

4 Ways to Make the Most of One-On-One Time With Your Kids

There's not a dad among us who doesn't find scheduling to be a challenge. We invest in our work, we invest in our commitments, and we run out of hours in a day.

Time gets away from us to the extent that we feel overwhelmed, rushed, and a little bit out of control. Then we miss out on the best investment dads can make.

Sometimes, we end up missing school stuff, family time, and more. It happens too often.

You know, those events and details that look like a small deal—until all of a sudden they're a big deal. We're stretched, we're disconnected, and we see our children grow up too fast, slipping out of our reach before we know it. Consequently—and mostly because we've missed too many small details—we see our relationships with our kids become more reactive than proactive. Not all the time, but enough to remind us that we need to make a change.

Solution: What we need is to invest more time in our kids. Not so much random or haphazard encounters, but planned quality time. It's about being intentional; it's about investing in our kids. Breakfast with dad, walking the dog together, movie night, even an overnight trip. It's about being deliberate; it's about going one-on-one.

Here are some great ideas designed to keep us ahead of the curve with our children, custom crafted to help dads stay in the loop, and have some fun too. And don't forget to write them on the calendar as a "don't miss" appointment.

1. Dog walk with dad. Try making it a habit. Twenty minutes of one-on-one time for non-agenda conversation. Small talk. Building rapport. Got more than one kid? Share the schedule. Chances are this is something they'll all look forward to. But be prepared. Real conversations could break out, so keep your phone in your pocket.

2. Breakfast with dad. Hook in with an All Pro Dad's Day at their school or simply schedule one day per week as breakfast with dad day on the way in. Variations could include ice cream night with dad or Saturday brunch while mom sleeps in. The key here is undivided, one-on-one attention. No agenda, just time.

3. Museum of the month. No matter where you live, there's some accessible culture, a state park, or a few historic sites within reach. Make exploring a go-to dad event. Let the kids be in on the research and planning. Be excited, Dad, even if you're not naturally a museum or a history kind of a guy. It's about the relationship.

4. Movie night madness. Use your imagination. You could work a theme, such as, "The best sports movies in history." "Classically awful monster films." Or "Movies that dad loved as a kid." Followed by movie analysis over a pizza.

It's about being intentional; it's about investing in our kids. The overriding, ironclad, "must not be broken" rule here is this: Give the kids 100 percent of your attention. Make "dad time" accessible and regular. Remember: It's the best investment dads can make.

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