

# Dad to Dad

:: parenting series ::

## | Success at Home

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In my work as a therapist, I see many men for a variety of reasons, but one comes up most frequently - parenting problems. Too many men are feeling powerless in dealing with their family issues. Many of these men are successful in their jobs. They are in high level positions of responsibility at work or owners of their own company. Many have put their work before their home life. However, no success in the workplace will ever take the place of success in the home! So then, what does it take for a father to have that same success at home!? I'd like to offer you (dad to dad) some key concepts that will have a big impact on just about any issues you may be having there at home.

First, let's be clear and make sure we are on the same page. Are we in agreement when I state that as parents our key objective is to raise our kids into healthy, God-fearing, responsible adults, correct!? Great, then read on!

**Good parenting requires a process, which takes place within a system -- and you do have a system whether you realize it or not!** Ultimately, your child and their behaviors will greatly (not totally) reflect your parenting process and family system. **Your system requires key components which include:**

### Leadership

Dad, your family needs you as the leader in your home! Managing your family is not enough. At work, a manager goes home at night. A leader's commitment is 24/7. A father who leads embraces the entire range of fathering activities all the time! Examine what type of leader you are! Lead with love and respect and you will never go wrong!

### Teamwork

The most important thing a man can do for his children is to clearly show them how much he loves their mother (1 Corinthians 13). Only second to husband and wife, father and mother make up the most important team in the world. A united, loving front is critical in tackling the challenges of parenting your children and leading your team to success!

### Communication

In many of the families I deal with (especially with teenagers), one complaint is common. "My parents don't listen to me!" For many dads, listening well is one of our most frustrating stumbling blocks. I know what you may be thinking right now. "They never have much to say when I do talk!" Many teens don't say much (at least not to their parents), but it's not for the reasons you may think! Dads - identify in yourself any behaviors or attitudes you need to work on that may be getting in the way of your child being able to talk with you. Also, ask good questions. Use "How..." and "What..." rather than "Why...!" For example, "Please tell me how I can get you to be able to (fill in the blank) without having to ask you several times?" instead of "Why do I have to get to the point of yelling before you do what I ask?" Speak without shame or blame. This assures them that they can come to you with just about any topic without fear of judgment and/or repercussions.

### Discipline

Discipline means to *teach*! In manspeak, it means *training the team*! Your players need to know exactly what the coach (you) expect from them and what will happen if those expectations go unfulfilled! Your expectations (rules) for your kids need to be clear and reasonable. Discipline (consequences) also needs to be clear, and appropriate to the situation, age of the child and severity of the offense. Discipline requires patience, persistence and keeping the end goal in mind. Dad, it also helps if you are disciplined in your own conduct. This is where tag teaming with mom comes in handy!

### Relationship

Lastly, don't merely love your kids, fall in love with them! Know them from the inside out. Allow them to know you in the same way. You should find that the better your relationship is with your children, the less you will need to rely on the rules and the consequences.



Greg enjoys working with dads and their families in 3 of our locations: New Lenox, Orland Park, and Shorewood.

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