2023 NATIONAL FORUM:
All About Fathers* and the Men* in Children’s Lives
*cis and transgender
MAY 2-4, 2023
www.brazeltontouchpoints.org
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome .............................................................................................................. 1
Agenda .................................................................................................................. 3
TBB Award Ceremony ......................................................................................... 8
Musical Finale ..................................................................................................... 10
Roundtable Descriptions ................................................................................... 12
Speakers Bios ..................................................................................................... 19
About BTC .......................................................................................................... 33
Stay In Touch ...................................................................................................... 34

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![Brazelton Touchpoints Foundation](image-url)

Why fathers?

Families are changing, and so is fatherhood. So many men want to be more involved in raising their children. Yet they’re not always welcome when they show up at programs and services for families. Programs and providers are often unprepared to open up space for fathers and the other men in children's lives.

BTC's 2023 virtual National Forum: *All About Fathers* and the *Men* in Children's Lives (*cis- and transgender*) brings together fathers and the men in children's lives for a series of conversations that:

- Provide fresh perspectives on the many facets of masculinity that fathers and men bring to children and families
- Shift mindsets about the roles of fathers and men in children’s lives – from the beginning and before
- Build awareness of cultural, ethnic, and racial differences and similarities in father roles, and in the supports and barriers for fathers' involvement in their children's lives
- Understand fatherhood as a developmental process across the lifespan
- Explore the role of fathers’ relationships with children’s mothers, whether cohabiting or romantically involved or not, in their involvement in their children’s lives
- Affirm fathers and men who work with children and families for their essential role in children’s lives – from the beginning and before
Renowned pediatrician, T. Berry Brazelton, MD, did everything in his power to welcome fathers in his pediatric practice, provocatively asking about circumcision during the prenatal visit, playfully vying with fathers for their newborn baby’s attention, and surfacing gatekeeping wherever it was keeping fathers out of their children’s lives.

We will remember Dr. Brazelton at this year’s **T. Berry Brazelton Award Ceremony** on Wednesday, May 3, at 3:30 PM ET / 12:30 PM PT. We will posthumously honor Dr. Betty Bardige as this year’s awardee, with a reading by artist and children’s book author Shabazz Larkin. Betty was a developmental psychologist, author, advocate for young children’s language and literacy, and former Chair of the Brazelton Touchpoints Foundation.

Sincerely,

Joshua Sparrow, MD
Executive Director
Brazelton Touchpoints Center
Tuesday, May 2, 2023

**Welcome and Opening**
11 – 11:30 AM ET / 8 – 8:30 AM PT

- Opening remarks presented by U.S. Congressman Jimmy Gomez (D Calif.), Founder of the Congressional Dads Caucus
- Read about the Congressional Dads Caucus [here](#).

**Finding the “Dad” Path: Two Native Men Discuss their Journey to Successful Fatherhood**
11:30 AM – 1 PM ET / 8:30 – 10 AM PT

Moderator:
- Tarajean Yazzie Mintz, EdD, Co-founder and Principal Consultant, First Light Education Project, LLC; Project Director, Indigenous Early Learning Collaborative

Speakers:
- Chris Allen, computer developer, enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, born and raised in Shiprock, New Mexico
- Duane Humeyestewa, multimedia storyteller, filmmaker, content producer, and creative consultant; born and raised on the Hopi reservation in northeastern Arizona

**Break**
1 – 1:30 PM ET / 10 – 10:30 AM PT

**Men at the Beginning of Life and Before**
1:30 – 3 PM ET / 10:30 AM – 12 PM PT

Moderator:
- Anne Stone, Early Childhood Innovation Director, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Economic Services Administration; Founder and Director, Washington State Fatherhood Council
Speakers:
- Joel Austin, Founder, President & Chief Executive Officer, Daddy University Inc.; Executive Director, The School of Parent Education; Certified Postpartum Doula
- Craig Garfield, MD, Professor of Pediatrics and of Medical Social Sciences, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine; practicing pediatrician, Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago
- Nicholas Kasovac, Pediatric Occupational Therapist, developer of The DAD Projects (Fathers & Infants, Toddlers & Fathers), Milk Men: Dads and Breastfeeding Support, and Baseball Tummy Time
- José Romo Ramirez, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program, Washington State Department of Health; class instructor, Conscious Fathering program, Parent Trust for Washington Children

Break
3 – 3:30 PM ET / 12 – 12:30 PM PT

Men Who Play Professional Roles in the Lives of Children and Families
3:30 – 5 PM ET / 12:30 – 2:00 PM PT

Moderator:
- Joshua Sparrow, MD, Executive Director, Brazelton Touchpoints Center

Speakers:
- Kitt Cox, founder & co-coordinator of North Shore Postpartum Help
- Haji Shearer, Associate Commissioner of Family and Community Supports at the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care
- Nick Terrones, Director at Daybreak Star Preschool, Seattle, Washington
Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Opening
11 – 11:30 AM ET / 8 – 8:30 AM PT

Black Fathers’ Mental Health: Trauma, Loss, Hope, and Joy
11:30 AM – 1 PM ET / 8:30 – 10 AM PT

Moderator:
• Hassan Daniel, Founder and CEO of The Father Factory, Inc., a positive parenting and counseling program for fathers who have experienced childhood trauma

Speakers:
• Dar’Ron Anderson, LCSWA, father, author, family engagement specialist, developer of Fatherhood Counseling
• Charles Johnson, maternal health advocate and Founder of 4Kira4Moms

Break
1 – 1:30 PM ET / 10 – 10:30 AM PT

Supporting Father Involvement: Parents as Partners
1:30 – 3 PM ET / 10:30 AM – 12 PM PT

Moderator:
• Deutron Kebebew, Founder/President of MENtors: Driving Change for Boys, Men & Dads

Speakers:
• Carolyn Pape Cowan, PhD, Professor of Psychology Emerita, University of California, Berkeley
• Philip Cowan, PhD, Professor of Psychology Emeritus and Professor of the Graduate School at the University of California, Berkeley
• Kyle Pruett, MD, Clinical Professor of Child Psychiatry and Nursing, Yale School of Medicine’s Child Study Center
• Marsha Kline Pruett, PhD, MSL, ABPP, Maconda Brown O’Connor Professor, Smith College School for Social Work

All About Fathers and the Men in Children’s Lives
Break and How You Can Bring SFI to Your Program —
Building Your SFI Facilitator Team
3 – 3:30 PM ET / 12 – 12:30 PM PT

- Mindy May, MS, Director of Partnership and Professional Development,
  Brazelton Touchpoints Center

T. Berry Brazelton Award Ceremony honoring Betty Bardige
3:30 – 5 PM ET / 12:30 – 2 PM PT

- Shabazz Larkin, father, artist, poet, film maker, painter, book-maker, and
  author of the acclaimed children’s book, *The Thing about Bees: A Love Story*
Thursday, May 4, 2023

Opening
11 – 11:30 AM ET / 8 – 8:30 AM PT

Gay and Trans Dads
11:30 AM – 1 PM ET / 8:30 – 10 AM PT

Moderator:
- Joshua Sparrow, MD, Executive Director, Brazelton Touchpoints Center

Speakers:
- Michael Accardi, Director of Resource Development, Brazelton Touchpoints Center
- Luis Roldan Aponte, Licensed Massage Therapist
- Kayden Coleman, Black transgender man who has carried and given birth to two daughters; advocate for the transgender, Black, and queer communities
- Jose Garces Rivera, MD, physician
- Brian Rosenberg, Founder of Gays With Kids, creator and head coach of GWK Academy, the only App designed specifically to help gay and queer men become dads

Break
1 – 1:30 PM ET / 10 – 10:30 AM PT

Black Fathers Supporting Black Mothers and Babies
1:30 – 3 PM ET / 10:30 AM – 12 PM PT

Moderator:
- Jessica Roach, MPH, maternal and child health professional, reproductive justice advocate, and Co-Founder and CEO, Restoring Our Own Through Transformation (ROOTT)

Speakers:
- Eric Johnson, PhD, author, Chief Consultant, Strategies to Succeed
- Dorian Wingard, COO and Partner at ROOTT

Break
3 – 3:30 PM ET / 12 – 12:30 PM PT

Closing Reflections
3:30 – 4:30 PM ET / 12:30 – 1:30 PM PT

- Closing remarks by Office of Head Start Director Khari Garvin
- Boston Renaissance Charter Public School Choir: Voices of Renaissance
T. Berry Brazelton Award honorees seek out, deeply respect, and give voice to the intrinsic strengths and truths of babies, young children, and the families, communities, and cultures that nurture them. They embody Dr. Brazelton’s gifts — his skill and dedication as a mentor, and his commitment to bringing people together to discover the potential that emerges from their relationships with each other. Brazelton awardees also share his ability to inspire the next generation of leaders and nurturers to do the same.

This year we will posthumously honor our friend and colleague — and Berry Brazelton’s too — the late Dr. Betty Bardige. Like Berry Brazelton, Betty Bardige was not only a leader in early child development research, but also in using research for advocacy and activism. Because her focus was on early language and literacy development, Shabazz Larkin, the extraordinary artist and children’s book author, will be joining us to honor Betty Bardige with a reading of his book, *The Thing About Bees: A Love Story*. It is fitting as this story is about overcoming fear through learning and love.

**When:** Wednesday, May 3, 2023 @ 3:30 – 5 PM ET / 12:30 – 2 PM PT

**Where:** [https://bostonchildrens.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAsf-6rrT0sE9LtJJRkdgMYQYk9EpiXAh95](https://bostonchildrens.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAsf-6rrT0sE9LtJJRkdgMYQYk9EpiXAh95)
Shabazz Larkin is an African American artist, poet, painter and book-maker. Larkin is based in Nashville, TN, painting portraits of black culture in stark black or red skin, a rebellion against Eurocentric notions of identity, and is best known for his desire to capture the beauty of resilience in black life. His technique of vandalizing photographs, overwhelming use of color and bold typography veils his true intention to explore issues of justice, spirituality and the power of Black joy.

Shabazz has a long list of private collaborators, from orgs like the Obama Foundation to moguls like Bill Gates, Sean Combs, Maya Angelou and a long list of other kings, presidents and global brands. When he is not making art, you might find him leading a meditation with Soul music. Shabazz now serves as the head of content for a Mindfulness app called True Voice, designed to make meditation and wellness accessible to all people starting with those that have been underserved.

He is also the founder of Larkin Art & Company, creating a line of creative offerings and books that bridge the well-being and mindfulness gap for Black, Indigenous and People of Color.
This year, the National Forum closing will again feature the uplifting voices of the extraordinary Boston children’s choir, The Voices of Renaissance.

- “I was going to talk about the problem, but after hearing them, I realize that the solution is right here in the room.” Ayanna Gregory, daughter of celebrated Comedian and Human Rights Activist Dick Gregory

- “Powerful and timely!” Congressman John Lewis, Georgia

- “Wow! What a powerful sound from such young voices!” President Barack Obama

The Voices of Renaissance was formed in the fall of 1999, at the request of the former Superintendent of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School, Dr. Roger F. Harris. The mission of the chorus is to convey positive messages and inspiration to people of all ages through the performance of vocal music. Under the direction of Ms. Evelyn D. Lee (Director of Visual and Performing Arts) and Mr. David-Christopher James (Assistant Director and Accompanist), these talented musicians, singing in three-part harmony, maintain good grades, attend rehearsals during the school week, serve as ambassadors for the school and role models for their peers.

The Voices of Renaissance infrastructure also serves as a mentoring program. The tenor section, The Young Kings, and the soprano and alto sections, The First Ladies of Renaissance, are a part of our mentoring and performance programs. The Voices of Renaissance made its debut at a reception held at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel for former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Check out their hit single, “Today I Will Be Great” on iTunes.
Ms. Evelyn D. Lee, Boston Renaissance Charter Public School Children’s Choir Director

A versatile and skillful educator of 35+ years, Ms. Evelyn D. Lee has prepared children choruses for performances for Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, and performances at Boston Symphony Hall, Harvard University, the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston City Hall, The Massachusetts State House, and the John F. Kennedy Library, among others. Ms. Lee has traveled with her choirs to Georgia and performed at Spelman College, Morehouse College, Fort Valley State University, and the Ebenezer Baptist Church at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, among others.

Ms. Evelyn D. Lee is a classical soprano and gospel artist who has performed with Patti LaBelle, The New England Spiritual Ensemble, Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops Orchestra, and Seji Ozawa, former Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. She has received numerous awards, including the Golden Apple Award, given to 15 teachers of excellence in the Boston Public Schools system, the Women Amongst Us Award, the African-Americans Making History Today Living Legend Award, the Champions for Children Award, and the Urban League Education Award, among many others.
May 2, 2023

Finding the “Dad” Path: Two Native Men Discuss their Journey to Successful Fatherhood
11:30 AM – 1 PM ET / 8:30 – 10 AM PT

In dialogue with two Native men, Duane Humeyestewa (Hopi), the father of an adult son, and Chris Allen (Diné), the father of a young child, we will explore the discoveries, the lessons, successes and challenges, and the ultimate joy of fathers raising Native children. What hopes do these men have for their children? What strengths do they draw upon from their respective Indigenous cultures to guide them? How have they created the path to fatherhood, and how does that path evolve as their children grow into Native adults?
Men at the Beginning of Life and Before
1:30 – 3 PM ET / 10:30 AM – 12 PM PT

How do men support fathers and mothers from pregnancy, through birth and breastfeeding, to become the parents and partners they aspire to be? Let us count the ways — with certified postpartum doula and founder of Daddy University, Joel Austin; pediatrician Craig Garfield, a “dad bod” researcher (seriously!) and author of the American Academy of Pediatrics’ three statements on Fathers; Nicholas Kasovac, a certified breastfeeding counselor, and Prenatal Dads and Dads and Development instructor; and José Romo Ramirez, a Dad WIC worker and Conscious Fathering Instructor. Together, they’ll talk about the roles they play supporting fathers and mothers at the beginning of life and before in this conversation moderated by Anne Stone, a founder and director of the Washington State Fatherhood Council.
Men Who Play Professional Roles in the Lives of Children and Families
3:30 – 5 PM ET / 12:30 – 2 PM PT

Why do children — and their families — need men in early childhood settings? What do boys — and girls — learn about themselves when there is a male early educator in their lives? And what difference does it make for fathers’ engagement in early education settings and in their children’s lives? Kitt Cox, Haji Shearer, and Nick Terrones talk with moderator Joshua Sparrow about the joys and challenges of being in the minority as male early educators, and family supporters, as well as how their presence can enrich children’s development, and that of their families too.

Kitt Cox
Haji Shearer
Joshua Sparrow
Nick Terrones

All About Fathers and the Men in Children’s Lives
May 3, 2023

Black Fathers’ Mental Health: Trauma, Loss, Hope, and Joy
11:30 AM – 1 PM ET / 8:30 – 10 AM PT

How do fathers find their way through trauma and loss to hope and joy? Where do their paths take them when racism amplifies the harms? Dar’Ron Anderson, Hassan Daniel, and Charles Johnson all know from personal experience, and from the men they partner with. Together they work to discover the strengths that adversity may instill and that fatherhood nurtures. Join them as they share the ways that men hurt too, and how fatherhood can help heal.

Dar’Ron Anderson

Hassan Daniel

Charles Johnson
Too many father involvement programs are based on stereotypical assumptions and fail to address the obstacles that keep men from becoming the fathers they aspire to be. Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) is a research-based program that surfaces these barriers and works with fathers and their co-parents — whether straight or gay, whether cohabiting or romantically involved or not — to build strong parenting partnerships, in person and over time. Studies show that, as a result of their strengthened collaboration, parents who participate in the SFI program enhance their children’s well-being and development, and their own too. Founders Carolyn and Phillip Cowan, and Kyle and Marsha Pruett tell us how in this conversation moderated by SFI facilitator, Deutron Kebebew.
May 4, 2023

Gay and Trans Dads
11:30 AM – 1 PM ET / 8:30 – 10 AM PT

Michael Accardi, Luis Roldan Aponte, Kayden Coleman, José Garces Rivera, and Brian Rosenberg will talk with moderator Joshua Sparrow about their joys and aspirations, and their concerns and challenges, as gay fathers and trans fathers. Find out what has harmed and what has helped on their paths to fatherhood, and how everyone can join in to make our world a more inclusive one in these divisive times.
Black fathers and men matter in Black women’s lives as primary sources of support through pregnancy, birth, and their children’s first years. Racism has disrupted Black families by the ways Black fathers are excluded, seen, or not seen, and by the ways it has led them to see themselves. Restoring Our Own Through Transformation (ROOTT) works with Black men and women to improve their families' maternal, neonatal, and infant health outcomes. Find out how in this conversation moderated by ROOTT CEO Jessica Roach, with ROOTT COO Dorian Wingard and their colleague Dr. Eric Johnson, chief consultant at Strategies for Success.
Michael R. Accardi, MPP, brings a diverse and broad array of experience to his role as Director of Resource Development at the Brazelton Touchpoints Center (BTC), spanning more than 20 years in the nonprofit sector. Throughout his career, Michael has designed institutional advancement strategies, and led their tactical implementation through program development and frontline fundraising. Evidence of his success is found in many forms, including securing major philanthropic investments from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies; building transformational workforce development partnerships and career ladders; cultivating and recruiting boards of directors and advisors; and designing new centers of thought, programming, and service — all with a focus on advancing mission and achieving resource development goals.

Prior to joining BTC, Michael served in various organizational leadership roles. At Merrimack College in North Andover, Massachusetts, Michael helped design and implement Merrimack's 10-year strategic plan, developing signature initiatives for the College while growing fundraising revenues in the process. Michael led the reorganization of the development department, creating a frontline fundraising team that led to the doubling of philanthropic income in under five years. Before joining Merrimack College, Michael worked at Northeastern University's College of Professional Studies, building the College's fundraising infrastructure and strategy, and partnering across the University on the development of its national campus expansion plan, which has catalyzed tremendous institutional growth, leading to the establishment of professional campuses across North America. In addition, Michael has provided consulting services and strategic counsel to dozens of organizations around the country, both independently and as an Affiliate of Marts & Lundy, and has taught fundraising as an adjunct professor in various graduate degree programs.

Chris Allen, MPA, is an innovative tech professional with over 20 years of experience working as a computer developer. Chris has partnered with higher education institutions, nonprofits, and several tribal programs and agencies. Chris earned an MPA from the University of New Mexico with a concentration in Public Management. He also earned his undergraduate degree from Arizona State University. He is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation and was born and raised in Shiprock, New Mexico.
When not on the computer, Chris can be found spending time with his family. That being: playing legos with his 5-year-old son Aiden, telling dad jokes to his 10-year-old niece Petra, or doing his best Bandit (Bluey's dad) tickle monster impression. Chris has spent many years putting together toys, hours building pillow forts, and several minutes playing freeze dance with the inseparable little ones in his life. When not being a dad, Chris can be found working in the garage, spending time outdoors, or out golfing or running the trails around the neighborhood.

**Dar'Ron Anderson, LCSWA**, provides fatherhood counseling to fathers, father figures, and men. As The Clinical Father Engagement Specialist™, Dar'Ron works with fathers, professionals, and communities to help strengthen the family structure. His vision is to increase the visibility of fathers and have them widely recognized as a high commodity, loyal, and a necessity to the family structure. Dar'Ron’s goals are to increase human capital, promote self-sufficiency, and encourage paternal involvement.

Dar'Ron has been dedicated to the advancement of fathers and families for over 10 years and through his experiences has developed Fatherhood Counseling — an innovative and effective approach to address the everyday concerns of fathers and their families. His approach was awarded by the National Association of Counties (NACo) for his effectiveness with fathers of Wake County, North Carolina. Dar'Ron's methods of treatment are based on scientific research and professional experience as a clinician. Dar'Ron is a U.S. Air Force Reserves veteran and holds graduate degrees in both Social Work and Human Behavior.

**Joel Austin** is the Founder, President & Chief Executive Officer for Daddy University Inc. and the Executive Director of The School of Parent Education. He is also a Certified Postpartum Doula. In this role, he serves as a strong, undeniable force in propelling males and positive parenting to the forefront of the family and community agenda.

Fueled by his role as a father of four, Joel is personally and professionally committed to educating and re-educating people about the importance of fatherhood. Through his leadership, Daddy University Inc. has grown into a recognized authority on fatherhood information, support, and training. As a national speaker and skilled facilitator, Joel presents to thousands across the nation, infusing his passion through audiences and empowering individuals and groups to positively impact the lives of others.
Among his many accomplishments, Joel is the founder of the Annual Daddy Daughter Dance; in its eleventh year, it has become a tradition that changes the lives of young women everywhere. He is also the program developer for the Fathers Club, a free weekly fatherhood training group now at four different locations in the city of Philadelphia. He serves fathers from all backgrounds, ages, and stages. His latest venture is the Doulas 4 Dads program, providing training and certification to over 10 male Doulas providing maternal and paternal care to new mothers and fathers. Always the visionary, Joel in 2020 established the Delta Alpha Delta (DAD) Fraternity Inc., so all fathers of all ages and stages can come together and support each other in brotherhood.

Kayden Coleman is a 36-year-old black transgender man who has carried and given birth to two daughters. He is one of very few black transgender men who have done so publicly. Kayden has dedicated his life to advocating for the transgender, black, and queer communities through visibility and education. He has spoken at Duke University, University of North Carolina, and Harvard University, and provided DE&I trainings for IKEA, AWHONN, and many more.

Carolyn Pape Cowan, PhD, is Professor of Psychology Emerita at the University of California, Berkeley. She has over 40 years of clinical and research experience in evaluating interventions with parents from diverse settings and income levels that are designed to strengthen family relationships in order to foster parents’ and children’s development and well-being. She is one of the four designers and consultants of the Supporting Father Involvement/Parents as Partners program, conducted in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Malta, and Israel. Co-editor of Fatherhood Today, and co-author of When Partners Become Parents and The Family Context of Parenting in the Child’s Adaptation to School, Dr. Cowan also publishes widely in the literature on family transitions, interventions, and family policy.

Philip A. Cowan, PhD, is Professor of Psychology Emeritus and Professor of the Graduate School at the University of California, Berkeley. He is co-director of three longitudinal preventive intervention projects with Carolyn Pape Cowan. Dr. Cowan served as Director of the Clinical Psychology Program and the Institute of Human Development at UC Berkeley. In addition to authoring numerous scientific articles, he is the author of Piaget with Feeling (Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1978), co-author of When Partners Become Parents: The Big Life Change for Couples (Erlbaum, 2000), and co-editor of four books and monographs, including Family Transitions (Erlbaum, 1990), and The Family Context of Parenting in the Child’s Adaptation to School (Erlbaum, 2005). He is one of the four designers and consultants of the Supporting Father Involvement/Parents as Partners program, conducted in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Malta, and Israel.
Kitt Cox’s current endeavors primarily focus on working to improve perinatal mental health education and resources for families on the north shore of Boston. He is the founder & co-coordinator of North Shore Postpartum Help. In that role that he has held for the last 15 years, he leads regular network meetings and attempts to bring “help, hope, and connection” to families and the perinatal mental health community. When the weather is fair, he often may be found “Busking for Babies” — raising awareness and funds to address diaper needs through musical street performance. He aspires to someday bring a local version of the Carnegie Lullaby Project to local hospitals, birth centers, and community health centers.

Beginning in 2003, Kitt spent a decade as the program director at the Birth to Three Family Center program in Ipswich, Massachusetts. There, he served as an administrator, parenting education facilitator, music educator, and family support advocate. He was also selected in that period for the Schott Fellowship in early education & care. The goal of that program was to create a learning community where leaders gained confidence and new skills; expanded their networks; and learned to step into leadership positions, lead organizational change, and impact policymaking.

Kitt is happily married to Theresa Dady-Cox and a grateful father of three sons and an active grandfather to six grandchildren. Residing and thriving with the people, culture, and natural resources of Cape Ann, Massachusetts, he practices songwriting with a focus on local history and community affairs and is currently performing with the Wabi Sabi Combo.

Hassan A. Daniel is the Founder and CEO of The Father Factory, Inc., a fatherhood program geared towards positive parenting, biblical literacy, and counseling for fathers who have experienced various types of childhood trauma, including, but not limited to, molestation, and physical and mental abuse. Hassan — a faithful husband, dedicated father to his two sons, ordained minister, and compassionate speaker — is on a mission to optimize affirmative parenting outcomes for fathers, by providing guidance, proven resources, and a non-judgmental community. Hassan’s mission is to help fathers navigate through everyday life despite personal dilemmas. Hassan additionally works with families while providing lectures on various topics ranging from inner healing to early childhood development. He is the published author of a book titled, Where Is the Man of the House? During his tenure as Program Director for the Baby College, a program of the Harlem Children's Zone, Hassan graduated over 2,000 families from its nine-week parenting program.
Craig Garfield, MD, is a Professor of Pediatrics and of Medical Social Sciences at Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine and a practicing pediatrician at the Lurie Children’s Hospital (LCH) of Chicago. In 2020, he became the founder and director of the Family and Child Health Innovations Program (FCHIP), which focuses on how to support families in all their diversity and is buoyed by the notion that “Children thrive when families thrive.”

After graduating with a BA in English Literature from the University of Michigan, Craig received his medical degree at Rush Medical College in Chicago and completed his pediatric training at Massachusetts General Hospital. He completed the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program at the University of Chicago and concurrently obtained a Master’s in the Art of Public Policy from the Harris School of Public Policy as a Harris Child and Family Scholar. His research has been funded by NIH, AHRQ, CDC, PCORI, RWJF, and other philanthropic organizations. Career highlights include contributing to the scientific evidence of the “dad bod,” authoring all three of the American Academy of Pediatric’s statements on Fathers and Pediatrics, and collaboration with the CDC to create the first-ever public health surveillance system for fathers, called PRAMS for Dads. He is a frequent plenary speaker on the topic of fathers, family and health.

Khari Garvin is the Director of the Office of Head Start (OHS) at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). He has more than 20 years of national, state, and local experience designing and leading systems serving children and families in low-income communities. Before joining the Biden-Harris administration, he served as the president and CEO of the United Way of Greater Greensboro in North Carolina, leading the mission to end generational poverty in the Greensboro metro area.

Garvin has modeled service at every level of Head Start programming. He served as the executive director for a large, multi-state Head Start grant recipient serving children in rural communities across five states in the Southern, Southeastern, Midwestern, and Great Plains regions of the United States. As the director of North Carolina’s Head Start Collaboration Office, he convened 55 affiliate grant recipient organizations — including public school systems, community action agencies, county governments, and private nonprofits — that served over 28,000 children and families in all 100 counties.
Garvin is a proud alumnus of the National Head Start Fellowships program, where he worked at OHS. He previously served as a Head Start program manager in Illinois and as assistant Head Start/Early Head Start director at a program in North Carolina. Garvin holds a degree in psychology from Emory University and a master's degree in education from Southern Illinois University.

**U.S. Congressman Jimmy Gomez** proudly represents California’s 34th Congressional District, one of the most diverse and culturally rich districts in the country. In the 118th Congress, Congressman Gomez sits on the Committee on Oversight and Accountability and serves as an Assistant Whip of the Democratic Caucus and Deputy Whip for the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC). Congressman Gomez is the Founder and Chair of the Congressional Dads Caucus and is also a member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), and Future Forum.

Prior to his election to Congress in June 2017, Congressman Gomez served four and a half years in the California State Assembly where he served as Chair of the Assembly Appropriations Committee. In the Assembly, Congressman Gomez distinguished himself as a proven national champion of paid family leave and combating climate change. He became a key figure in authoring landmark legislation to address public health, environmental justice, water conservation, access to education, civic engagement, campaign finance disclosure, LGBTQ rights, and affordable housing.

**Duane Humeyestewa** is a filmmaker, content producer and creative consultant. Born and raised on the Hopi reservation in northeastern Arizona, Duane is continuously mastering the art of storytelling and marketing by creating and developing content to help organizations and individuals build relationships with their communities.

Duane serves as a multi-media creative consultant, a content producer and creative director primarily in the areas of small business and nonprofit experiential marketing, digital marketing, and deploying new media technology experiences to disrupt or supplement traditional marketing channels — ultimately elevating the bottom line by crafting creative solutions to pressing challenges.
Charles Johnson has dedicated his life to the pursuit of what his own family failed to receive — safe, respectful, and equitable maternal health outcomes in America. His passion for systemic change is driven by his love for his wife, Kira, who passed away following the birth of their second child. In April 2016, Kira underwent a routine c-section following an uncomplicated pregnancy. Hours later, she died from internal hemorrhaging despite adamant pleas for help from medical professionals by her husband and loved ones. Her story exemplifies the current crises happening in America: rising rates of maternal mortality and the silencing of Black voices.

After experiencing the unimaginable, Charles harnessed his pain and used it to pursue the highest level of good. He channeled his grief into founding 4Kira4Moms, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving birth outcomes in America. Charles knows childbirth should be empowering and free of fear for all mothers. 4Kira4Moms advocates for improved maternal health policies and regulations, educates about the impact of maternal mortality in our communities, provides support to victims’ loved ones, and approaches maternal mortality as a human rights issue. Mothers are the very framework of our society. They teach us how to love unconditionally and are willing to protect the most vulnerable among us. The loss of even one at the hands of an unjust system robs our country of what it needs most.

Charles has used his voice and story to advocate for change at countless events and media appearances all over the country. He is a board member of March for Moms and serves as Chairman of the Fairness of Injured Patients Act, which seeks to restore the rights of victims of medical negligence in California. Charles has testified twice before Congress and helped pass key legislation including: the Preventing Maternal Death Act of 2018, the Protecting Moms Who Served Act of 2021, and the California Momnibus. He is currently working with Congress to pass the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act, an unprecedented set of bills addressing every aspect of the maternal health crisis happening in America.

Charles was also honored by Oprah Winfrey on OWNSpotlight’s 2020 fatherhood special entitled, “Honoring our Kings – Celebrating Black Fatherhood.” In addition to his advocacy work, Charles is busy raising his two beautiful boys, Charles V and Langston, who keep their mothers’ spirit alive powerfully every day.
Eric Johnson, PhD, is the former Chief of Research Publications for the United States Air Force Academy. He also served as the Director of the Urban Education Program in the School of Education at Drake University. He has facilitated workshops on a variety of topics that include: using difference as an organizational asset, leadership facilitation, organizational development and more recently topics related to fatherhood. He has conducted seminars in many organizations nationally and internationally in places such as Russia, China, Canada, Namibia, South Africa, and Central America.

Eric has been involved in developing strategies to respond to systemic disparities of minority youth in general and black males in particular. In addition, he has authored three inspirational books: *Beyond Self Help: A Journey to be Better*, *10 Deadly Aspects of Pride*, and *Livin’ in the Shade: Implications of Father and Son Relationships Explored*. He remains involved in efforts around the country that target young males of color and their disproportionate representation in special needs, suspensions, attrition inequalities, and even in-school contacts with police officers. As a former special needs teacher in the area of ADD/ADHD, where black males are over-represented, he understands the importance of the thinking about equity in programs, teaching quality, and student achievement.

Nicholas Kasovac, MSOT, OTR/L, IMH-E®, has worked in Pediatrics for over 20 years in a variety of capacities/settings. Since his training as a Healthy Steps Specialist in 2004, Nicholas has been passionate about the father-infant relationship and developed programs for Fathers, including The DAD Projects (Fathers & Infants, Toddlers & Fathers), Milk Men: Dads and Breastfeeding Support, and Baseball Tummy Time. As a second career, Nicholas chose to “upgrade” his skills to become a pediatric occupational therapist and is currently employed with Kids at Play Therapy, an OT Clinic in Puyallup, Washington.

Deutron Kebebew is a father, husband, and a mentor to fathers, father-figures, and young people in our community. He is the Founder and Executive Director of MENtors Driving Change for Boys, Men and Dads, a local social justice nonprofit organization. Previously, Deutron managed and directed the Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) evidence-based clinical research project for over a decade in Santa Cruz County (California) in partnership with UC Berkeley and Yale University. He received his undergraduate degree in Electrical Engineering from UC Santa Cruz.
Deutron has a strong passion and commitment to representing, supporting and working for children, youth, fathers, and families. He has extensive fatherhood involvement intervention expertise, training, knowledge, program experience, and background in evidence-based program implementation with fathers and co-parents. He has over 15 years of leadership and implementation experience and working with the Supporting Father Involvement curriculum and group work. Deutron has engaged and served over 4,000 fathers and father-figures over a 15-year period. He has served on several community boards, including Children's Network, CASA, Smith Society, and the Watsonville Rotary Club. He is the recipient of the prestigious UC Santa Cruz Tony Hill Community Service Award, the NEXTies Award – Next Generation of Community Leaders, the United Way of Santa Cruz County Community Hero Award, and the Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow Award.

**Mindy May, MS**, is a seasoned program developer and learning facilitator with extensive experience developing and implementing professional development and quality improvement initiatives. She has worked with providers from a variety of fields, including early childhood education, early intervention, public health, and child welfare. She has focused on creating and delivering professional development in the areas of family engagement, child development, parenting support, and organizational culture.

Early in her career, Mindy was a teacher and administrator in multiple settings, including Head Start and a university lab school. She holds an MS in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

**Kyle Pruett, MD**, a Clinical Professor of Child Psychiatry and Nursing, served as Director of Medical Studies at the Yale School of Medicine’s Child Study Center, where he received both the Lifetime Distinguished Teaching and Lifetime Achievement awards. He was also in private practice of infant, child, adolescent, and family psychiatry in New Haven and Guilford, Connecticut, and since 2007, in Northampton, Massachusetts.
Kyle is an award-winning author and researcher, has published 80+ original scientific articles, and is a frequent contributor to national and international media on matters pertaining to children's mental health and their families, with an emphasis on paternal engagement and its effect on child well-being. He is President Emeritus of ZERO to THREE, served on the Board of Directors of Sesame Workshop, narrated Oprah Winfrey's award-winning video "Begin With Love," and was invited by Peter Jennings to co-host the Children's Town Meeting the Saturday following 9/11 on NBC. His award-winning Psychology Today blog, Once Upon a Child, appears weekly. He is also the co-founder of the Early Childhood Peace Building Consortium with Yale University, Sesame Workshop, and UNICEF.

Marsha Kline Pruett, Ph.D., M.S.L., ABPP, is the Maconda Brown O'Connor Professor at the Smith College School for Social Work. She has over 30 years of teaching and clinical experience in private and public practice, designing and evaluating model programs focused on minimizing family conflict and resolving disputes. She is the Social Science editor for the Family Court Review and co-author of two books, including Partnership Parenting with her husband, Dr. Kyle Pruett.

One of the four designers and consultants of the Supporting Fatherhood Involvement (SFI) Program, she has been involved in its design and implementation in the United States and Canada and in current adaptations in the U.S. and abroad. A prolific writer and speaker for scholarly and lay audiences, Marsha specializes in family science research translation, family issues pertaining to early development, and coparenting plans after separation.

Jose Romo Ramirez is a multi-skilled professional with more than 50,000 interactions directly with young parents in his 15 years of work experience in maternal and infant health. He currently works with the Washington Department of Health Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program. He started his professional career with WIC as a clinic manager in South Los Angeles and most recently worked serving communities in the Seattle area. In addition to WIC services,

Jose is a class instructor for the Conscious Fathering program for Parent Trust for Washington Children and serves on local and state boards. Jose is excited about energizing parents and caregivers to grow with their child and share the many benefits that come from creating a consistent, predictable, and reliable team.
Jessica M. Roach, MPH, & Dorian L. Wingard, MPA, are co-founders of Restoring Our Own Through Transformation, known to our community family as ROOTT.

ROOTT is a Black-family led, community-based health and wellness organization, dedicated to specifically addressing Black health inequity as it relates to maternal and infant mortality. ROOTT’s reproductive justice philosophy emphasizes and re-empowers the inherent agency Black families have in making their decision to determine when, where, how, and if they decide to have children.

Both Jessica and Dorian have extensive multi-disciplinary experience in public health and public policy creation, development and advocacy, academic and clinical research, and professional development and training of clinical and non-clinical personnel. Jessica serves as ROOTT’s Chief Executive Officer and Clinical Director, with Dorian serving as ROOTT’s Chief Operations Officer and Policy Director. Together, they bring over four decades of integrated, multi-faceted experience to the challenge of Black family health inequity.

ROOTT’s Perinatal Support (Doula) Model provides innovative interventions that target the improvement of birthing conditions and outcomes for Black families who have collectively been disproportionately impacted by maternal and infant mortality and morbidity. ROOTT’s philosophy of engagement is laser-focused on addressing Black Maternal, Infant and Family Health through a health equity lens.

Since 2015, ROOTT has achieved and sustained a 0% Black infant and maternal mortality rate and currently serves as a subject matter expert for White House staff, Congressional leaders, state and local governments, central Ohio hospital systems, and various national and local community stakeholders. ROOTT is a founding member of the national Black Mamas Matter Alliance, and a recent recipient of the 2021 Publishers Award from the Ohio Minority Business Enterprise Media Group.

Brian Rosenberg is the founder of Gays With Kids (GWK) and creator and head coach of GWK Academy, the only-one-of-its-kind App designed specifically to help gay and queer men become dads. He has more than 25 years of sales and marketing experience, but his real passion has been the creation of Gays With Kids, the one-stop destination for gay, bi, and trans dads and dads-to-be.
Brian and his husband Ferd became first-time dads in 2009, creating their family through adoption and surrogacy. At the time, there were few resources available to help queer men become dads, and even fewer for those who already were, so they launched GWK in March 2014. Together since 1993, the secret to this couple’s longevity is Ferd’s prowess in the kitchen and Brian’s great appreciation for anything his husband cooks!

**Haji Shearer** is a husband, father, and social activist. For three decades, he’s been a leader in human service programs and has trained thousands of professionals in family strengthening strategies. He’s currently the Associate Commissioner of Family and Community Supports at the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

Early in his career, Haji provided home-based crisis counseling to families involved with the state’s child protection agency. In 1999, he founded a fathers’ education and support program that still serves men in Boston, Massachusetts, and beyond. He also founded the Brothers Healing Circle, a psycho-social support group for men of color that has been meeting regularly since 2007.

A Licensed Social Worker, Haji frequently presents at family strengthening conferences. His writing has appeared in The Boston Globe, Voice Male magazine, and the anthology, Men Speak Out: Views on Gender, Sex and Power. His first book, Facilitating Fathers’ Groups: 22 Keys to Group Mastery, was published in 2014. Haji and his wife, artist Radiant Jasmin, parented two humans who are successfully adulting.

**Joshua Sparrow, MD, DFAACAP**, is Executive Director of the Brazelton Touchpoints Center (BTC) in the Division of Developmental Medicine at Boston Children’s Hospital, where he also holds an appointment in the Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Sparrow’s care in the 1990s for children hospitalized for severe psychiatric disturbances, often associated with physical and sexual abuse, and for developmental delays aggravated by social and economic deprivation and systemic racism, prompted his interest in the social determinants of health and mental health, and community self-strengthening, community-based prevention, and health promotion.
Anne Stone is the Early Childhood Innovation Director at the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Economic Services Administration. A central part of that role is as a founder and director of the Washington State Fatherhood Council, which works to amplify the voices of fathers to be the fathers they aspire to be for their children, families, and communities. This cross-cutting state-level coalition made up of state and nonprofit providers, academics and advocates, and, most importantly, fathers with lived experience promotes fatherhood inclusion, access, and belonging to maximize children's potential.

Anne has 30-plus years of experience in the child and family services field as an innovator and change agent in youth and family crisis, child healthcare transformation, early childhood systems, poverty reduction, and fatherhood inclusion, as a funder, nonprofit executive director, community consultant, crisis counselor, and state agency innovator.

Anne has a strong value around affecting root causes of family struggle, such as racism, poverty, and bias; using human-centered design grounded in early brain science to inform system and policy change; and working to redesign systems so that families get what they need, when and where they need it, to flourish. She has served on a wide variety of nonprofit boards, state councils, and commissions and has volunteered in the public schools for 20 years supporting community and families. When not working, her focus is on her family celebrating the gift of a new grandbaby, gardening during COVID-19 to grow food and soothe the soul, paddling, and hiking with her partner of 35 years.

Nick Terrones has served as an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) for over 15 years and has recently been in the role as Director at Daybreak Star Preschool, a long-standing program of United Indians of All Tribes Foundation in Seattle, Washington. Twelve of the years spent in ECE have been primarily working and playing alongside toddlers. Nick roots his teaching and pedagogy in values of social justice education, and anti-racism and anti-bias paradigms, as well as viewing toddlers as capable humans. Nick continues to be a participant in the World Forum Foundation's Men in ECE, and is currently pursuing his Master's in Indigenous Education. Outside the realm of ECE, Nick likes to play music, snowboard, backpack, hike, and travel.
Tarajean Yazzie-Mintz, EdD, is co-founder and principal consultant for First Light Education Project, LLC (www.firstlighteducationproject.org), a consulting collaborative built on Indigenous principles with a mission to strengthen historically underserved educational communities across the United States.

Starting as a Toddler 2 teacher, Tarajean has built her career as a teacher, researcher, and nonprofit leader, guiding numerous tribal and national projects that have contributed to strengthening systems of care and learning within tribal and immigrant educational communities, centering change efforts within families, local communities, and early childhood leaders and systems. With expertise in early childhood education, Native education, teaching and learning, and community-centered research, Tarajean also serves as Project Director of the Indigenous Early Learning Collaborative, a national initiative implemented in partnership with the Brazelton Touchpoints Center.
The Brazelton Touchpoints Center (BTC) provides strengths-based, culturally-grounded, co-constructed professional and leadership development, organizational learning and change, community-based participatory research, and program evaluation for family-facing professionals in prenatal and pediatric primary care, early childhood, infant mental health, home visiting, child welfare, library services, and more. BTC is home to the Touchpoints Approach, the Brazelton Institute (the Newborn Behavioral Observations system and the Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale), the Indigenous Early Learning Collaborative, the Family-to-Family Real Talk Series, the BTC Learning Network, and the BTC Research and Evaluation team. BTC is based in the Division of Developmental Medicine at Boston Children’s Hospital, the nation’s leading children’s hospital (U.S. News and World Report).

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Access Statement

At BTC, we are dedicated to creating a lasting community in which equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, and access thrive. We engage in reflective practices to enhance equitable processes and outcomes, and to reduce bias — including our own. We come alongside and learn with the infants, children, families, and communities that we have the honor of working with. While we still have much work to do, we see the path to racial equity and justice as a journey — one that we have wholeheartedly embarked on. BTC is committed to creating equitable and inclusive opportunities for learning and growth through collaborative, strengths-based, culturally-affirming approaches within our organization and in our partnerships with all others.
Stay In Touch!

We'd love to hear from you! Here is how you can reach us...

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