuals and families. Services last up to six months. A case manager helps clients with employment, financial education, budgeting, housing assistance, and referrals to community resources.	Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. Website (816) 358-6868 x8317
University of Missouri Extension	Fatherhood/Parenting Healthy Relationships Economic Stability Incarceration	The <i>Show Me Healthy Relationships</i> (SMHR) project, supported by a five-year grant from the Office of Family Assistance, provides management and group training for families, couples, and individuals. The program assists with parenting skills, relationship skills, economic stability, and personal wellbeing. The University of Missouri Cooperative Extension also receives state funding for the <i>4-H Living Interactive Family Education (LIFE)</i> program, which addresses the needs of children with incarcerated parents. The LIFE program consists of 1) a parenting skills class, 2) monthly planning for incarcerated parents to help design activities for family/club meetings, and 3) monthly family club meetings during visitation.	SMHR serves 21 counties. SMHR Website 573-882-4325 LIFE serves seven correctional centers in Missouri. LIFE Website (573) 882-2680

Policies to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Paternity Establishment

Establishing paternity gives a child born outside of marriage the same legal rights and privileges as a child born to married parents. Children gain access to family medical history and rights to inheritance, fathers' medical and life insurance benefits, social security and veterans' benefits, and child support. In addition, Native American children gain tribal enrollment rights.

In Missouri, there are three ways for unmarried parents to establish paternity: 1) both parents sign an Affidavit Acknowledging Paternity in the hospital at the time the child is born. 2) A man who believes he is the father can file a Declaration of Paternity with the Missouri Bureau of Vital Records. 3) At any time before the child's 18th birthday, either parent can ask the Missouri Family Support Division (FSD) Child Support (CS) office to file with the court to establish paternity, after which a genetic test may be ordered. If paternity is confirmed, FSD CS or the court may enter an order establishing paternity and the father may have to pay for the genetic test.ⁱ

Child Custody

If unmarried or divorced parents cannot reach agreement concerning child custody or visitation, a legal order can be made through the court system. Either parent may be granted custody of the child, or both may share equally in physical custody and/or decision-making responsibilities. There is no legal connection between payment or non-payment of child support and rights to visitation.

In Missouri, the court awards custody based on the best interests of the child. The court can grant joint legal custody, sole legal custody, joint physical custody or sole physical custody or any combination. Joint legal custody means that parents share the decision-making rights, responsibilities, and authority relating to the health, education and welfare of the child. Joint physical custody means that each parent has significant, but not necessarily equal, periods of time when a child is under the care/supervision of each of the parents. Joint physical custody is shared in such a way to assure the child has frequent, continuing, and meaningful contact with both parents.ⁱⁱ If a parent is not granted custody, he or she is entitled to reasonable visitation rights, unless the court finds that visitation would endanger the child's physical health or impair his or her emotional development.ⁱⁱⁱ If the parent without custody is found to be guilty of domestic violence against the custodial parent or child, records and reports pertaining to the child (including their current address) may be withheld from the noncustodial parent.

Child Support

The Federal Child Support Enforcement Program was established in 1975 as Title IV-D of the Social Security Act to locate noncustodial parents, establish paternity and establish and enforce child support orders. General services available in all states and territories include voluntary in-hospital paternity acknowledgement, genetic testing, explanation of state guidelines for determining child support orders, and review of child support orders at least every three years at the request of either parent. State child support offices are responsible for collection and distribution of child support payments and can modify orders when appropriate. If a parent is behind in their payments, the office may use enforcement tools such as license revocation (including drivers, professional, recreational or occupational licenses), seizure of assets, property liens, passport denial, and federal and state tax refund offsets.^{iv}

The Missouri Department of Social Services' Child Support program is in charge of child support services. Parents can apply for services online or print and complete an application, then mail it to the Family Support Division. Go to the [website](#) or call (800) 859-7999 for more information.

The Family and Medical Leave Act

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) protects employees who have worked with the same organization for at least 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours within the past year. It contains provisions for both fathers and mothers

to take time off after the birth or adoption of a child, or during a serious illness, without fear of losing their jobs. Employees in companies with 50 or more employees are entitled to up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave, over a one-year period, to care for a new child, recuperate from a serious illness, care for a seriously ill family member, or handle issues arising from a family member's call to active military duty. The FMLA also gives employees the right to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a family member who is seriously injured or becomes ill while on active military duty.^v

Missouri has no additional provisions for paid or unpaid leave.

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded school readiness program for young children from low-income families. The program, currently delivered by about 1,700 local organizations – public and private, non-profit and for-profit – provides preschoolers with comprehensive services, such as education and health screenings, with the goal of building their skills across five school readiness domains: language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical development and health, and social and emotional development. Head Start encourages the role of parents (both mothers and fathers) as their child's first and most important teachers. Programs build relationships with families that support positive parent-child relationships, family well-being, and connections to peers and community. Early Head Start, also managed by the federal Office of Head Start, is directed toward children up to the age of three and their parents. While the program is federally funded and managed, local agencies make decisions regarding service delivery based on the specific needs of their communities; for example, some may opt to include home-based services for families in their programs. Most states have multiple Head Start programs providing services for fathers.

To find information on Head Start programs in Missouri, go to this [website](#).

Policies to Promote Economic Stability

Child Care Assistance

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) works with states to provide support for children and their low-income families. Subsidized child care services are available to eligible families through certificates (vouchers), grants, or contracts with providers. Fathers and mothers may select a child care provider that satisfies applicable state and local requirements, including basic health and safety requirements.^{vi}

Missouri's Child Care/Early Childhood Services provides child care assistance for families 1) that are low-income and working or enrolled in education or job-training, 2) receiving temporary assistance, 3) with a disabled parent, or 4) with a child who is special needs. The program assists families with child care expenses so that parents can work or attend school or training programs. Child care services provide reimbursement for parents or direct payment to eligible child care providers.^{vii}

Rental Assistance

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides rental assistance to low-income families and individuals through a number of methods. HUD subsidizes privately owned apartments, allowing low-income tenants to rent them at reduced rates. In the Public Housing program, local housing agencies manage rental housing for low-income tenants, while HUD provides professional and technical assistance in their planning, development, and management. The Housing Choice Voucher Program, better known as Section 8, provides eligible families and individuals with vouchers that they can use to pay for all or part of the rent at housing units of their choice. Generally, eligibility for the HUD rental assistance programs is based on annual gross income, assets, family size, and other considerations such as elderly or disabled status. Local housing agencies generally set the fixed eligibility rules for their regions, determine assistance amounts, and manage waiting lists for assistance.^{viii}

Missouri has no additional state provisions for rental assistance.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp program, provides low-income individuals (both men and women) and families with funds delivered in an electronic benefit transfer card, or EBT card) that can be used to purchase food. SNAP is administered within the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Services and is federally funded, but applications, delivery, and outreach are handled at the state or local level. In general, individuals and households are eligible to receive SNAP if they have less than \$2,250 in countable resources and earn less than 130 percent of the poverty line in gross monthly income. However, characteristics of recipients (for example, age or disabled status) can affect eligibility requirements, and states have flexibility in determining eligibility, particularly with regard to what is considered a countable resource. In many states, individuals over the age of 18 and under the age of 50 are limited to three months of SNAP benefits every three years unless they are working or in a work or training program 20 hours a week. Some states have waivers to this rule for all or part of the state – for detailed state eligibility requirements, consult the [state SNAP agency](#).^{ix}

Families who wish to apply for SNAP benefits in Missouri may file an application in person, by mail, by fax, or online through the Family Support Division Program Enrollment website. Benefits are dependent on the size and income of the household. To be eligible, members of the applicant's household cannot own resources valued at more than \$2,500; if everyone in the household is age 60 or over, or disabled, the resource limit is \$3,250.^x

Missouri offers the Missouri Employment and Training Program (METP) to help Food Stamp recipients gain skills, education, training, or work experience so that they can reach self-sufficiency. The METP is offered through Job Centers at no cost for participants. Participants who meet the criteria for the METP by being identified as Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) must participate in work or training for at least 80 hours per calendar month; failure to do so will lead to termination of Food Stamp Benefits after three months. This requirement does not apply for willing volunteers.^{xi}

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program grants federal funds to states for developing and implementing their own welfare programs that provide assistance and work opportunities to needy families.

In Missouri, TANF is known as Temporary Assistance. To qualify, families must have a child under 18 and cannot own resources valued at more than \$1,000. Recipients of TANF in Missouri must also participate in the Missouri Work Assistance program, which provides work and training services to help recipients transition to a job by setting goals and building job-search skills. Participants must be in employment and training activities for a minimum number of average hours per month. Failure to meet the minimum number of work hours will lead to reduction and/or cessation of TANF benefits. Exemptions exist to the work hour minimum in situations where the recipient is 1) in a household where domestic violence may occur in the recipient's absence; 2) over the age of 60 or permanently disabled; 3) has a child less than 12 months old in the household; or 4) is needed in the home to take care of a disabled household member.^{xii}

Other Helpful Resources

Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV)

The state and federally funded MCADSV is a statewide network of over 120 domestic and sexual violence programs. MCADSV provides education about domestic and sexual violence to the general public, technical assistance and training to service providers, and research on how to reduce sexual violence in Missouri. The coalition [website](#) connects those in need with local agencies that provide services and assistance to domestic violence survivors.

References

- ⁱ For more information on Paternity Establishment in Missouri, see <https://www.courts.mo.gov/file.jsp?id=48008>.
- ⁱⁱ For more information on child custody in Missouri, see <http://www.moga.mo.gov/mostatutes/stathtml/45200003751.HTML>.
- ⁱⁱⁱ For more information on visitation in Missouri, see <http://www.moga.mo.gov/mostatutes/stathtml/45200004001.html>.
- ^{iv} For more information on the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, see www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/css.
- ^v For more information on the Family and Medical leave Act, see <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs28.pdf>.
- ^{vi} For more information on the Child Care and Development Fund, see <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/about/what-we-do>.
- ^{vii} For more information on Child Care Assistance in Missouri, see <http://dss.mo.gov/cd/childcare/>.
- ^{viii} For more information on Rental Assistance, see http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/topics/rental_assistance.
- ^{ix} For more information on SNAP and to find services in your state, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply>.
- ^x For more information on SNAP in Missouri, see <https://dss.mo.gov/fsd/food-assistance/food-stamp-program/>.
- ^{xi} For more information on the Missouri Employment and Training Program (METP), see <https://dss.mo.gov/fsd/food-assistance/missouri-employment-training-program.htm>.
- ^{xii} For more information on Temporary Assistance (TA) and Missouri Work Assistance (MWA), see <https://dss.mo.gov/fsd/temporary-assistance.htm>.