

Time with Dad...by Kim

It's amazing what ordinary life experiences can teach us about Fathers. For example, the other day at the gym, I witnessed a great Fathering lesson.

It was an ordinary Saturday morning and people slowly began filling up the gym exercise machines after sleeping in a bit later than usual. As I jogged along the treadmill, my attention was drawn to a man in his mid 30's. He was walking toward one of the treadmills while a young girl followed behind him carrying his bag. Her eyes were fixed upon his every move. As they interacted, I realized this was a father/daughter event.

The man soon picked out a machine and started his exercise routine and the girl followed suit on the machine next to his. He didn't push her to keep up, but I could tell she wanted to give it her best. While he seemed preoccupied, she frequently glanced over at her dad as if to make sure she was following his lead...and to make sure he wasn't going anywhere.

Soon the workout was finished and the two talked and laughed and walked out together. Of course I didn't follow them, but I hoped when they walked out the door that Dad held the door open for her. I hoped he realized what his routine activities and mannerisms were teaching his young daughter. Several things were obvious to me:

- He was teaching his child that she was important enough to him that he chose to spend time with her.**
- He was teaching her that taking care of one's health is an important priority in life.**
- He was modeling self-discipline.**
- He was teaching her how men behave and, more importantly, how she can expect to be treated as she grows into adulthood.**

Men, whether you have sons or daughters, realize that every moment you spend with them is an opportunity to teach them healthy life skills. What have you taught your son lately? How have you influenced your daughter? The seemingly insignificant things in which you involve your child speak volumes about his or her importance to you. Their self worth is built at the gym, not at Disneyworld.

When I left the gym that Saturday morning, I happened to see that father and daughter driving down a nearby street. They were strapped in their jeep talking and laughing and it made me wish every kid could be given the gift of Time with Dad.