

# The Importance of Good Fathers



## Dads Matter In Their Kid's Lives Too

When a parent plays an active role in their child's life, they both are rewarded dramatically from this supportive and trusting relationship. While most research tends to focus on how mothers impact their child's development, fathers are just as important. Children greatly benefit when they have fathers that are both physically and emotionally present. Every child deserves a dad who shows up for them.

## The Value Of Dad's Involvement In A Child's Life

### Health: Dads Help To Keep Their Kids Safe And Healthy With Their Presence

- Babies are less likely to be at risk of lower birth weights and infant mortality.
- Children have lower rates of injuries as they are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors.
- Children are less likely to misuse substances including alcohol when they have actively involved fathers.

### Emotional Well-Being: Kids Are Happier And More Well-Adjusted With Both Parents

- Children with involved fathers have higher levels of self-esteem, are better at asserting their independence, and thrive in leadership roles.
- They exhibit more prosocial and empathic behavior towards other people.
- When dads play an active role, their children tend to experience less behavior problems.

### Education: Children Perform Better In School With An Involved Father

- Children achieve higher test scores and grades, have increased attendance, and greater participation in after-school activities.
- They are less likely to skip class, repeat a grade, and drop out of school.
- Fathers who engage in educational activities, such as reading bedtime stories, contribute to their child's language and literacy development.

- An actively involved father has a significant positive influence on their child's development and life.
- Fathers that have a loving and supportive relationship with their child will have a higher quality of life.
- There are simple and fun ways for men to become more involved dads.
- Actively involved fathers are present, willing to listen, supportive, patient and respect their children.

### Life Outcomes: Dad's Active Involvement In A Child's Life Sets Them Up For Success

- Kids with fathers who are an active presence have more achievement in their adult life than those who grow up without an involved father.
- They are less likely to become teen parents, be incarcerated during their youth, and engage in criminal activity.
- Kids with involved fathers are at lower risk for living below the poverty line and for being incarcerated as an adult.

**Being A Good Dad Is Good For Dad, Too.** When a man is an active participant in their household and has a healthy relationship with their child, they also benefit. They are happier, have higher self-esteem, and have better physical and mental health. Involved fathers are more likely to be active in their community and have stronger familial relationships outside their immediate family.



**CONNECTICUT  
Clearinghouse**  
a program of the Connecticut Center  
for Prevention, Wellness and Recovery

800.232.4424 (phone)  
[www.ctclearinghouse.org](http://www.ctclearinghouse.org)

A Library and Resource Center on Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs, Mental Health and Wellness

## Tips For Being A More Involved Dad

- **Have A Father-Child Activity Day:** Go to a baseball game, go on a road trip to the shore, or go on a walk around a local park.
- **Teach A New Skill:** Teach them how to ride a bike, how to pump gas or how to take care of the family pet.
- **Help Out With School:** Help them with their homework, chaperone a field trip, or work on a class project together.
- **Talk To Them:** Ask about their day, their likes/dislikes, or what they want to do on the weekend.
- **Get Involved In Activities:** Help them with instrument practice, do a homemade art project with them or be a leader in their scouts troop.

## Advice For Becoming An Even Greater Dad

### Be There

Be available and show up for them. Be a consistent presence and attentive towards them. Take them out on fun outings, read them a book, or play a board game with them. Even when not physically present, make the conscious effort to reach out to them. Check-in with them through phone and video calls and text messages.

### Show Affection

Engage in positive physical contact, such as hugging and kissing, to strengthen the emotional bond with an infant child. Maintain a consistent loving relationship to foster a secure connection with the child while they age. Become a trustworthy and non-judgmental confidant for high-school aged children.

### Provide Support

Be a source of comfort for an upset child. Mentor and give a great amount of care to the child. Contribute to the household through financial and emotional support. Be a positive influence for the child: help out with household tasks such as doing the dishes and taking out the trash. Be a role model for children and encourage them to help with chores. For example, teach them to put their toys away.

### Show Patience And Kindness

Avoid spanking or using physical discipline. This will only teach the child that aggression is an acceptable method to express their anger. Instead, practice patience and remain calm when a child misbehaves. When punishing a child, use age appropriate consequences, such as placing a toddler in timeout or implementing a curfew for a teenager. Recognize good behavior in a child. Show praise and reward them for their behavior.

### Give Respect And Allow Independence

Actively communicate respect and confidence towards a child. Let them decide. Allow them to make age-appropriate decisions, such as what to wear to school or what sport to play. This will help foster autonomy within a child. Advise and encourage them on how to explore the world outside of their comfort zone.

## Connecticut Resources

### 2-1-1 of Connecticut

[www.211ct.org](http://www.211ct.org) or call 2-1-1

## National Resources

### National Fatherhood Initiative

[www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)

### National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

[www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

### US Department of Health and Human Services

[www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

