

THE POWER OF “I LOVE YOU”

One early morning on a trip to a remote community in Belarus (former Soviet Union) I was looking over my notes for a fathering conference. My two sons were riding in the front of the van with me as we traveled as a family talking about family fathering issues – ours particularly.

My notes asked the questions which still stir my past, “How often and consistent have you told your kids that you love them?” How much did you hear your dad say that to you? The results are predictable in a room of fifty dads; a handful will raise their hands. The majority of these men are still waiting to hear their dad say, “I love you” for the first time. And – like father, like Son – many of them don’t consistently say it to their children.

It may not seem like a big deal but those three words “I Love You” – spoken with sincerity and backed up by behavior – can demonstrate support, encouragement, tenderness, and carry as much as anything else we do.

Dad, this is a Big Deal. Our words – or sometimes our lack of words – can either bless or discourage our children for their entire life. As we’ve heard all the excuses: “They know how much I love them.” “I don’t want my son to get a big head.” But those are just excuses and poor ones I may add.

Action Points for Committed Dads...

- Find ways to reinforce your message, like big hugs anytime and anywhere.
- Ask your child to autograph a picture, then display it a public place
- Go into your child’s room at night, when they are sleeping, and practice saying it. Keep doing it until it becomes natural and then you can come out and say, “I just want you to know that I love you and accept you totally, just as you are success or not.”

As I got of that van in a remote part of the world, I hugged my sons and told them how desperately I loved them. Be Brave today, Step out for NO reason and Tell your Kid of Your Love for Them.