

'LEARN THE FATHERHOOD CRAFT'

(by Dr. Stephen F. Duncan, Ph.D.)

- **“Have regular one-on-one time with each child.** Sometimes it’s fun to talk while you’re doing errands or making home repairs, but be sure that there are times that you turn off the TV, put down the newspaper, and give your kids your undivided attention. Schedule a daddy-daughter or daddy-son date occasionally. Go out to eat a favorite meal or to do an activity the child enjoys. Sit with them occasionally just before bed and talk about how the day went.”
- **“Show affection often.** Even if older kids seem squeamish, kids enjoy a hug and encouraging words now and then from their dad. With the older kids you may want to do this in private, though, rather than in range of their friends.”
- **“Take kids to work.** this is a great way to teach them about the world of work that you are a part of. Take kids with you on business trips when possible.”
- **“Stay connected when you have to be away.** Sometimes work takes dads out of town. Set up a routine to stay connected. Some family’s schedule a specific time Dad will call that is convenient for all members of the family. When you return, bring home something special for the kids. It need not be extravagant. My younger children have been thrilled to receive wing pins from an airline.”
- **“Teach them.** No dad has every gift or skill. Kids may learn certain things from other males in their lives. Use opportunities to share *your* talents. In my family, I lack mechanical ability, but i have passed on the gift of music through providing piano and drum lessons to my children.”
- **“Connect with your child at all levels.** Make sure you have some contact with every aspect of your child’s life. Visit the school, meet the teacher and kids and have at least fleeting contact with an after-school activity. If you have seen where your children are and met their friends, you will have more to talk about and more interesting conversations. Parent involvement during children’s schooling is critical to their school success. Work with your employer to see that your work schedule doesn’t preclude your involvement in your child’s schooling.”

Building Relationship That Transform Families

(Stephen F. Duncan, Ph.D., “The Importance of Fathers.” Montana State University Extension Service, Human Development B-6 (Family Life) June, 2000 Mont Guide Fact Sheet #20008/Human Resource Development.

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