

Lessons of Involved Fatherhood

Each dad brings a unique blend of individual personality characteristics and male socialization to parenting. Male socialization encourages some of the following characteristics in fathers.

- interact with their children in an active and playful style.
- approach problems as a challenge to solve.
- often push the limits of one's talents and instill high expectations.
- provide a sense of security and protection.
- promote independence and a willingness to challenge authority
- encourage risk-taking in a positive way of trying new things and overcoming fear.

As a dad you also have some unique opportunities to influence your children in the following ways:

- What it means to be a man
- How to manage and regulate emotions.
- As a model for male-female relationships.
- Instill a sense of stability and safety
- Stress the importance of academic achievement and school success.
- How to be playful
- Foster curiosity, problem- solving and persistence
- Promote cognitive and social competence.

You also have a second chance to learn some social and emotional skills often stunted in men through male socialization. Your child gives you a chance to learn some of the following lessons of fatherhood:

- Caring about others, moving away from self-centeredness.
- Increased empathy for others.
- Sensitivity to nonverbal cues.
- Sacredness of human life.
- Problem solving skills and managing complexity.
- Attention to feelings and how to express as well as manage a range of emotions.
- The importance of relationships.
- The art of compromise.
- Patience.