

How Do You Know When Your Wife Is Happy?

The below suggestions come from the book *Educating the Whole-Hearted Child* by Clay and Sally Clarkson, and we think they're right on!

All Pro Dads, you know your wife is happy when you:

- Initiate and lead regular planning times with your wife without the children (and you plan the babysitter!).
- Take the kids regularly for several hours on planned, meaningful outings (i.e., take them *away*—see below). Taking them to the Chick-fil-A playground while you have coffee and read the paper does not qualify as an outing. Your wife wants to know that the time will be more than just babysitting.
- Assist with the “uppers” whenever possible, and be sensitive to the “downers.”
- Defend and protect your wife’s time boxes against time consumers (people, distractions, children, calls, etc.).
- Plan in time boxes to be with your children during the day and the week, especially when it gives your wife free time or when it makes her tasks easier (such as while she is preparing dinner).
- Budget in your heart and mind (and checkbook) for paid household help, if you are able, especially when your children are young. *Any* help goes a long way.
- Prepare an arsenal of ideas that you can do with the children on a moment’s notice (see below).
- Be sensitive to the end-of-the-day stress level, planning ahead to take control of the kids at the end of the day even when you are tired.

Here are some activities Dad can do with the kids to give Mom time alone.

Big Times (outings):

- Take them to the park.
- Take them to a nature center.
- Take them to a lake or beach area.
- Take them to a museum.
- Ride bikes in the country with them.
- Take them on a mini field trip.
- Go on a hike with them.
- Go swimming with them.
- Take them to the library reading time.
- Play tennis with them.
- Take them to special events.
- Take them to seasonal festivals.

Little Times (innings):

- Read books to them.
- Play a game with them.
- Throw a ball or shoot baskets with them.
- Take a walk around the block with them.
- Teach them something.
- Clean up the yard together.
- Make a tent with them.
- Build something with them.
- Give them driving lessons.
- Play table tennis with them.
- Overhaul bicycles (clean, tighten, etc.) together.

Dad Dates

Every child needs individual time with Dad. Plan regular times to take each child on a date to be together and talk about life.

- Go out for breakfast to the child's choice of restaurant, even if it's the donut shop. Go as early as possible to make it more special.
- Go to a favorite park, playground or outdoor area. Take

a picnic meal or snack. Play and talk.

- With sons, plan an overnight campout. With daughters, plan a dress-up night out for dinner.
- Take them for a special shopping trip.

All Pro Dad is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a byproduct, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include daily emails, blogs, Top 10 lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From , fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **Instagram**.