

## Father's Involvement in Upbringing a Child

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### Introduction

The father has an important potential role at each developmental stage that his children pass through. Fathers play a significant role in fostering social-emotional, cognitive, language, and motor development in the lives of their young children. Research shows that the active participation of father in nurturing a child will strengthen the development of their children. A child without a father is like a house without a roof. The great *FATHER* should be faithful, attentive, a teacher, a hero, an encourager and a recreationalist.

### Benefits for the children

Children with actively involved fathers are having the following benefits:

- Access to resources that facilitate healthy development (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, quality medical care).
- Children develop problem-solving skills.
- Show higher level of sociability and high level of school performance.
- More positive attitude and better behavior at school and become more independent.
- Fathers who love their children are more likely to develop strong emotional bonds with their fathers and develop healthy self-esteem
- Fathers tend to use a more physical style of play (e.g., wrestling) that offers a number of benefits to children, including enhanced cognitive ability
- By being actively involved in a child's life, a father promotes a trusting relationship. The child does not have to worry about being abandoned.
- Fathers have a unique opportunity to teach their children valuable skills that will enable them to grow up to be healthy and productive adults.
- Positive father involvement decreases the boy's behavioral problems and better mental health for girls.
- Active fathers listen and support their children when they experience joy, sadness, anger, fear, and frustration.
- Children are less likely to engage in early sexual activity, thus reducing their chances for teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Children with actively involved fathers are less likely to drop out of school, less likely to commit suicide and less likely to commit juvenile crimes than children with uninvolved fathers
- The chances that a child will commit crimes as an adult also diminish when he grows up with an actively involved father

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- Father provides their children with an environment in which they can become competent, productive and self directed members of society.

### **Benefits for the Family**

- Better communication between fathers and family members
- A greater sense of commitment to the family
- Less troubling conflict with teenage children
- Fathers who are involved in nurturing a child will have happy family life that promotes optimal development of children.

### **Benefits for Fathers**

- Enjoy a secured attachment relationship with their children
- Cope well with stressful situations and everyday hassles
- Feel more comfortable in their occupation and feel that they can do their job well
- Feel confident they have a lot to offer others in terms of their job skills, parenting skills, and social relationships.

### **Guidelines to be an effective father:**

1. Fostering a positive relationship with the children's mother
2. Spending time with children
3. Nurturing children
4. Disciplining children appropriately
5. Serving as a guide to the outside world
6. Protecting and providing
7. Serving as a positive role model

#### *1. Fostering a positive relationship with the children's mother*

- Father should treat the mother of their children with affection, respect, and consideration.

- Children who witness affectionate, respectful, and sacrificial behavior on the part of their father are more likely to treat their own, future spouses in a similar fashion.

- Couples who can raise issues with one another constructively, compromise, and forgive one another for the wrongs done generally have happier marriages and happier children than those who do not handle conflict well or who avoid addressing issues in their relationship.

#### *2. Spending time with children*

- Fathers should spend considerable time with their children playing and having fun. Fathers' play has a unique role in the child's development, for example, how to explore the world and how to keep aggressive impulses in check.

- Fathers should maintain the active, physical, and playful style of fathering as their children age. When it comes to father-child fun, active pursuits like tossing the football, playing basketball, kicking, or going to the library are more valuable than spending time in passive activities such as watching television.

- Fathers should engage in productive activities with their children such as household chores, washing dishes after dinner, or cleaning up the backyard. Doing such shared activities promote a sense of responsibility and significance in children that is, in turn, linked to greater self-esteem, academic and occupational achievement, psychological well-being, and civic engagement later in life.

- Fathers should spend time fostering their children's intellectual growth. Fathers' involvement in educational activities from reading to their children to meeting with their child's teacher is more important for their children's academic success than their mother's involvement.

- Fathers can conduct family meeting several times a week, and encourage every member to offer ideas about how to keep the home a happy place.

#### *3. Nurturing children*

- Fathers should be responsible in infants care such as holding and hugging them often, and

participate in their basic care (e.g., feeding and changing diapers).

- Fathers should praise their children when they behave well or accomplish something, hugging and kissing their children often, and comfort them when they are sad or scared.
- Fathers should continue to praise adolescents, especially when they achieve significant accomplishments.
- Do not expect adult behavior from young children but expect them to behave as well as they can.

#### 4. *Disciplining children appropriately*

- Father must maintain control of his emotions, his body language, and his hands when he disciplines his children.
- Fathers who scream at their children, who pound tables, or who strike their children are destined to fail as disciplinarians, and lose their children's respect when they are not able to control their emotions.

#### *The keys to good discipline are*

- ❖ Set clear rules and enforce them.
- ❖ Be consistent.
- ❖ Keep anger out of discipline.
- ❖ Do not confuse bad behavior with a bad child. Parents need to verbalize to children that it's the bad behavior that they don't like, not the child.
- ❖ Use time-outs and other appropriate consequences.
- ❖ Praise good behavior.
- ❖ Combine rules and limit setting with explanations. Helps them to learn what is acceptable and not acceptable behavior.

#### 5. *Serving as a guide to the outside world*

- When the children are in preschool, fathers can prepare their children for the outside world by engaging in vigorous, physical play and encouraging small steps in the direction of autonomy.
- As children begin school, fathers can tell their children of his own experiences in school and encourage them to study hard and teach them

about money management and teach them a sport that will help his children learn about teamwork.

- Fathers of adolescents should incorporate discussions of their core beliefs and life experiences into ordinary conversations with their teens and have meals with their children on a regular basis.
- Father should talk to their children about peer pressure and the dangers of alcohol, drugs, early sexual activity, and violence.
- Fathers should give controlled freedom to the adolescents.
- Fathers need to be preparing their children for the challenges and opportunities of adulthood by gradually giving them more opportunities to act independently and to make good use of their independence.

#### 6. *Protecting and providing*

- Fathers are expected to provide protection for their family financially.
- Fathers play an important role in ensuring their children's safety. This is particularly important in communities that experience high rates of violence and crime.
- Fathers should pay close attention to the type of peers with whom their children are spending time. If they determine that their children's peers are engaged in unethical, dangerous, or unlawful activities, they need to minimize their children's contact with these children.
- Fathers should monitor children's health in terms of immunization, dental care and monitoring child safety.

#### 7. *Being a role model*

- The better way that fathers treat other people, spend their time and money, and handle the joys and stresses of life will help in guiding the behavior of their children in better way.
- Father's relationship with opposite sex, his ability to control his own emotions, and his approach to work, all play a formative role in shaping his sons' and daughters' approach to romantic relationships, marriage, interpersonal relationships, school and work.

## Conclusion

Various studies have indicated that when the fathers are in the delivery room, delivery times are shorter, anesthetic agents are used less frequently, mothers and babies are calm, and infant feeding problems are less. Father involvement makes a real difference for children in the areas of intellectual development, sex-role development, or psychological development. Most children do better when their relationship with father is close and warm, and when father lives with them. Undoubtedly fathers have important roles to play in their children's lives.

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