

SUMMER 2020



SPOKANE FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE

*Building stronger fathers, stronger families,
& stronger kids*



SPOFI CLASSES CONTINUE DESPITE COVID

Fatherhood Classes Teach Parenting Skills While Also Building Character

Despite the challenges brought on by the coronavirus lockdown in the spring of 2020, the Spokane Fatherhood Initiative (SpofI) continues to offer its valuable “24-7 Dad” training through online Zoom meetings. SpofI was half-way through the 12 sessions of a class in March when shelter-in-place rules took



effect, but 10 days later the class was reconvened online. That group of 11 men graduated April 14. Eight of the 11 immediately enrolled in the advanced fatherhood class (an additional 24 hours of training) and all eight graduated May 28.

Fatherhood classes offered by SpofI are gathering widespread community support. Referrals to these classes come from family law commissioners, attorneys, social workers, addiction recovery programs, churches, state agencies, probation officers and others.

“Our reputation is growing as a source of comprehensive training that results in changed behavior,” said SpofI President Ron Hauenstein. “We have great facilitators and a powerful curriculum, but most importantly we have students who come to us eager to learn and ready to change.”

Training Programs Offered by the Spokane Fatherhood Initiative

- **24-7 DAD** (*Basic Fatherhood Course*)
- **24-7 DAD ADVANCED**
Advanced course for graduates of Basic
Basic and Advanced courses are 12 sessions, two hours each, taught twice a week in the evening (*subject to change*)
Also available online through Zoom
- **UNDERSTANDING MOM**
An Awareness and Communication Program for Moms
Nine, two-hour sessions
Schedule pending
- **24-7 DAD KEY BEHAVIORS WORKSHOP**
8-hour workshop; schedule pending

Go to www.spofi.org for more information.

Dad Joke

Q: When does a joke become a Dad joke?

A: *When the punch line becomes apparent!*

When Dads Write to Themselves Through the Eyes of Their Children



One of the most interesting assignments given to 24-7 Dad students deals with self-care. After discussing the importance of taking steps to protect and improve their physical and mental health, students are asked to put themselves in the position of

their children and then compose a letter they imagine their children would write to them about their (dad's) health. These letters are often poignant and painful. A sampling:

"Dear Dad, Take better care to get better. Go back to the dad you were."

"Dear Dad, I really enjoyed going skiing, I had fun spending time with you. You have shown me many things, like never giving up, being strong, as well as bonding with you."

"Dear Dad, thank you for taking care of us. We love you. Please keep trying. Please be more patient and don't yell at us. Don't give up."

"Dear Dad, I'm not happy living with you. It's not good for my mental and emotional health. I want to live with Mom because I can't take the emotional stress living here."

"Dear Dad, I would like to talk more."

"Dear Dad, I think you should be more positive. I think you should be more patient with me. I think you're a good dad and I need you."

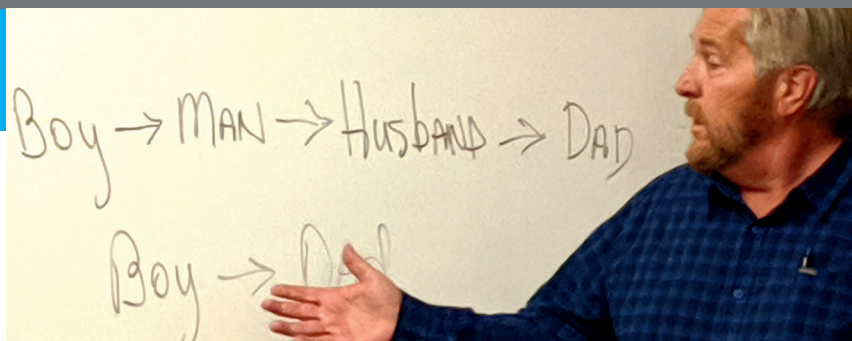
"Dear Dad, I wish you would stop smoking and acting angry when you're tired. I love when we go outside to play as a family. Please don't beat yourself up when you are doing the best that you can to raise us up the right way."

The Path to Fatherhood

One of the key principles taught in the 24-7 Dad PM class is the importance of manhood preceding fatherhood. The best approach for families and society is for a boy to grow and develop into manhood, then become a husband and then become a father. But this path that has served society well for thousands of years is becoming obsolete. Western culture does not sponsor a ritual or ceremony for boys to be declared men. Furthermore, millions of children grow up today without a father so they lack the

mentoring and guidance to help them mature into thriving adults.

SpoFI teaches the path from boyhood to fatherhood shown in the picture above. Sadly, far too many boys in our culture are not only skipping marriage, and thus becoming husbands, they also lack the emotional and spiritual maturity to be fully a man. A man can't be-



come a good dad without becoming a good man first. The factor that best predicts whether a father is involved in the life of his children is whether he's married to their mother. Dads father best in a happy, healthy marriage.



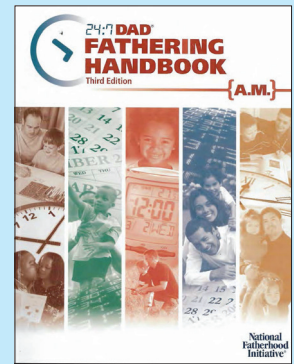
Fatherhood Class Students Find Hope, Encouragement at SpoFI

Men who enroll in SpoFI's fatherhood training are almost all non-custodial dads who desperately want to be more involved in the lives of their children but often feel powerless because they lack basic parenting, relational, communication and emotional control skills. These men are unequipped to deal with complex legal orders, unrealistic financial demands and their own confusing and poorly regulated emotions.

"While we provide technical training such as parenting tips and communication skills, we also offer friendship and encouragement," said SpoFI President Ron Hauenstein. "We plant seeds of hope in what is often barren soil. Many of the men we assist tell us that a major highlight of their experience with SpoFI is they do not feel judged for their past mistakes. They tell us that for

the first time they believe someone is listening to them and their concerns."


Further evidence of the value of this training is the graduation rate for these classes, **which is a remarkable 94%**. "Our students don't want to miss any of these classes because they are getting valuable information and feel strongly encouraged by our facilitators and volunteers," Hauenstein said. "Many of our students face complicated and often chaotic life circumstances that require real commitment to attend two classes a week. The credit goes to them."



SpoFI Adds Class for Moms and New "Key Behaviors" Workshop for Men

In 2020, SpoFI expanded its curriculum with the addition of two new courses.

UNDERSTANDING DAD

 As more and more men graduated from SpoFI's 24-7 Dad classes and positive and powerful changes were felt in their households, many of their wives and girlfriends began asking for a class for women. SpoFI responded with the purchase of "Understanding Dad: An Awareness and Communication Program for Moms," an outstanding course developed by the National Fatherhood Initiative.

This nine-session course helps mothers improve the relationships they have with fathers, for the benefit of their children. Through highly interactive teaching, mothers gain a better understanding of the importance of involving dad in their children's lives, and how to better communicate with the father(s) of their child(ren).

With the help of Family of Faith Community Church and Vanessa Behan Crisis

Nursery, SpoFI launched Understanding Mom March 12 with 12 students. Unfortunately, the exciting launch was cut short by the coronavirus lockdown. Classes were suspended after one session. SpoFI hopes to resume face-to-face teaching in the fall of 2020.

KEY BEHAVIORS WORKSHOP



SpoFI is honored to have been chosen by the National Fatherhood Initiative as one of 30 organizations across the nation to beta test a new workshop "24-7 Dad Key Behaviors Workshop." This 8-hour course teaches men the value and importance of 12 key behaviors such as having an accountability partner, taking care of your emotional health, disciplining children in healthy ways, and developing fathering skills.

SpoFI plans to launch Key Behaviors workshops in the fall of 2020, subject to Covid reopening rules. The anticipated format is an all-day Saturday workshop.

24:7 Dad Success Stories: Transformed



A young couple had been in family court for three-plus years and had lost three of their children to foster care when the husband enrolled in 24:7 Dad

classes. As he progressed through the classes, his attitude and behavior toward the court and the state become less combative and more cooperative. The change in both husband and wife was so significant that the family law commissioner who had been dealing with them for three-plus years commented on the changes she saw and said this couple had been "transformed." Full parental rights were restored.

SPOKANE FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE

PO Box 8266
Spokane, WA 99203
www.spofi.org

The mission of the Spokane Fatherhood Initiative is to create a new cultural climate modeled on the teachings of Jesus Christ that restores the importance, value, honor and dignity of fatherhood through training programs, networking, community initiatives and public awareness campaigns.

Restoring Honor and Dignity to Fatherhood

SpoFI is founded on the principle that fatherlessness is the primary cause of nearly all of our social problems. This newsletter describes our achievements and our aspirations for equipping men and women to be better parents and to become more involved in the lives of their children.

We are an all-volunteer, faith-based non-profit that relies on the grace of God and our amazing financial supporters. If after reading this newsletter you are led to support our work, a donation envelope is enclosed. Or you can give online at www.spofi.org/donate.

We need many more volunteers as we expand our classes to unreached parts of our community. To learn more about these opportunities to participate in our life-changing programs, email info@spofi.org.

Thank you in advance for your interest in and support of SpoFI. We are succeeding because of your gifts, your encouragement and most of all your prayers.

"A father to the fatherless...is God in His holy dwelling." Psalm 68:5



—Ron Hauenstein, *President*



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PO Box 8266
Spokane, WA 99203

Phone: 509-557-0659
E-mail: info@spofi.org
www.spofi.org



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