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## The Neighborhood Files

# Proud PAPAS Invites Families to Celebrate

Come out for pancakes 9:30-11:30 a.m. Sunday.

By [Jennifer Squires](#) [Email the author](#) March 10, 2012

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Papas, bring your families out Sunday morning for pancakes, some fun and a presentation about a unique Watsonville-based program that helps dads better connect with their kids.

For nearly a decade, [PAPAS has been supporting fathers and parenthood while researching the best ways to help fathers participate in their families and communities.](#) The staff added a Sunday morning drop-in program for dads and their kids to enjoy breakfast together and work on their relationships two years ago.

That's the program they're celebrating Sunday.

"We're reaching out to our community," said Deutron Kebebew, the project manager.

Kebebew and his staff launched the Sunday program to offer services to dads who weren't involved in the research project.

"I just couldn't turn people away," Kebebew said.

[PAPAS has touched 1,000 dads in the past year through presentations at schools and daycares, the Sunday program and other events.](#) Kebebew said. Dads come from Watsonville, Santa Cruz, Gilroy, Hollister, Seaside, Santa Clara and Los Banos.

"The results are amazing," Kebebew said, explaining that aggression and hyperactivity has lowered among the kids whose dads are involved in the program. "We're seeing families staying together rather than separating."

PAPAS loses its funding at the end of this fiscal year. The program had been backed by government money.

"As of July 1, the program's goign to close and we're going to close," Kebebew said.

But Kebebew said he came up with a plan to cut the \$400,000 budget to \$150,000, reduce staffing and eliminate the research element of PAPAS. Instead, the program would focus on the Sunday morning outreach to dads.

So far, Kebebew has rallied \$30,000 in support from the Ow family and the Webster Foundation. He hopes events like Sunday's will draw more people to the program and help with the grassroots campaign to save it.

PAPAS is in the [La Manzana Resource Center](#), 18 W. Lake Ave. in Suite L. The event is 9:30-11:30 a.m., starting with a pancake breakfast.