

FM Infographics

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Why Do Fathers Matter?

involved fathers give children a stronger foundation for holistic well-being

children have a lower risk for a variety of negative childhood outcomes:



- ✓ Infant Mortality
- ✓ Emotional & Behavioral Problems
- ✓ Neglect & Abuse
- ✓ Injury
- ✓ Obesity
- ✓ Poor School Performances
- ✓ Teen Pregnancy
- ✓ Incarceration as Juveniles
- ✓ Alcohol & Substance Abuse
- ✓ Criminal Activity
- ✓ Suicide



Source: National Fatherhood Initiative® 2024.
Father Facts: Ninth Edition. Germantown, MD:
National Fatherhood Initiative®.



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When Moms Involve Dads...

When mom involves dad in the birthing process and shares an active role in parenting, she benefits in many ways.



- ✓ More likely to receive prenatal care
- ✓ Less likely to experience stress during pregnancy
- ✓ Healthier births
- ✓ Advocates in the hospital
- ✓ Lower risk of post-partum issues
- ✓ Lower parenting stress
- ✓ More leisure time
- ✓ Higher quality of companionship

Source: National Fatherhood Initiative® 2024.
Father Facts: Ninth Edition. Germantown, MD:
National Fatherhood Initiative®.



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Involved Dads are Happier Fathers!

Men are **inherently programmed** to be active in their child's life. When they are involved without limits, **their feelings and actions are of a higher quality.**



- ✓ Better Physical & Mental Health
- ✓ Live Longer
- ✓ Less Depression
- ✓ Increased Self Esteem
- ✓ More Active In The Community
- ✓ More Involved Civically & Politically
- ✓ Feel Better About:
 - ➡ Their Masculinity
 - ➡ Lowering Alcohol & Substance Use
 - ➡ Finding Gainful Employment
 - ➡ Managing & Saving Money
 - ➡ Connecting With Family



Source: National Fatherhood Initiative® 2024.
Father Facts: Ninth Edition. Germantown, MD:
National Fatherhood Initiative®.



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Dad Village Workbook



Building a Dad Village

Activity Workbook

Reflection & Action Planning for Fathers

Name: _____

Date: _____

"When Fathers Thrive, Families Thrive"

— Fathers Matter NOLA

Section 1: Understanding Your Village

A Dad Village is your support network—the people who help you navigate fatherhood, celebrate successes, and work through challenges. This section helps you identify and strengthen your village.

Activity 1.1: Mapping Your Current Village

List the people who currently support you in your fatherhood journey. Consider:

- Family members (spouse, parents, siblings)
- Close friends
- Other fathers you know
- Mentors or role models
- Community connections

My Current Village:

| Name | Relationship | How They Support Me |
|------|--------------|---------------------|
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Activity 1.2: Reflection Questions

Take time to reflect on your support system and connections:

1. What gaps exist in my current village?

2. Who could I reach out to for different types of support (emotional, practical, social)?

3. When was the last time I opened up about my fatherhood journey with someone?

Section 2: Building Support Networks

Building a strong village takes intentional action. This section helps you identify ways to strengthen existing connections and create new ones.

Activity 2.1: Overcoming Isolation

Many fathers experience isolation. Identify your barriers and solutions:

What prevents me from connecting with other dads?

- Time constraints
- Don't know where to find other dads
- Feel awkward or uncomfortable opening up
- Pride or stigma about asking for help
- Work schedule conflicts
- Other: _____

What small step can I take this week to reduce my isolation?

Activity 2.2: Connection Opportunities

Brainstorm ways you can connect with other fathers in your community:

| Connection Opportunity | First Step I Can Take |
|---|--|
| <i>Example: Join a dad discussion group</i> | <i>Example: Look up local dad meetups online</i> |
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Section 3: Contributing to Your Village

A strong village is built on mutual support. This section focuses on how you can give back and strengthen your community.

Activity 3.1: How I Can Support Others

Think about the unique strengths and experiences you bring to your dad village:

1. What parenting lessons have I learned that could help other dads?

2. What practical skills or resources can I offer to other fathers?

3. What do I wish someone had told me when I first became a father?

Activity 3.2: Three Ways to Contribute

Commit to three specific ways you will contribute to building your dad village:

Share and Listen

I will open up about my journey by:

Offer Support

I will provide practical help by:

Engage in Activities

I will participate in community by:

Section 4: 30-Day Action Plan

Transform your reflections into action with this 30-day commitment to building and strengthening your dad village.

Week 1: Reach Out

Goal: Make contact with at least one person in your village

- Call or text a dad friend I haven't talked to in a while
- Share one honest thing about my fatherhood journey
- Ask someone how they're really doing as a father

Who I will reach out to: _____

When I will do it: _____

Week 2: Learn and Listen

Goal: Actively listen to another father's story

- Have a one-on-one conversation focused on listening
- Attend a dad meetup or community event
- Ask open-ended questions and resist the urge to give advice

What I learned: _____

Week 3: Offer Practical Support

Goal: Help another father in a tangible way

- Offer to watch someone's kids for a few hours
- Share a resource or tip that helped me
- Invite a dad to join me in an activity

How I supported someone: _____

Week 4: Commit to Community

Goal: Make a long-term commitment to staying connected

- Join a dad group or start one
- Schedule regular check-ins with dad friends
- Identify one way I'll stay engaged in the next 30 days

My commitment: _____

Section 5: Group Discussion Guide

Use these questions to facilitate meaningful conversations with other fathers:

Opening Question (5 minutes)

- What brought you to this discussion today? What are you hoping to get out of it?

Understanding the Village (10 minutes)

- Who are the people in your dad village right now?
- What kind of support have you received from other fathers that made a difference?
- What makes it hard to ask for help or connect with other dads?

Real Talk (15 minutes)

- What's one challenge you're facing as a father right now?
- What's something about fatherhood that surprised you?
- When have you felt most isolated or alone in your fatherhood journey?

Building Together (15 minutes)

- What's one way you'd like to support other dads in this group?
- What would a strong dad village look like in our community?
- What's one commitment you can make to staying connected after today?

Closing (5 minutes)

- What's one thing you're taking away from this conversation?
- How can we support each other moving forward?

Additional Resources

Continue your journey with these tools and connections:

Connect with Fathers Matter NOLA

- Monthly Workshops & Community Events
- All Events Open to All Men
- Resources & Support for Family Court
- Follow FMNOLA on Social Media
- Visit Our Site for More Guides Like This

Remember

Building a #DadVillage isn't just about getting support—it's about creating a network where all men and fathers can thrive.

Your presence, your story, and your willingness to show up matter.

"When Fathers Thrive, Families Thrive"

You are not alone in this journey.



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