



Mr. Rashad L. Saxon former 24/7 Dads Program participant and mentor

Rashad learned about the 24/7 Dads Program when he desperately needed guidance around parenting; specifically, father involvement. "My first child was due any day and I didn't know anything about being a good dad or a good husband."

According to Rashad, one of his favorite parts of the 24/7 Dads Program was the food talk sessions. "The information that we received was so valuable in making a change in our family's health choices. We learned how to make meals from items we already had in the refrigerator and cabinets, learned how to properly read food labels and make decisions on what to buy based on that."

"Before these sessions I had no idea about things like high cholesterol, being a problem in our community and that my current diet was putting me on that path. I can't explain how thankful I am to have had my eyes opened. I am now conscious of what foods I cook for my family and I feel good knowing we are eating healthy things."

Rashad found the 24/7 Dads Program evidence-based curriculum helpful as well. Rashad stated, "It posed questions that made me think. It asked things like "What does it mean to be a man?" and "What is a man's role in the house? I'd never really thought about those questions in a serious sense. Growing up, you're told what a man is. But all the definitions you hear are somebody else's opinions. I guess I'd never really asked myself what I thought it meant to be a man, I was just repeating what others had told me a man should be."

"The most inspiring part about the entire program was that there were other dads, with stories just like mine, who were just as dedicated to being a good dad, just like me. The media might have us believing otherwise; that there aren't any black men wanting to be responsible fathers. But I went to the program every Monday and there were plenty of other dads there as well, some with their wives/girlfriends and some even with their kids. It made me feel good to see my brothers meeting up to talk about our problems and share some brotherly love and encouragement. It was nice, coming together to share ideas on conflict resolution and how it's important to compromise. It's a powerful thing. At the conclusion of our program, I felt that I was a different person...the way I looked at what it meant to be a father, was different. This program came along exactly when I needed it. Right when my daughter was born".