

The best way fathers can nurture relationships is by spending quality time with their children on a daily basis.

Fathers

Fathers have a very important role in their child's life

Historical census data shows that for generations, mothers have taken the lead in the care of children. However, fathers are just as important, and recent data suggests that fathers are taking a more active role in raising their children.

Children form secure attachments to their fathers just as they do with their mothers. Nurturing fathers can make a significant contribution to the emotional, social and intellectual development of their children. When children grow up without a nurturing father, they are more likely to live in poverty, develop emotional problems, have difficulty in school and engage in risky behavior.

The best way fathers can nurture relationships is by spending quality time with their children on a daily basis. The length of time spent with a child is not as important as the quality of the activity. Developing a good relationship with your child does not mean you have to set aside a lot of time or money. Instead, focus on making the most of the time you do spend with your child. Simple activities, such as reading a book or playing together, can make a big difference.

What parents can do

- Learn about child development. When you learn about what is normal and age-appropriate behavior for your child, you will have realistic expectations and a better understanding of his or her physical and emotional development.
- Practice appropriate discipline with your child. Discipline should be age-focused and should teach age-appropriate behaviors.
- Set family rules with all of your family together. The family rules must have clear consequences when one is broken. Adults in the home must model these values and rules for children.
- Become involved in your child's daily activities. Talk to your child about what is happening at school and participate in his or her extra-curricular activities. Take time to listen to your child.
- Be a role model for your child. Always speak respectfully to your child and model behaviors you would like to see. Your child learns from your example.
- Provide praise and reinforcement to your child. When your child says or does something displeasing to you, calmly point out the behavior and demonstrate or tell the child what he or she can do or say differently.