



GUARD YOUR HEART. GUARD YOUR MIND. GUARD YOUR BODY.

Father's Day: The Importance of Dad

The Institute for the Study of Civil Society in a fascinating [article](#) has broken down the importance and role of the father in the home and in the development of a child, starting with infancy on through adolescence and the teen years. In this study the affects of a father in a child's life are astounding. Kids with fathers express empathy to other kids at a much earlier age and can learn to see things from another person's viewpoint. Kids with physically interactive dads score higher on IQ tests and display much higher problem solving skills than those with no male influence. Fathers with a strong commitment to their families provide a model of responsible behavior to their kids, who then learn to be more responsible.

Many studies agree on one point though, that kids raised without fathers have a much higher incidence of bad outcomes including poor performance in school, violent activities, early sexual activity, drug use, and criminal convictions. Some conclusions point to the facts that fatherless households have lower income and therefore fewer opportunities. Others point to more psychological or ethical factors. Whatever the root cause, and likely there are many, the conclusion remains: kids need dads in order to get the best chance in life.

The National Center for Fathering goes as far as to say, "When fathers are absent, children suffer. Fatherlessness is linked to poverty, high school dropout rates, crime, adolescent drug use and teenage pregnancy." Read the [full article here](#), and ask yourself, What is the solution? It is as easy as education. Being a father is as easy as having sex, but raising a child takes time, patience and education. Most men are not naturally good fathers. Good fathers have learned the behavior through years of observation and study of the strong men in their lives.

Five Tips for dads to make their homes a healthy place to live ([from fatherhood.org](#)):

1. **Value and Appreciate Mom.** Your relationship with mom is probably the first one your kids will see, and they'll model how you talk to and treat each other. Make it a point to value and respect her, and communicate that to your children through words and actions.
2. **Show Love.** You've heard the saying "actions speak louder than words" for a reason – many times they do! Kids spell love T-I-M-E so make sure to spend time with them doing special activities and attending school functions. Daily signs of affection – like hugs and kisses – are also important. And, of course, while actions do speak louder than words, kind words and "I love you"s are important for building your child's worth and self-esteem.
3. **Teach Your Kids To See Through Others' Eyes.** Kids need to learn early on how to resolve conflict and get along with a variety of people. Modeling this for your children will also be a good reminder to you, and, when taken to heart, will help you keep conflicts from turning into huge arguments.
4. **Know That Your Kids Need You.** Your sons will watch you to learn how to be men, and your daughters will watch you to learn how to be treated by men. You may feel more comfortable with your sons, or with your daughters, but it's important to spend one on one time with both your boys and your girls, teaching them what it means to be a man.
5. **Look to the Future.** You are not who you were yesterday. Don't get stuck on past mistakes or decisions and always keep moving forward. It's never too late to change, or to create a safe and happy home life for your family.