

# 10 FACTS ABOUT FATHER ENGAGEMENT

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By [The Fatherhood Project](#)



Research shows that fathers not only have the capacity for care giving, but that children benefit directly from dads' parenting contributions. Findings from the rapidly growing science of early childhood and early brain development show the positive, lifelong impact fathers can have by being positively engaged early in their children's lives. The beneficial outcomes for children are not limited to childhood. People with actively involved father figures during childhood are more likely to have higher levels of success in their careers, a better chance of having a strong, lasting marriage, and an improved ability to handle stress. Related findings indicate that fathers' emotional absence has long lasting negative effects on child development. Father absence is defined as any situation where the father is psychologically disconnected from his children, whether or not he is currently living in the same home.

## **10 FACTS ABOUT FATHER ENGAGEMENT\***

1. Fathers and infants can be equally as attached as mothers and infants. When both parents are involved with the child, infants are attached to both parents from the beginning of life.[1]
2. Father involvement is related to positive child health outcomes in infants, such as improved weight gain in preterm infants and improved breastfeeding rates.[2]
3. Father involvement using authoritative parenting (loving and with clear boundaries and expectations) leads to better emotional, academic, social, and behavioral outcomes for children.[3]
4. Children who feel a closeness to their father are: twice as likely as those who do not to enter college or find stable employment after high school, 75% less likely to have a teen birth, 80% less likely to spend time in jail, and half as likely to experience multiple depression symptoms.[4]
5. Fathers occupy a critical role in child development. Father absence hinders development from early infancy throughout childhood and into adulthood. The psychological harm of father absence experienced during childhood persists throughout the life course.[5]
6. The quality of the father-child relationship matters more than the specific amount of hours spent together. Non-resident fathers can have positive effects on children's social and emotional well-being, as well as academic achievement and behavioral adjustment.[3]
7. High levels of father involvement are correlated with higher levels of sociability, confidence, and self-control in children. Children with involved fathers are less likely to act out in school or engage in risky behaviors in adolescence.[6]
8. Children with actively involved fathers are: 43% more likely to earn A's in school and 33% less likely to repeat a grade than those without engaged dads.[7]
9. Father engagement reduces the frequency of behavioral problems in boys while also decreasing delinquency and economic disadvantage in low-income families.[8]
10. Father engagement reduces psychological problems and rates of depression in young women.[8]

In order for more fathers to become involved in parenting, it is essential for them to understand the advantages to children of fathers' emotional engagement. Visit our [website](#) to learn more about how The Fatherhood Project empowers fathers to be active, informed and emotionally engaged with their children and families.