

# Helping Dad to Reconnect



## 1. Stability-

-Get stable: Before a dad can be a serious influence in a child's life, He needs to be stable. Linking dad to resources, support, education, etc. is necessary for a father who has been absent to be considered a solid option for a child. If dad is not stable, that doesn't mean there isn't a way to start relationship building. It's a process.

## 2. Communicate the intention-

Communicate the intention with the child's mother. Another parent can influence how successful coming back into a child's life can be. Use the CFT process to assist. If mom has a parent partner, meet up to discuss strategies

## 3. Learn about the child/ren-

Learn about the children, helping fathers to make the effort to learn about their children by providing ideas and information, strategizing next steps, and supporting them through it because it can and will be hard. The support is vital through this process.

## 4. Meet in a safe environment-

Meet in a safe environment. Sometimes dad can be coming from a "stranger" position You need to meet in a safe place. Maybe a relative home or a park or with an adult the child trusts. The idea is to make the child feel safe.

## **5. Learn your child/ren's love language-**

Learn the child's love language. Gary Chapman has identified love languages for children. They are physical touch, words of affirmation, quality time, gifts, act of service. There is a quiz to help identify the "language of love" for a child. Just google it! ( This may require guidance)

## **6. Don't be "fun-time" dad all the time-**

Don't be a fun-time. See where dad can help. In school, with sports, teaching a child how to tie a shoe? The ability to help in one of the key child welfare areas is only challenged by an imagination. It can be as simple as collecting magazines for a school project. If the only activity provided is to buy something or take them someplace fun, it does not represent an accurate role of a dad.

## **7. Get on your child's level-**

Get on the child's level. Literally. Dads can be big and intimidating. Get down to the child's level. Use words they understand. Respect them and just be there to learn what they are like. This too may require guidance. (This is where it can be explained the importance of parenting class)

## **8. Don't try and change what is working in the child's world-**

Don't try and change what is working in the child's world. Don't ask to take the child out of their comfort zone. If there are habits or rituals, respect them. Help dad understand that learning about them and understanding why something is necessary before questioning them.

## **9. Be consistent and predictable-**

Help dad develop a routine and share the importance of maintaining his constancy. If he cannot make it, remind him to give notice and apologize. Sometimes fathers need to be reminded that apologies are vital to building relationships and admitting when your wrong with their children but not to make a habit of it.

## **10.Keep Promises-**

One of the most important lessons is "**Keep Your Promise!**" Do not make promises you cannot keep and if something happens, find a way to make it up after apologizing.