Engaging Fathers in Kids Education

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What the Research Tells Us

- Family involvement is a “win/win” for students & schools.
- Higher grades, better attendance & homework completion
- More positive attitudes toward school, higher graduation rates & greater enrollment in college
- Fewer discipline problems
- Become more responsible adults when parents are actively involved in their children’s learning...
Challenges

- Parent involvement = mother’s involvement
- Assumption: mother is responsible for the child’s learning and development.
- These assumptions miss the importance of father’s involvement.
The Father Absence

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 24 million children in America—one out of three—live without their biological father in the home. Research shows when a child is raised in a father-absent home, he or she is affected in the following ways...

National Fatherhood Initiative
Benefits of Fathers Engagement
Problem Solving

▪ Young children who have high father involvement show an increased in curiosity & in their problem solving capacity.

▪ Encourages children’s exploration of the world around them & confidence in their ability to solve problems.
Modeling Behavior for Boys

- Show our sons what it looks like to have respect for yourself and to give respect. Demonstrate how to be in control of your emotions (it’s not weak to say “excuse me,” “please,” and “thank you”).

- Show him what it looks like to have respect for his mother, sister, aunt, grandmother, and his female classmates
Modeling Behavior for Girls

- Show our daughters what it looks and feels like to be respected at all times.
- Demonstrate appropriate boundaries when interacting with males as well as other females.
- Show her what to expect in a relationship by the way you treat her mother.
What Can we Do?

- Communicate with the Father

- School Notices: Fathers should know they are welcome at school & receive notices from school even if they live in the same home with the mother

- Provide non resident Fathers with student progress reports & other important information as well as the mother.

- Expect Father’s to be involved

- Provide information & training to parents

- Establish family resource centers in schools
What Else Can we Do?

- Adjust school and childcare activity schedules to meet family needs
- Create a father friendly environment.
- Reinforce father’s contributions
- Father-to-father strategies
- Parent – teacher meetings
- Images on display
Dealing with Resistance to Change

- Self Assessment
  - How do we really feel?
  - What are your experiences?
  - Does it impact judgement?

- Cultural Conditioning
Strengthening Fathers Engagement in Kids Education

- **Tools for fathers:**
  - Asking questions about school
  - What fathers can do at home
  - What fathers can do at school
“How was school?” “Fine.” – the art of asking questions

Questions to Ask Your Kids When They Get Home From School
(instead of “How was school today?”)

1. What was the funniest thing that happened today?
2. Did you do something nice for someone?
3. Did someone do something nice for you?
4. What challenged you today?
5. What did you eat for lunch?
6. What games did you play at recess?
7. Who made you smile today?
8. What was one thing that you learned in class?
9. What did you learn about one of your friends/classmates?
10. On a scale from 1 to 10, how was today?
11. Did anything troubling happen at school today? Did someone push your buttons?
12. What is your favorite thing about your teacher?
13. What are you hoping to learn about tomorrow?
14. Did you make any new friends?
15. Does anyone in your class have a hard time following rules?
16. What is one thing that you did today that makes you proud?
17. Did you have trouble with anything you were learning today?
18. What are you most excited to keep learning about?
19. What subject do you like the most?
20. If you were the teacher, what subject would you teach?
21. Did you hear about any new books we can read?
22. How do you describe your family to your friends?
23. Did anyone do anything gross today?
24. If you could change one school rule, what would it be and why?
25. What school grade are you most excited for?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Fatherly Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Take your child to school the first day of class.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Introduce yourself to their teacher.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Find out about progress reports and how to access them. (usually online)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Post your child’s school calendar at home.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Join PTA.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Attend parent/teacher conferences.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Post school lunch menus at home.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Go in and have lunch with your child.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Review contents of your child’s work folder/backpack each night. Ask questions and make comments.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Help your child to create a “workplace” at home for them to do their homework.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Help your child to determine a set time each night that homework will be completed.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Read to your child and have them read to you.</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Help your child with his or her homework! If you don’t know the answer, don’t pretend to. Let that be a learning opportunity for you both.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Create the expectation that each evening they should be prepared to tell you at least one thing they learned at school.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Make sure your child gets up early enough each morning to properly prepare for school.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Try to make each morning a peaceful organized experience by preparing the night before.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Each morning ask your child what is in store for them at school.</td>
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father

A father is neither an anchor to hold us back, nor a sail to take us there, but a guiding light whose love shows us the way.
Questions???
Contact Information

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