



# LIGHTLINES

## Investing in Fathers

A Fiscally Responsible Approach to Social Change

by Eli Williams and Bruce Stapleton

In an era of intense debate over government spending and budget priorities, one often-overlooked solution holds remarkable promise: **strengthening fatherhood**.

While partisan battles rage over social program funding, tax rates, and the proper role and size of government, fatherhood initiatives represent a rare opportunity for common ground—programs that simultaneously strengthen families and reduce taxpayer burden. Will strengthening fatherhood work? Yes, it will!

I (Eli) know firsthand what a difference good fathering makes. My father and mother came from fatherless homes. Yet, they raised thirteen children together on a common laborer's pay. None of their nine sons spent time in prison. Not one of their four daughters became unwed mothers. We were never hungry, we never depended upon welfare, nor did we ever live in subsidized housing. We cost the government little, and each child is now a responsible, tax-paying member of society with a family of their own. The keys to that great return on investment were their faith, father-presence, and committed co-parenting.  
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## Church Partnerships Are Needed

### First, A Little History

From the late 1980s, when Judy and I began our nonprofit ministry work, our partnerships with churches have been vital to our local missionary service to the Springfield community. Early partners included Fellowship Church, Greater Grace Temple, Word of Faith (now RiverSong Church), and several others.

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We have reached over 59,000 people through our Google Ad Grant already in 2025.

## Corporate Sponsorship: A Win-Win for Businesses and Nonprofits

Nonprofit organizations rely on the generosity of individuals, foundations, and corporations to carry out their missions. Corporate sponsorship is a powerful way for businesses to partner with nonprofits and make a meaningful impact on the community.

### Benefits for Nonprofits

Corporate sponsorship can provide nonprofits with much-needed financial support, as well as in-kind donations of goods and services. This support can help nonprofits expand their programs, serve more people, and achieve their objectives.

In addition to financial support, corporate sponsorship can also help nonprofits to raise awareness of their work and build their brand. When a well-known company partners with a nonprofit, it can help to legitimize the organization and attract new supporters.

### Benefits for Corporations

Corporate sponsorship can also be a valuable tool for businesses. It can help companies to build their brand, improve their reputation, and engage their employees. When a company sponsors a nonprofit, it sends a message that the company is committed to giving back to the community.

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# Investing in Fathers



## The Hidden Costs of Father Absence

The statistics paint a sobering picture: 25% of American children—a staggering 18.4 million—are growing up without their biological fathers. This absence isn't just a family tragedy; it's a massive economic drain on our public resources.

Father-absent homes cost American taxpayers nearly \$100 billion annually in direct support payments. And that's just the beginning. This figure doesn't account for the long-term financial impacts:

- **Higher incarceration rates:** Children from fatherless homes are significantly more likely to enter the criminal justice system, costing taxpayers approximately \$80,000 per inmate per year.
- **Increased dependency on public assistance:** Children in father-absent homes are four times more likely to live in poverty, requiring longer-term government support.
- **Greater need for mental health services:** The emotional toll of father absence often translates to increased utilization of publicly funded mental health resources.
- **Remedial education costs:** Schools must allocate additional resources to address the behavioral and educational challenges more common in children from father-absent homes.

These cascading costs create a cycle of expenditure that strains federal, state, and local budgets year after year.

## Breaking the Cycle: How Fatherhood Programs Save Tax Dollars

Unlike many social interventions that require substantial ongoing government funding, fatherhood programs offer exceptional return on investment. For every dollar spent on effective father engagement initiatives, communities save multiple dollars in reduced public expenditures.

Consider these cost-saving outcomes:

1. **Reduced welfare dependency:** When fathers are actively involved, family income typically rises, reducing reliance on TANF, SNAP, and other assistance programs.
2. **Lower juvenile justice costs:** Communities with strong father presence experience demonstrably lower youth crime rates, saving millions in juvenile detention, court, and rehabilitation expenses.
3. **Improved educational outcomes:** Father involvement correlates strongly with better academic performance, reducing the need for costly special education services and remedial programs.
4. **Decreased mental healthcare utilization:** Children with involved fathers experience fewer behavioral and psychological problems, reducing the burden on publicly funded mental health systems.

The fiscal math is straightforward: investing in fathers now prevents much larger government expenditure later.

## The Private Sector Advantage

What makes fatherhood initiatives particularly appealing from a budgetary perspective is that they don't require massive new government bureaucracies or tax increases. Innovations like [Fathering Strong®](#) demonstrate how private-sector approaches can deliver sustainable community transformation through father engagement.

These programs leverage community connections, volunteer mentorship, and targeted education, thereby multiplying their impact without increasing government overhead. The model creates a social infrastructure that reduces dependency rather than managing it, addressing root causes instead of symptoms.

Beyond the Budget:

## The Human Return on Investment

While the financial case for fatherhood programs is compelling, the human impact extends far beyond spreadsheets and budget lines. Children with involved fathers:

- Perform better academically
- Develop healthier relationships
- Show greater resilience and emotional regulation
- Experience higher levels of confidence and well-being

These outcomes represent not just savings but societal gains—stronger communities, more productive future workers, and healthier families for generations to come.

## Investing in Fathers (cont.)

### A Practical Path Forward

For taxpayers and policymakers concerned about fiscal responsibility, supporting fatherhood initiatives offers a pragmatic approach to addressing complex social challenges without expanding government or raising taxes.

Simple steps can make a difference:

- Support community-based fatherhood programs through private donations or corporate social responsibility initiatives
- Advocate for policies that remove barriers to father involvement
- Volunteer as mentors in communities with high rates of father absence
- Recognize businesses that implement father-friendly workplace policies

By investing in fathers, we invest in families. By investing in families, we build stronger communities. And by building stronger communities, we naturally reduce the need for government intervention and expenditure.

In today's polarized climate, few solutions offer common ground. Fatherhood programs represent that rare opportunity—a fiscally responsible approach to meaningful social change that benefits everyone's bottom line, from family budgets to county, state, and federal balance sheets.

### The Innovative Initiatives of Fathering Strong®

Over the past five years, Urban Light Ministries has developed a suite of resources to support and strengthen fatherhood, locally and beyond. Components of the initiative include:

- **The Fathering Strong Mobile App** – Enables the formation of virtual fatherhood communities for connection, empowerment, and engagement through private groups, mentoring, and forums. We are working to provide the Fathering Strong app to other nonprofits, enabling them to better engage with the fathers they seek to serve.
- **The Fathering Strong Podcast** – Informative, inspiring, and encouraging father-focused weekly conversations with fathers and subject matter experts.
- **The Fathering Strong Blog** – Weekly posts on topics that provide practical wisdom and actionable strategies for the everyday challenges fathers face while raising children.
- **FatheringStrong.com** and **UrbanLight.org** – Robust online repositories of informative and inspiring podcasts, articles, videos, devotionals, fatherhood courses, and more.

With these tools, Fathering Strong is well-positioned to lead a faith-inspired fatherhood movement that has the potential to strengthen the institution of fatherhood, restore the Creator-established family order, and thereby begin rebuilding communities without overdependence on government funding. To do that, your support is needed.

### How to Invest in Fathers Through Fathering Strong

- **Give** - Your generous contributions to Urban Light Ministries make it possible for fathers to receive the above resources free of charge. Every gift, large or small, is essential.
- **Volunteer** – Serve as event staff, a content contributor, a virtual group moderator, a mentor of dads, a provider of services, or in other ways.
- **Pray** – Include Urban Light Ministries, our team, and fathers in general in your prayers.
- **Share** – Spread the word about what God is doing through Urban Light Ministries. Encourage fathers you know to get engaged with Fathering Strong.

## New Book Release

June 2025

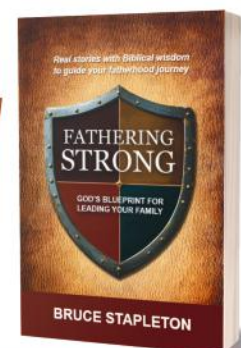
### Fathering Strong -

God's Blueprint for Leading Your Family

by Bruce Stapleton

*Real stories with Biblical wisdom to guide your fatherhood journey.*

**COMING SOON**



## Corporate Sponsorship

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### Benefits for Corporations

Corporate sponsorship can also be a valuable tool for businesses. It can help companies to build their brand, improve their reputation, and engage their employees.

When a company sponsors a nonprofit, it sends a message that the company is committed to giving back to the community. This can help to attract customers, investors, and employees who share those values.

Corporate sponsorship can also provide companies with opportunities to engage their employees in meaningful volunteer activities. This can help to boost employee morale and create a more positive work environment.

### How to Get Involved

If you are a business owner or representative, I encourage you to consider partnering with a nonprofit organization such as Urban Light Ministries. There are many ways to get involved, from sponsoring an event to donating or volunteering your time.

### Examples of Successful Corporate Sponsorships

There are many examples of successful corporate sponsorship. For example, for several years, the Jeff Wyler Automotive Family has partnered with Urban Light Ministries as the title sponsor of the annual Jeff Wyler Charity Invitational golf scramble. This partnership has been beneficial for both organizations. The event enables Urban Light to raise funds for our charitable work, which includes meeting some of the critical needs of families with small children and supporting Fathering Strong. In exchange, Urban Light's staff and volunteers help to run the Jeff Wyler Charity Invitational tournament at the prestigious Springfield Country Club each year.

New ULM corporate sponsors this year include Reliable Home Improvements of Ohio and the Christian Blue Pages. Their benefits include high-profile recognition at our events, including the annual Springfield Mayor's Breakfast and the Good Dad Awards ceremony.

### Conclusion

Corporate sponsorship is a powerful tool that can benefit both businesses and nonprofits. By working together, businesses and nonprofits can make a real difference in the community. We would love to partner with your business in this way. Get details about Urban Light's Corporate Sponsorship opportunities by scanning the QR Code.

Scan QR Code for  
Corporate  
Sponsorships



#### Office address:

20 S. Limestone St., Suite 247  
Springfield, OH 45502

#### Mailing address:

PO Box 3132  
Springfield, OH 45501

Office phone:  
937-727-4891

## Church Partnerships Are Needed

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### We Need You

If you are not currently actively working with us, we are seeking a collaboration with your church to make an impact for Christ in the local community and beyond. We use the term "partnership" because your church will be integral to our mission as we work together to help advance your mission within the community. We desire to partner with you in spreading the gospel and being salt and light in the community, all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Your financial, volunteer, and prayer support of our local missionary efforts help us continue and grow.

### Our Current Work

Through our Fathering Strong® initiative, we provide resources and support to help males become the best they can be as men, fathers, and co-parents, ultimately leading to better outcomes for their children. The Fathering Strong resources we offer include weekly blog posts, podcast episodes, a smartphone app, mentoring, classes, and additional resources.

Through our Care It's for Kids fund, we help meet some of the immediate, critical needs of area children. We do this anonymously to preserve the dignity of the parents.

### How Can We Serve Your Church?

Urban Light can offer Christ-centered male and fatherhood workshops as part of our partnership with your church. These can be scheduled as a single session or as a series, providing a valuable resource for men and fathers in your congregation. Additionally, we can work with you or your men's ministry leadership to set up a private virtual community on the Fathering Strong® App exclusively for the men and fathers of your church, fostering fellowship, mentorship, and accountability.

We would also love to discuss with you how we can partner together to serve the needy children in your neighborhood and the broader community through the quiet yet impactful Care-It's for Kids fund.

We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss these and other potential collaborative opportunities and provide you with a more comprehensive update on our mission. Please use this link to schedule a personal conversation: <https://calendly.com/pastoreli2023>. We look forward to talking with you.

Eli Williams, President  
Urban Light Ministries

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