



EARLY CHILDHOOD
RESOURCE CENTER

James: Fulfilling His Promise

James Cutler has never met a stranger. The gregarious barber is the dad of a three-year-old and the stepdad of an eight-year-old.

James didn't know his own dad. He always promised himself that if he ever had a child, he would become the best father he could possibly be. But with few parenting examples from his own life to draw from, he started out raising his children the same way he was raised, which was unproductive and frustrating.

He's better able to fulfill his promise to himself after taking the *24/7 Dad* class offered by the Early Childhood Resource Center, which he calls "a gem."

The class was a game-changer, offering helpful parenting strategies from the very first session.

As James described it, "I opened up that book and it was full of skills. I'm not a big fan of classes. But that one? I was all in. Who wouldn't want to be a great parent?"

One of the first things he learned was that talking works much better than yelling. Learning that helped him step up his parenting game. Now, he takes every opportunity to bond and be gentle, instead of scolding and spanking. Using his words first is a productive communication strategy he intends to continue.

He has also brainstormed with other dads during Parent Café sessions, which foster open discussion about common, relatable parenting topics.

Now James is a much more confident parent. Because he now has the right information and strategies, he says, "I feel like I've got an 'S' on my chest."

Learning to be a 24/7 Dad

The National Fatherhood Initiative's *24/7 Dad*® curriculum helps fathers learn to be involved, responsible, and committed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The program supports the growth and development of fathers and children as caring and compassionate people who treat themselves, others, and the environment with respect and dignity.

The program focuses on building self-awareness, self-caring, fathering skills, and relationship skills.

We truly believe fatherhood has the power to change our communities, one father at a time.

For more information, visit us at ecresourcecenter.org