

# THE LAUNCH PAD

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## Sponsor Spotlight:



We're incredibly grateful for the continued support of Page Auto Group, a valued partner right here in our own community. Their commitment to giving back helps make our program possible, and we encourage our community to support them the next time you're in the market for a vehicle. Supporting our sponsors means supporting the mission. And that truly matters!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### \* Spring Into The Arts

February 15, 2026

The Art Factory and Party Place  
4810 Market Square Ln  
Midlothian, VA 23112  
1pm-3pm

### \* Multicultural Food Fest

March 1, 2026

American Legion Post 354  
4800 Welby Turn  
Midlothian, VA 23113  
1pm-3:30pm

### \* Woodworking As A Business

March 8, 2026

Woodcraft of Richmond  
9862 W Broad St  
Glen Allen, VA 23060  
11am-3pm



## Family Feature

# One Family, Two Paths, Endless Potential

In this month's Family Feature, we are proud to introduce **Lateesha and her sons Landen & Damariee**. These two young men are both smart, motivated, and truly enjoy being a part of the program. Yet each shows up with a personality all his own! While they both share a love for learning and growth, Damariee is more reserved and leads with quiet focus and thoughtfulness. Landen, being more outgoing, leads with energy and confidence. Showing us that success doesn't look just one way!

- How long have you been with L4L?

**We have been with LAUNCH for Life since August 2025.**

- How did you hear about L4L?

**I discovered L4L via Facebook.**

- How have your sons grown during the program?

**Damariee's eagerness to attend the LAUNCH events has grown tremendously. He doesn't ask me to drive him; he enjoys the bus pickups.**

**Landen loves trying new things, so seeing his confidence blossom and listening to how his day went is a delight.**

**With the gentle exposure to the mentors and other mentees, this has helped create trust and my boys have seemed to let go of their shyness a little.**

- How has the program helped/supported you?

**Launch for Life has helped expose my boys to building leadership qualities, new skills, confidence and so much more to come.**

**Family Feature Continued..**

- What would you like to brag about your son/s about his/their accomplishments?

**Landen is my huggable, lovable, inquisitive baby boy. He has been doing outstanding in school. His attitude towards school has changed, his grades are A's & B's, and he will be receiving Honor Roll for the second 9-weeks.**

**Damariee is my quiet, sweet, respectful sunshine. He's such a team player. Damariee finished his last Junior Varsity football season. They finished the season with an 8-2 record.**

- What is your family dynamic?

**We are a single-parent household. I have clear expectations for my boy's behavior and academics. There is lots of encouragement and positive reinforcement. The last 5 years have been on autopilot with life changes and health challenges, so we make sure that we spend time together. We love playing cards, watching movies and go-karting.**

- Would you recommend the program to friends and family?

**Yes I will highly recommend the Launch for Life program.**

-Latesha Mullen

**Our Latest Events in Pictures**



Our mentees took in the excitement of a college basketball game while building memories and brotherhood.



Moments like these open doors, build perspective and shows our mentees what's possible!



Mentees gained confidence, discipline, and practical skills during our self-defense event.



Empowerment in action! Learning how to stay safe while strengthening mind and body.



Mentor Spotlight

**Meet Sameer Athale**

This month we're excited to spotlight Sameer, a dedicated mentor who leads with purpose, encouragement, consistency and has a genuine passion for watching our mentees grow. Sameer knows firsthand how impactful mentorship can be and uses this to guide his mentor journey.

1. How did you hear about L4L?

**I had worked with Ken Jordan, years back at Capital One. I used to see his posts on LinkedIn on LAUNCH 4 LIFE and his passion for mentoring young men would come through. Reading that piqued my interest in L4L.**

2. How long have you been a mentor?

**I have been a mentor with L4L for 3 years now. I started with one group of boys from their junior year through their graduation year and now I am with my second group.**

3. Why did you decide to become a mentor?

**For a very selfish reason. I get immense joy mentoring, whether at L4L or at work and seeing the mentee grow. I have had the privilege of having multiple mentors, including my dad, who shaped my thinking and values from young age and continue to do so now. When I mentor, I have always found that I get as much back in that interaction and that helps me grow as a person.**



# 10 Ultimate Truths About Parenting Teen Boys

Published December, 2020

Raising teen boys is a wild mix of chaos, growth, and unexpected joy. *Raising Teens Today* captures this journey with honesty and heart. As boys race through adolescence, sprouting up overnight, retreating into one word answers, and guarding their emotions, they're also quietly becoming thoughtful, capable young men. This article highlights ten core truths every parent should know: teen boys talk less but feel deeply; they still need the grounding presence of their mothers; and despite their aloofness they crave physical affection and connection. They compare themselves to peers more than they admit, navigate early romantic experiences with surprising vulnerability, and often need extra time and space to process their day. Some of the best conversations happen in the car, where the pressure is low and the road ahead opens them up. They rarely admit when they're wrong, but with time humility comes. And most importantly, they need room to make mistakes because stumbling, recovering, and trying again is how they build resilience and independence. Together, these truths offer a compassionate roadmap for understanding and supporting our teen boys as they grow into themselves.

For the full article, please see the link below.

[https://raisingteens.today/truths-about-parenting-teen-boys?utm\\_source=copilot.com](https://raisingteens.today/truths-about-parenting-teen-boys?utm_source=copilot.com)



## Get Involved!

**Our workforce is comprised of volunteers. If you have a few free hours that you can dedicate to others, or a skill that can be shared, we will be happy to channel it in the right direction.**

**Contact us today!**



LAUNCH for Life

### Mentor Spotlight Continued..

4. What have you learned through mentoring?  
**One of the first things that struck me was how smart and resilient these boys are. They may not have had a constant father figure but most exhibit a positive outlook and energy. I learnt that it takes time to establish trust. The trust comes through a constant presence and small consistent interactions. Trust is the foundation of deeper connection that helps build a young man with their core values and life skills. A mentor has to be patient in binding this trust and can't force it.**

5. What has been your favorite event/memory thus far?  
**There have been many that vie for this. Bowling with the current juniors is right at top. There was a friendly competition, a little bragging but also a lot of support and tips being shared at the alley. This event brought the group closer and helped open up a lot of boys.**

6. Tell us about yourself, likes, hobbies, occupation, family, etc?  
**I grew up playing a lot of team and individual sports. I was good in many to represent my School. I enjoy meeting new folks, knowing them and widening my knowledge and perspectives. For my job, I work as a Business Analyst in financial industry. My wife Pallavi is my soulmate and we are together now for more than 25 years. We have 2 daughters, one a Sophomore at College of William & Mary and the other a high school freshman. As a family we love traveling, skiing and playing board games.**

-Sameer Athale



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