



Chiropractic Newsletter

Well-Being

A Father's Presence

Studies Show that Fathers have a Bigger Impact in their Daughters' Lives than Society Acknowledges

In today's society, where there are significantly more single moms than in the past, there is a tendency to believe that a woman can raise a child—especially a daughter—on her own. However, recent studies indicate that this is not an ideal situation. Girls not only benefit from having their dad around, but they also need their father to help them develop emotionally.

Why Dads Matter Emotionally

According to a study published in the Journal of Family Psychology, girls who have good relationships with their fathers are less likely to develop anxiety and depression, and are better at handling everyday stress. They're also much more comfortable talking about their feelings, and that ability to be open about how they feel can help prepare them to have fulfilling relationships with others in the future.

Dads also help shape things like personal values, self-image, relationships, and sexuality for their daughters. When a father forms a deep, healthy relationship with his daughter, he helps her create a positive self-image and allows her to establish a feeling of



control over her life that will enable her to have the confidence to succeed.

Why Dads Matter Practically

In addition to having a huge impact emotionally, dads also have a profound effect on the financial and even physical health of their daughters. According to a Rutgers study, girls that have a father who's involved from the beginning are more likely to have enough to eat and are in better physical health than those who have uninvolved or absent fathers.

Fathers also help to provide financial stability for their daughters, which, when combined with good physical and emotional health, makes them much more likely to succeed and be able to further themselves financially.

Involved from the Beginning

The earlier fathers are involved with meeting their daughter's needs, the stronger the

bond between them will be— which leads to all the benefits above. Earlier involvement of fathers is something relatively new, especially when you consider that 75 years ago, dads couldn't even be in the room when their daughters were born.

Now, there are more opportunities for men to be involved with their daughters as soon as they're born. They can change diapers, of course, and they can even be included in feeding by extracting breast milk or using formula. Rocking their little girl to sleep at the end of the day is another way fathers can build a substantial bond right from the start.

Influence of Media

Unfortunately, even with these greater opportunities for involvement, there are a lot of negative influences in the media that some men may find difficult to overcome. Consider how many television shows portray fathers as bumbling idiots that know nothing about women. It's important, however, for fathers to recognize that these stereotypes don't have to be followed, and are simply poor portrayals of what a father should be.

Role of Moms

It's important to note that although a father is certainly important in a girl's life, this is not to diminish a mother's role. Moms can provide valuable information and advice

about what it means to be a woman, and are the ones that will guide their daughters through milestones like puberty, menstruation, and interest in dating.

For men reading this who may be concerned about the relationship they have with their daughter—perhaps because they weren't involved in the early years—there's still hope, as it's never too late to form a close, healthy relationship with your daughter. It may take more work, but it's worth it to give them a better chance to succeed in life.

—Melody Joy Cary

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