



News Release

Communication Services
5334 South Prince Street
Littleton, Colorado 80120
Phone: 303-795-5467
Fax: 303-734-5470
www.arapahoegov.com

For release: Aug. 6, 2015

Contact:

YVETTE YEON

Communication Services Specialist II

Direct: 303-636-1945

Mobile: 720-785-0714

Email: yeon@arapahoegov.com

A former disengaged dad now teaching fatherhood classes in Arapahoe County celebrates his successes during Child Support Services Month

Helping to raise awareness and recognize the critical role child support plays in the lives of children

Aurora, Colo. – In observance of National Child Support Awareness Month, in August Arapahoe County is honoring parents who support their children and saluting human services professionals for their dedication in educating families about programs and enhancing child support services.

Child support plays a critical role in the lives of children in many ways. A child receiving financial support is more likely to receive emotional support from the parent. The parent is more likely to stay involved in the child's life and even provide protection, helping prevent child abuse and neglect. Child support helps strengthen family bonds and improves the lives of children, parents and families.

No one knows that better than 55-year-old Lewis Griffin of Aurora. Griffin is a proud and happy father who has his life and family together. He spends his days styling men's hair at a local barber shop and just recently started co-facilitating fatherhood classes in the Child Support Services Division of Arapahoe County.

But not everyone knows about the difficulties he has overcome. For many years, Griffin's criminal past kept him from getting a job, maintaining his health, keeping a driver's license and even seeing his daughter. He's relationship with his daughter's mother was damaged mainly because he did not provide child support.

"I was one of those guys not willing to pay because I was angry at everything," said Griffin, "I was in a mess and I was behind in child support."

Griffin's relationship with the mother of his child was worsening and his relationship with his daughter was nonexistent. He said he didn't provide child support because he couldn't get a job and he couldn't get a job because his driver's license was revoked. Griffin said his driver's license was revoked because he didn't pay child support. It's a scenario that is shared by many parents who come to Arapahoe County seeking help.

The Department of Human Services offers child support services from our offices in Aurora. Services include establishing paternity, locating non-custodial parents, assisting medical support orders and providing education programs. Programs offered are designed to help parents overcome barriers such as unemployment and help them build better relationships with their children and families.

When Griffin first came to Arapahoe County, he enrolled in the Colorado Parent Employment Project, also known as CO-PEP. The program offers classes and resources to help the unemployed and underemployed struggling in paying child support. For Griffin, CO-PEP supported his dream of becoming a small business owner. He then took the fatherhood

class and the relationship education workshop that helped improve his role as a father and family supporter. It was during mediation, a facilitated meeting between feuding parents, when he believed he got a second chance at life.

"When I came out of mediation, I was really blown away, I couldn't believe it," said Griffin. "I got my swag back, and I got my license back, I got my life in order and I was paying child support and all this allowed us as a family to move forward."

Griffin has been invited back to Arapahoe County to co-facilitate the fatherhood class. He will join Arapahoe County in honoring Child Support Services Month.

To help raise awareness, there will be several events in August:

- **Aug. 6 – Green Ribbon Event:**
Help raise awareness by tying a green ribbon outside Human Services offices at 10 a.m. Green ribbons will be available outside Arapahoe Plaza 1690 W. Littleton Blvd., Littleton and CentrePoint Plaza 14980 E. Alameda Dr., Aurora.
- **Aug. 13 – Info Booth:**
We are sharing information and answering questions about Arapahoe County Child Support Services in the first floor lobby of CentrePoint Plaza 14980 E. Alameda Dr., Aurora.
- **Aug. 20 – Wear Green Day:**
Show your support by wearing green.
- **Aug. 27 – Kids Coloring Fest:**
Get free coloring books, crayons and information about Child Support Services. 1-3 p.m. in the Littleton Rooms, first floor, CentrePoint Plaza 14980 E. Alameda Dr., Aurora.

#

For photos of Lewis Griffin click on this link:

<ftp://ftp.arapahoegov.com/Pub/Communication%20Services/Photos/Human%20Services/Lewis%20Griffin/>

LewisGriffin_podium.JPG: Griffin speaking about his journey during the April, Not One More Child in Arapahoe County Community Coalition to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect meeting in Aurora.

LewisGriffin_talking.JPG: Griffin (left) having a conversation with John Faught (right), President and CEO of The Kempe Foundation during the April, Not One More Child in Arapahoe County Community Coalition to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect meeting in Aurora.

Connect with Arapahoe County

Stay informed and give us your input about Arapahoe County Government. Sign up for news releases, agendas and updates to our website via our *Notify Me* Link at www.arapahoegov.com. Or, connect with us via Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.