

Being a Father REAL Time

You've probably heard that being a good father means spending time with your children. In recent years, studies have found that spending time with children is still important, but it also matters that you are spending time with them in a positive way.

I want to make sure you understand why this is important. You need to know that YOU matter to your kids. It is you who has to make the choice to spend real time with your children; no one can force you. But when you choose to spend positive time with your child, you are choosing to:

- *Bless them with security and love*
- *Help them in their future relationships*
- *Improve their opportunity for success*
- *Create a healthy family that will make an impact for generations*
- *Be an example to your family and friends*

But, when you choose NOT to spend positive time with your child, you are choosing to:

- *Make your child's life harder and more difficult*
- *Make it harder for your child to form healthy relationships*
- *Increase the chances of failure for your child*
- *Be a negative influence on your family and friends*

Adjusting to Your Fatherhood Type

Responsiveness, also known as parent warmth is how you respond to your child.

- *Are you warm and affectionate?*
- *Do you give unconditional acceptance*
- *Are you full of praise for your child?*

If so, then you would have a high level of responsiveness.

Demandingness is the expectations and limits you put on your child.

- *Do you require your child to get good grades?*
- *Do you control access to electronics?*
- *Do your children have chores and consequences if they do not do them?*

Then you would likely have a high level of demandingness.

Children are more likely to be emotionally, socially, physically, and psychologically successful when they have parents with high *responsiveness AND demandingness*.

Parents who are **responsive** and open to the child's needs while also setting goals and having expectations will likely:

- *Increase their child's academic performance*
- *Reduce their aggressive behaviors*
- *Lower their levels of obesity*
- *Increase the likelihood that they will be successful in college.*

In short, you will give your child the greatest chance of success when you are involved, loving, and encouraging, while also setting age-appropriate goals for your child.

Real Time is:

Relevant time spent with your child doing something that is “relevant” or meaningful to them. What really matters is that you are being responsive while helping them with goals and limits.

Expected time spent with them regularly and not rarely. You can have simple routines where you spend REAL time with your children every day.

Attentive time spent with your child, which is simple, but sometimes not easy. When you’re spending time with your child, don’t spend it checking your phone, talking to others, or watching sports. ***Get rid of anything that distracts you during the time you are together.***

Loving time, which may seem obvious but is not always easy to make happen. Children may react, and it may even feel like they “ruin” the time you’re spending with them. But this is the best time to be responsive to them and show them how much you love them even if they are choosing poorly. *Your children may test you just to make you prove that you really want to spend time with them.*

You have this amazing opportunity to impact a child’s life forever, but that is also a pretty big responsibility. The good news is, it is not that complicated. Simply choose to spend time with your child that is Relevant, Expected, Attentive, and Loving. And that is it—if you are responsive and challenging when you interact with your child, then they will have an amazing start in life. With this as your guideline, you will be well on your way to being a great father.

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