

MAN POWER



Strategies For Involving Dads and Other Father Figures in School



WHY INVOLVE DAD?

When men are actively involved in their child's education, their children:

- ◆ do better in school
- ◆ enjoy school more
- ◆ are less likely to repeat a grade
- ◆ are able to make better choices
- ◆ have better attendance
- ◆ are more likely to graduate high school and attend college
- ◆ exhibit more positive behavior and values
- ◆ are better equipped to resist peer pressure

*Harness one of the most powerful influences on our children and their future...
dads and other father figures.*

Fathers play a critical role in raising children and offer a unique perspective. When fathers are actively involved in the lives of children, they make a positive and lasting difference.

The Man Power resources are intended to support school efforts to engage men in the essential role they play in helping their children grow up to be healthy, productive adults.

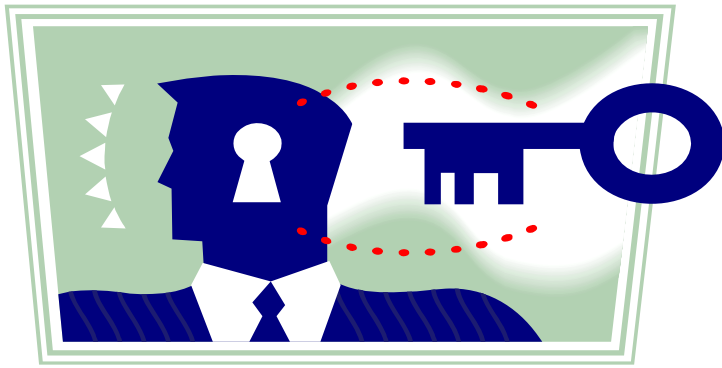
It is vitally important to recognize that children who may not have access to their biological father can still benefit greatly by engaging in interactions with other positive male role models, including step-fathers, adopted fathers and non-related father figures.

TOOLS

to Help You Get the job Done!

- Professional development for staff
- Promotion materials
- Event Planner
- Sample activity flyers
- Scripts for Parent Link messages
- Newsletter announcements
- Appreciation/Recognition ideas





KEEP THIS IN MIND...

What's In A Name?

"Fathers" is a broad term that has changed over the years. Schools should be sensitive to the fact that the important male role models in a child's life may not be biological, residential, or custodial. A father figure may be a relative, a neighbor, a pastor, a mentor, or a close family friend. It is important to be deliberate when wording communications intended for your male audience. You may want to use terms such as; "Father Figures" or "Prominent Male Role Models".

"MANaging" your Recruitment Efforts

Often times the most effective recruiter of fathers and men is...a man! If possible, appoint a male to head up your efforts to recruit fathers. Men are more apt to respond to a request from another male.

What About Mom?

Mothers may initially feel "left out" when schools target a male audience. Traditionally, it has been moms who have responded to school recruitment efforts. It is a good idea to explain WHY your school is targeting fathers. You may need to explain why it is important to involve fathers in education. Then, involve mothers in your efforts to reach out to the men. Once women are aware of the goals and benefits, they can be one of your most effective tools for getting dad in the door!

Legal Issues and Restrictions

Be aware of any custodial issues in your school before sending out blanket invitations to all fathers... residential, custodial, or otherwise. There will likely be a few fathers who are specifically under a "no contact order" or other court issued restrictions. Exclude these fathers when recruiting.

GETTING STARTED

- ◆ Meet with staff to clearly define why (and how) increasing the active involvement of fathers will benefit the school and students. Share any relevant data.
- ◆ Ask for volunteers to help head up the initiative. Encourage a male to be the main point person. An ideal arrangement would be co-leaders: a male staff person and a father of one of your students.
- ◆ Clarify your goals. For instance, you may want to recruit men as mentors for literacy or as friendly hallway supervisors, or to spend lunch time with targeted students who would benefit from a male role model.
- ◆ Plan how you will recruit fathers and father figures. Consider multiple avenues of communication (phone calls, flyers, emails, letters, marquee, Parent Link message, etc.) Be sure to involve the students.
- ◆ Schedule your first event to welcome interested men and begin to brainstorm together how the initiative will work.
- ◆ By allowing the men to be part of the planning process, they will gain personal ownership. This increases the likelihood that the program will be sustained over time.
- ◆ Consider having a fathers booth at enrollment, to spread the word. Recruit fathers to "man" the booth.
- ◆ Frequently acknowledge the contributions of your volunteer dads and other men. Share the good news with staff and your community.
- ◆ Be sure to plan how you will evaluate the effectiveness of your efforts and make any necessary changes, on a regular basis.

MEN-U of Activities to get dad in the door.

Me and He

Boys and their father figures create a “show and tell” based on what they enjoy doing together. (Hobbies, favorite books, vacations or other interests.)

Conferences Just For Dad

Bring dad in the loop with tips on how to help their child with homework, etc.

Building Dynamite Dads

Share the vital role that father figures play in a child’s development.

“Read to Me, Dad!” Day

Ask men to read to a child or a class and talk about their favorite book.

Mom’s Night Off

Just for fun... Games, dinner and a movie.

Character Counts Night

Share school expectations (respect, responsibility, etc.) and tips for modeling the behaviors at home.

March Madness (math night)

Look at the brackets, sports stats, etc.

Hug Your Kid Day

Just what it says. Share the love.

Lunch and Learn

Kids and dads eat lunch together and talk about what’s happening at school.

Career Day

Men share their jobs and the skills they use... math, research, reading, etc.

Dads of Discipline

Parenting tips for father figures

Safety First Fathers

Recruit men to provide supervision and promote safety in the school and on the grounds.

Men-Tors

Recruit father figures to befriend a child and encourage them in school.

Fathers First Friday

Invite dads to start their day at school on the first Friday of every month.

Monthly Men Matter Workshops

Pick a topic from literacy to discipline.

*All flyers have samples available

CHECK OUT THESE *new* PROGRAMS!



24/7 Dad

This community based program helps men develop the attitude, knowledge, and skills they need to get (and stay!) involved with their children.

Developed by parenting and fatherhood experts, 24/7 Dads focuses on the characteristics that men need to be an involved father 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 12 two-hour sessions for groups or one-on-one.

www.fatherhood.org/247dad

DADVENTURES

DadVentures is an interactive program that teaches dads and kids important character traits. Enjoy fun activities that dads and kids can do together.

18 fifteen minute sessions.

www.fatherhood.org/dadventures



Try these online resources to support your efforts in engaging dads

www.fathersource.org

National Fatherhood Clearinghouse and Resource Center

www.fatherhood.org

National Fatherhood Initiative

<http://fatherhood.hhs.gov>

Health and Human Services Promoting Responsible Fatherhood.

www.fathers.com

National Center for Fathering

www.fathers.com/watchdogs

Watch Dogs (dads of Great Students)