

Dads and Daughters  
February 2011

# Parenting *Rules!*

## Fathers Play An Important Role...

Many fathers underestimate the importance of their relationship with their daughter. A common misconception among men is that girls get their needs met by their mothers and boys by their fathers. However, studies have shown that dads have as much or even more influence over their daughters than moms. Since a daughter's relationship with her father is her first experience in a relationship with the opposite sex, it strongly shapes the way she will form relationships with men the rest of her life.



It is important for fathers to be involved in their daughter's lives whether they live with them or not. Girls who grow-up with an actively involved father or other key father figure tend to:

- have more confidence and self-respect
- have healthier relationships
- do better in school
- make wiser life choices
- get into trouble less
- stay in school longer
- be less likely to experiment with drugs
- avoid teenage pregnancy

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Be There For Her...

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When a father spends time with his daughter, he is letting her know that she is important. Girls need their father's love and attention, everyday. Don't be too busy to make your daughter feel loved, accepted and important.

Here are ten easy ways to show your daughter how important she is to you:

1. Say "I love you" often
2. Give her lots of hugs
3. Listen to your her
4. Spend one on one time with her
5. Go to her school functions
6. Eat dinner together
7. Show interest in her feelings
8. Read to her
9. Call her often if you don't live with her
10. Play her favorite games

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## Discipline Her With Love...

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Discipline isn't about yelling and/or punishing; it is about teaching your daughter positive behavior, how to follow rules and understand consequences. Fathers who discipline with love and respect create an environment where their daughters can feel safe and secure.



Here are some tips on disciplining your daughters:

- ✓ Be a good role model by showing your daughter positive behavior and respect for self and others.
- ✓ Praise the positive behavior you want to see more of.
- ✓ Establish fair rules and boundaries.
- ✓ Be sure to have clear and consistent consequences, which your daughter understands, for not following the rules.
- ✓ Be consistent and always follow through.
- ✓ Use redirection, not hitting
- ✓ Babies are too young to discipline; never punish your baby.

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Be a Responsible and Loving Father...

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Being an effective father is about being available to teach your daughter about life, provide encouragement and most importantly show her lots of love.

Being a responsible and loving father is as easy as:

- spending time with your daughter
- respecting her mother
- teaching her manners and self-control
- encouraging her to do her best
- giving her lots of hugs
- praising her positive behavior
- providing rules and limits; gently but firmly
- staying calm and being fair

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## Resources for Dads...

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### National Center for Fathering

P.O. Box 413888, Kansas City, MO 64141  
800-593-DADS [www.fathers.com](http://www.fathers.com)

### Children's Friend - Dads Making a Difference Program

621 Dexter Street, Central Falls, RI 02863  
401-721-9200 [www.cfsri.org/dadsdifference.html](http://www.cfsri.org/dadsdifference.html)

### Rhode Island Parent Information Network

175 Main Street Pawtucket, RI 02860  
401-727-4144 [www.ripin.org](http://www.ripin.org)

### The RI Department of Health, Family Health Line

Men2B Mentoring Program 401-222-4630

### iParenting

PO Box 1780 Evanston, IL 60204  
847-556-2300 [www.dadstoday.com](http://www.dadstoday.com)

### Rhode Island 211

2-1-1 [www.211ri.org](http://www.211ri.org)

## ABOUT PARENTING RULES! E-NEWS...

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 **Rhode Island**  
**Family & Children's Trust Fund**  
Administered by the RI Department of Children, Youth & Families

 Prevent Child Abuse  
Rhode Island

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Please share this information with the families in your programs. Thank you!