

5 Things Good Dads Kick Out of Their Lives

The transition from childless adult to being responsible for the life of another human being is dynamic and life-altering. Sleep becomes a luxury and sex, at times, a distant memory. Yet to become a good father is such a beautiful honor and the unconditional love that we have for that child mandates that we make changes within ourselves. As 1 Corinthians 13:11 says, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, and I thought as a child. But when I became a man, I put away childish things."

Some of the ways we behaved when we were children didn't have the ramifications they do now. Now everything we do and are about affects the lives we have been put in charge of. Below are five activities good fathers, aka All Pro Dads, should stop doing. They do not apply to all, but are common and should be addressed.

1. Substance Abuse

So many lives are destroyed and so many families crumble because of substance abuse. Don't let this be you. Start by taking inventory of whether smoking, alcohol or prescription drugs are altering the trajectory of your life in a downward slant. If they are, get help for the sake of your family.

2. Financial Recklessness

For some folks, the word "budget" is non-existent. But when that baby is here, you are definitely going to need one. If you are already a parent you know this, and if you are still waiting on your child to arrive, you are going to find out real soon. Children cost lots of money, in ways you haven't

even considered yet. As our friend Dave Ramsey says, “Live like no one else so you can live like no one else.” Abhor debt and budget wisely so that you can give your kids a bright future.

3. Disrespectful Abandonment

Yes, that sounds like a pretty harsh term for being gone too much. But isn't that what it is when we leave our wives and families at home alone for long periods, just to satisfy personal desires? The term “golf widow” is not meant to be endearing. There is a fine line to this topic because it most certainly is important to still maintain a meaningful personal existence. A happy parent usually makes a good parent. A Saturday morning game of golf, some time out with friends to watch a big game, and other things like this are normal and important in life. However, when a dad makes himself scarce on a regular basis to escape from the responsibilities he faces, it is a big problem. That is no less than disrespectful abandonment.

4. Foul Speech

Our children listen to and absorb everything we say. If our statements are vile, racist or hateful, then all of that is going to seep into our kids' worldviews. Keep that in mind when going off on rants. The things we say around our children, even if just blowing off steam, do not get separated into different categories. They all go into the “truth bin” of our kids. That is scary to any parent, so be very careful with your words.

5. Free and Easy Living

Single life has a few benefits, and one of them is doing whatever you wish at any time you wish to do it. Watch the

game while you eat dinner on your lap? No problem. Even in a childless marriage, there is still a lot of wiggle room for free and easy living. Couples can go to movies any night of the week at any time, they can take a weekend getaway on short notice, and they can be romantic at home whenever they desire. All of that ends when we become parents. If we continue to behave like we are single once we become parents, something is going to go very bad in pretty short order. Priorities change and lifestyles change. But the tradeoff is so much more meaningful. Catching a baseball from your son on a sunny spring afternoon will be cherished forever, as opposed to the 'freedom' of spilling chicken wing grease onto your already dirty tee as you watch ESPN. Life as a father is now harder but so much better.

What has been the biggest sacrifice you have had to make in becoming a father? {eo}

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