



Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana

Ten Ways to Be a Better Dad!

Every father wants to be a great dad, but no child comes with an instruction manual. Being a father can be challenging, especially in today's world. It takes some planning and paying attention to details that you might not have thought about. Below are a few tips that, once put into action, might get you a "World's Greatest Dad" coffee cup. Why not try a few?

1

Spend time with your children.

How a father spends his time tells his children what's important to him. Treasuring children often means sacrificing other things, but it is essential to make time for your kids. Kids grow up so quickly, and missed opportunities are forever lost.

2

Keep dialogue open.

All too often the only time a father speaks to his children is when they have done something wrong. Begin talking with your kids when they are very young and take time to listen to their ideas and problems.

3

Support your partner.

One of the best things a father can do for his children is to respect their mother. If you are married, keep your marriage strong and vital. If you aren't married, it is still important to respect and support the mother of your children.

4

Discipline with love.

All children need guidance and discipline, not as punishment, but to set reasonable limits. Remind your children of the consequences of their actions and provide meaningful rewards for desirable behavior.

5

Be a role model.

Fathers are role models to their kids, whether they realize it or not. A girl who spends time with a loving father grows up knowing she deserves to be treated with respect. Fathers can teach sons what is important in life by demonstrating honesty, humility, and responsibility.

6

Be a teacher.

A father who teaches his children about right and wrong, and encourages them to do their best, will see his children make good choices.

7

Eat together as a family.

Sharing a meal together can be an important part of family life. It gives kids the chance to talk about what they are doing and is a good time for fathers to listen and give advice. Most importantly, it is a time for families to be together each day.

8

Read to your children.

Begin reading to your children when they are very young. Instilling your children with a love for reading is one of the best ways to ensure they will have a lifetime of personal and career growth.

9

Show affection.

Children need the security that comes from knowing they are wanted and loved by their family. Parents, especially fathers, need to feel comfortable and willing to hug their children. Showing affection every day is the best way to let your children know that you love them.

10

Realize that a father's job is never done.

Even after children are grown and leave the home, they will still look to their fathers for wisdom and advice. Fathers continue to play an essential part in the lives of their children as they make decisions about schooling, new jobs, and as they grow and, perhaps, marry and build their own families.

*Adapted from the National Fatherhood Initiative - <http://www.fatherhood.org/10ways.asp>