

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.ⁱ
2. Father involvement is related to positive child health outcomes in infants, such as improved weight gain in preterm infants and improved breastfeeding rates.ⁱⁱ
3. Father involvement using authoritative parenting (loving and with clear boundaries and expectations) leads to better emotional, academic, social, and behavioral outcomes for children.ⁱⁱⁱ
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.^{iv}
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.^v
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.^{vi}
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.^{vi}
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.^{vii}
9. Father engagement reduces the frequency of behavioral problems in boys while also decreasing delinquency and economic disadvantage in low-income families.^{viii}
10. Father engagement reduces psychological problems and rates of depression in young women.^{viii}

ⁱ Lamb, M. E. (1977). Father-infant and mother-infant interaction in the first year of life. *Child development*, 167-181.

ⁱⁱ Garfield, C. F., & Isacco, A. (2006). Fathers and the well-child visit, *Pediatrics*, 117, 637-645.

ⁱⁱⁱ Marsiglio, W., Amato, P., Day, R. D., & Lamb, M. E. (2000). Scholarship on fatherhood in the 1990s and beyond. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4), 1173-1191.

^{iv} Pruett, K. D. (2000). *Fatherneed: Why father care is as essential as mother care for your child*. New York: Free Press.

^v McLanahan, S., Tach, L., & Schneider, D. (2013). The causal effects of father absence. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 39(1).

^{vi} Anthes, E. (2010, May/June). Family guy. *Scientific American Mind*.

^{vii} Fathers' and mothers' involvement in their children's schools by family type and resident status. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. 2001.

^{viii} Sarkadi, A., Kristiansson, R., Oberklaid, F., & Bremberg, S. (2008). Fathers' involvement and children's developmental outcomes: a systematic review of longitudinal studies. *Acta Paediatrica*, 97(2), 153-158.