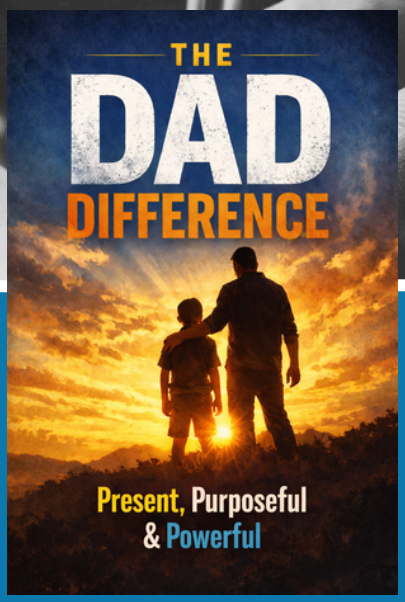
MASSACHUSETTS FATHERHOOD LEADERSHIP SUMMIT 2026





TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

DCU CENTER

50 Foster Street, Worcester, MA

PRESENTED BY THE MASSACHUSETTS FATHERHOOD COLLABORATIVE

EVENT SCHEDULE

08:00 AM

REGISTRATION & WELCOME

Check-in, visit with community providers, and enjoy light refreshments.

09:00 AM

OPENING REMARKS

Commissioner Staverne Miller, Massachusetts Department of Children and Families

The Honorable Cecely A. Reardon, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Youth Services

09:15 AM

KEYNOTE SESSION

Kevin M. Simon, MD, MPH, MBA

The Difference Is Showing Up: Fatherhood, Attention, and the Courage to Stay

10:30 AM

WORKSHOPS (PARALLEL SESSIONS)

- Before the Crisis: Helping Fathers Recognize and Respond to Children's Mental Health Needs **South Ballroom**
- Power of Collaboration: The Journey of the Cambridge Dads Program **RM E**
- Economic Mobility for Fathers and Families: A DTA and DOR Collaboration **RM C**
- Fatherhood After Incarceration: Rebuilding Trust and Connection **RM D**
- From Harm to Healing: Engaging Fathers in Change After Violence in the Family **RM B**
- Turning 50 Barriers to Father Engagement into 50 Opportunities for Father Engagement **Junior Ballroom**

12:30 PM

LUNCH BREAK

Enjoy lunch and connect with fellow attendees and community providers.

01:30 PM

WORKSHOPS (PARALLEL SESSIONS)

- Engaging Fathers in Therapeutic Play to Support Early Childhood Mental Health **South Ballroom**
- Fatherhood and Co-parenting **RM E**
- Partnering with Fathers in Child Sexual Abuse Prevention **RM C**
- Thinking Beyond Workshops and Groups: Building a Robust Fatherhood Community **Junior Ballroom**
- Two Homes, One Childhood: A Father-Inclusive Approach for Providers **RM B**
- We Have a Fatherhood Engagement Leadership Team, "What's Next?" **RM D**

03:30 PM

SUMMIT CONCLUDES

Refreshments, conversations, and new connections.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Kevin M. Simon, MD, MPH, MBA

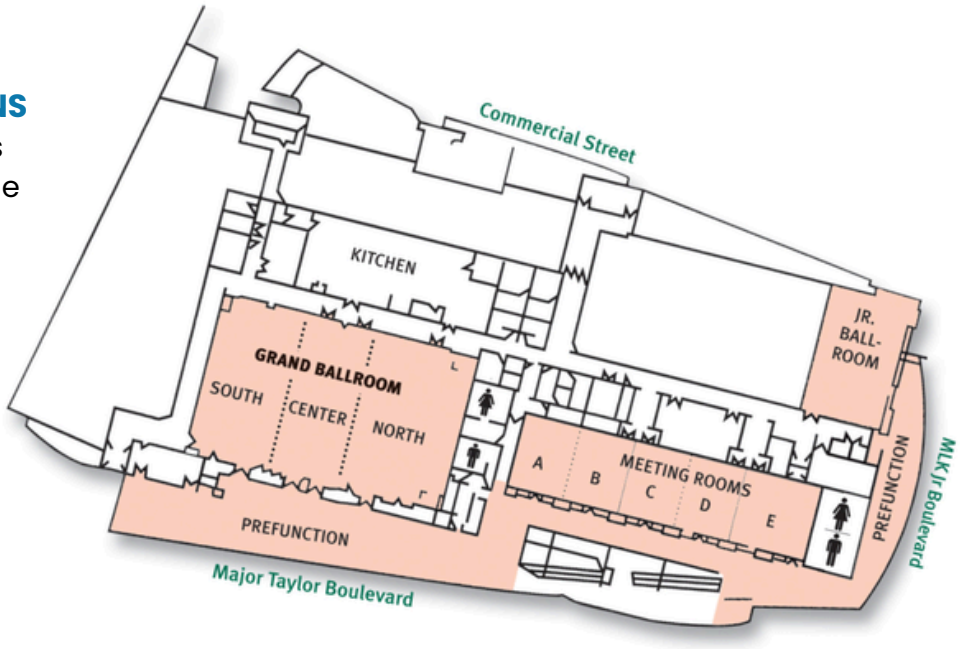
THE DIFFERENCE IS SHOWING UP: FATHERHOOD, ATTENTION, AND THE COURAGE TO STAY

A father's influence is not measured only by what he provides. It is measured by what his presence teaches a child to believe about their own worth. Drawing from psychiatry, public health, his own fatherhood, and encounters with families in hospitals, homes, schools, and communities, Dr. Simon explores the quiet power of fathers and father figures who stay curious, stay available, and repair when they fall short. The keynote will challenge deficit narratives about fathers and invite participants to build families and systems that treat fathers not as peripheral supports but as essential partners in the lives of children.

Dr. Kevin Simon is Boston's first Chief Behavioral Health Officer appointed by Mayor Michelle Wu. Simon is a polymath – a physician-scientist, a healthcare policy expert, an inspirational teacher, and a noted writer. He is an attending pediatric psychiatrist and addiction medicine specialist at Boston Children's Hospital, an Assistant Professor at Harvard Medical School, a former Commonwealth fund fellow in Health Policy at Harvard University, the medical director of community behavioral health agencies, and a healthcare policy and systems consultant.

WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

Workshop presentation slides and materials will be available at www.mfcsummit.org following the Summit, when provided and authorized for sharing by presenters.



WORKSHOPS

AM SESSIONS

10:30am - 12:30pm

South Ballroom

BEFORE THE CRISIS: HELPING FATHERS RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Kevin M. Simon, MD, MPH, MBA

Children signal distress through behavior long before they have the language to explain it. This interactive workshop helps fathers, father figures, and family-serving professionals recognize early signs of emotional difficulty, open conversations that preserve trust, and respond without rushing to judge, correct, or fix. Participants leave with practical tools for strengthening connection, partnering with caregivers and professionals, and knowing when a child needs additional behavioral health support.

Room C

ECONOMIC MOBILITY FOR FATHERS AND FAMILIES: A DTA AND DOR COLLABORATION

Peter Coulombe, JD and Kamaria Moore-Hollis, MPA

This workshop will highlight a collaboration between the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) and Child Support Services Program (DOR) to assist fathers with accessing DTA's Pathways to Work Program, which provides employment and training opportunities to families and individuals.

Room D

FATHERHOOD AFTER INCARCERATION: REBUILDING TRUST AND CONNECTION

Toy Burton and Joseph Bennett

This interactive workshop focuses on rebuilding fatherhood after incarceration. It centers on restoring trust, reconnecting with children, and navigating emotional challenges. Through lived experience and dialogue, participants will gain practical strategies to support fathers in building healthy, consistent relationships.

Room B

FROM HARM TO HEALING: ENGAGING FATHERS IN CHANGE AFTER VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY

Juan Carlos Areán, Ph.D.

This workshop will explore approaches that promote safety, accountability, and growth for fathers and families impacted by domestic violence (DV). Participants will examine real-world challenges, successes, and promising practices, and learn concrete strategies and tools to engage and support fathers who have used violence while promoting family safety and well-being.

Room E

POWER OF COLLABORATION: THE JOURNEY OF THE CAMBRIDGE DADS PROGRAM

James Normil, Matt Dottin, and Shawn Proctor

Explore the history and evolution of citywide fatherhood collaboration, highlight Cambridge Dads' current activities, and share best practices for engaging diverse fathers. Participants will gain practical strategies for developing inclusive programming and identify potential community partners to strengthen and transform their fatherhood initiatives.

Junior Ballroom

TURNING 50 BARRIERS TO FATHER ENGAGEMENT INTO 50 OPPORTUNITIES FOR FATHER ENGAGEMENT

Abdul-Rahmaan I. Muhammad, LMSW

This interactive training helps professionals working with fathers shift their perspective on engagement barriers. While many obstacles exist, some beyond control, participants are encouraged to reframe these challenges as opportunities to strengthen connections, deepen engagement, and promote positive outcomes for fathers, children, families, and the systems that support them.

WORKSHOPS

PM SESSIONS

1:30pm -3:30pm

South Ballroom

ENGAGING FATHERS IN THERAPEUTIC PLAY TO SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

Christy Moulin, MA

With a definition of Early Childhood Mental Health centering fathers, learners will consider the critical step of engaging fathers in play to serve young children. We will use the framework of Regulation-Informed Interactive Play with self-reflection and skills practice essential to father-friendly interventions.

Room E

FATHERHOOD AND CO-PARENTING

LaWaun Curry, BA, and Tara Register Curry, AA

Families come in many different forms. Whether a father is co-habitating or not, come understand why their role is important. Learn principles that will allow fathers to see the glass as half full rather than half empty when co-parenting.

Room C

PARTNERING WITH FATHERS IN CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION

Ana María Ramos, BHM, and Chris White, MPA

This interactive workshop equips family support professionals with practical tools to intentionally engage fathers as active partners in prevention. Through real-world examples and guided practice, participants will learn strategies for initiating meaningful conversations with fathers about their role in protecting children and strengthening family relationships. Participants will also build coaching skills to support fathers in having ongoing, age-appropriate conversations about bodies, boundaries, and consent, leaving with practical language and increased confidence to bring fathers into prevention efforts.

Junior Ballroom

THINKING BEYOND WORKSHOPS AND GROUPS: BUILDING A ROBUST FATHERHOOD COMMUNITY

Keegan Albaugh, BA, Marlon Fisher, BS, and Dan Castrigano, M.Ed., PEL-MGSS

In addition to offering curriculum-based classes and groups, what are other methods of engaging fathers in their roles as caregivers? Come learn about Dad Guild, home to Northern New England's largest fatherhood community, and what strategies they have used to build a growing network of 2,500+ dads across Vermont.

Room B

TWO HOMES, ONE CHILDHOOD: A FATHER-INCLUSIVE APPROACH FOR PROVIDERS

Nancy Ritz, MSOL

This interactive workshop explores co-parenting through a father-inclusive, attachment-informed, trauma-aware lens. Participants will examine fathers' emotional experiences after separation and learn practical strategies to strengthen engagement, support emotional regulation, and foster healthy parent-child attachment across two homes. Case discussions and reflective exercises provide tools for promoting respectful, child-centered co-parenting dynamics.

Room D

WE HAVE A FATHERHOOD ENGAGEMENT LEADERSHIP TEAM, "WHAT'S NEXT?"

Rob LeBlanc, MS, and Aaron Tilton, BSCJ

Father Engagement Leadership Teams (FELT) have been established across the Department of Children and Families area offices. Implementation of the core components of the FELT model has varied. Challenges have been identified related to structure, clarity, sustainability, and how to effectively begin the work, while adapting to shifting initiatives and practices.

SOCIAL WORK CONTINUING EDUCATION

This program has been approved for 5 Social Work Continuing Education hours for relicensure, in accordance with 258 CMR. NASW-MA Chapter CE Approving Program.

PRESENTER BIOS

KEEGAN ALBAUGH, BA, FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DAD GUILD

Keegan brings over a decade of experience in trauma-informed education and family support. Prior to founding Dad Guild in 2019, Keegan spent ten years teaching at Howard Center's Centerpoint School, where he developed expertise in working with youth facing significant mental health and behavioral challenges. His personal experience as a father of two young children, combined with his professional background, informs his passionate commitment to engaging fathers in their caregiving roles and promoting healthy masculinity. Under his leadership, Dad Guild has grown from serving 35 fathers to a network of 2,500 dads across Vermont.

JUAN CARLOS AREÁN, PH.D., PROGRAM DIRECTOR AT FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Juan Carlos is an internationally recognized peacemaker, activist, public speaker, and published author. Since 1991, he has worked to engage men across different cultures to become better fathers, intimate partners, and allies to end domestic violence and achieve gender equity. He presently works as a Program Director at Futures Without Violence. He is an active trainer and facilitator who has led hundreds of workshops and presentations throughout the United States, the Americas, and the Caribbean, as well as in Europe, Asia, the US Congress, the White House, and the United Nations in New York and Geneva.

JOSEPH BENNETT, FOUNDER OF YARDTIME

YardTime is an organization committed to empowering returning citizens by addressing mental health, supporting successful reentry, and strengthening family bonds. After spending over two decades incarcerated for a crime he did not commit, Joseph now focuses on breaking cycles of incarceration and building stronger communities. He facilitates men's groups and serves on panels centered on reentry, healing, and fatherhood, with a vision of creating communities with active and engaged fathers.

TOY BURTON, FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DEEDEE'S CRY

DeeDee's Cry is a BIPOC-led organization focused on suicide prevention, mental health, and family support. As a suicide attempt and loss survivor, Toy leads community-based work rooted in lived experience. DeeDee's Cry has a strong focus on men's mental health through its Man2Man support group and five years of hosting its Men's Mind, Body & Spirit Summit. Toy facilitates workshops and panels that create space for honest conversations, accountability, and rebuilding relationships.

DAN CASTRIGANO, M.ED., PEL-MGSS, REGIONAL EXPANSION COORDINATOR

Dan is a teacher, community organizer, and father, and serves as Dad Guild's Regional Expansion Coordinator. Dan has spent his life working with children and young people. He has taught in traditional and alternative schools, spending much of his career teaching middle school social studies. Dan has also worked at summer camps, coached middle and high school sports, and developed curricula for teachers. Dan cares deeply about environmental and social justice and is committed to dismantling patriarchy and achieving gender equality. In addition to overseeing Dad Guild's expansion efforts, Dan is also the host and producer of the organization's monthly podcast, Dad Pod.

PETER COULOMBE, JD, REGIONAL DIRECTOR DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE/CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

Peter has worked for DOR/CSS for over 20 years and in various roles for the agency, beginning as an attorney in the CSS Policy & Procedures unit, before moving into operational management positions. He has been the Regional Director of the CSS Metro Regional Office since 2015.

LAWAUN J. CURRY, BA

LaWaun is a licensed social worker, parent educator, and Master Trainer of the Nurturing Fathers Program® with more than 25 years of experience working with children and families. A graduate of Colby College, his career has included developing youth enrichment and afterschool programs, child welfare, foster care, and fatherhood programming. LaWaun has developed and facilitated Nurturing Fathers programs, including a fully funded summer program for fathers. He has presented workshops for UMass Boston, Children's Trust, the New England Fathering Conference, and other organizations. A father and grandfather, LaWaun is passionate about positive male role models, co-parenting, and strengthening families.

TARA REGISTER CURRY, AA

Tara is a community leader, parent educator, and advocate dedicated to strengthening families and building resilient communities. Her experience includes leading Dorchester CARES, a DCF Community Connections Coalition, and facilitating Family Nurturing and Breakthrough Parenting programs and workshops. Tara has also supported families impacted by community violence through the Community Healing Response Network and citywide Healing Response Team. A certified Trauma and Resiliency Life Coach, she also serves as Pastor of Evangelism and Community Outreach at Full Life Gospel Center. Tara's work centers on connecting families to resources, fostering healing, strengthening communities, and helping individuals and families thrive.

MATT DOTTIN, CAMBRIDGE DADS COORDINATOR

Matt is a Cambridge native, proud father, and Cambridge Dads Coordinator with the Center for Families and Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative. He leads community-based programming that connects fathers and male caregivers through family activities, peer support, and meaningful relationships. From father-child outings and recreational events to discussion groups and wellness activities, Matt creates welcoming opportunities for dads to connect, share experiences, and build supportive networks. His approach emphasizes intentional outreach, consistency, and trust, particularly among fathers who may feel disconnected from traditional family services. Matt is passionate about strengthening families and building communities where fathers feel valued, supported, and included.

MARLON FISHER, BS, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR AT DAD GUILD

Marlon is a dynamic nonprofit leader, U.S. Army veteran, and lifelong advocate for youth and families who serves as Dad Guild's Development Director. He brings a deep commitment to service rooted in over 15 years of experience across education, juvenile justice, residential treatment, and community-based programs. Previously, Marlon worked as a Family Services Worker for the Vermont Department for Children and Families, providing trauma-informed care for high-risk youth, and held roles with the Department of Corrections and Howard Center, where he partnered with law enforcement to de-escalate mental health crises.

ROB LEBLANC, MS, ASSESSMENT SOCIAL WORKER DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Rob has worked in human services for 29 years, including 17 years as a social worker with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families. He has served in assessment, ongoing, response, and adoption roles and has facilitated the Nurturing Fathers Program since 2021. Rob is a member of the Massachusetts Fatherhood Collaborative and facilitates the Fatherhood Engagement Leadership Team in DCF's New Bedford Area Office. He presented on Fatherhood Engagement Leadership Teams at the 2024 Massachusetts Fatherhood Leadership Summit. In 2025, Rob earned a Master's degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology to advance father inclusion, training, and organizational culture.

KAMARIA MOORE-HOLLIS, MPA, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Kamaria currently serves as the Associate Commissioner of Employment and Training Programs for the Department of Transitional Assistance. In this role, she oversees DTA's Pathways to Work program, which provides employment and training programming to DTA clients, including SNAP Path to Work and programming for TAFDC families. These programs serve close to 9,000 clients per year and total over $67M through a variety of funding sources. She has spent her entire DTA career with employment and training programs and is committed to supporting the economic mobility of DTA clients.

CHRISTY MOULIN, MA, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD AT THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

Christy comes with a combination of personal and professional experience with a deep passion for building systems to support optimal emotional health for young children and their families. Her field of expertise includes creating, implementing, and improving the practices, programs, policies, and systems that touch young children and the adults who care for them (families and professionals). Christy has 20+ years of experience working with primary care providers, community behavioral health, early education and care, and state agency programs and providers to do better by young children and their families. Every day she endeavors to walk through the world in ways that cause the least harm and shine a light on everyday acts of healing.

ABDUL-RAHMAAN I. MUHAMMAD, LMSW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MY PEOPLE COMMUNITY SERVICES

My People Community Services is a community-based nonprofit dedicated to building stronger, more connected communities through innovative programming and collaboration. With over 20 years of experience in human services, Muhammad has led impactful work locally and nationally focused on manhood, fatherhood, youth development, and community transformation.

JAMES NORMIL, FATHERHOOD SPECIALIST, CAMBRIDGE DADS

James is a Fatherhood Specialist and Father Facilitator at Cambridge's Baby University, where he leads parenting workshops, provides individualized family support, and connects fathers with community resources. With more than 20 years of experience as a youth worker and spiritual leader, James is passionate about empowering fathers and strengthening families. He also supports Cambridge Dads initiatives and serves as founder and president of the Boston chapter of the K.I.N.G. Movement, a national men's ministry. A husband and father of three, James believes that supporting fathers creates lasting, positive change for children, families, and communities across generations.

SHAWN PROCTOR, PROGRAM MANAGER, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & FAMILY SUPPORT DIVISION, CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICE PROGRAMS

Shawn is Program Manager of the Community Engagement and Family Support Division for the City of Cambridge's Department of Human Service Programs. With more than a decade of experience advancing fatherhood initiatives, he oversees Baby University, Cambridge Dads, the Center for Families, and case management services. Shawn has strengthened father engagement through innovative outreach, parenting education, and community partnerships, including Fatherhood Buzz, a longstanding collaboration with local barbershops. His leadership has helped expand father participation and create inclusive, supportive networks for families. Shawn is passionate about advancing equity, removing barriers, and building stronger connections across family-serving systems.

ANA MARÍA RAMOS, BHM, CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINER AT THE CHILDREN'S TRUST OF MASSACHUSETTS
Ana leads statewide trainings to help organizations, educators, and families prevent, recognize, and respond to child sexual abuse. A certified Sexual Health Educator, she previously facilitated comprehensive sexuality education programs for parents and youth with the Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts. After a successful career in hospitality management, Ana María shifted her focus to empowering families through education. A proud Puerto Rican mother and bilingual educator, she is passionate about helping adults build the knowledge, confidence, and communication skills needed to create safer, healthier communities for children.

NANCY RITZ, MSOL, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF PREVENTION PROGRAMS
Nancy is an experienced human services and workforce development leader with a strong background in coaching, program management, and community engagement. With more than 15 years of leadership experience across education, prevention services, and family support programs, she has guided individuals and teams toward meaningful personal, educational, and career outcomes. Her work focuses on learner engagement, staff development, strategic partnerships, fatherhood programming, and creating supportive environments that empower individuals to achieve long-term success.

AARON TILTON, BSCJ, FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE COORDINATOR DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Aaron Tilton has served as a social worker with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families for 25 years. He leads Family Group Conference and Family Find Coordinators, helping strengthen family connections and ensure children achieve safety and permanency through family-centered planning. Aaron is the Northern Regional Fatherhood Engagement Leadership Team Coordinator, a facilitator of the Nurturing Fathers Program, and a member of the Massachusetts Fatherhood Collaborative. A recipient of the 2018 DCF Commissioner's Performance Recognition Award, he has presented at state and regional fatherhood conferences and is committed to advancing father engagement, collaboration, equity, and positive outcomes for children and families.

CHRIS WHITE, MPA, FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE COORDINATOR AT THE CHILDREN'S TRUST
Chris is the proud father of two young sons and a passionate fatherhood advocate, trainer, and leader dedicated to strengthening families and supporting the professionals who serve them. As Fatherhood Initiative Coordinator at The Children's Trust, he partners with state agencies, community organizations, and practitioners across Massachusetts to advance father-inclusive policies, practices, and programs. Chris is known for translating research into practical strategies that help professionals effectively engage and support fathers. His engaging, evidence-informed trainings inspire systems-level change while highlighting the vital role fathers play in promoting child development, family well-being, and stronger communities.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO NOTICE

The Massachusetts Fatherhood Leadership Summit is a public event. Photographs and video recordings taken during Summit activities may be used by the Massachusetts Fatherhood Collaborative (MFC) and its partners for educational, informational, and promotional purposes.

By attending the Summit, participants acknowledge that they may be photographed or recorded and that their images may be used without compensation.

Attendees who prefer not to be photographed or recorded should notify event staff at registration.