

## **The powerful influence of a parent**

By Craig Miller

Did you know how incredibly important and powerful you are as a parent to influence the destiny of your children? Unfortunately, it is often the case that you do not find out how significant and influential you are until your children are grown and you see what they have become. By that time you look back, you wish you had done many things different. The more information you have the more you can improve your relationship right now and decrease the need to regret your mistakes. The following is a collection of research that will surprise you and help you to be a wiser parent to decrease your regrets later.

1. Boys without a father are twice as likely to drop out of school, twice as likely go to jail, nearly four times as likely to need treatment for emotional and behavioral problems\*
2. Boys that have a father who is involved for guidance and direction are less frustrated with life, more social, and do better academically. (Boys with little or no guidance and direction have more violent and other antisocial behaviors.\*)
3. Boys that have an absent or less involved father and spend 80 percent of their time with women don't know how to act as a man when they grow up. The relationship between sexes is affected and the man becomes helpless and acts more like a big kid.\*
4. Girls whose fathers are involved, have rules with loving control and exhibit affection are twice as likely to stay in school and achieve greater academic success.\*\*
5. Daughters who believe that their fathers care about them have significantly fewer suicide attempts and fewer instances of body dissatisfaction, depression, low self-esteem, substance abuse, and unhealthy weight.\*\*
6. Girls with involved fathers or father figures feel more protected, are more likely to attempt college, and are less likely to drop out of college.\*\*
7. Girls with fathers that are emotionally close and give attention exhibit less anxiety and withdrawal behaviors and are less likely to seek male attention by flaunting themselves.\*\*
8. A mother's failure to emotionally attach early in life can be linked to mental and physical illness. (Lack of attachment = detachment, withdrawal, anxiety, inability- cope- ups and down of life)\*
9. Parental connectedness is the number one factor in preventing girls from engaging in premarital sex and indulging in drugs and alcohol.\*\*
10. Girls who live with both parents have significantly fewer growth and developmental delays, and fewer learning disorders, emotional disabilities, and behavioral problems.\*\*
11. Girls who live only with their mother have significantly less ability to control impulses and delay gratification, and have a weaker sense of conscience about right and wrong.\*\*
12. Children who spent most of their time in child care are three times more likely to exhibit behavioral problems in kindergarten.\*

13. There is a direct correlation to the amount of time spent in day care and traits such as aggression, defiance, and disobedience.\*

References: \*James Dobson, *Bringing up Boys*, \*\*James Dobson, *Bringing up Girls*, (Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 2010)

If this information shocks you or touches your heart in any way, you need to know you still have the power to make changes in the life of your children or grandchildren. It is never too late to influence a relationship! If you need help to learn how to make changes I recommend you seek professional counseling.

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