

Safe kids Healthy kids Happy kids

Fathers — Stay Close to Your Daughters

Research shows that fathers influence their daughters. Make a difference in your daughter's life.



Joe Kelly, author of Dads & Daughters: How to Inspire, Understand & Support Your Daughter, says most fathers share the struggles and joys of parenting girls. These tips will help fathers parent their daughters.

A positive father-daughter relationship fosters:

- Greater academic success,
- Healthier emotional and sexual development,
- Career success, and
- Independence.

Through their fathers, girls come to know what to expect from the men in their lives.

Many dads find the relationship with teen daughters a bit awkward. Friends become their confidantes. Dads may be the last to know about their feelings and plans. Hormonal changes can send girls flying to their bedrooms with doors slamming. Dads are often clueless and not sure what to do or say.

Realize that emotional outbursts are normal.

- Listen without offering advice. Teens do not always want you to solve their problems.
- Understand – do not judge. Learn what she is thinking. Respect her opinions, though they may be different from yours.
- Car-pool her and her friends. Listen as she and her friends talk. Learn what her friends think.
- Ask questions. What are her plans for the weekend? Where did she and her friends go after the basketball game? What did her coach say after her last game?

- Involve yourself in her interests. Attend games and recitals. Go to her practice events. Take her and her friends to a concert.
- Keep your promises. If you promise to attend an event – *be there*.
- Spend one-on-one time together. Go out for dinner. See a movie. Spend time in a bookstore.
- Show respect to her mother - even if you are divorced. This shows her how she should expect men to treat her.
- Be affectionate. Give hugs and shoulder-hugs. Kiss her forehead or cheek.
- Celebrate special events like prom night, birthdays or first dates.
- Pick your battles. Bright pink streaks of hair is a passing phase.

Fathers - and stepfathers - are the most important male role model in their daughters' lives. They teach girls to expect boys to respect them.

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1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

