



## Parenting with Pruett: The Evolution of the Role of Fathers, by Kyle D. Pruett, M.D., member of The Goddard School® Educational Advisory Board

As I look back on my experiences as a father across a few decades, it is evident that the role of fathers and expectations in society have significantly changed. More men today are physically and emotionally engaged with their children than before the Industrial Revolution, especially the younger ones. Co-parenting is the expectation among most newlyweds; the women want the help, and the men want to be closer to their kids than they were to their fathers. With support from women and society, increasingly active fathering is crossing many social and economic barriers.

And this is quite a good thing - for the men, the women, but most especially their children. Most men figure parenting out on the job (just like women) but they do it best when they don't try to mother (which of course they really can't) and instead comfort, discipline, problem-solve, rough-house and tease in their own fashion. The science to date reassures these men - and maybe more importantly their spouses - that children respond positively to these differences and are able to manage and enjoy life better when they have a positively engaged dad or trusted father figure in their lives.

Enjoy fatherhood – and know you are making a world of a difference.

### The Importance of Father's Day

Each year, the third Sunday in June is a day dedicated to showing our dads and father figures just how important they are. We should remember to appreciate our male role models for everything they do for us year-round, but [Father's Day](#) is a great opportunity to make sure they know how much we love them. While it is important to spend this day with this special person, don't forget to show Grandpa and your uncle some love, too. This can be done with a phone call or by sending a card or [small gift](#).

Ask Dad or your father figure how he would like to spend Father's Day. Ideas could include mini-golf, a family-friendly construction activity such as building a bird house or simply playing together in the backyard or at the local park. Lastly, be sure to tell your special guy how much you love and appreciate him and everything he has done for you.

What are some activities your family does to celebrate Father's Day?

### Diving into Dad Duties: Five Tips for New Dads

[Fatherhood](#) is a profound, wonderful journey full of moments that you will cherish for a lifetime. Here are five tips for dads who are [new to the experience](#).

#### Master the art of diapering.

Diapering is part of Fatherhood 101. Changing a diaper is a simple way to help keep your baby happy while bonding with your baby.

#### Work as a team to handle baby duties.

Stay focused on what your child is learning and on developmental growth. Don't discuss other children, unless you want to mention that your child plays with another child outside of school. Keep an open mind about any behavioral issues. Work out solutions together, so your child has a consistent set of expectations at home and at school.

#### Communicate, communicate, communicate.

When you're part of a team, communication is key. If you're going to be late coming home from work, call your partner. If you're not sure how to handle a baby-related task, ask someone. Opening the lines of communication can work wonders.

#### Be patient.

Fatherhood isn't an exact science, so remember that becoming the best dad you can be takes time. Enjoy those moments when you're still figuring things out and [remember to laugh](#).

#### Take care of yourself.

Being a good dad means being there for your child. Make sure you are staying healthy and avoiding unnecessary risks. Exercise, watch your diet and drive carefully.

### Beyond The Tie: Celebrating Father's Day

Tired of the traditional breakfast in bed? Over the cliché shirt and tie combo? Make Dad's Day a little more rad.

Have a picnic, take a walk or just relax outdoors—let Dad choose how he would most enjoy relaxing with the family.

Plan a day of not planning. Make today the day to put aside all errands, chores and projects—help Dad to enjoy a pressure-free day.

Father's Day is not only for your children to celebrate Dad—let him know just how impressed you are with how amazing a father he is to your children.

Give Dad the gift of a few hours by himself! We all need time to ourselves to refocus now and then. Dad may be thrilled to schedule an unexpected tee time, or to curl up with that new bestseller he's been eyeing up.

Don't limit the father festivities to just your children's dad; encourage your little ones to call their grandpas and other special male role models, too.

Most importantly, let Dad know how appreciated he is. Help your children to write (or color) a thank you note, encourage them to create a special song or lend them a hand in whipping up a special treat. Homemade gifts or projects can sometimes be the best at conveying your child's love and appreciation for Dad.