



# Working with Dads: Encouraging and Supporting Father Involvement from Birth through Adolescence

June 20, 2013



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Fatherhood Clearinghouse

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# National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse Overview

- Office of Family Assistance (OFA) funded national resource for fathers, practitioners, programs/Federal grantees, states, and the public at-large who are serving or interested in supporting strong fathers and families.
- NRFC Director: Kenneth Braswell, Sr.  
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- NRFC Manager: Patrick J. Patterson  
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# National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

- Visit the NRFC: [www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)
- Contact any of our staff: [info@fatherhood.gov](mailto:info@fatherhood.gov)
- Please encourage any fathers or fatherhood practitioners to contact our national call center toll-free at **1-877-4DAD411** (877-432-3411).
- Engage with us via social media:  
Facebook: **Fatherhoodgov** Twitter: **@Fatherhoodgov**
- See the website for information on the *President's Fatherhood and Mentoring Initiative* and our *Fatherhood Buzz* events.
- Look for examples of our *Annual Media Campaign* designed to promote the Responsible Fatherhood field.





# National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse Overview

Resources are available for:

- **Dads** looking for tips, hints & activities for dads and kids (see *DadTalk Blog* and "*For Dads*" corner).
- **Fatherhood programs** looking to get started or expand (check out "*For Programs*" and *webinars*).
- **Researchers and policy makers** looking for the latest on responsible fatherhood (search our *Library*).



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# NRFC Twitter Town Hall

Please join us on Twitter on Wednesday June 26<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. EST for a conversation about the NRFC's latest product *Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit: Resources from the Field*

*Panelists include:*

*Nigel Vann, NRFC*

*Joe Jones, Center for Urban Families*

*Andrew Freeberg and Guy Bowling, Goodwill Easter Seals Minnesota*

- Join us via Twitter at **#AskNRFC**
- Questions will be responded to by the panel via video feed and twitter



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# Working with Dads: Encouraging and Supporting Early Father Involvement

Armin Brott

June 20, 2013



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# Stages of Early Fatherhood

- **The Expectant Father (pregnancy - birth):** Dad's emotional "pregnancy" is just as profound as mom's.
- **The New Father (0-12 months):** Maybe the most important year—a condensed version of the full arc of fatherhood.
- **The Evolving Father (ages 1-5):** Solidifying your relationship with your child. Figuring out who you are as a dad and what your priorities are.
- **The Confident Father (ages 6-9):** Seeds of independence. Making the world a better place.



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# Engaging Expectant Fathers

What dads can do	What practitioners can do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Partner's exercise and nutrition</li><li>- Go to OB</li><li>- Take childbirth prep class</li><li>- Show partner some love</li><li>- Do stuff without being told to</li><li>- Talk to the baby</li><li>- Resolve family leave/workplace</li><li>- Talk about her expectations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Invite dad in, encourage his questions and participation</li><li>- Make office/waiting rooms more dad friendly</li><li>- Recommend good resources</li><li>- Let him know how important he is even during pregnancy (if you don't know, learn)</li><li>- Recommend resources</li><li>- Offer classes/groups for dads</li></ul>



# Engaging New Fathers

What dads can do	What practitioners can do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Take leave if you can</li><li>- Hold, carry, cuddle the baby</li><li>- Talk to the baby</li><li>- Never miss a chance to change diapers</li><li>- Stimulate senses</li><li>- Gentle play (no tossing)</li><li>- Read</li><li>- Discover the baby's temperament</li><li>- Don't sex stereotype</li><li>- Think about anger management</li><li>- Start childproofing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Dad-friendly environment (exam rooms, waiting rooms, evening and weekend hours)</li><li>- Emphasize his important role in breastfeeding</li><li>- Emphasize other benefits to child, mom, dad</li><li>- Talk to mom about gatekeeping</li></ul>





# Engaging Evolving Fathers

## What dads can do

- Volunteer in child's school
- Childproof again
- Monitor electronics
- Discipline, don't punish
- Read about child development
- Get involved in kids' lives, daily decisions
- Play
- Don't devalue what you do (you're not mom)
- Talk a little, listen a lot
- Read together
- Take care of the mom

## What practitioners can do

- Dad-friendly outreach ("parent" = "mom")
- Talk to moms
- Encourage dads to volunteer in school
- Evaluate policies
- Offer resources
- Focus on what he's doing well, not the negative
- Bribery
- Explain benefits of dad involvement
- Suggest ways to be involved
- Classes, etc. - but for dads only





# Engaging Confident Fathers

What dads can do	What practitioners can do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Drive (to school, sports, etc) - easier to talk</li><li>- Volunteer in school</li><li>- Talk about the tough stuff</li><li>- Don't preach</li><li>- Play - 60mins/day</li><li>- Give responsibility</li><li>- Allow to develop skills</li><li>- Know your child</li><li>- Keep reading</li><li>- Learn, teach</li><li>- Prepare to let go</li><li>- Take care of yourself</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Encourage volunteering</li><li>- Audit policies, location, recruitment, schedules, outreach...</li><li>- Keep talking to mom</li><li>- Keep reminding dad about his importance</li><li>- Point out high-profile positive examples of men</li><li>- Offer resources</li><li>- Keep it fun</li><li>- Events/groups that allow dad-child interaction</li></ul>





# Contact Information

- Website: [www.mrdad.com](http://www.mrdad.com)
  - Blog: [mrdad.com/blog](http://mrdad.com/blog)
  - Radio shows: [mrdad.com/radio](http://mrdad.com/radio) and [mrdad.com/militaryfather](http://mrdad.com/militaryfather)
- Email: [armin@mrdad.com](mailto:armin@mrdad.com)
- Relevant books
  - *The Expectant Father: Facts, Tips, and Advice for Dads-to-Be*
  - *The New Father: A Dad's Guide to the First Year*
  - *Fathering Your Toddler: A Dad's Guide to the Second and Third Years*
  - *Fathering Your School-Age Child*
  - *The Military Father: A Hands-on Guide for Deployed Dads*
- Other resources
  - *Mr. Dad on Pregnancy (app)*
  - *Mr. Dad on Babies (app)*
  - *Mr. Dad on Military Dads (app)*



# Working with Dads: Encouraging and Supporting Father Involvement ages 6 to 12

David Miller

June 20, 2013



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# Dads & Reading

- Start reading with your children from an early age, but continue through early childhood and beyond.
- Establish a routine of bed time stories together.
- Reading and playing with books is a wonderful way to spend special time together.
- As your children begin to read, take turns reading to each other.
- As they get older, you can still sit and read together - even if you are each reading something different. Encourage them to talk about what they are reading.



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# Literacy Strategies For Dads

- Have your child read aloud to you every night.
- Ask your child to tell you in her own words what happened in a story.
- Before getting to the end of a story, ask your child what she thinks will happen next and why.



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# Dads Communicating with Pre-Teens

- Table Time- Use dinner time as a strategy to communicate with your children. Meal time provides a great opportunity to talk about a variety of topics: school, sports, movies and things happening in the world.
- Take time to listen to your children without providing advice. Many times children want to feel that you are interested in their lives.



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# Active Dads (Exercise with school age children)

- Establish Family Fitness- If you want your children to know the value of fitness, exercise with them (30 minutes- 4 days a week)
- Plan fun walks, take a tennis class, shoot some baskets, throw a baseball, kick a soccer ball



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# Dads Monitoring Your Child's Technology

- Set the ground rules
  - Don't enter personal information such as name and address.
  - Create user names that don't reveal your true identity.
  - Do NOT agree to meet a stranger you meet online in person.
  - Tell a parent or trusted adult if you encounter bullying or suspicious behavior
- Understand the technology they're using. (Become familiar with all social media applications- Dad do your research!)
- Set the parental controls
  - Investigate parent controls on your computer



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# The Role of TV

- Think about what your kids are watching.
- Watch programs with them and talk about what they are seeing - for example:
  - Explain how commercials are trying to sell them things.
  - Ask how they feel about something that a character did or said.
- Don't use TV as a babysitter.
- Look for how we might limit our own TV watching and cell phone usage to be more present for our kids, better role models, etc.



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# Contact Information

David Miller, M.Ed.

Twitter @uchangenow

*Khalil's Way*

*Raising Him Alone* (Book for single Mothers Raising Boys)

Dare To Be King (Survival workbook for adolescent African American males)



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# Working with Dads: Encouraging and Supporting Father Involvement during Adolescence

Carl Pickhardt Ph.D.

June 20, 2013



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# Adolescence

- **Adolescence** = the period between the separation from childhood (ages 9-13) and the onset of young adulthood (ages 23 - 30).
- **Fathering adolescents is a dance:** The dad must follow where the adolescent leads, and lead the adolescent where he wants the young person to grow.
- **Adolescence is a working compromise:** the dad doesn't get all the influence he wants, and the adolescent doesn't get all the freedom he/she desires. In each case, some has to be enough.





# A Father is not a Mother

**Mother =**

Founding attachment

Intimacy based

Relational focus

**Father =**

Earned attachment

Approval based

Performance focus

## Risks of Adolescence

The controlling mother

Too close for comfort

Hard letting go

The distant father

Too removed to care

Hard staying connected



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# An Adolescent is not a Child

## With a Child - Attachment Parenting

- The parent **holds on** to keep close.
- The **goal** is to establish a **secure dependency**.
- The child needs **basic trust** in parents.

## With an Adolescent - Detachment Parenting

- The parent **lets go** to let grow (still remaining involved).
- The **goal** is to nurture a **confident independence**.
- The adolescent needs **basic trust** in self.



# 4 Stages of Adolescence

- **Early Adolescence (9-13):** The Separation from Childhood - needs father for *constant structure*.
- **Mid Adolescence (13-15):** Forming a Family of Friends - needs father for *source of interest*.
- **Late Adolescence (15-18):** Acting More Grown Up - needs father as *reliable informant*.
- **Trial Independence (18-23):** Stepping off more on one's own - needs father as *life mentor*.



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# 3 Engines of Adolescence

- **SEPARATION** - to create distance for room to grow. Seeks more privacy and time with friends.
- **DIFFERENTIATION** - to try out different interests and images for identity. Seeks alternative definitions to see what individually fits.
- **OPPOSITION** - asserts more persistence and resistance. Seeks to operate more on own terms.

Adolescence creates more **opportunity for conflict** on all three counts.



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# Father/Adolescent Conflict

## Rules are:

- 1) Disagreement is normal.
- 2) Argument is good.
- 3) Conflict is for communication.
- 4) Differences are of interest.
- 5) Concern is more important than control.
- 6) The goal is stay connected.
- 7) Conflict must NEVER be an excuse to cause another family member harm.





# Contact Information

- Website: [www.carlpickhardt.com](http://www.carlpickhardt.com)
- Email: [pickhardts@yahoo.com](mailto:pickhardts@yahoo.com)
- Most recent book: SURVIVING YOUR CHILD'S ADOLESCENCE (Wiley, 2013)
- Weekly blog: "*Surviving (your child's) Adolescence*" for PSYCHOLOGY TODAY



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# Happy Fathers Day

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