

5 Challenges Single Dads Consistently Face

When you are a father, you are hit daily by a world of challenges and stressful situations. Even when you have a wife to help you, fatherhood is the most challenging thing in the world. However, it is even more difficult when a man is charging forward alone as a single father.

Being a single dad is a serious balancing act. The responsibility of parenthood is enormous, and men who are giving their all for their kids should be praised. But sometimes it gets tough and lonely. We want all single fathers to know we appreciate you. That's why we're here to give you some encouragement.

1. Too little time. For a single dad, time is at a very high premium. Work eats up most of it, so task overload can easily swallow what remains. There are mouths to feed, dishes to clean, clothes to wash and all the chores and charms of home that need your attention. As a generalization, try not to feel guilty if you leave the dishes in the sink overnight. Place the emphasis and importance on being with your children to play, read or just simply talk.

2. Financial difficulties. A great many single parents find themselves in financial distress. Keep in mind that the thing your kids *need* most from you is your love and attention. After that, separate the true needs from the pile and place top priority on them—things such as food, shelter and clothing. Children don't always understand why they can't have everything they desire, but one day they will.

3. Feeling overwhelmed. It is difficult and challenging being the only adult in the room long term. Loneliness, stress and depression are common for single parents. Know that you are

not alone. There are 1.7 million others in your same boat who are experiencing the same things. Be sure to take time for yourself to recharge and strengthen your mind.

4. Relationships old and new. With divorce, the ex-spouse is still a very big part of family life and always will be. How that relationship is handled and functions is extremely important, not only to the children but also to your overall mental state. In dating and new relationships, extreme care must be taken when introducing new people into the life of the family. Resentment or early attachments are just two of the standard pitfalls. Keep the hope of love in your heart always, but be mindful of far-reaching, unintended consequences.

5. Building a support system. Family, friends, babysitters, teachers, mentors and all sorts of people take a role in your family life. However, divorce can take a big toll on family support; judgment and bitter feelings can split friends.

Try to display humility and understanding toward those in your life. In most cases, they won't understand the entire picture and will see only what they want to see. Only time and a new stable reality will change those perceptions. Be patient.
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