

Bonding with your kids

Dads and parents building a healthy relationship with their children is the most important thing they can do in their children's lives.

When dads have a healthy relationship with their children, it helps them to develop in healthy ways and have more positive outcomes in their lives.

It also means dads feel more confident and effective as parents and are motivated to become even more involved in their children's lives¹.

The first step towards creating this healthy relationship is for dads to develop a bond with their children.

Here are three ways dads can bond with their children:

1. spending one-on-one time with their children
2. being available to their children
3. taking responsibility for their children's needs.

Dads can set aside time to try these three different ways, including in different settings and at different times of the day. For example, at home during the day, after school pick-up, while driving in the car, while playing in the park, or at bed time.

Everyone is different and it's up to each dad and his family to work out what feels right for them.



More information about the three ways a dad can bond with his kids is available below.

1. SPENDING TIME WITH HIS CHILDREN

The dad is there physically and emotionally for his children, and at the same time, he and his children are interacting and learning from each other.

Examples might include:

- playing games
- reading books
- talking about the day
- having tummy time with his baby
- helping his children at bath time.

2. BEING AVAILABLE TO HIS CHILDREN

The dad is in the same room as his children and always available for interaction, but not necessarily face-to-face.

For example:

- sitting next to his children as they play a game
- driving home from school
- eating dinner together
- letting his children know when he leaves the room
- watching his children play.

3. TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS CHILDREN'S NEEDS

The dad makes sure his children are taken care of and have everything they need. He starts conversations about his children's needs and plans ahead.

For example:

- arranging childcare
- making appointments and putting them in the family calendar
- starting a discussion about toilet training with his toddler
- making a reward chart for his children's positive behaviour
- helping his children decide which library books to borrow.

¹ Allen, S., & Daly, K. (2007). *The Effects of Father Involvement*. (2007). Canada: Father Involvement Research Alliance.