



A Father's Place: the Importance of Male Involvement in the Early Years

INTRODUCTION

- ✘ Culturally, mothering behavior typically has a clearly identifiable initiation-typically awareness of pregnancy or at the delivery.
- ✘ Fathering behavior has a much broader range of when he has a clearly identifiable initiation as a father.
- ✘ The “fatherhood click” is unique for each man.

MEANING OF FATHER INVOLVEMENT

Dads are not just substitute moms.

- + Economic provider
- + Companion & playmate
- + Paternal caregiver
- + Teacher & role model
- + Monitor & disciplinarian
- + Protector
- + Advocate
- + Unique resource



WHAT FATHERS NEED



WHAT FATHERS NEED

- ✘ What can we do to promote occasions for these three conditions to occur for fathers in our neighborhoods and communities?
- ✘ How might fathers increase their chances for these three to be available to them?

PATERNAL INSTINCTS

Across cultures, there are two truly significant differences between maternal and paternal instincts:

(1) Fathers tend to play with their children, using their bodies more than mothers do, employing their masculine approaches through tossing, roughhousing, tickling, wrestling and engaging in sports and outdoor activities of different types.

PATERNAL INSTINCTS

(2) The second distinction is that fathers' daily interactions tend to focus upon helping their children prepare for the future- by emphasizing and role modeling such skills as instilling impulse control, learning to be a good loser, inspiring the work ethic and encouraging other mature survival attitudes and adult role expectations.



THE ROLE OF FATHERS

Through thousand of years in studied cultures, fathers have assumed three primary roles-that of protector, of provider and of disciplinarian. This is no longer the exclusive role of most fathers in two parent families today in the US.

But fathers have continued to seek to fulfill these three roles in unique and paternal ways.

ROLE OF PROTECTOR

From child-proofing a home when the child is very young to making sure their children are not threatened by other children or adults, fathers play an important role in making sure their children are safe and secure. This is particularly important in communities that experience higher rates of violence, gang activity and crime.

ROLE OF PROTECTOR

- ✘ Moms tend to see the rest of the world in relation to their children
- ✘ Dads tend to see their children in relation to the rest of the world

ROLE OF PROTECTOR

- ✘ Mom's emphasis: Protect my child from getting hurt by the “outside world” such as from dangerous strangers, disease, lightning, mean dogs, bullies, car accidents, falls, etc.
- ✘ Dad's emphasis: Prepare my child to cope with the harshness of the “outside world”, how to deal with the same dangers.

ROLE OF PROTECTOR

Fathers protect their children by monitoring their social environment and knowing who are the peers and friends of their children.

Fathers monitor their children's safety by organizing the child's environment and eliminating hazards from the child's path.

ROLE OF PROVIDER

A father's ability to provide for his family is very much tied up with the average man's sense of self, duty and manhood. "Real men" bring home the bacon, support their family by the sweat of their brow, tend the fields, work the mines and forests, and fish the seas to earn their keep and generally assume the "breadwinner" responsibility.



ROLE OF DISCIPLINARIAN

- ✘ Fathers tend to emphasize the mechanical or societal consequences of misbehavior, bringing more emotional distance to disciplining. Thus, they are often less likely to be manipulated.
- ✘ Fathers are generally more focused on having high expectations of their children and encouraging them to deliver on those consistently.



ROLE OF DISCIPLINARIAN

- ✘ Fathers often guide their children's behavior through offering structure, encouraging respect, expecting obedience, and using his low firm voice to get the child's attention.
- ✘ In years past, many mothers would threaten misbehaving children with the warning "Just wait until your father comes home."

ROLE OF DISCIPLINARIAN

Some times fathers may seem to be "too tough" to the moms, but their toughness is rooted in helping children be prepared for real life. From a disciplinary standpoint, they tend to impose consequences more clearly and quickly and then talk about the situation later.



HOW FATHERS IMPACT CHILDREN

Now let us now examine 15 dimensions that fathers influence the healthy growth and development of their children. None of these points should be seen as detracting from the equally important contributions that mothers make in raising healthy productive children.



1. FIRST ROLE MODEL OF MASCULINITY

- ✘ In the toddler years, the father has a significant part in molding the child's gender role identity, by role modeling healthy masculine behaviors and attitudes.
- ✘ In the preschool years, the father's presence is crucial in helping his child work through basic gender identity.



1. FIRST ROLE MODEL OF MASCULINITY

- ✘ Fathers provide the cornerstone to shaping how their children will develop relationships with others of both genders.
- ✘ He plays the role of “significant other” to the mother and offers an alternative perspective of the child’s world.



1. FIRST ROLE MODEL OF MASCULINITY

- ✘ Fathers shape the basis of acceptable masculine and feminine behaviors and attitudes in their children.
- ✘ They delineate appropriate emotional and physical expressions, especially in boys



1. FIRST ROLE MODEL OF MASCULINITY

He is the grinding stone upon which his son sharpens his emerging masculinity and the appreciative audience to which his daughter expresses her femininity.



2. PHYSIOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✘ He helps shape their gross and fine motor development through his play approaches.
- ✘ Dads encourage orientation toward comfort with their body through sports and physical play
- ✘ Pheromone studies yield interesting biological connections between dads & kids
- ✘ Fathers tend to stress and allow more physical risk-taking.



2. PHYSIOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

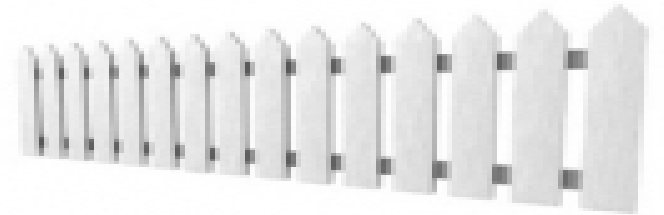
- ✘ A father's tendency to activate his child encourages and supports the child's discovery of their capacity for exercise, play, coordination and general physical activity.
- ✘ Fathers encourage orientation toward comfort with their body through sports, games, play and physically strenuous and risky behaviors.



3. ETHICAL & MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✘ Fathers as disciplinarians teach children a sense of right from wrong.
- ✘ He disciplines with an interest in the societal bottom line outcome.
- ✘ He helps with responding to peer pressure.
- ✘ Dad instills impulse control, especially by role modeling.
- ✘ He encourages respect and tolerance of others' views

Setting Healthy



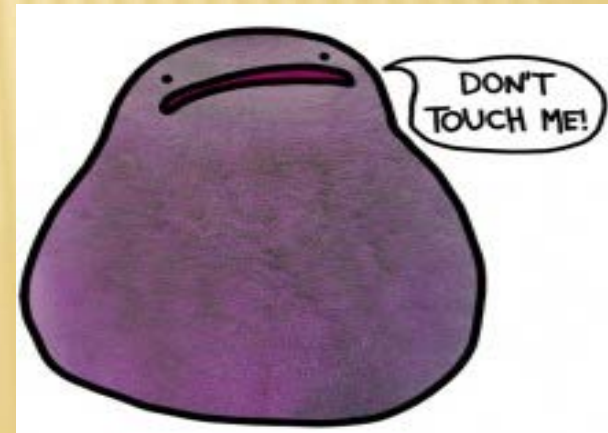
Boundaries

3. ETHICAL & MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✘ Fathers tend to determine of level of acceptance of people of different backgrounds. Tolerant, non-violent, respectful fathers raise children who reflect the same values.
- ✘ Studies show that primary school children score higher on tests of empathy-the ability to see a situation from another person's viewpoint- if they had secure attachment to healthy nurturing fathers during infancy

4. SELF ESTEEM AND SELF IMAGE

- ✘ Promotes individuation through storytelling, play and discipline.
- ✘ Fosters a strong sense of who they are through his attitude and behaviors toward them.
- ✘ Encourages healthy self-image by endorsing autonomy and offering positive messages.
- ✘ Allows children to embrace all facets of self, not just positive.



4. SELF ESTEEM AND SELF IMAGE

- ✘ A separate sense of self develops around age of eight. Father presence may significantly impact this sense, positively or negatively.
- ✘ When fathers engage in shared activities, it promotes a sense of responsibility and significance in children that is, in turn, linked to greater self-esteem, psychological well-being, and civic engagement later in life.

4. SELF ESTEEM AND SELF IMAGE

Fathers tend to encourage children to take risks, while at the same time ensuring the latter's safety and security, thus permitting children to learn to be braver in unfamiliar situations, as well as to stand up for and believe in themselves.



4. SELF ESTEEM AND SELF IMAGE

- ✘ Dads are more likely to encourage their children to talk to strangers, to overcome obstacles, and even to have their toddlers put out into the deep during swimming lessons.
- ✘ When children have fathers who are emotionally involved- that is, they acknowledge their children's emotions and help them deal with uncomfortable emotions- children score higher on tests of 'emotional intelligence'.

5. INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✘ Studies suggest that fathers who are involved, nurturing, and playful with their infants have children with higher IQs, as well as better linguistic and cognitive capacities, such as paying attention, processing information and remembering facts.
- ✘ Fathers promote left brain thinking and problem solving.

5. INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

In infants and toddlers, fathers' hallmark style of interaction is physical play that is characterized by arousal, excitement, and unpredictability. This stimulates the toddler's brain to promote neuron growth.



6. LANGUAGE AND SPEECH SKILLS

Dads encourage more advanced speech in infants, being reluctant to promote “baby talk.” They tend to use bigger words and longer sentences in infants than moms do. They tend to keep expectations high for their children’s acquisition of language skills.



6. LANGUAGE AND SPEECH SKILLS

- ✘ Fathers tend to imitate their child's sounds and words while expanding on them, thus encouraging them to a higher level of speech and language development
- ✘ Fathers tend to provide different verbal and physical stimulation than mothers, by patting their babies gently, bouncing them and communicating to them with sharp bursts of sound and facial expressions.

7. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



- ✘ Children with involved fathers tend to be more patient and can handle the stresses and frustrations associated with schooling more readily than children with less involved fathers.
- ✘ Numerous studies find that an active and nurturing style of fathering is associated with better verbal skills, intellectual functioning, and academic achievement among adolescents.

7. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

A fathers' involvement in their child's school is linked to positive school outcomes for the child including higher class standing, more enjoyment of school, and a lowered likelihood of grade repetition, suspension or expulsion.



8. PROBLEM SOLVING & DECISION MAKING

Dads model effective problem-solving skills for their child. They have an opportunity to show their child how to make and act on decisions, as well as experience the consequences of their actions and decisions. This process fosters a child's responsibility, independence, and self-reliance.



8. PROBLEM SOLVING & DECISION MAKING

- ✘ Fathers who model healthy safe problem-solving in relationships have children who are less aggressive and who are more popular with their peers and teachers.
- ✘ Fathers tend to offer less immediate support in face of the child's frustration, thus promoting adaptive problem-solving competencies.

9. EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✘ Children who have an involved father are more likely to be emotionally secure, be confident to explore their surroundings, and, as they grow older, have better social connections with their peers.
- ✘ Fathers tend to promote independence and an orientation to the outside world.



9. EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✘ Fathers, by dint of their size, strength, or aggressive public presence, appear to be more successful in keeping predators and bad peer influences away from their daughters and sons.
- ✘ Children who grow up with involved fathers are more comfortable exploring the world around them and more likely to exhibit self-control and pro-social behavior.

9. EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Rough and tumble play between fathers and their young children is part of their healthy development, shaping their children's brain so that they develop the ability to manage emotions, coordinating thinking and physical action altogether. Researchers called this a key developmental stage for children



9. EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ✘ Engaged fathers help protect girls from prematurely seeking the romantic and sexual attention of older boys and men.
- ✘ Extensive evidence indicates that fathers use more imperatives (commands) and other forms of power-assertion in talking to children, thus allowing them to develop appropriate responses to authority figures.

10. IMPULSE CONTROL

- ✘ Rough-housing with dad, for example, can teach children how to deal with aggressive impulses and physical contact without losing control of their emotions, especially for boys.
- ✘ Children who witness their father's anger toward or contempt for their mother are more at risk for depression, aggression, poor health, violence and risky or criminal behaviors.

10. IMPULSE CONTROL

- ✘ Fathers exercise a critical role in providing their children with a mental map of how to respond to difficult situations.
- ✘ Fathers seem to be uniquely successful in disciplining boys, perhaps in part because boys are often likely to respond to discipline by a male authority figure.



10. IMPULSE CONTROL

- ✘ Fathers typically spend more of their time engaged in vigorous play than do mothers, and play a uniquely physical role in teaching their sons and daughters how to handle their bodies and their emotions on and off the field, rink or floor.
- ✘ Children of involved fathers display less impulsivity and more self-control, especially in unfamiliar social situations.

11. RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL FORMATION

- ✘ It is the religious practice of the father of the family that, above all, determines the future religious participation of the children.
- ✘ There is strong evidence that fathers' religiosity moderates the influence of other family characteristics on children, such as empathy, self-control and moral development

11. RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL FORMATION

For many children, the father's belief in a higher power and how he ties that to moral development social justice or giving back to the community, significantly influences their willingness to participate in altruistic endeavors.



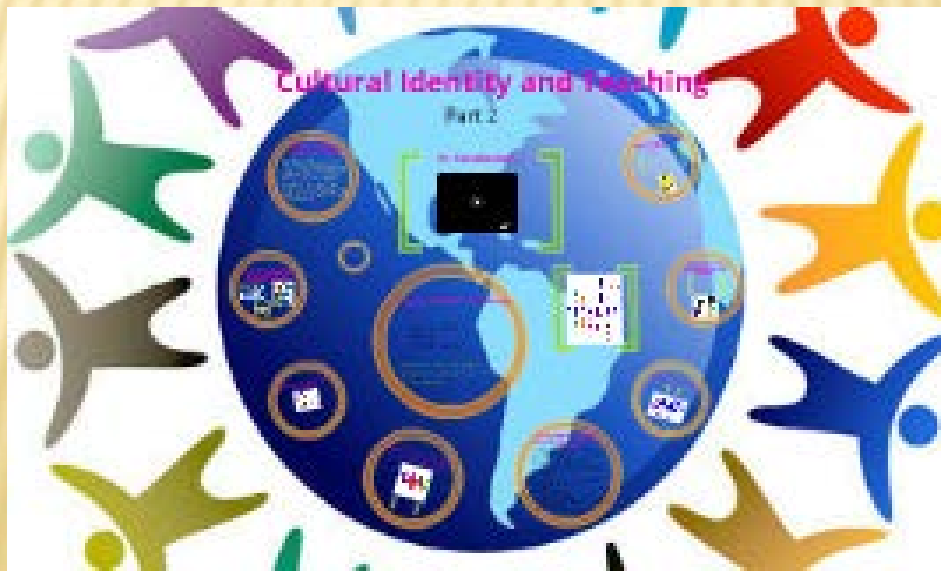
12. CULTURAL IDENTITY

Fathers may contribute significantly to their children's awareness of their legacy, their heritage and what that means to members of their group, regarding self identity, gender roles, accumulated knowledge and world view. Fathers exemplify customs and traditions that they want to pass on to future generations.



12. CULTURAL IDENTITY

When fathers place substantial importance upon recognizing and promoting their cultural identity or ethnic heritage, children tend to pursue a similar interest in engaging in the practices and customs related to their shared identity



13. ROLE EXPECTATIONS

- ✘ Fathers teach and model relationship skill building. Fathers who handle conflict and high stress situations constructively and non-violently can expect their children to generally do the same.
- ✘ Children who witness affectionate, respectful, and sacrificial behavior on the part of their father are more likely to treat their own future partners or spouses and family members in a similar fashion.

13. ROLE EXPECTATIONS

- ✘ Fathers need to be present for the milestones in their children's lives, their rites of passage, and the major events important to their children's development.
- ✘ List 5 to 10 milestones that are important to you.



14. CAREER CHOICES

Studies of high achieving women employed in Fortune 500 companies indicate that fathers played a significant role in removing barriers and allowing them to enter the field of their choice, avoiding stereotypical career fields for females.



15. GUIDE TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD

When children are in preschool, fathers can best prepare their children for the outside world by engaging in vigorous physical play and by encouraging small steps in the direction of autonomy. This might include dressing themselves, shaking hands with a guest, or dealing with their frustrations through healthy problem-solving.

15. GUIDE TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD

- ✘ Fathers who bring their children on errands. to work, to volunteer and to community activities help prepare them for the real world of adult responsibilities.
- ✘ Healthy dads talk to their children about peer pressure and the dangers of alcohol, drugs, early sexual activity, and violence.

15. GUIDE TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD

- ✘ Fathers tend to focus less on making a child feel good or secure and more on challenging them and helping them prepare to cope with the real world.
- ✘ Remember slides 12 & 13



CONCLUSION

- ✘ Please select three to five observations listed in this power point and decide how you want to expand opportunities for fathers to exhibit these.
- ✘ "The most important work that fathers will ever do will be within the walls of our own homes."-~
~ Harold B. Lee

FATHERHOOD QUOTES

“You don't have to deserve your mother's love. You have to deserve your father's.” ~ Robert Frost

“My father didn't tell me how to live. He lived and let me watch him live it.” ~ Clarence Budington Kelland

“A father carries a picture of his child where his money used to be.”.

FATHERHOOD QUOTES

“There is a hole in the soul of every child in the shape of their absent father.” ~Phylo Pharquart

“My mother protected me from the world and my father threatened me with it.” ~Quinten Crisp

“My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person. He believed in me.”
~ Jim Valvano

**WE NEED TO TEACH
OUR DAUGHTERS TO
KNOW THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN:**

a man who flatters her and
a man who complements her,

a man who spends money on her
and a man who invests in her

a man who views her as property
and a man who views her properly

a man who lusts after her
and a man who loves her,

a man who believes he's a gift to
women, and a man who believes
she's a gift to him.

And then we need to teach our
sons to be that kind of man.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

A significant portion of the content of this workshop power point is drawn from the research of Kyle Pruett, MD, contained in his book Fatherneed, published by Penguin Random House, 2001.

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