

The Daddy Difference

How his way is good for the kids

Sept 2011



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Studies have highlighted the impact of fathers as distinct to that of mothers on children's development.

By Marilyn Rodriguez



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This Month...

Sep 3: Pope Gregory the Great

Sep 4: Ordinary Time 23

Come back brother.

Sep 8: The Birth of Mary

Sep 11: Ordinary Time 24

Forgive others

Sep 12: Holy Name of Mary

Sep 13: St John Chrysostom

Sep 14: Triumph of the Cross

Sep 15: Our Lady of Sorrows

Sep 16: Ordinary Time 25

The first shall be last

Sep 17: St Matthew the Apostle

Sep 17: Ordinary Time 26

The Father's Will

Sep 27: St Vincent De Paul

Sep 29: Archangels Michael,

Gabriel & Raphael

The Daddy Difference

A person is singing in my dream, very loudly, and doesn't stop. Then I realise it isn't singing, it's one of my children calling out in the night. I untangle myself from bed and stagger, half asleep, into my daughters' room.

"What is it sweetheart?"

"I want Daddy."

"Daddy's asleep, Bubba. Did you have a bad dream?"

"I want Daddy."

Of course she does. I go back to get him, but he has heard and is already on his way. Ten seconds later he's back and it's sorted, the monster has been properly chased away.

Daddy's a bit of a hero around here.



Daddy's a bit
of a hero around
here...

In our home my husband returns from work to a clamour of little people wanting to tell him about their day, wanting him to give them a bath, say prayers with them or put them to bed.

Now I can do all these things very well, but he does them differently. He lets them run around a bit before bedtime, be a bit loud, leave the lounge room in a mess.

And the kids love the Daddy Difference.

Studies have highlighted the impact of fathers as distinct to that of mothers on children's development.

In families where fathers are actively involved their children typically develop better cognitive skills, fewer behavioural problems and fewer psychological problems.



A recent study on the impact of involved fathering on children's development found that fathers are more likely than mothers to engage in rough and tumble physical play, and more likely to tease their children. They are most likely to startle them in play, by jumping out and surprising them for example.

All of this is thought to foster their children's independence, self-confidence and resilience.

Mothers, on the other hand, tend to engage their children in gentler forms of play, encourage their verbal self-expression and provide reassurance.

While these are broad tendencies and not necessarily the case in every family, they show that fathers relate to their children in qualitatively different ways to mothers and that these differences serve a purpose.

And sometimes dads are simply better at chasing dream monsters away than mums!

Children are best served when **both** parents provide them with what they need, including the basics of good parenting such as support, affection and safety and are supportive of each other's differing approaches.



A Father's Work Never Ends

It's a cliché said of mothers, but you could say it of many fathers too: that a father's work never ends.

Most fathers do so much that goes unacknowledged in the day-to-day. They are expected to lead while also supporting their wife's lead, to nourish and provide, laugh and play, encourage and teach, protect and support, and provide love and affection to their family.

How often do we as wives really stop to appreciate and affirm our husbands in their unique role as the father of our children?

Is there anything we can do to help him better enjoy his experience of fatherhood?

Links/Source:

The Secret of Dad's Success, Wall Street Journal, www.online.wsj.com

Consider these ideas:

- **Pray for Fathers** (see Pope John XXIII's Prayer for Fathers, p7)
- **Model appreciation of him for the kids**, "Wasn't that kind of Dad to bring home dinner for us so we could have a treat?".
- **If he is the primary breadwinner, consider how grateful you are that he is able to provide materially for the family. Tell him. Look for all the different ways he provides, and thank him for all the work he does and all the different ways he provides, in and outside the home.**
- **Appreciate that his way of interacting with the children is different and perhaps complementary to yours, not necessarily better or worse. By working with each other we hopefully will raise well-rounded, resilient and capable children.**
- **Sign up for a parenting course together, or read a book or watch a program on child development. If finding the time is an issue, be creative! A friend jots down salient points she has learned from her own reading and sticks them to the wall so that her husband can digest them at his leisure.**



How Mum's can draw forth the best from Dad

Despite that fact that nagging is totally ineffective in motivating the men in our lives to do what we want, we women are sometimes slow learners! Instead of trying a different strategy, what do we do? We nag harder, louder and more shrilly. And when this too is ineffective, we conclude that our husbands are just hopeless.

Nagging will almost never work. And here's why. Men will always resist when our style induces shame. Nagging implies incompetence, ill-will or selfishness – shaming judgements that disempower our hubbies and drive them into withdrawal. If you want to see your husband fully engaged in the home, nagging is NOT the way to do it!

Well, time for a change girlfriends! Let's work on reversing the shame culture and start building a culture of respect. We start by quitting the nagging, the criticism, the snide remarks and non-verbal putdowns. Instead, affirm your hubby when he does good. Voice your appreciation often and consistently and he'll soon work out what you like and want. Psychologists call this '**positive reinforcement**' and we do it all the time with the kids – praising and cheering when they do something clever. Practicing respectful appreciation helps you focus on what he does well and will help you avoid self-pity and resentment building up in your relationship.



Pope John XXIII's Prayer for Fathers

***Saint Joseph,
Guardian of Jesus and chaste husband of Mary,
you passed your life in loving fulfillment of duty.***

***You supported the holy family of Nazareth
with the work of your hands.
Kindly protect those who trustingly come to you.***

***You know their aspirations,
their hardships, their hopes.***

***They look to you because they know
you will understand and protect them.
You too knew trial, labour and weariness.***

***But amid the worries of material life,
your soul was full of deep peace
and sang out in true joy
through intimacy with God's Son
entrusted to you and with Mary, his tender Mother.
Assure those you protect
that they do not labour alone.***

***Teach them to find Jesus near them
and to watch over Him faithfully as you have done.
Amen.***



Father of the Year Activity

Award Certificate



Materials

Computer, MS Office, printer.

Instructions

1. From MS Powerpoint, select File > New > Award Certificates. Make your choice from the selection. Click Download.
2. Fill it in with Dad's name, and write in why he wins the award.

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Business Card Mini Photo Album

Materials

- Three business cards (they could be your Dad's, or get a card that is blank on the reverse side.)
- A4 heavy weight paper (eg 120gsm)
- Scissors
- Pens, markers, photos
- Glue
- Ruler, Pencil
- String or thick Cotton thread 30cm (1 ft)
- Stapler



Instructions

1. Cut a strip from the paper that is a few millimeters narrower than the length of your business cards.
2. Fan-fold the paper so that it fits neatly within the width of the business card. Trim the leftovers from the end. Glue two cards to the ends of the paper.
3. Cut a circle from the third card, approximately 12mm in diameter. This will be your button clasp.
4. Loop the string at one end, position it on the front business card (make sure that it is on the long side of the card, on the side that has the raw edge of the concertina book) and staple.
5. Place your button on top and staple through the button, string, cover. Your string should wrap around the back, round the front and wind 2-3 times around your button. Trim off excess.
6. Decorate your booklet with photos and messages.

Mini Footy & Hole-in-One savoury bites



In this recipe, the humble sausage roll has been transformed into themed food to give Dad a tasty treat!

Ingredients

- 500g thin sausages
- 1 egg
- 2-3 ready-made puff pastry sheet.
- Tooth picks or small skewers
- Sticky labels

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/375°F.
2. Lie a sausage on the edge of the pastry with 1 cm overhang at each end. Roll the sausage up until the pastry overlaps. Trim off the excess and set pastry aside for the next batch.
3. To assemble the hole-in-ones: Cut the roll about 3 cm from the end. Pinch the pastry closed at the end to seal it. Set it on the baking tray with the golf-ball facing up and press down to flatten the bottom. Do the same to the other end of the roll.
4. To assemble the footy: Using the middle section of the roll, cut into two parts (or three if your sausages are particularly long. Set the sausage rolls on the baking tray with the seal on the bottom. Cut thin strips from the excess pastry and place on top to look like laces.
5. Repeat with the remaining sausages. Brush the pastries with beaten egg. Bake in the oven 10-15 mins until pastry is golden.
6. Cut flags from sticky labels (1 cm x 2.5cm) and attach to the blunt end of the toothpicks, sticking the flag to itself. Trim to make triangular flag shapes. Insert the finished flags into the 'golf balls' when cooked. Arrange the pastries on a platter and serve with tomato sauce on the side.

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