

Tips Sheet: Introduction to theme Family Wellbeing

Wellbeing - the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy, is a combination of physical, mental, emotional and social health. Fathers have a powerful impact on the social, emotional and physical well-being of children from infancy to adolescence, with lasting influences into their adult life^{1,2}. Children who have an involved father are more likely to be emotionally secure, be confident to explore their surroundings, and, as they grow older, have better social connections with peers.

At the fathering Project we say 'Play is a game changer' - because the way fathers play with their children also has a highly important impact on a child's emotional and social development. Children who play with their fathers are more confident and better at coping with challenges, setbacks or problems. Fathers are also more likely to engage children the physical activity they need for good health.

Based on this evidence, this month The Fathering Project seeks to provide fathers with tips for their important role in supporting their children's wellbeing during these testing times and beyond.

What kids need from their dads

The **BUS** principle:

B - Being There for them.

U - show **Unconditional Love**.

S - help them realise how **Special** they are.

Top Tips

- **What they need is you.** Fathers really matter and they need you to be present and actively engaged in in their lives.
- **Tell them you love them.** Tell them they are loved not because of what they do or don't do, but simply because they are your son or daughter.
- **Tune in and engage with your kids.** Really 'BE THERE' Put away the phone and connect with your kids. You never know when your child will decide that now, is the moment they want to really open up to you.
- **Listen to them.** Get to know about them as an individual. Their thoughts, their ideas, their wishes, their likes and dislikes, their friends and their dreams.
- **Play with them.** get back to your childhood, have fun and play with them.
- **Cherish the everyday moments.** Spending everyday moments at home together has just as much value as the special events

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If you are struggling, call Lifeline on 131 114, or Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636. If children are struggling, they can call Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800 or Youth Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636