

Family and Community Health “Connections” in Tom Green County



Father’s Day Pondering: What is the Essence of Fatherhood?

Stephen Green, Ph.D., extension specialist for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service shares that we should be asking not the question of, “Is it simply the establishment of biological paternity,” but should be asking the question of, “What constitutes RESPONSIBLE fatherhood?”

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Responsible fatherhood CANNOT :

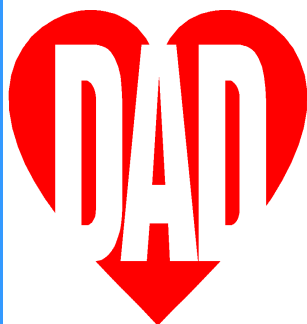
- be proven with a blood test
- consist of simply providing a paycheck.
- be reduced to a single dimension.

Responsible fatherhood DOES involve:

- Commitment, self-sacrifice, integrity, and unconditional love.
- The concern with the well-being of the children
- Their desire to see their children succeed in all areas of life.

Ken Canfield, President of the National Center for Fathering, has developed a four part frame work that summarizes the very question of responsible fathering:

1. Positive involvement—spending quality and quantity time with his children
2. Consistency—with encouragement, discipline, protection, care, and love
3. Awareness—Understanding of the uniqueness of each child’s emotional, cognitive, and social characteristics.



20 Reasons Why a Child Needs an Active Father

by Stephen Green, Ph.D.

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Fathers play a critical role in the development of their children. The latest research indicates that fathers who are actively involved in raising their children can make a positive and lasting difference in their lives. In contrast, this same research reveals a number of potentially negative outcomes for children whose fathers are not involved. Listed below are 20 reasons why your child needs you to be an active father. Being an active father:



1. Lets child know that you love her. Love involves more than saying the words, "I love you." Fathers who love their children demonstrate their love by spending quality and quantity time together. Children who feel loved are more likely to develop a strong emotional bond with their father and a healthy self-esteem.
2. Provides child with greater financial resources. Research clearly indicates that families with an active father are "better off" financially. This means that children with active fathers will be more likely to have access to resources that facilitate healthy development (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, quality medical care).
3. Provides child with a positive male role model. Children, regardless of gender, need positive male and female role models. Children tend to model behavior (positive and negative) that they witness on a consistent basis. Active fathers can promote positive behaviors by setting a proper example for their children.
4. Provides child with emotional support. In addition to financial support, children also need emotional support from their parents. Active fathers listen and support their children when they experience joy, sadness, anger, fear, and frustration. Fathers who support their children emotionally tend to raise children who are more in-tune with the needs of others.
5. Enhances child's self-esteem. Self-esteem refers to how a person feels about himself. Children with high self-esteem tend to be happier and more confident than children with low self-esteem. Active fathers promote their children's self-esteem by being fully involved in their lives and letting them know that they are highly valued.
6. Enhances child's intellectual development. Children who are raised with actively involved fathers tend to score higher on measures of verbal and mathematical ability, and also demonstrate greater problem-solving and social skills.
7. Provides child with guidance and discipline. From infancy, children need proper guidance and discipline. Active fathers play an important role in teaching their children proper behavior by setting and enforcing healthy limits.
8. Gives child someone to play with. One of the primary ways that fathers bond with their children is through play. According to researchers, there are qualitative differences in the ways fathers and mothers play with their children. Fathers tend to use a more physical style of play (e.g., wrestling) that offers a number of benefits to children, including enhanced cognitive ability.
9. Provides child with someone to talk to when she has questions. Young children are full of questions. This natural curiosity helps them learn about their environment. Active fathers can be a valuable source of information for children who are seeking answers to life's important questions.
10. Increases child's chances for academic success. Children whose fathers are actively involved in their lives are more likely to achieve academic success than children whose fathers are not actively involved. These academic benefits appear to extend into adulthood.
11. Provides child with an alternative perspective on life. Research indicates that men and women often differ in their parenting styles; however, one style is not necessarily better than the other. Instead, it can be healthy for children to be exposed to different perspectives on life, such as a father's.
12. Lowers child's chances for early sexual activity. Children with actively involved fathers are less likely to engage in early sexual activity, thus reducing their chances for teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. (continued page 3)

Keys to Controlling Diabetes

13. Lowers child's chances for school failure. Children with actively involved fathers are less likely to drop out of school than children with uninvolved fathers.

14. Lowers child's chances for youth suicide. Children with actively involved fathers are less likely to commit suicide than children with uninvolved fathers.

15. Lowers child's chances for juvenile delinquency. The benefits of having an active father throughout a child's early years extend into the teen years as well. Children with active fathers are less likely to commit juvenile crimes than children with inactive fathers.

16. Lowers child's chances for adult criminality. The chances that a child will commit crimes as an adult also diminish.

17. Provides child with a sense of physical and emotional security. One of the major benefits that fathers can provide to their children by being actively involved is a sense of security (physical and emotional). By being actively involved in a child's life, a father promotes a trusting relationship. The child does not have to worry about being abandoned.

18. Facilitates child's moral development. Children need a moral compass to guide them when they face difficult moral choices. Fathers, like mothers, help children to develop a sense of right and wrong that serves as a foundation for establishing moral character.

19. Promotes a healthy gender identity in your child. Boys and girls benefit from having healthy role models from both sexes. Research points to the fact that mothers and fathers socialize their children in different ways. Fathers can help their children, especially boys, to develop a healthy sense of what it means to be a male.

20. Helps child learn important life skills. Most of the essential life skills that children need to survive are learned within the home.

Fathers have a unique opportunity to teach their children valuable skills that will enable them to grow up to be healthy and productive adults. Fathers, your children need you! Make a commitment to be an active father. Your children will greatly benefit from your involvement in their lives.

Dr. Stephen Green is an Associate Professor and Extension Child Development Specialist with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System. His areas of specialty include child development, early childhood education, and father-child relationships. Source: Wade F. Horn, David Blanken-

Positive lifestyle changes are important in contributing to the control of blood glucose levels. Do Well Be Well and Cooking Well With Diabetes are two different series of classes that help participants understand how to make positive changes. The four key factors of control are:

- Plan meals so that carbohydrate amounts are balanced throughout the day.
- Get enough physical activity every day.
- Monitor blood glucose levels
- Take prescribed medicine as directed.

In order to understand how to balance carbs, we need to know that there are three major nutrients that provide calories or energy for the body: carbohydrates, fats and protein. Of all these nutrients, carbs have the greatest effect of raising blood glucose. The simpler the carb, the faster it breaks down in the stomach and the faster it raises blood glucose. Foods groups that have the biggest effect and need to be counted are:

- Starchy vegetables and breads
- Fruits
- Milk and Milk Products
- Sweets and desserts

They don't have to be avoided altogether, but they must only be consumed in moderation. What is moderation? That depends on your age, sex, size, and activity level. Talk to your doctor about how much is "moderate" for you and talk to your FCH Extension Agent to see where the nearest DWBW or CWWDD classes are scheduled.



Courtney Redman, CEA/FCH
113 W. Beauregard
San Angelo, Texas 76903
Phone: 325-659-6527
cjbarbee@ag.tamu.edu

County Website:
<http://tomgreen.agrilife.org/fch>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/TomGreenCountyFCH/>

Nutrient Content for 1/5 serving
Total Calories: 250

Total fat:	9 g	14%
Saturated fat	3 g	15%
Protein:	15 g	
Carbohydrates	30 g	10%
Dietary Fiber	3 g	12%
Sodium	220 mg	9%

Veggie Omelette



- 5 small potato, cubed**
- 1 small zucchini (sliced)**
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil**
- 1 small onion**
- 1 1/2 cups green peppers**
- 5 medium mushrooms**
- 5 eggs (or 3 eggs and 4 egg whites)**
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- 1/4 teasp. garlic powder**
- 3 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded**
- 1 Tablespoon Parmesan cheese**

Directions:

In an electric skillet or large fry pan, sauté in oil the potatoes till slightly tender. Add zucchini, onion and peppers. Continue to saute till slightly browned.

Turn heat to low.

In medium mixing bowl, beat eggs, pepper, garlic and mozzarella cheese.

Pour egg mixture over sautéed veggies in skillet.

Using spatula, lift veggies to let eggs run underneath in about 5 places in the middle. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese.

Put the lid on and cook on low till eggs are set. (About 10 minutes)

Cut into 5 portions and serve.

Vegetables for Breakfast anyone?

Here's a tasty way to get a full serving first thing in the morning.

Tom Green County TEEA News

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