

Single Parent Networker

Ascension, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit,
Corpus Christi, St. Anne, St. Mary, St. Joseph,
Christ the King, and Spirit of Life

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Raising Confident Kids

It takes confidence to be a kid. Whether going to a new school or stepping up to bat for the first time, kids face a lot of uncharted territory.

Naturally, parents want to instill a can-do attitude in their kids so they'll bravely take on new challenges and, over time believe in themselves. While each child is a little different, parents can follow some general guidelines to build kids' confidence.

Self-confidence rises out of a sense of competence. In other words, kids develop confidence not because parents tell them they're great, but because of their achievements, big and small. Sure, it's good to hear encouraging words from mom and dad. But words of praise mean more when they refer to a child's specific efforts or new abilities.

When kids achieve something, whether it's brushing their own teeth or riding a bike, they get a sense of themselves as able and capable, and tap into that high-octane fuel of confidence.

Parents can help by giving kids lots of opportunities to practice and master their skills, letting kids make mistakes and being

there to boost their spirits so they keep trying. Respond with interest and excitement when kids show off a new skill, and reward them with praise when they achieve a goal or make a good effort.

With plentiful opportunities, good instruction, and lots of patience from parents, kids can master basic skills - like tying their shoes and making the bed. Then, when other important challenges present themselves, kids can approach them knowing they have already been successful in other areas.

STAY ON THE SIDELINES

Of course, supervision is important to ensure kids stay safe. But to help them really learn a new skill, it's also important not to hover. Give kids the opportunity to try something new, make mistakes, and learn from them.

For instance, if your son wants to learn how to make a peanut butter sandwich, demonstrate, set up the ingredients, and let him give it a try. Will he make a bit of a mess? Almost certainly, but don't swoop in the second some jelly hits the

countertop. In fact, avoid any criticism that could discourage him from trying again. If you step in to finish the sandwich, your son will think, "Oh well, I guess I can't make sandwiches."

But if you have patience for the mess and the time it takes to learn, the payoff will be real. Someday soon he'll be able to say, "I'm hungry for lunch, so I'm going to make my own sandwich." You might even reply, "Great, can you make me one, too?" What a clear sign of your faith in his abilities!

OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT and PRAISE

Sometimes, kids give up when frustrations arise. Help by encouraging persistence in the midst of setbacks. By trying again, kids learn that obstacles can be overcome.

Once kids reach a goal, you'll want to praise not only the end result but also their willingness to stick with it. For instance, after your son has mastered making that peanut butter sandwich you might show your confidence by saying, "Next time, want to learn how to crack an egg?" Sandwich-fixing and egg-

cracking might not seem like huge achievements, but they're important steps in the right direction toward your child's independence.

Throughout childhood, parents have chances to prepare kids to take care of themselves. Sure, it's great to feel needed, but as kids steadily gain confidence and independence, their relationship with you can be even richer. You can be bonded, not just by dependence, but by love and shared pride in all they've achieved. Eventually, your grown-up kids just might say thanks for how prepared they feel for the road ahead a road they can take with confidence.

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TIPS FOR SINGLE DADS

Stay in Contact—Find ways to stay in touch with your child even when distance or other circumstances keep you from

seeing your child regularly. Send cards, jokes, silly stories or riddles. E-mail and phone calls will all help you keep in touch too.

Keep your Commitments - Be predictable. Kids need to be able to count on your promises.

Spend Quiet Time Together - You will learn a lot while taking a nature hike, bicycling, fishing or reading to your child. Listen carefully.

Special Occasions - You are creating memories, so try to make birthdays, summer holidays and family gatherings memorable.

Watch your Words - Never let the kids overhear you saying anything negative about their mother, her friends or family.

What Makes a Dad?

God took the strength of a mountain
The majesty of a tree,
The warmth of a summer sun,
The calm of a quiet sea,
The generous soul of nature,
The comforting arm of night,
The wisdom of the ages,
The power of the eagle's flight,
The joy of a morning in spring,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities,
When there was nothing more to add,
He knew His masterpiece was complete,
And so,
He called it ... Dad

- Author Unknown

PARENTING POINTERS

627. June 5: Don't think that you have to rush in with a solution to every problem your child has. Sometimes all that a child needs is your listening presence to figure out his or her own solution.

628. June 12: "There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots, the other is wings." (Hodding Carter) If YOUR life is rooted in faith, let your child see it. If your child takes a different path, believe that the Spirit will take care of him or her. As a parent of adult children your job is to let go but not give up.

629. June 19: Father's Day is coming up. What qualities do you think make an ideal father? Did you learn any of these from your own father? Tell him in person or prayer. Identify one quality that you especially want to pass on to your own child. Take a step to do it today.

630. June 26: Parents are rightly concerned about their children's health and safety but we cannot protect our children from all danger. What worries you about the future of your child? Take normal precautions of course, but sometimes a child has to fail, get hurt, or make a mistake to grow. Be available. Pray.

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5 WAYS TO BULLY PROOF YOUR KID

Did you know 25% of public schools report that bullying among kids happens on a daily or weekly basis? And 1 in 5 high school students report being bullied in the past year?

The good news is because bullying has made national headlines, schools and communities (and even celebrities) are taking a strong stand against bullying.

You can do your part at home, too. Here are 5 smart strategies to keep kids from becoming targets — and stop bullying that has already started:

1. **Talk about it.** Talk about bullying with your kids and have other family members share their experiences. If one of your kids opens up about being bullied, praise him or her for being brave enough to discuss it and offer unconditional support. Consult with the school to learn its policies and find out how staff and teachers can address the situation.
2. **Remove the bait.** If it's lunch money or gadgets that the school bully is after, you can help neutralize the situation by encouraging your child to pack a lunch or go to school gadget-free.
3. **Buddy up for safety.** Two or more friends standing at their lockers are less likely to be picked on than a child who is all alone. Remind your child to use the buddy system when on the school bus, in the bathroom, or wherever bullies may lurk.
4. **Keep calm and carry on.** If a bully strikes, a kid's best defense may be to remain calm, ignore hurtful remarks, tell the bully to stop, and simply walk away. Bullies thrive on hurting others. A child who isn't easily ruffled has a better chance of staying off a bully's radar.
5. **Don't try to fight the battle yourself.** Sometimes talking to a bully's parents can be constructive, but it's generally best to do so in a setting where a school official, such as a counselor, can mediate.

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Tips for Keeping Your Kids Fit

1. Severely limit the number of hours they watch TV, play video games or have tablets on. The Academy of Pediatrics says the limit should only be 1-2 hours per day.
2. Check out local football, basketball or soccer camps.
3. Kids love it when parents participate, so get those bikes out or take a family hike. You will be surprised at the conversations you will have while spending time together.
4. Allow them to bring a friend along, kids love to do things with their friends so take them to the park to play, or to the swimming pool for some fun.
5. Try to establish a regular routine for family fitness, then your kids know what to expect. Your more likely to stick to it if you have an established time each week.



Dear Lord, help me to take a moment each day to appreciate the gifts I have been given and to reflect on how special it is to be a father.

May I take the time to listen to my child— really listen—to guide, to praise, to thank my child and to remember to smile with love when I see them coming to me.

May I reserve some time in my day for myself—without duties or demands, so that when I am with my child I can give them 100% of my attention.

May I rise to the challenges I meet each day, lower my standards when they are impossibly high, and accept there are some things I will not get accomplished by day's end and know that it is okay.

And may I have the wisdom to forgive myself when things don't go as planned and to know when to ask for forgiveness when I've hurt the one's I love.

Dear Lord, thank you for letting me be a father and for having the opportunity to role model your unconditional love to those I dearly love.

Prayer of a Single Father

Beginning Experience:

Separated, Divorced, Widow
Tara at 701-426-8303

Level I—Charity Lutheran

Level II—Faith Lutheran

Level III—Good Shepherd

Each level is 10 weeks. All levels run concurrently. See website below.

Children's Beginning Experience:

Susan at 1-701-258-3152

Free Preschool for 3&4 year olds for eligible families; contact **BECEP** at 701-323-4400 for school year.

Caring for Children Program—health coverage to uninsured children. 1-800-342-4718. www.ndcaring.org

Single File Newsletter

For information

www.bismarcksinglefile.com

Parish Information:

Cathedral—222-2259

St. Anne—223-1549

Ascension—223-3606

St. Mary- 223-5562

Corpus Christi—255-4600

Spirit of Life-663-1660

Christ the King -663-8842

St. Joseph -663-9562

Office of Family Ministry—Diocese of Bismarck—

Joyce McDowall 701-204-7209

Toll Free 1-877-405-7435

www.bismarckdiocese.com

jmcdowall@bismarckdiocese.com

If you would like your name removed from the mailing list, please call your parish coordinator

Parents Forever-Education for Families in divorce Transition, call NDSU Parent Resource Center, 667-3342 or 667-3340

WEBSITES THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST:

- www.celebratesimply.com
- www.bereavementmag.com
- www.beginningexperienceofwesternnorthdakota.org
- www.vibrantfaithathome.org
- www.usccb.org

www.fambooks.com/moms.htm

www.singleparents.about.com

www.bridgetobenefits.org