



Tip 38 - Importance of communication.

As part of The Fathering Projects involvement with your school, I will be including helpful tips and ideas for all fathers and father – figures. I hope these tips will help, inspire and encourage all fathers and father – figures to be the best that they can be, as all fathers and father – figures are critically important in every child's life.

More involved fathers and father – figures = better outcomes for children.

This weeks Tip is focusing on step-dads and communication skills. Communication shows respect, ensures that everyone's needs are being met, and reduces and resolves conflict.

Communicate clearly and calmly.

- It is important to communicate clearly and calmly, let your step-child know that you are available to talk whenever needed.
- Listen to their messages, both obvious and subtle. Give them a response, communicate back to them that you have heard them and understand.
- Be open-minded and accepting of any differences.
- Make your own preferences known without being harsh or intimidating. Try using statements like "I feel," "I think," "perhaps you could try" and avoid phrasing your thoughts as 'fact'. i.e. avoid "you should," "you need to."
- Be a good listener; ask follow up questions, keep your responses short and try not to 'dominate' the conversation by lecturing about your own thoughts.
- Always explain your actions and preferences with the real reasons, this helps your stepchildren to understand your thoughts and accept your words, behaviours and decisions.



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