



*“There’s a Dad For That!”*



# ***Dads Central Project***

## **Project Plans:**

- FCSS has funded WRCC to develop ***Dads Central*** in the communities in the M.D. of Foothills.
- Offer an active and practical approach to providing fathers with an opportunity to get into the community and participate in events with their children.
- Engage in sports, games and other play based activities as the primary focus of events
- Offering parenting advice and guidance “on the move” – as dads are interacting with their children at the events, trained facilitators are there to answer questions, address concerns and teach some parenting strategies that will build on their parenting capacity.
- Focus on day to day activities to promote relationships in the home.
- Provide 1:1 Outreach support for dads who interested in more parenting support.

## **Long Term Goals:**

- Enhance a father-child relationship.
- Enhance easily transferable parenting skills to different situations.
- Enrich a child’s bond with their dad (or significant male in their life).
- Create lasting change that will affect father-child relationships progressively in their day-to-day lives.
- Children who have grown up with a positive relationship with their dad will be better able to pass this on with their own kids and thus creating a repetitive cycle of enhanced father-child relationships.
- Work with other community agencies to enhance father-friendly environments.

# Dad's Central

## Connect, Enjoy & Know

### WHO?

- Fathers (and any significant male caregiver) in developing positive relationships with their children.

### WHY?

- "The more time fathers spend in enriching, stimulating play with their child—such as playing pretend or sharing stories—the better the child's math and reading scores are at 10 and 11 years old.
- "Children with involved fathers tend to be more patient; and, when they are older, they can handle the stresses and frustrations associated with schooling more easily than children with less involved fathers.

(Zero to Three ~ The Daddy Factor- How Fathers Support Young Children's Development 2015).

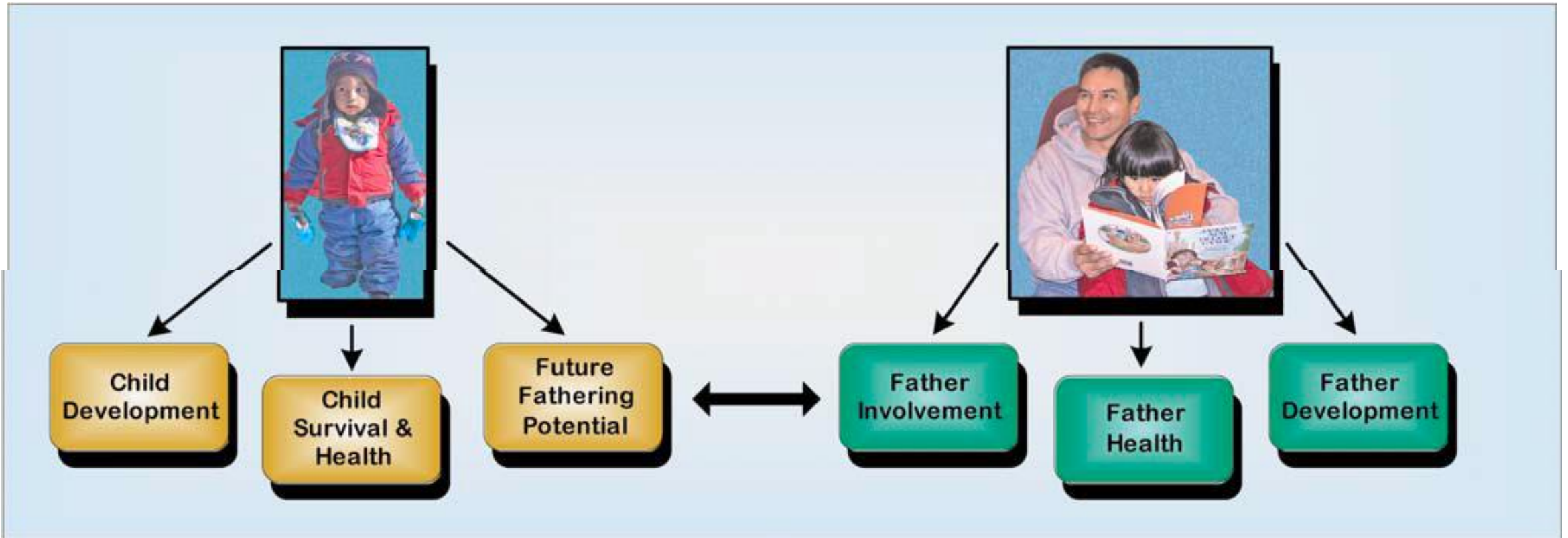
Involved fathers impact development in the following ways:

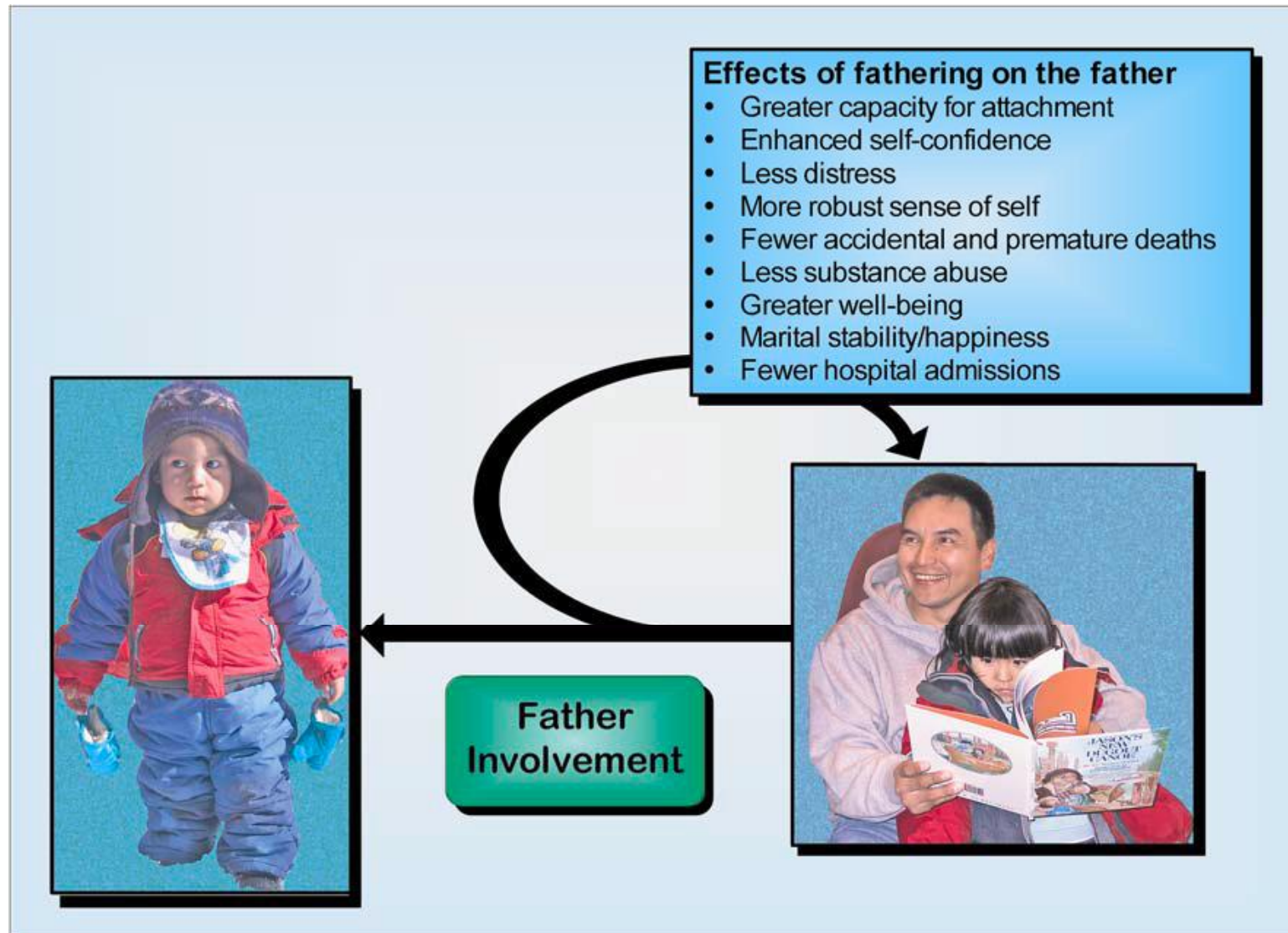
1. Develop better problems solving skills;
2. Cope better with everyday frustrations and try new challenges
3. Feel secure enough to actively explore their world around them
4. Have a greater tolerance for stress and able to wait for adult attention (eg: teacher)
5. Develop greater confidence in their own abilities and thoughts
6. 75% less likely to have a teen birth
7. 80% less likely to spend time in jail and half as likely to have depression

(Zero to Three 2009 National Survey- "Tuning Into Dads)

# Benefits to Kids ~ Benefits to Dads

Research has shown that positive father involvement can protect children against delayed development, smoking, criminality, promiscuity, depression, and anxiety, and can reduce children's risk of developing an addiction later in life.





## Father's Involvement as a Determinant of Child Health

Jessica Ball, M.P.H., Ph.D. ; Ken Moselle, Ph.D. ; Steve Pedersen, M.P.H.



# Risk-taking (Let me try tough stuff)

Trying new things involves taking risks. This allows children to test themselves and learn about their strengths, their skills, and what they love to do.

Dads often allow some risk for their children. They also keep their children safe by staying nearby, offering words of encouragement, and being ready to step in if help is needed. You can encourage this by:

- Giving your child new things to try.
- Encouraging with words, a thumbs up, or “high 5”.
- Praising your child’s efforts.

**2016 Post Survey Question:** As a result of Dads Central, I am more aware of how my child’s needs change as he/she grows and develops. **5 Somewhat Agree; 10 Agree; 3 Strongly Agree 2 No rating**



# Dad's Central

## Okotoks BBQ 5th July 2017

### Experience

Great location with grass, BBQ, and a park. As the green space was so big families seemed to spread out to the shade. FSWs took the opportunity to chat about sun safety for children.

Moms were invited to this event, and they were very keen to see what the dads did at Dad's Central. There were lots of discussions on focused family time and the importance of dad/children time.

They also discussed our activities, which are both developmental as well as fun. Soccer skills, throwing/catching games, parachute games giant frisbee etc. We discussed their related skill areas.

### Parenting skills

- Family fun + making memories
- Child-led play
- Sun safety

### Feedback

- "I get to go grocery shopping alone!"
- "The kids can't wait for dad to come home from work... he's like a rock star!"
- "I get a few hours to myself where their dad gets to tire them out. They sleep so well after Dad's Central!"
- "This is the most amazing program ever—my kids love coming home and telling me all about it!"

This week  
fsws asked  
moms what  
they like about  
Dad's  
Central....

### Attendance

46 dads  
78 children  
6 grandads/grandmas  
17 moms



# Exploration (Show me the world)

Children love to see the bigger world. It is how they learn about the world around them. This gives children a chance to try new things. You can encourage this by:

- Taking your child to places with you.
- Going outside.
- Planning fun activities.

**2016 Post Survey Question:** As a result of Dads Central, I have more confidence in my parenting skills.

**7 Somewhat Agree; 6 Agree;  
4 Strongly Agree 3 No rating**

**OUTCOME:** Participants report enhanced relationships with their children





# Dad's Central

## Okotoks Firehall 19th October 2017

### Experience

The Okotoks Firehall hosted Dad's Central as part of fire prevention week.

Dads, kids, and granddads enjoyed hotdogs with the firefighters and a safety talk followed by a tour of the station and equipment. Dads did well addressing expectations and safety rules throughout the visit.

There was learning on many levels —FSWs offer guidance of course, but now most learning comes from dads observing other dads dealing with situations. The role modelling is very powerful at Dad's Central.

One dad felt comfortable to discuss a family issue regarding grieving—FSWs made contact with Wild Rose Community Connections on his behalf.

Parenting Skills  
Following instructions was the key issue. The firefighters gave a safety briefing and dads had to remind their kids of the rules to be followed. There was some corrective teaching. Very well done.

- Feedback
- “He's been dying to wear his firefighter costume since I told him about this”
  - “I've never seen so many dads and kids in one room —this is awesome!”
  - “Me and my dad actually sat in a fire truck like we were driving it. The fireman took a picture for us”

Attendance  
**30 Dads**  
**47 Children**  
**2 Granddads**



# Dad's Central

## The Field House 4th Oct 2017

Tonight we partnered with colleagues from Public Health. As the dads and kids enjoyed free play, bouncy castle and ball skills, registered nurse Susan walk around with a FSW and was introduced to dads.

She answered many questions about vaccinations, sleeping and screen time. Also present Darren (speech, OT) he answered questions regarding lisps and motor skills.

Two dads asked the FSW to pass on their emails for further info. A couple of dads discussed children experiencing grief or loss and how to discuss this in an age appropriate way.

It was great to see the two dads from last Dads Central working on managing expectations. Both dads pre-taught their sons what was going to happen at home time. They did really well—no tears. One dad could explain the concept and why it worked for his son.

## Parenting Skills

### Child-led Play

This was very evident night and a large focus for the events.

Kids were setting up pins (skittles) as obstacles and leading dads through them.

Also on the volleyball court—two boys adapted the game so that they could play. Dads adapted to this concept and followed their lead. FSW discussed the value of child-led play.

### Feedback

- "My 5yr old used to be incredibly shy and never left my side, but the past year of Dad's Central has helped us both talk to other dads and kids and be more social"
- "What a fantastic program—I've never been before—but now you'll never get rid of us"
- My wife has gone out with a friend for a Moms night out"

## Attendance

16 Dads

30 Children

3 Granddads





# Creativity (Let's not sit still too long)

We know that kids are always on the go. They are trying new things all the time. This creativity encourages them to develop all kinds of important skills, like being flexible, anticipating what might be next, and seeing how things work together. You can encourage this by:

- Letting your child lead activities.
- Providing different ways to be creative.
- Showing how things affect each other, like how pressing a cookie cutter into play dough makes a shape or how blowing on a pinwheel makes it spin.

***Survey Question: As a result of "Dads Central" my dad/ uncle/granddad listens to me more often. As a result of DC, my dad/ uncle/ encourages me to do my best. 25 Kids surveyed and reported - Satisfied 😊***

***OUTCOME: Positive Family Communication***



**OUTCOME:** Participants report having a social network to support them, e. g. Extended family, friends and neighbours.



**Survey Question:** As a result of Dads Central I have met other parents in our neighbourhood/ community we can ask for help and support:

**2 Somewhat Agree; 11 Agree; 5 Strongly Agree**

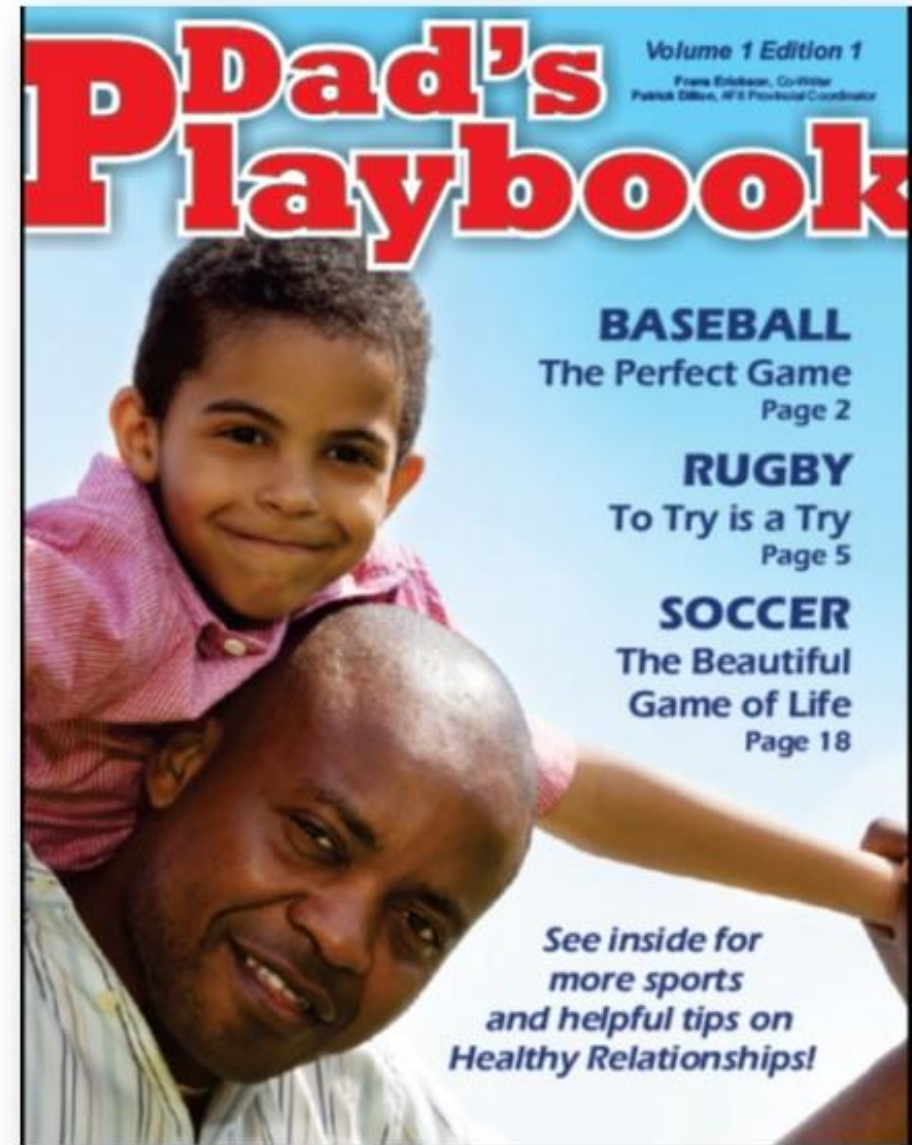




## There's a Dad For That

See the videos from our "There's a Dad For That" ad campaign.

[www.abdads.ca](http://www.abdads.ca)



## What we do

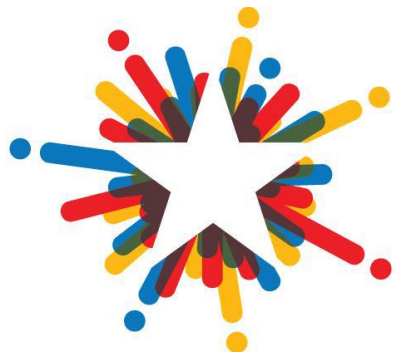
Alberta Father Involvement Initiative began in 2009. We are proud to promote engagement between fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers, and any other man who is influencing a child. Be the best dad you can be.



### ***Dad Fact:***

***Of the approximate 940,000 fathers in Alberta, about 235,000 (25%) were not born in Canada.***

***~ Alberta Fatherhood Involvement Initiative now Dad Central Alberta***



Play ■ Grow  
Connect ▲ Shine

FOOTHILLS CHILDREN'S  
WELLNESS NETWORK

THINGS TO CONSIDER TO ENHANCE A FATHER FRIENDLY ORGANIZATION		N/A	Scale				
			Poor	Good			Excel lent
•	A rating of N/A would apply if the item conflicts with an organization's mandate. (ie: Women's Shelter would not likely meet #1 & 14 since men are not allowed on the physical site)						
1.	The community view the organization with respect to serving fathers: Fathers view this as a place they can come for assistance		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Program hours are scheduled to accommodate time constraints of working fathers		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Preparedness of staff to serve fathers: Training, resources, receptive to providing services to fathers		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Stigma free environment: programs are neutral and invite all fathers to participate – not rooted in problem oriented issues (single parent, abuse)		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Fathers believe there is value to using the program – focus on their strengths and tap into their innate ability and desire to be good dads		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Meet with other organizations serving fathers and share ideas for effective strategies for engaging and retaining fathers in parent involvement		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Male staff (paid/unpaid) are available to work with fathers		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Family goal setting activities are inclusive of fathers; language is father specific (ie: instead of saying "Parents" say "Fathers and Mothers")		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Mothers are encouraged to involve fathers (except in DV/Abuse situations)		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Communication with fathers conveys an expectation for involvement		1	2	3	4	5
1.	ENVIRONMENT: toys/activities men enjoy doing with kids (puzzles; balls; blocks; play doh; tools); books that show dads with children and families		1	2	3	4	5
1.	ENVIRONMENT: Décor is neutral colors; diaper changing tables; Father's corner bulletin board; posters reflect men in nurturing roles with children		1	2	3	4	5
1.	RESOURCES: Father specific: info sheets; booklets; brochures (concise)		1	2	3	4	5
1.	RESOURCES: reading materials available (magazines like Maclean's, Outdoors, Popular Science, National Geographic); newspapers)		1	2	3	4	5
1.	CULTURE: Posters and resources that convey cultural diversity		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Inviting without Overwhelming: Offer friendly greetings; positive statements about importance of fathers in their child's life		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Invite fathers directly to activities –both on their own or with partner/mom		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Provide services with a variety of types and ages of fathers in mind		1	2	3	4	5



### **10 Tips for Agencies and Service Providers To Enhance Father Inclusive Language/Approaches**

- ☐ Consent for Participation: ensure your documents have a signature line for dad and his contact information.
- ☐ Avoid the “P” word – Fathers don’t feel included when you say “Parents” Train staff to be mindful of using the words mom and dad together and interchangeably when discussing involvement in the service.
- ☐ Invite fathers directly. To make dads truly welcome, invite him directly to increase his sense of involvement and importance. \*Be sure to make eye contact with Dad as well as Mom during conversation.
- ☐ Consult – don’t assume. Find out what each father wants and needs, his circumstances and when he is available. He may have a flexible schedule that allows him to participate during formal and informal hours of operation
- ☐ Build an awareness reminder into each staff meeting by encouraging staff to give examples of being mindful and using father inclusive language.
- ☐ Add dad specific information to your welcome or intake packages.
- ☐ Send notes to dads with their children or call dad directly to gather/ share information.
- ☐ Ask Dad for his opinion/thoughts on complex parenting/health issues. He may not volunteer anything, but it will encourage the expectation for his involvement.
- ☐ Use solution focused language when discussing child related issues. Men like to be direct and to the point.
- ☐ Use the internet to share information and provide quality resources for dads. This allows fathers who may not be able to attend or have no interest in attending a program to have their needs met.





Play • Grow • Connect • Shine  
FOOTHILLS CHILDREN'S WELLNESS NETWORK

## *The Foothills Children's Wellness Network*

*invites you to our 3rd annual Report to the Community.*

*Featuring Dr. Robbin Gibb. Dr. Gibb is from the University of Lethbridge and is internationally known for her research on the importance of the role of fathers in a child's life.*

*We encourage all Dads, Uncles, Grandfathers (Moms, Aunties and Grandmas too) to attend this FREE evening.*

*When: Wednesday, January 25, 2017*

*Where: D'Arcy Ranch Golf Course – clubhouse*

*Time: Doors open at 6:30, presentation at 7:00 pm*

*Cost: FREE*

*There will be appetizers and nonalcoholic beverages*

*RSVP: by January 18th to [tammy.burke@ahs.ca](mailto:tammy.burke@ahs.ca) or 403-995-2702*

*This event is sponsored by:*



Play • Grow • Connect • Shine  
FOOTHILLS CHILDREN'S WELLNESS NETWORK



In 2017, the Foothills Children's Wellness Network (FCWN), a local advocacy group for early child development, centres their attention on the role fathers and grandparents play in a child's life.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DEBBIE-LAYNE MACLEOD.

Grandparents LeeAnn and John Pearson along with Jeremy and Katie Bakken, and their baby Theo, attended the Foothills Children's Wellness Network Report to the Community event at D'Arcy Ranch Golf Course in Okotoks, Alta., on Jan. 25, 2017.



# Dad Central

## Tummy Time: "There's a Dad for that!"

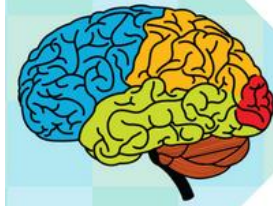


### "What is tummy time?"

Tummy time is when your baby plays on his or her tummy while awake and supervised. **Your baby should always sleep on their back.** Tummy time can start any time after your baby is born. It's a great opportunity to play with and respond to your baby, this is called serve and return and is critical for strong brain development.



### "Why do tummy time?"



- It helps your baby socialize, and allows you and your baby to bond.
- Some babies love to be on their tummies, it can calm or even excite them
- It builds stronger muscles (for both of you!) so she can learn to roll, sit, crawl and run with you.
- It stimulates your baby and helps build the foundation for a strong brain
- It allows your baby to look around at different things and helps develop hand-eye coordination.
- It decreases the chances of your baby's head developing flat spots.
- It is a fun activity for both of you!
- Tummy time is more successful if baby is happy and calm and doesn't have a full tummy. If baby gets upset during tummy time, pick baby up and
- cuddle. Try it again later. It takes multiple times to build a brain pathway for this new skill.
- Practice is the best way to learn a new skill. Try putting baby on his
- tummy on the floor after every diaper change while you clean up.

# Dad Central

Tummy Time: *"There's a Dad for that!"*



## 3 easy ways to do tummy time

### On Dad's chest

Lay baby on their tummy on your chest while you are sitting and awake. As baby grows older and stronger, lean back in your chair, until you are reclined. You could also lie down with baby on top of your chest. Make faces, sing songs, blow bubbles, baby will love it.

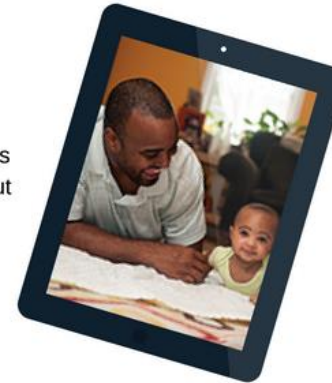


### Carrying baby over Dad's arm

Place baby's head on your elbow with baby's tummy on your forearm, baby's legs dangling on either side of your hand. Keep your other hand on top of baby's back till you get the hang of this position. This works best with younger babies. It is also a good "carry" for fussy or gassy babies.

### On the floor with Dad

Roll up a small towel and place it under your baby's chest, placing her arms in front of the towel. This will make it easier for her to hold her head up. Put your face or a toy in front of her and talk to her, play with her. As he gets older and stronger you can remove the rolled towel and let him lie flat on the floor, lifting up his head and shoulders with his arm and body strength.







Alberta  
family  
wellness  
initiative

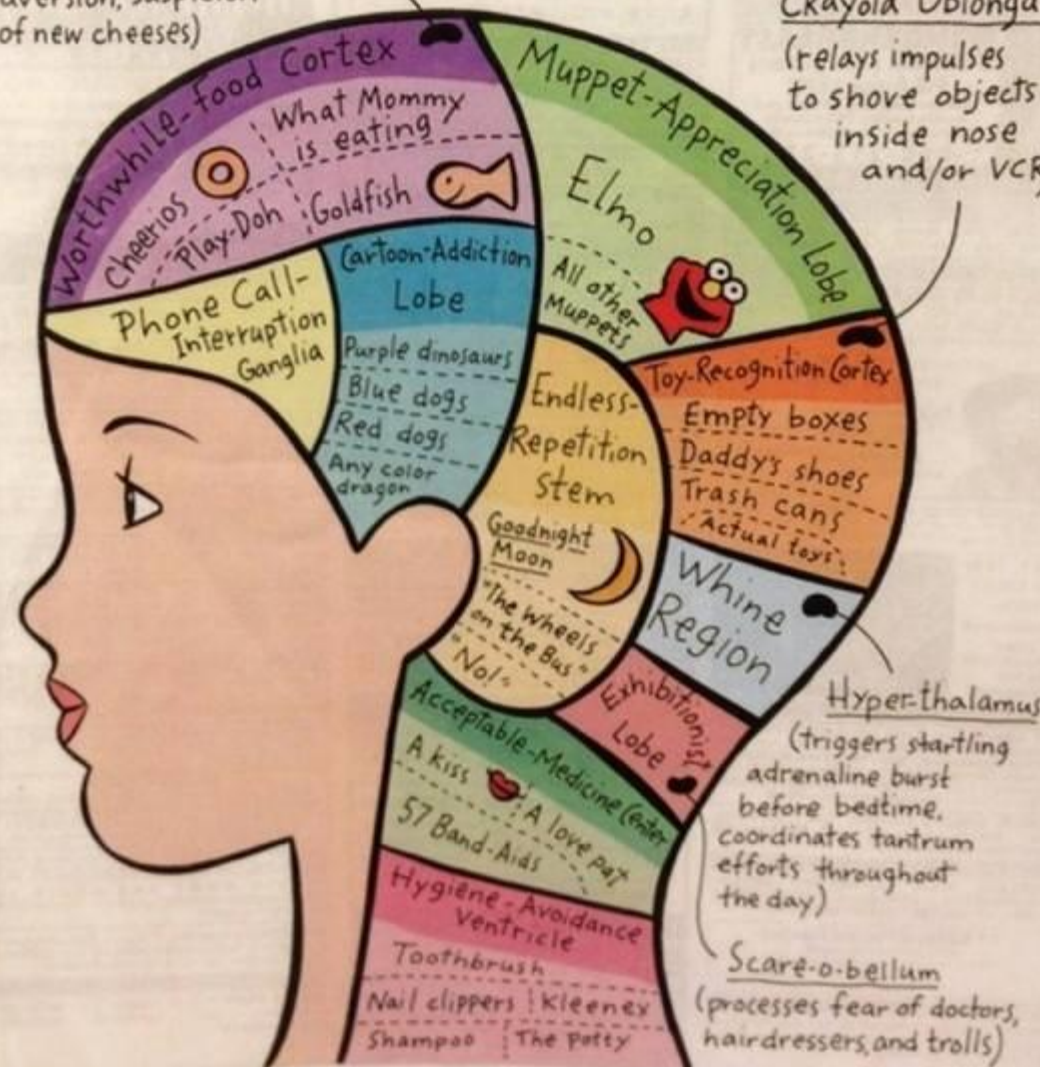


Play • Grow • Connect • Shine  
FOOTHILLS CHILDREN'S WELLNESS NETWORK

# Inside a toddler's brain

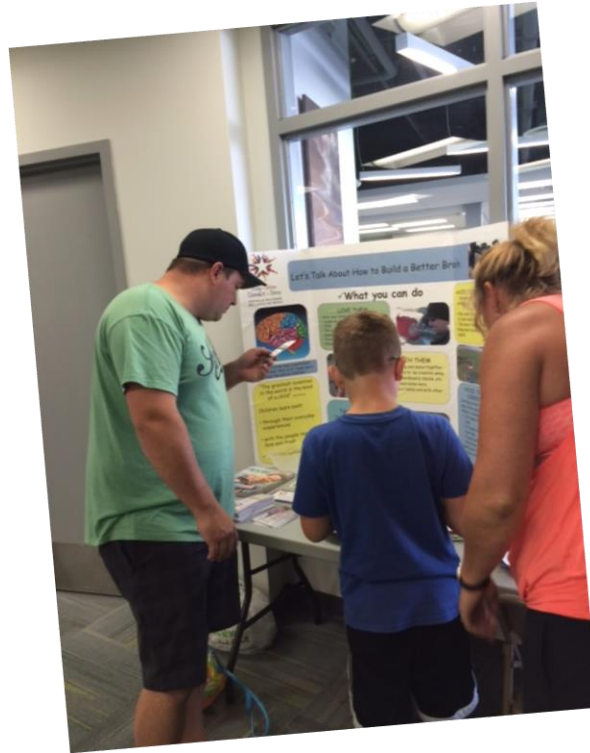
Ptooey Gland  
(regulates veggie  
aversion, suspicion  
of new cheeses)

Crayola Oblongata  
(relays impulses  
to shove objects  
inside nose  
and/or VCR)



MARY LYNN KELLEY





# BOUNCY FUN DAYS AT THE ALDERSYDE FIELDHOUSE



78  
Dads

Here's what the  
Dads are saying:

"love seeing my kids  
have so much fun.  
Love being part of  
this"



"I am working all the time,  
so coming here and just  
having fun with my daughter  
and seeing her big smile is  
wonderful"

Like food,  
activities and the  
simple layout of  
activities.

1  
Uncle

"It's great to be able to come  
to a place to meet other  
parents. It's hard for a dad to  
get out to meet other dads in  
the community."

"Super excited"  
to be attending  
and having fun  
with my kids

Links: "Like the  
resources found on  
FCWN website"

4  
Grandpas



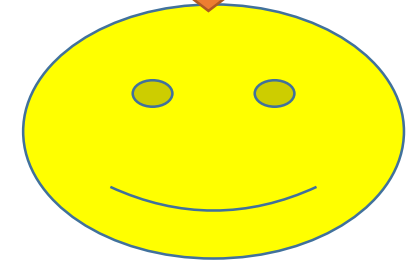
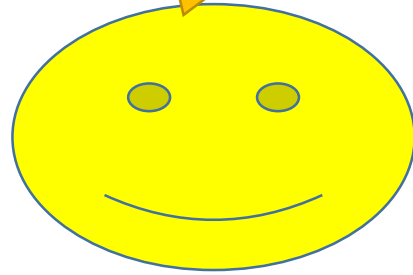


140  
Kids

25 kids  
surveyed  
said they  
love the  
events

Picnics, Fire Halls  
and Bouncy  
Castles are big  
hits!!

1 said "I am sort of  
ok but not ok, but  
that's just the way I  
always am. Just ask  
my mom"





Wild Rose Community Connections ~

## *Dads Central Survey 2016*

- *Ques #4: Did you feel welcomed by the facilitators of Dads Central?*
  - **20 Strongly Agree** *“Taylor and the team are awesome”*
- *Ques #5: Would you like to see Dads Central continue?*
  - **1 Agree**      **19 Strongly Agree**
- *Ques #6: Would you recommend Dads Central to other dads / male role models?*
  - **1 Agree**      **19 Strongly Agree**

- *“Meeting with the group has been a great experience for both myself and children. We appreciate the chance to gather with the other families and look forward to more meets.”*