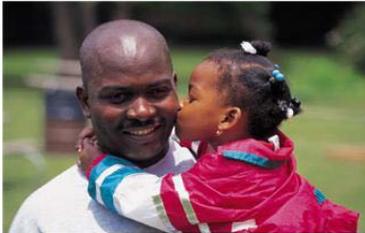


Fathers

Fathers have a very important role in their child's life

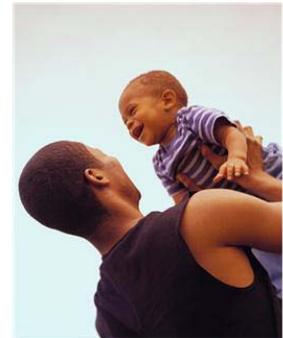


For many years mothers have taken the lead in the care of children; however, fathers are just as important. In fact, today's fathers are taking a more active role in raising their children.

Children form attachments to their fathers just as they do with their mothers. Caring fathers can make a big difference in the emotional, social and intellectual growth of their children. When children grow up without a caring father, they are more likely to live in poverty, develop emotional problems, have difficulty in school and engage in unsafe behavior.

The best way fathers can strengthen their relationship with their children is by spending quality time with their children on a daily basis. The length of time spent with a child is not as important as the quality of the activity.

Having a good relationship with your child does not mean you have to set aside a lot of time or money. Spend time with your child by doing simple activities, such as reading a book or playing together.



What parents can do

- ♥ Learn about child development. When you learn about what is normal for your child's age, you will better understand his or her physical and emotional development.
- ♥ Practice appropriate discipline with your child. Discipline should teach age-appropriate behaviors.
- ♥ Together, set family rules. The family rules must have clear consequences when one is broken. Adults in the home must model these values and rules for children.



- ♥ Become involved in your child's daily activities. Talk to your child about what is happening at school and share in his or her after school activities. Take time to listen to your child.
- ♥ Be a role model for your child. Always speak respectfully to your child and model behaviors you would like to see. Your child learns from your example.
- ♥ Provide praise and support to your child. When your child says or does something that you do not like, calmly point out the behavior and tell or show the child how he or she can do or say differently.