



The Importance of Fatherhood

Fathers play an important role in the development of their children and in the success of families. The involvement of two caring parents has many positive effects on children and families.

- The family is more likely to live above the poverty level and in a stable residence.
- Children have higher self-esteem and are less likely to succumb to peer pressure.
- Children have fewer problems in school and stay in school longer.
- Children have longer lasting relationships and a better chance for a successful marriage.
- Children have better coping skills and can adapt to change more easily.

Ways fathers can be active and involved in their children's lives

- Don't let moms have all the fun! Spend time caring for and playing with your children.
- Get to know your child. How do they learn, what do they like, what are they good at?
- Show affection. Say "I love you" and give hugs. Children need to know they are wanted by their families.
- **Be a role model for your child.** Always speak respectfully to your child and model behaviors you would like to see. Your child learns from your example.
- Spend time together as a family. Eat a meal together, go for a walk, or play board games. Spending time together gives children a chance to talk about what they are doing or would like to do.
- Read to your child. Start reading to your children when they are young. As they get older have them read to you or ask your child to read on their own.
- Talk to your child and not only when he or she is being disciplined. Ask your children about their daily activities. Listen to their ideas and problems. Praise your children often.
- Spend time one-on-one with your child. Family time is important, but so is one-on-one time. Children learn a lot from the different ways their parents interact with them.