

# REAL FATHERS INITIATIVE

## Mentor Resource Sheets



Developed for REAL Fathers in Atiak, Amuru District  
Northern Uganda  
2013



# REAL FATHERS

## RESOURCE SHEET #1

### Tips and Tricks to Being a Great Father

- 1. Respect your child's mother.**

When children see their parents showing respect to each other, they are more likely to feel that they are also accepted and respected. They will also grow up to have respectful relationships themselves.
- 2. Respect your child.**

When you talk and communicate with your child non-violently, you show them respect, and they will grow up to communicate their needs and feelings without anger.
- 3. Spend time with your child.**

If you always seem too busy to be with your children, they will feel neglected no matter what you say or how much money you bring to the family.
- 4. Disciple with love.**

Fathers who discipline or correct their children in a calm and fair manner show love and care. Beating leads to fear of fathers, and not respect. As they grow up, children who fear their fathers will not listen and work well; they will only respond to fear. There is no evidence to show that NOT beating a child spoils them.
- 5. Be a role model to your children.**

How you treat your children, your wife and your neighbors is seen every day by your children. Act the way you want them to act, and treat them the way you would want to be treated.
- 6. Be a teacher to your children.**

Engaged fathers use everyday examples to help their children learn basic life lessons. They use every opportunity to guide and teach their children. They don't forget that children learn values and skills by repetition, by having their father teach them the same thing many times.
- 7. Talk and listen to your children.**

Don't just tell your kids what they are doing wrong. Talk to them every day. And listen to what they are learning about life.
- 8. Praise your children.**

Don't call your child bad names, like stupid, dumb, or lazy. Praise them throughout the day for their good behavior and traits. Say things like "Good job listening to mommy;" "I am so proud of how you cleaned up;" "You have a beautiful singing voice!" Praising children makes them know they are loved and helps them gain confidence.
- 9. Eat a meal with your children every day.**

It is the best time for fathers to listen and give advice. It is the best time for children to see that fathers respect both girls and boys equally.
- 10. Show affection.**

Showing affection every day is a great way to let your children know that you love them.

# REAL FATHERS

## RESOURCE SHEET #2

### Train, Improve and Score! Fatherhood is like Football

#### TRAIN: Prepare yourself and your home for children

- Know what you are feeling and how to cope with whining and crying. Children are a blessing, but crying can also be stressful and make you tired. Know how to deal with these emotions.
- Learn to play with children: Learn songs (lullabies) to sing to your young children; prepare or learn games to play with your children.
- Make sure their sleeping area is safe: your child should have some cloth for covering up from the cold, a bed net to protect from mosquitoes, a dry and clean bed, and the bed should be safe so that the child cannot fall off when sleeping.
- Make sure your home is safe: Anything thing a child can break or put in their mouth which you do not want them to should be put out of their reach.
- Make sure your home and compound are safe: Make sure they cannot pull anything down on their heads.
- Make sure your home and compound are safe: Keep knives and anything sharp are out of reach.
- Make sure your home and compound are safe: Provide soap and practice hand washing at key times (before eating, after using the toilet, after cleaning a child, and before feeding a child).
- Make sure your home and compound are safe: Keep anything poisonous (i.e. paraffin or pesticides) out of children's reach so the child will not get poisoned.
- Prepare your house so your child does not get shocked or burned: Place matches away from your children's reach; make a barrier between and open fire and children; keep children away from the cooking place/fire; keep boiled water out of your children's reach.

#### IMPROVE: Continue building skills to maintain good fatherhood.

- Get in the game right away or start the practice straight away!
- The earlier you start caring for children and being a part of their lives, the easier it will be for you.
- The earlier you start caring for children, the stronger the bond between you and your child.
- The earlier you starting caring for children, the greater respect they will have for you when they grow up.
- Build your fatherhood skills: give baby or kids baths; wash their clothes; bring them to the health center for immunization and treatment whenever they are unwell.
- Build your fatherhood skills: sing for them and play with them.
- Build your fatherhood skills: hold babies and play with them.
- Build your fatherhood skills: when a baby cries, go to them and pay attention to them.
- Treat sons and daughters equally. Let boys cry. Let girls play football.
- Talk with your wife about what kind of parents you want to be.
- Talk with your wife about what you want for your child's future, and how you will work as a team to help achieve this.
- Make sure you and your partner get enough sleep to be able to attend to the child

## SCORE: You've made it! You are a REAL (Responsible, Engaged and Loving) Father

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## RESOURCE SHEET #3

### Fatherhood Discipline Styles

#### Father #1: The Dictator

This father is always strict and never nurtures and cares for the children. He leads with control and enforces rules without discussion. He seems to be angry and yelling at the children mostly. His children know what he does NOT want them to do, but they are not clear what he WANTS them to do. The children are scared to ask questions and do not learn to solve problems themselves. He says "this is how I want things done! You must behave and listen to what I say."

#### Father #2: The Teacher

This father is strict but also nurtures his children when needed. He leads by example and shares teachings/guidance regularly as the children grow up. His children know what he wants them to do and what he wants them not to do. He also allows his children to ask questions on things they do not understand. He says "let me show you the way."

#### Father #3: The Joker

This father is never strict and rarely nurtures. When he is around, it's all about fun, and he also jokes and makes fun of the children. His children don't know what he doesn't want them to do, nor do they know what he wants them to do. He says "let's just have fun."

#### Father #4: The Invisible

This father is never strict and never nurtures. He lets the mother take the lead on discipline and doesn't get involved. His children do not know what he expects of them. He says "do whatever Mom says."

# REAL FATHERS

## RESOURCE SHEET #4

### Positive Discipline

#### What is punishment?

The aim of punishment is to correct a child for doing something wrong. It is based on the idea that children must suffer to understand what they have done wrong, and discourage them from doing it again.

#### What is discipline?

Discipline means **setting rules and limits** that help a child to behave well. Discipline aims to teach or guide in order to improve a child's behavior in the future.

There are many ways to discipline. It is important to know that physical punishment and violent discipline does not work in the long-term. It does not nurture self-discipline or confidence in children. It does not stop the bad behavior of 'difficult' children. It teaches children harmful ways to relate to their community and school. What works for the child and the family is positive discipline, or "discipline with love."

#### What is discipline with love?

Many parents discipline with love and are effective in teaching their child what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. They never suggest they dislike their child even when they dislike their child's behavior. They are patient, and do not expect everything to change overnight.

This assumes that:

- Children want to behave well, but need help in understanding how to do so.
- Children learn more through cooperation and recognition for what they do well than through punishment.
- When children feel good, they tend to behave well; when they feel bad, they may behave badly.

**Discipline with love can be done through:**

				
<p>Reward the behavior you want with a hug/pat on the head or playtime</p>	<p>Redirect attention to something else (for example, another thing to play with)</p>	<p>Remove or limit playtime after explaining the reason</p>	<p>Use positive reinforcement. Say 'yes' and 'well done' as often or more than 'no' and 'stop'</p>	

# REAL FATHERS

## RESOURCE SHEET #5

### Communicating with Children Ages 1-3



Respect your child's mother



Play together



Teach your child



Hold and comfort your child



Get on the same level and use a soft voice



Praise your child



Listen patiently to your child



To correct your child, speak firmly without anger

[Photo Credit: Save the Children/Dickens Ojamuge]

- 1. Communicate early and often.** Talking to young children lays the groundwork for communication by letting them know they will get a response.
- 2. You are your child's role model.** There are many ways to correct children's behavior. Correcting with love, instead of violence or shouting, makes the child feel safe to learn and want to learn and work hard.
- 3. Boys and girls need their fathers.** Regular communication is a great way to show your love and care, and strengthen bonds between father & child.

**Fathers' teachings last a lifetime.**

## When Parents Hit Children

When parents hit their children:

- Children often feel anxious and afraid.
- Children may learn to hide their real feelings from their parents.
- Children may not listen or do their work carefully; they only respond when there is something to be fearful of.
- Children may move closer to another side of the family, and learn from them instead of you.
- Children may feel angry and aggressive, and grow up to use violence themselves.
- Children may learn that violence is the best way to get what they want.
- Children begin looking at their fathers as enemies and run away or hide whenever they appear.

# REAL FATHERS

## RESOURCE SHEET #7

### **Kind and Assuring Words Children Need to Hear from their Fathers**

I am so proud of you!

Well done!

You are beautiful/handsome!

You are intelligent/brave/creative!

You are kind and thoughtful!

Thank you for helping!

I believe in you/I trust you!

You can do it!

I will always be there for you, no matter what!

You are so special to me!

I'm glad that you are my son/daughter!

I appreciate you so much!

The day you were born was one of the best days of my life!

# REAL FATHERS

## RESOURCE SHEET #8

### Home Communication Conduct

- Your children will do better in life if they have your support as well as their mother's.
- Your children will have less stress if you and their mother value each other.
- Don't talk badly about their mother in front of your children.
- Tell your children often that they should love and respect their mother.
- Show your children how to love and respect their mother through the words you choose to communicate with her.
- Save your arguments for the night time when your children are sleeping (or avoid exchanging words when the children are nearby and can overhear).
- If you have a fight with your wife in front of your children, remember to tell them that you love her and them, even when you and their mother have arguments.
- Never tell your children that they caused a problem between you and their mother.
- Discuss important issues with your wife before making decisions so that your children learn that you respect her.
- Listen to your wife every day.
- Don't break an agreement between you and your wife without talking with her first.

# REAL FATHERS

## RESOURCE SHEET #9

### Communication Skills

#### **GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS:**

- Listen carefully and politely.
- Not interrupting the person while s/he is talking.
- Use open body language to show you are not defensive (which looks like arms crossed) or angry (which looks like scowling face).
- Accept and acknowledge what the person says, regardless of whether or not you agree.
- Positively reinforce the person for their efforts to communicate their ideas, needs and feelings.
- Coming to a mutually beneficial conclusion to a conversation for both people

#### **BAD COMMUNICATION SKILLS:**

- Interrupting the person before they are finished talking.
- Not listening carefully.
- Not acknowledging what the person says.
- Being defensive or argumentative.
- Using put-down words or names: dumb, stupid, lazy.
- Telling someone what to do, rather than asking them what they would like to do and finding a compromise.
- Ignoring or giving the silent treatment.

# REAL FATHERS

## RESOURCE SHEET #10

### The Rules of Football versus the Rules of Marriage

#### How Marriage and Football are Similar

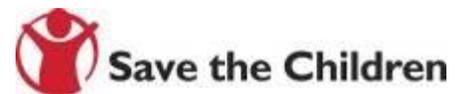
- Football is played in teams, just like a husband and a wife are a team.
- It takes teamwork to play well.
- It takes communication to play well.
- It takes practice to play well.
- It takes trust to play well.
- All team members work together for the same goal.
- Success and failure are shared -- if one person succeeds the others succeed. If one person fails, it affects everyone on the team.
- Every contribution to the team is very important. No one person can do it alone.
- Only a few people are born expert players, most people have to practice hard to get good at playing and we have to continuously practice.
- There are rules to good sportsmanship.
- You never start or leave a game mad or angry. You always shake the other teams hand before leaving and respect the effort they put into the game.
- We appreciate the efforts of everyone on the team.

#### Good Sportsmanship Rules in Football

- Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.
- Show respect for the others, if you expect it yourself.
- Enjoy yourself and encourage enjoyment for others.
- Take responsibility for your actions. Don't blame others for your mistakes or find excuses for poor behavior.
- Recognize and appreciate good performances.
- Encourage all surrounding people to display these rules and behaviors.
- Show concern for an injured person.
- Win with class. Lose with dignity.
- Win without boasting. Lose without excuses.
- Never use disrespectful or derogatory comments.
- Never make a display of temper when you or someone else is not successful.
- Never laugh or name call.
- Never use profanity or display anger.
- Remember, it's only a game.

#### Good Home Conduct

- Don't verbally attack the other person.
- No name calling.
- Stick to the subject of an argument and agree to resolve it within 15 -30 minutes.
- Don't bring up past arguments or problems if it has nothing to do with the current argument or issue.
- Work together.
- Keep calm and end the talk if one of you becomes angry.
- Recognize and appreciate all that the other person does each day.
- Respect each other.
- Ask each other a question each day and listen to the answer with interest.
- Show love and appreciation for the other person each day.
- Always be honest with each other.
- Count your blessings as a family.
- Bear each other's burdens.
- Forgive and forget.
- Be kind and tenderhearted.
- Comfort one another.
- Speak the truth and keep your promises.
- Be supportive of one another.
- Be true to each other.
- Look after each other.
- Treat each other like you treat your friends.
- Love each other deeply from the heart.



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