



Dad Central

Facts for Fathers

Respecting Children's Mothers is Part of Being a Good Dad


When children have fathers who respect and support their mothers, everyone benefits. Moms are more patient and sensitive. Dads are more involved and confident. Working together helps children thrive.

It is different for kids when their fathers are disrespectful or abusive towards their partners or ex-partners. Try this *True or False* quiz on the effect of parents' conflicts.

- T F Even very young children are affected by conflicts between their parents.
- T F Although children may seem to “get over” fights quickly, the impact is often longlasting.
- T F Children are usually aware of the conflict between their parents, even if their parents try to fight only when the children are asleep or out of the house.
- T F Children understand that fathers can love and respect their mothers even if they occasionally lose control and say or do things they regret.
- T F How fathers relate to children's mothers has substantial and lasting impacts on the father-child bond.
- T F Children often think that fights between their parents are their fault.

***ALL OF THESE ARE TRUE**

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Children are negatively affected when one or both of their parents are disrespectful or abusive towards each other. Parents often underestimate how much this kind of behaviour affects children. Here are some of the ways children react:

- Feel confused, embarrassed, scared, guilty, alone or unsafe.
- Blame themselves.
- Worry about their parents, and might try to do something to stop the fights.
- Get caught in loyalty conflicts.
- Get less positive engagement from both parents.
- Learn unhealthy lessons about how men treat women in relationships, and about what it means to be a parent.
- Feel like there is no one to turn to.
- Have less energy to do kid things, like learn in school and play with their friends.
- Act out with aggression or defiance, or become anxious or depressed.

If you are struggling to be respectful and supportive of your partner or ex-partner, don't wait. Reach out to others to make a positive parenting choice – get help. Your kids will thank you.



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Want to know more?

Dad Central Ontario has booklets and other resources for fathers.

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