

10 + 1 Tips to be an Involved Father

Adapted from <http://www.dadscan.ca/index.html>

1. Support and respect the mother of your children.

By both mother and father showing respect for each other, children grow up in a secure, nurturing environment. Children learn from this openness and likewise gain respect for themselves and others.

2. Work together as a team, sharing equally in all childrearing tasks.

Get up at night to help look after your child. Take an active role in supportive fathering of the breastfed baby if your child is newborn. Discuss with your partner concerns and issues you have about your child's health, safety and development.

3. Spend time with your children.

Read to your child. Play with him or her. Attend your child's school events, music recitals or sports events. Participate in the school classroom or assist with a field trip. The rewards are great and will last a lifetime for both you and your child.

4. Show love and affection toward your child.

Be committed to your child's emotional wellbeing. Encourage and teach your child to live a life of intimacy and integrity with respect for others. Establishing boundaries, setting reasonable limits and disciplining in a fair manner might be necessary on occasion.

5. Protect your family.

Enjoy the physical maturation of your child and be aware of your child's immunization record and visits to the family doctor or dentist. Your child's health is as much your responsibility as that of your child's mother.

6. Spend time together as a family.

Share a meal together on a daily basis. While eating, listen to your children and encourage them to talk about their day. Provide them with support and advice as to how to cope with various situations they experienced.

7. Tell your story.

Your history, that of your parents and your own family, can be interesting to your child. A young child often feels the world began at his/her birth. You need not tell all the details of your history, but only those which leave your child with the feeling that you too were once a child and you grew up and became an involved father.

8. Promote and encourage your place of work to be father-friendly.

Organize a father's day event with your colleagues such as a dad's picnic. Have photographs of your family displayed at work and take along pictures your children have made. If possible, promote a "bring your child to work" day.

9. Be an example.

Model to your child manners, honesty and self-discipline. Earn the right to be listened to by your children. Remember, your child is watching you and your interactions with others.

10. Being an involved father is for life.

Your children will grow up and perhaps eventually will have children of their own. Your participation in their lives and those of their children is ongoing. Fatherhood is a lifelong commitment and your relationship with your child is forever.

10+1. Dads can do it!

Believe in yourself and your potential to be an active, caring father. Every child deserves a loving, involved father.