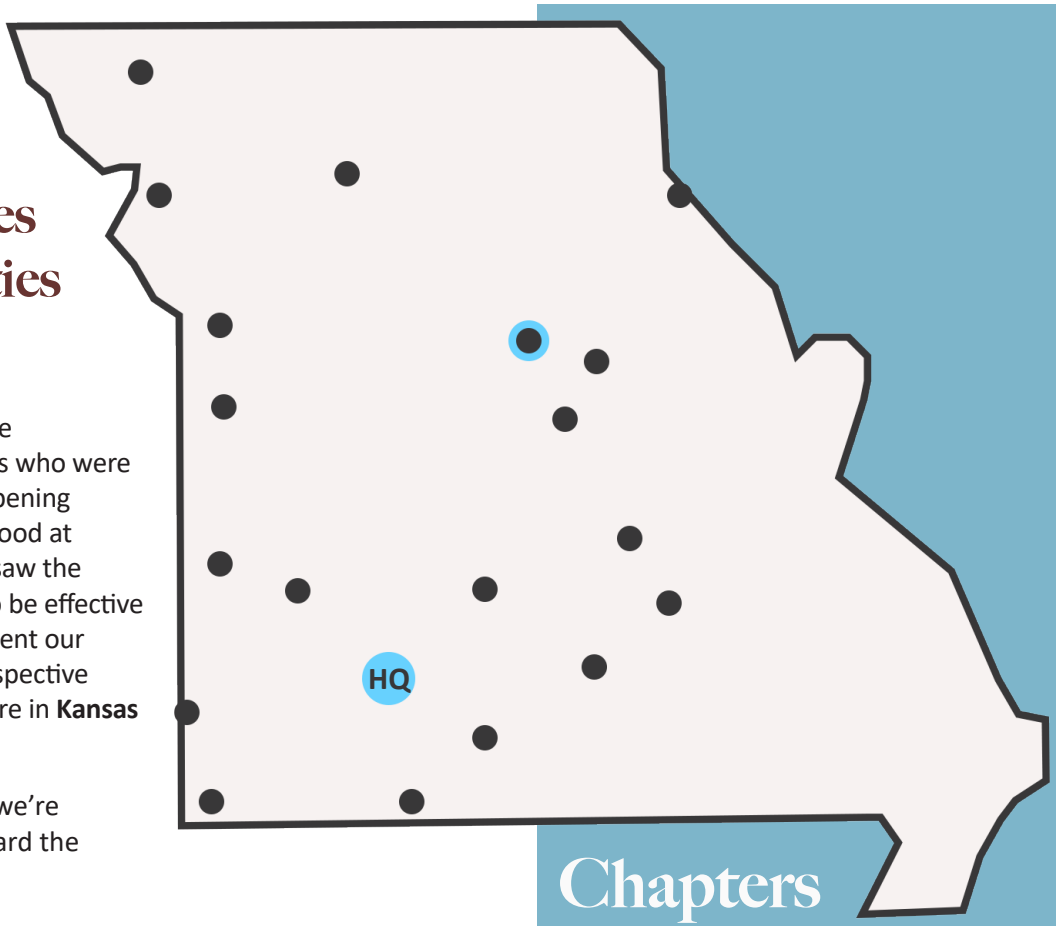
Good Dads Makes Great Communities



Dear <Legislator Name>,

In 2022, Good Dads had just three community chapters, three towns who were enthusiastic about the work happening in support of responsible fatherhood at our headquarters in Springfield, saw the potential for the blueprint to also be effective for them, and decided to implement our programs for the dads in their respective communities. Those chapters were in **Kansas City**, **Joplin** and **Hannibal**.

Fast-forward to today, and now we're welcoming our 20th chapter aboard the Good Dads bandwagon.

We've also opened offices in Columbia, MO, and in the Kansas City metro. The number of fathers who benefit from our services has skyrocketed. We've encountered these great successes because four years ago, our legislature recognized the urgent need to provide funding supporting these effective programs supporting fatherhood.

Why it Works

To us, the message from the last four years couldn't be clearer: No matter where you are, communities need responsible, loving, **engaged fathers.**

It's also clear to us that, with a focus on father engagement, Missourians enjoy greater school performance, lower crime rates, and less unemployment, resulting in better economic performance in their communities. If we want to keep the momentum going, we need the Good Dads Great Communities program more readily available throughout our state.

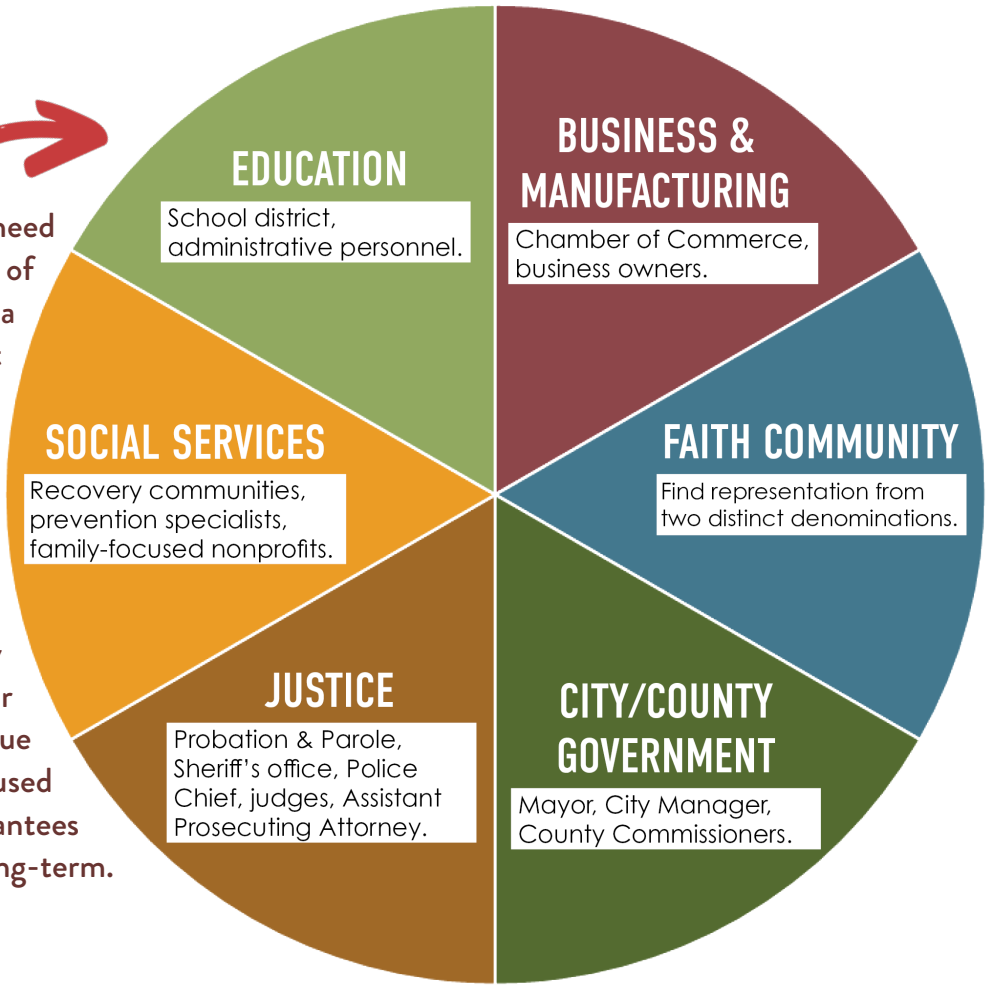
But why does the Great Communities model work? It boils down to one thing: **community teamwork.**

The Good Dads Great Communities model encourages teamwork because the people who actually live, work and play in a community are the same ones who invest in its success. An outsider can't just show up in a community and start telling people what to do. You've probably seen it yourself: An ambitious and well-meaning grant-funded program, armed with action plans, flowcharts and some glossy brochures, moves into town. It flounders around for a few

Chapters

- Ava
- Branson
- Cass County
- Cedar County
- Chillicothe
- Columbia
- Dent County
- Fulton
- Independence
- Jefferson City
- Joplin
- Lebanon
- Mark Twain (Hannibal area)
- McDonald County
- Nevada
- Northwest MO (Maryville area)
- Rolla
- St. Joseph
- Texas County

Communities need buy-in from a variety of leaders who all have a vested interest in supporting engaged fatherhood. Each chapter aims to have two individuals from each sector represented on their Advisory Board. Each sector brings something unique to their father-focused initiative and guarantees success long-term.



years, failing to make meaningful connections or gain a foothold.

Then, when the money runs out or the grant ends, that resource is gone forever.

A community's leaders—its business owners, teachers, attorneys, and mayors—are keyed into what their residents need most, and what is likely to work best for them. This is equally true for rural towns with just one elementary school and for big cities with six-lane highways.

When a community can truly buy in to a common goal, that conviction or consensus usually sticks. When leaders across sectors can use their wisdom and connections in service of the same goal, amazing things can happen. We've seen it happen for all of our Good Dads chapters.

By equipping communities with the right tools, by asking the right questions, and by having the right people in the room, our nearly 20 community chapters have thrived. They take Good Dads programs and run with them.

I'm eager to tell you more about Good Dads' plans for building better communities across Missouri. I will be joined by members of my Board of Directors on **Wednesday, February 11,** for a visit to the Capitol. I would love 15 minutes of your time that day to share more about Good Dads' mission and impact.

Warmly,

Jennifer L. Baker PsyD

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