

Be a team player by... Having time in your 'shed'

Even in the best teams, individuals need some time away for themselves. Sometimes you need to retreat to your 'shed' and do a little bit of what you enjoy. Providing the time you spend on it is not excessive, pursuing a hobby with friends can benefit your child – you will be a better dad if you are relaxed, content, happy and more able to give time and energy to others.

Creating traditions

Family traditions, such as bedtime stories or having a film night, will form strong memories and deepen bonds. As well as whole family routines, try to make some regular dad and child activity time. A trip to feed the ducks every weekend or a weekly outing for hot chocolate will become a cherished memory for both you and your child.



Helping you to be an even better dad



For more information and tips on family life, visit cff.org.uk

You might like to:

- **Attend** a local *Time Out for Parents - Dads* course cff.org.uk/courses
- **Read** *The Sixty Minute Father* by Rob Parsons cff.org.uk/shop
- **Visit** the *Parenting* section of our website – cff.org.uk/parenting

 **positiveparenting**

Care for the Family seeks to promote strong family relationships and help those who face family difficulties.

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Top Tips For Parents

Being a Dad



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“What are dads for?”

It is a good question. We are expected to be involved in the lives of our children, and we want to be good dads. But perhaps we are not sure how. Maybe they seem to get all they need from their mum and we feel like an assistant parent. But dads are essential and can play an important and unique role in the lives of their children. Here are some tips on how you can be a good dad.

Be a manager by... Setting a good example

Actions speak loudly. Your sons are learning how to be men and our daughters are discovering what to expect from men by watching what you do. Consider what kind of men you would like your sons to become and your daughters to have relationships with, and be that sort of man yourself. You don't always get it right, so be prepared to say sorry to your child when you make mistakes.

Maximising credits

Imagine your child has an emotional bank account and help them maintain a healthy balance. Make credits by using kind words, encouraging, listening, having fun and giving support. Sometimes debits will occur – if you shout, criticise, don't spend time together or fail to listen. This is inevitable because no dad is perfect, but with enough positive deposits in the bank, your child should be able to cope with some debits.

Be a coach by... Investing time

Spending time with your children can be a struggle, but it is like relationship glue. Investing time in your child's life will give you the best chance of having a positive and durable relationship. You may be a dad who cannot be with his children regularly – perhaps you don't live with them or you work away from home – but you can still invest your time from a distance by writing letters, making phone calls or keeping in contact through social media.

Switching off and switching on

Don't let your child think your phone or computer is more important than them. Regularly switch off your devices and switch on to your child.

As a dad, you may find that you respond to your children's conversation by finding a solution or directing them with instruction.

While being directive is clearly appropriate at times, whenever possible, try instead to listen to your child, ask questions and acknowledge their feelings.

Be a trainer by... Setting boundaries

One of your responsibilities as a dad is to train your child so they can learn self-control and recognise acceptable limits of behaviour. Setting boundaries and enforcing them can be tough and you may make some mistakes, but you are more likely to earn your child's respect if you try to be clear, firm and consistent. If you don't do it, others, such as teachers and even police officers, may end up doing it for you!

Being assertive

It's natural to want to be popular, but if you give in to every demand your children make, you are not preparing them to cope with life's frustrations. Distinguish between your child's wants and needs. Meet their needs and sometimes give them what

they want, but you must also be willing to allow your child to learn to cope with disappointment.

Being assertive doesn't mean being bossy or aggressive, but it does mean saying 'no' from time to time.

