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FATHERS HELP KIDS COVER DEVELOPMENTAL “BASES”

Children receive 5 key benefits from supportive fathers

Carmel, NY – June is the month to celebrate fathers. And according to experts at Putnam Family and Community Services, Inc. (PFCS), dads play an important role in child development that truly deserves recognition.

“Research shows that fathers who are actively involved in their children’s lives, and who are responsible and caring role models, help kids grow and thrive across five key dimensions,” says Roger Young, LCSW. Young heads up Family and Community Outreach at PFCS and has been providing mental health counseling to individuals and families for 37 years. The five areas he refers to are Behavior, Academics, Social skills, Emotional health, and Self image; “We like to say that active dads help children cover their ‘BASES.’”



Roger Young, LCSW is a father of 2 and head of Family and Community Outreach at PFCS.

Behavior

Fathers who demonstrate warmth and affection help keep kids from engaging in negative behaviors. According to Young, “Children are less likely to get involved with drugs and alcohol, or get in trouble at home or out in the community.”

Academics

Fathers are also important to their children’s success in school. Studies have shown that involved, nurturing fathers have toddlers who exhibit more school readiness and adolescents who have better verbal skills and earn higher grades.

Social skills

“Kids who have good relationships with their fathers often have good relationships with their peers,” says Young. Children who have involved fathers are more likely to display caring and concern for others, establish supportive friendships, and have successful marriages.

Emotional health

Children with supportive fathers are better at handling stress and frustration, and are less likely to experience depression and emotional distress. Young states that many people who seek mental health services at PFCS were *not* fortunate enough to have an involved father: “Maybe he left, didn’t care, or was abusive. These experiences can be harmful to mental health.”

Self-image

Finally, active fathers are instrumental in giving their kids a positive sense of self. Involved fathers have children with more self-confidence, and daughters in particular have higher self-esteem.

In Young’s opinion, fathers should be proud of the positive impact they can have on their children. He goes on to say that by staying involved and offering emotional support, even fathers who live apart from their kids can play a vital role in their development and help them “cover the BASES.”

Young does offer a word of caution, however, to fathers who feel overwhelmed, depressed or anxious. Parenting, he says, can cause a lot of stress, especially for men who are unemployed or overqualified and unsatisfied with their jobs. To assist these fathers – and anyone raising a child – PFCS offers a number of services such as support groups, parenting classes, and counseling: “We want dads to know that help is available.”

About Putnam Family and Community Services, Inc.

Putnam Family and Community Services, Inc. (PFCS) is a private non-profit agency providing mental health, chemical dependency treatment and prevention, and family support services to people of all ages, regardless of ability to pay. PFCS promotes opportunities to grow, heal, and recover through comprehensive services including counseling, case management, family advocacy, community outreach, and assistance with addiction and rehabilitation. For more information, visit www.PFCSinc.org.