



Dad Central

Facts for Fathers

Relationship Changes

Why did becoming a Dad have to change OUR relationship so much?

Everyone knows that life changes when you become a parent. But have you thought about how becoming a parent changes your relationship with your partner? Here are some things that all new Dads should know:

You have an amazing opportunity to show your child what a healthy relationship looks like.

Children learn a lot from their fathers. One of the most important lessons is how to be in a close, intimate relationship. Children are very aware of love, affection, tension, conflict and compromise in their parents' relationship. They learn lifelong lessons from what you and your partner show them.

The first year of parenthood can be challenging for partners.

Babies are a lot of work. They create new responsibilities and new expenses for Dads and Moms. Most likely, you will get less sleep, have less money to spend, and have less free time for yourself and with your partner. It is no wonder that the first year is associated with a drop in couples' satisfaction with their relationship! (Don't worry, it gets better as the kids get older).

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It may take you a bit longer to feel comfortable about being a parent

Mothers get a “head start” in parenting due to pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and lots of early hands-on baby care experience. Dads sometimes take longer to feel comfortable and connected. Time and experience with your baby will help.

The things you like (and dislike) about your partner might change

Remember how you used to find it cute that she could sometimes be a bit scatterbrained? Maybe not anymore. Some of the differences between you and your partner that you used to love might start to feel like problems. On the other hand, you will likely find new strengths in your partner that you love.

Competing with Mom is a losing game for everyone

Although you do need Dad and baby time, it is important to become involved in a way that supports the mom-baby connection too. Moms sometimes feel like that they have all the responsibilities for parenting, and it can take some time to work out roles and responsibilities for both of you.

Your sex life will probably change

Early parenthood is a time when less frequent sex is normal. Even after she has recovered from childbirth, her body is different. She might feel “all touched out” and she may take a while to feel sexy again.



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Want to know more?

Dad Central Ontario has booklets and other resources for fathers.

Visit dadcentral.ca