



One minute guide

Father-inclusive practice



Date: June 2025

Version: 1

When we say 'father' or 'dad' we mean:

- biological (or 'birth') dads who live with their child
- biological dads who live in a household separate from their child
- male partners who are not the biological father of the child but who represent a father-figure
- single dads
- adoptive fathers
- foster fathers
- male kinship carers (for example uncles, grandads or adult older brothers)

What is father inclusive practice?

Father inclusive practice recognises and values a dad's role in parenting and in supporting the health and wellbeing of their children. It also supports the health and wellbeing of dads themselves. It recognises that families are a system and keeps dads in mind as an integral part of the family unit.

Why is it important to involve dads?

Positive father involvement is beneficial for the whole family, supporting both child development and wellbeing, and family functioning. Evidence shows dads have a positive impact on children's health, social and emotional development, educational achievement and future opportunities.

The time dads spend taking part in educational and enrichment activities with their children - such as playing - seems to matter most. The quality of an interaction, not the amount of time spent, leads to better outcomes for children.

Statistics tell us that dads are very present:

- Two thirds of dads attend routine antenatal appointments, and more than 9 out of 10 are at the scans and the birth.
- 85% of parent-couples are married/ cohabiting when their baby is born.
- 95% of fathers register their baby with the mother.
- Sadly, 5.5 % mums and dads who live together have separated by the time their child is age 3.

What mums have told us:

Dads play an important role in supporting mothers. Their support has been shown to have positive impact on maternal mental health, breastfeeding, and stopping smoking. 80% of mums said the father was their primary support.

What dads have told us:

Men tell us that fatherhood makes them happier and healthier and that meaningful engagement with children is an important source of happiness and well-being. Nottinghamshire Best Start Dads and Dads-to-be survey (2024) told us:

- They would like more information specific for dads on how to support and care for their baby, how to support their partners and the transition to becoming a dad.
- They would like to know more about the services available to them.
- They would like professionals to be more aware of the role of dads and to include them in services, support, and conversations.
- They wanted services to run at times they can attend and be clear that they welcome dads.
- They would like more provision of groups aimed at dads and designed by dads.

Father-inclusive practice tips:

- Include dads from the outset; the earlier dads can be engaged the better.
- Recognise the value of dads to children. Share with the dad and mum the importance of the father-child relationship.
- Welcome the dad by name (often when dads read the word 'parent' they assume that the letter is intended for the mum) and encourage him to actively participate; offer dad your contact details.
- Ask dads what fatherhood means to them, being mindful of different cultural perspectives.
- Ask how the dad is and understand they are the experts on their own support needs.
- Consider the timing of any meetings to help dads who are at work.
- Make it easier for men to come into buildings: receptions and waiting rooms and their respective reading materials and posters should be welcoming to men.

How to find out more:

SSBC father's stories [Think Dads - YouTube](#)

NottsHelpYourself dads pages [Nottshelpyourself | Dads](#)

DigiDAD for young fathers (under 25 years) [DigiDAD – by dads for dads](#)

Dads pack for new fathers [a630d2d7fb528b07ce18c16e0137adf8d4920413.pdf](#)

Fatherhood Institute [HOME | Fatherhood Institute](#)