

THE DADVOCATE

THE NEWSLETTER OF
HOUSE OF DAVID, ADVOCATES FOR FATHERS, INC.

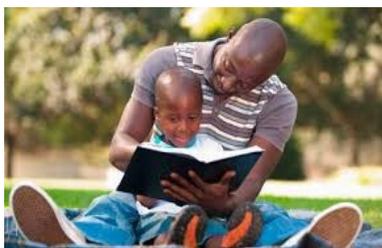
READERS ARE LEADERS

It's been an awful winter, with far too many days spent in the house with children that should be in school. Although school may be closed, take this time to reinforce reading. Most Dads simply don't have the time or inclination for pleasure reading, but we certainly want our children to read...after all, "readers are leaders." Here are three simple patterns to set for your children's reading skills:

Read every where you go. While taking my children for a ride on public transportation, my son asked me about a word printed on an advertisement. I realized that reading is truly an "on-the-go" activity. We began to play a game of visually locating certain words. Children are naturally inquisitive...so have them read things in your daily travels.

Read every day. Set a daily, consistent reading time, towards the end of the evening. This can help a child wind down from an active day, as well as reinforce a routine. Parents can also manage to get in a bit of pleasure reading.

Be a reading role model. Children imitate what they see. Daddy taking the time to read a book...just because, is a powerful statement. I have several books of interest that are waiting for me...and have been for a while.



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2015

It was truly a pleasure to testify at the Maryland 2015 legislative session as an Advisory Committee member of Maryland Hunger Solutions in support of the Hunger-Free Schools Act of 2015 (SB334). This act would provide universal free school meals to children all throughout the state of Maryland, providing relief to parents who are struggling financially, yet don't qualify for free/reduced lunch. Also on the agenda is a bill being led by the Children's Rights Fund and supported by State Senator Muse and State Delegate Carter. This bill, Rebuttable Presumption of Joint Custody (Shared Parenting), acts in the best interest of the child, but also protects the rights of parents for year-round access to their children. Contact your Senate and House representatives to show your support.



NOTES FROM THE DESK:

On January 4, 2015, Taelor and Sydni Scott (pictured here in one of the last pictures taken) lost their Father, Stuart Scott, to cancer, and the sports world lost an icon. Scott accomplished what men dream of: he left his mark on his profession, on his children, and on the world at large.

Scott's legacy in sports broadcasting was that he became known for commentating sporting events using the conversational style as the average fan would use in their own living room. His many humorous catch-phrases introduced the world wide sports audience to the art of "trash talking." Stuart's professional legacy was that he brought the excitement and knowledge of the authentic and genuine African-American male into the spotlight. His career progression reads as a "How-To" manual, with a steady progression upwards into the prime seat of sports commentating. Although he was sometimes criticized for his use of slang and his personal style of infusing pop culture references, his professional ability to deliver the attention of the demographics his bosses wanted became evident as his catch phrases became a staple to the language of the sports world.

What I find most interesting about Stuart, is his personal story. After suffering an eye injury while covering an NFL mini-training camp, Stuart recovered and continued on with his career. Although many on-air personalities would have taken this injury, the results of which could be visually seen, as career ending, Scott continued on. When he was diagnosed with cancer, he became a fighter...literally. At the age of 42, while undergoing chemotherapy, Scott took up mixed martial arts training. Physically showing that he was up to the fight of beating cancer, he would work out after receiving chemotherapy. Scott would simply turn up his training regimen when things became tougher, ultimately undergoing 58 chemotherapy transfusions and multiple surgeries. I recall several interviews over the years in which he stated his reason for fighting was for his daughters. Despite being divorced, Scott was a dominating figure in the lives of his daughters and made constant references to them.

Overall, Stuart Scott will be remembered for his determination, his fight, his mark on sports commentating and his commitment to being a Father and role model to his two daughters. Rest in Peace, Stuart Scott. As the catch-phrase which he coined and would later become part of basketball lingo goes...."BOO-YAH!"

All My Best,
David T. Clements
Executive Director



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FATHER IN FOCUS: James Woody



The hardest part about being a Father: Trying not to fix your child's mistakes and let them learn from their mistakes. It's very hard as they get older to trust them to make the right decisions and choices and to be accountable for the end result. As a father we are fixers; especially when it comes to our children. If they did not complete their chores for the day, trying not to complete them yourself is hard to do, but necessary.

The best part about being a

Father: Watching your kids grow and blossom into fine young adults with very bright futures. Seeing them excel in their endeavors, watching them set goals and aspire to reach them, and watching them succeed educationally and socially.

Words of Wisdom: Knowing that when children are born they do not come with instructions. So, when raising them do what you think is right, whether it is publicly popular or not. Pray to be good Father, Pray for your kids, and pray for wisdom.

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION OUTREACH PROGRAM (CROP)

Late in the fall, the Community Revitalization Outreach Program (CROP) was added to House of David's programming. This program was developed with the assistance of Saleh Stevens, an Advisory Committee member of House of David. This client managed and operated program provides community service along with real-world work and management experience. While removing loose trash from selected areas, clients gain the experience of logistical planning, transportation coordination, management and supervision. While building community relations, they also provide Fatherhood leadership in the community and provide program visibility. In just a few outings, CROP was able to identify it's positive impact in the community while enjoying the fellowship of one another. We look forward to



relaunching this initiative with the warmer weather. To donate trash bags, gloves, and other needed equipment, simply go to our website, donate or call to deliver materials.

Do you have an article, picture, or thought you'd like to share? Send to: AdvocatesforFathers@house-of-david.org

Dads have lots of responsibilities, but none of them is more important than feeding your family. But for some Dads, this is a very challenging issue. The reasons why it is

challenging may be complicated, but that doesn't lessen the responsibility.

Fortunately, there are solutions, and one of them is the Food Supplement Program (FSP). Outside of Maryland, it is known

as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and used to be known as food stamps. If you are eligible, FSP will provide you with an EBT card that you use just like a credit card, only it provides food for you and your family. Whether you need FSP for a few weeks while you are between jobs or as a supplement because your paycheck doesn't cover food, rent and health care, it is meant to ensure that you can put food on the table. It is meant to help you take care of that responsibility – that's why it exists. If you think you are eligible and want to talk to someone who can help you, you can call Maryland Hunger Solutions on their toll-free number at 866-821-5552. They are a non-profit organization which works to eliminate hunger in the state of Maryland. They will be glad to help you figure out if you are eligible. If you are, to help you apply. Because let's face it, Dads have a lot of responsibilities, and getting help with this one will help deal with the others.



Michael J. Wilson
Director
Maryland Hunger Solutions

THINK SPRING!

While the weather certainly is showing us differently, the calendar is inching towards Spring. Here are a few things the winter months have caused to fade into distant memories, yet they only take a bit of planning and preparation:

- Bike Rides—start looking for used bicycles.
- Kite Flying— a low cost (Dollar Store) energy burn activity....running until the kite takes flight.
- Start an herb garden
- Look for new parks and playgrounds
- Make a bird house (Home Depot free Saturday events)
- Plan a Daddy-Child picnic
- Take pictures on your cell phone of plants/trees in various stages of emerging from winter and edit them with different effects.
- Take video clips of any of the above activities

