

## Children Need Their Fathers

June 2009

# Parenting *Rules!*

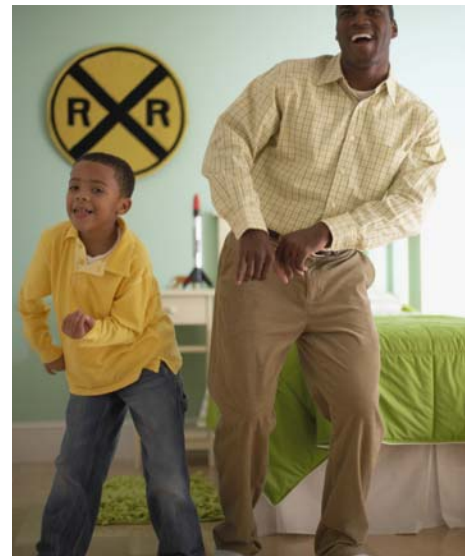
### Fathers Play An Important Role...

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In 1966, the importance of fatherhood was officially recognized when President Lyndon Johnson made Father's Day a national holiday. Every year, on the third Sunday in June, our country has celebrated the vital role fathers play in the lives of their children.

*"Being a Dad, in my opinion, is a privilege not a burden. The care and wellbeing of our children has been entrusted to us from a power greater than we can imagine. We are obligated to give our children all that we have to offer. There is no greater bond than between a Mom and child but equally important is the bond between a Dad and child."*

*~ Bill, father of four*



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

- have **more confidence**
- have **better friendships**
- do **better in school**
- make **wiser life choices**
- get into **trouble less**
- stay in **school longer**
- are **more responsible**
- grow up to be **caring adults**

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### Being a Responsible and Loving Father...

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Being an effective father isn't just about **being around**. It is about being **available** to teach your children about life, provide encouragement and most importantly show them lots of love.

*"Spending time with my children has been paramount to the development of a healthy relationship. It lets them understand that they are important to me and it builds their self-esteem. As they grow older, their need for my time becomes less, but they still value our connection and choose to spend a healthy amount of time with me and invite me to be an active part of their lives."*

*~ Darrell, father of two*

Being a responsible and loving father is as easy as:

- **spending time** with your children
- **respecting** your children's mother
- **teaching** them manners and self-control
- **encouraging** them to do their best
- **giving** them hugs
- **praising** their positive behavior
- **providing** rules and limits; gently but firmly
- **staying calm** and being fair

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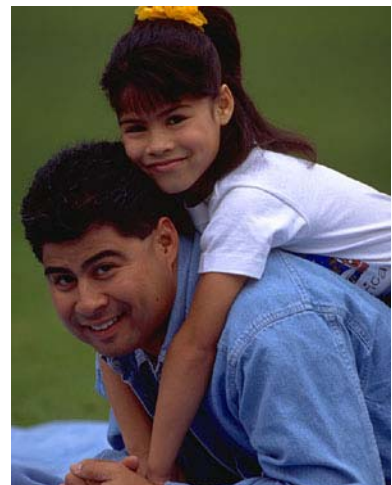
### Discipline with Love...

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

*"What really seems to work best is keeping the kids' reasons for their behavior in mind. To them, what they do often seems logical or acceptable! Talking through helps us all to focus on solutions, not just punishment..."*

*~ Christopher, father of four*



#### The Dos of Discipline:

- ✓ **Be a good role model** by showing your child 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 kids understand, 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 There...



When a father spends time with his children, he is letting them know they are important. Children need their father's love and attention, **everyday**. Don't be too busy to make your kids feel loved, accepted and important.

*"I find having time set aside for a specific activity that is shared one-on-one gives us a repeated ritual where we affirm our love for each other. In our case, I read to her (and sometimes her to me) every night before bedtime, and then snuggle for 5-10 minutes."*

*~ Walter, father of three*

Here are ten easy ways to show your kids you are there for them:

1. **Say "I love you"**
2. Give **hugs**
3. **Listen** to your child
4. **Help** with homework
5. Go to **school functions**
6. Eat **dinner together**
7. **Teach them** about responsibilities
8. **Read** to your child
9. **Call them** often if you don't live with them
10. **Play** their favorite game

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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

*Parenting Rules! E-news is produced by Prevent Child Abuse Rhode Island and is partially supported by an annual grant from the Rhode Island Family & Children's Trust Fund*

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[www.preventchildabuse-ri.org](http://www.preventchildabuse-ri.org)

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