

The COPES, Inc.

Creating Lasting Family Connections® Fatherhood Program: Family Reintegration



Strengthening Individuals, Families, and Communities for Over 30 Years

About the Council on Prevention and Education: Substances (COPES), Inc.

COPES is a non-profit agency whose mission is to advance a comprehensive range of effective programs and services in the Louisville community to address substance abuse prevention through personal, fatherhood, marriage and family strengthening programs that focus on building upon existing personal, family and community strengths. Further, COPES continuously contributes to the national and international body of research and knowledge in the fields of prevention, mental health and emotional well-being as they relate to the development of programs and practices that reduce substance abuse, delinquency, violence, HIV infection, prison recidivism and other negative outcomes for children and families. The goal of the integrated prevention approach used throughout all of COPES' programs is called "Connect-Immunity". The Connect-Immunity concept proposes that the more emotionally connected one is with other healthy people, the more immune to social disease one becomes. Each program component of COPES' *Creating Lasting Family Connections® (CLFC)* curriculum series is listed on the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP).

INSIDE

- Descriptions of the nationally recognized, evidence-based *Creating Lasting Family Connections® Fatherhood Program: Family Reintegration*.
- The social, financial and emotional benefits the program.
- How the world class *CLFC Fatherhood Program: Family Reintegration* can save any community **millions of dollars** each year!
- How to learn to implement the *CLFC Fatherhood Program: Family Reintegration* through your own agency.

Darren's Story



Unemployed, incarcerated, and completing an institutional substance abuse program while serving his sentence, Darren Brasher was feeling frustrated and hopeless. Like many of those in his position, he was trying to make his way in a world that was hard to navigate safely without having had the opportunity to learn and practice healthy life skills. Upon his release from prison, Darren was referred to the *Creating Lasting Family Connections® (CLFC) Fatherhood Program*.

During his participation in the *CLFC Fatherhood Program*, Darren often spoke about his hair-cutting abilities. By the end of our program, Darren had developed the confidence to open his own barbershop in Louisville, Kentucky to fulfill his dream. In May, 2013, *CLFC* staff approached Darren about participating in *Fatherhood Buzz*, a national event coordinated by the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFC). During this annual effort, community agencies partner with barbershops to promote responsible fatherhood and to provide resource materials for fathers. Darren immediately indicated an excitement and willingness to participate on Father's Day weekend, demonstrating a desire to "pass on" what he had learned to other fathers interested in successfully raising their children and being healthy members of their communities.

CLFC staff members continue to encourage and support reentry fathers transitioning back into the community to consider how they can leverage their specific skills and strengths to enhance their own economic stability, and, if possible, offer support to other fathers in the local community. Many, like Darren, are able to create a network of opportunity, wellness and hope for themselves and pass along support to others in their communities.

Unfortunately, for many who do not have access to *CLFC*, the story doesn't end on such a positive note.

In the United States, 7.1 million people are incarcerated or under supervision by a corrections facility.

Though millions are released from prison or prison or correctional supervision every year, nearly half of them are arrested again within 12 months¹. When people are arrested, they lose their ties to their community.

When people feel disconnected from family and community, they are more likely to do things to damage their relationships. If someone is not connected to and invested in their own community, they are more likely to perpetrate acts of crime within it such as vandalism and robbery.



What is the CLFC Fatherhood Program?



The *Creating Lasting Family Connections® Fatherhood Program: Family Reintegration* consists of 3 modules (parenting and family relationship skills, effective communication/refusal skills and alcohol and other drug education) delivered in 16 to 18 two-hour sessions. The program is designed to help fathers experiencing (or at risk for) family dissonance through any form of physical or emotional separation (substance abuse treatment and recovery, military service and prison reentry are typical examples). There is

an optional module covering HIV prevention (2 to 3 sessions that may include HIV testing) for at-risk populations. Referral capability and/or case management services are also provided. Anyone interested in implementing this program is required to receive *CLFC* trainer certification (requiring 48 to 64 hours of developer-approved training—see page 7) in order to do so.

The *CLFC Fatherhood Program* has shown the ability to produce measurable positive change in parenting skills, refusal skills, conflict resolution skills, family/personal responsibility, open communication about alcohol, drugs and sex, increased HIV knowledge, increased HIV testing and sustained positive change in substance abuse recovery and prison recidivism (when applicable). The program is designed for people who desire positive personal, family and relational outcomes.

The *CLFC Fatherhood Program* includes content that is adapted to focus on life situations and culturally relevant topics specific to men who have experienced personal or family separation due to incarceration, out of town work assignments, active military duty, discrimination or other forms of distance or “less than”-ness who wish to return to their fatherly role in their own family and community.

Results and Publications

The *CLFC Fatherhood Program* has been shown to increase healthy behaviors and attitudes in nine different areas of family and social interaction including communication skills, interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills, conflict resolution, emotional awareness, emotional expression, relationship satisfaction, relationship commitment and relationship management, while decreasing a participant’s likelihood of returning to prison **by an impressive 60%**.



Included in SAMHSA's
National Registry of
Evidence-based
Programs and Practices

The program received
perfect scores (4.0) on all
'Readiness for
Dissemination' ratings,
including implementation
materials, training and
support resources, and
quality assurance
procedures.

More specifically, the *CLFC* relationship skills are necessary for family, spouse, or partner communication and the ability to effectively bond with and discipline children. These relationship skills have proven to be helpful for acquiring and maintaining a job, and handling pressure or conflict without resorting to negative, threatening or violent behavior.

Providing financial support, love and consistent discipline are important components of responsible fatherhood. Moreover, for the prison reentry population, disengaging from all criminal activity and staying out of jail, as indicated by a lack of recidivism, allows for the physical presence of fathers in the lives of their children. The *CLFC Fatherhood Program* has also been proven to reduce substance abuse, binge drinking, violent behavior and HIV transmission while increasing substance abuse recovery and personal spirituality. These results were published in the following article:

- McKiernan, P., Shamblen, S.R., Collins, D.A., Strader, T.N., Kokoski, C. (2013). Creating Lasting Family Connections: Reducing Recidivism With Community-Based Family Strengthening Model *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 24, 94-122.

Return on Investment (ROI)

The *CLFC Fatherhood Program's* estimated cost of \$625 per person represents a bargain price for the benefits that its implementation provides—especially with men who are reentering society from prison. The example and numbers used below show the benefits of implementing the *CLFC Fatherhood Program* with 560 men in Kentucky—a state with a current recidivism rate of 35%. Kentucky could save over \$2.8 million per year just by having *CLFC* be a systemic part of post-release care for parolees. When the amount of money saved from a decrease in drug-related crime and the amount of taxable income these men can earn when they have been assisted by the program in gaining employment are considered, the savings figures skyrocket to **over \$14 million per year**.

Recidivism Costs Per Percentage of 560 Men Released



Calculations based on 2009 data pursuant to Kentucky's average annual incarceration cost of \$22,000.



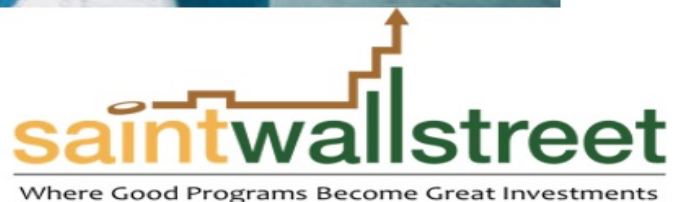
Drug-related Crime Savings for 560 Men Released



Based on the average victim cost of \$6,396 per year for substance abuser –related crime, from the SAMHSA-sponsored study, “The Cost and Benefits of Substance Abuse Treatment,” by The Lewin Group.



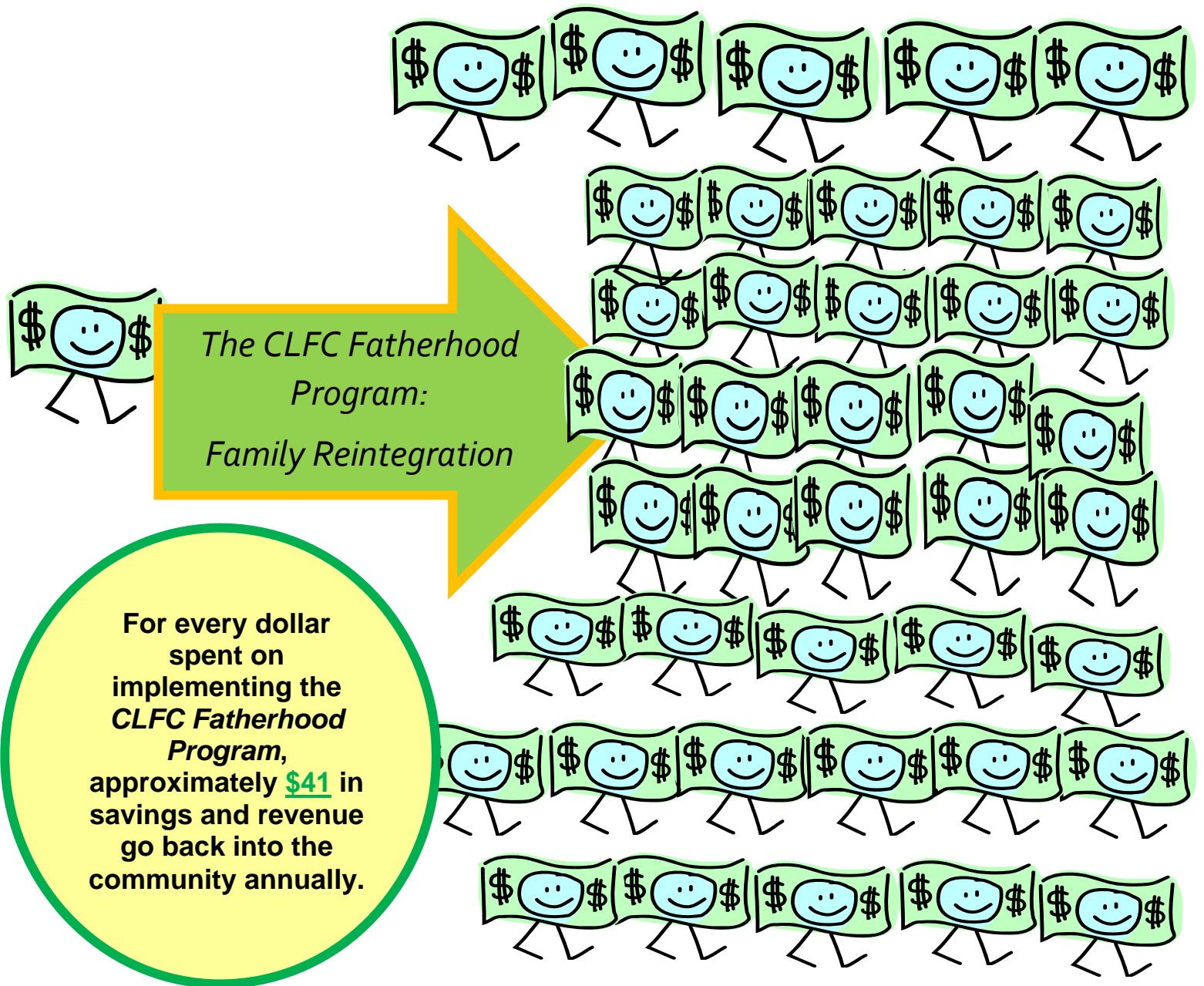
Estimated Earnings for 531 Employed



In addition, when a man becomes employed instead of being imprisoned, he is then able to pay child support (or begin helping to support his children financially), and be physically and emotionally present in the lives of his children.

Tax payers save money by not paying for the costs associated with the following: incarceration; child support (or child support enforcement); other negative outcomes arising from fatherless families including truancy, drug abuse, unwanted pregnancy, delinquency, etc.

Finally, when a father becomes successfully employed, he not only reduces his own family's burden on society, but he also reestablishes his role as a contributor by paying taxes and helping to support all other societal costs! In our study, 83.5% of our *CLFC Fatherhood Program* participants achieved employment during or soon after program participation.



The CLFC Fatherhood Program Implementation Training



A critical component of the success of the *CLFC Fatherhood Program: Family Integration* lies in our ability to train other committed individuals who wish to learn to facilitate any of our programs.

While COPES has a 30 year history of providing staff to facilitate *CLFC* programs at other partner agencies in our region, we also understand that this option is not logistically feasible across the nation. We have over 15 years of successful experience in training the staff of other agencies to professionally facilitate our *CLFC* curricula with fidelity.

With a range of between 3 and 9 days of *CLFC* Implementation Training, your staff can be certified to provide one or more of our *CLFC* programs. The *CLFC* Implementation Training explores the professional-level skills and know-how to express *CLFC* concepts and techniques to others in an easy-to-understand way, how to develop effective responses for various questions and circumstances that may arise while implementing *CLFC*, and how to make acceptable adaptations to the curricula in order to better meet the needs of the specific population that your agency may serve.

For more information about preparing your staff to become certified *CLFC* Implementation Trainers, please contact Teresa Boyd Strader at 502-583-6820 or teresastraderrfn@gmail.com.

Join Us in Creating Lasting Family Connections® for Others!

As the nation gears up to provide healthcare to everyone in the United States, *CLFC* stands out for its ability to work well both as a prevention and treatment measure, especially when experienced alongside other forms of mental and behavioral health support methods such as 12-step facilitation or individual cognitive behavioral therapy. And *CLFC* fits seamlessly into most treatment, education and case management plans. Therefore, it is certain to be regularly adopted by professionals in the fields of mental and behavioral health. You have an opportunity to be a leading proponent of prevention and health promotion in your region by engaging your staff with *CLFC* Implementation Training and materials today!



Get involved by contacting us via post, phone, email or social media.

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Notes and Resources

1 - <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=datool&surl=/recidivism/index.cfm>

Return on investment data provided by Saint Wall Street, LLC. www.saintwallstreet.com