

YOUR FATHERING JOB DESCRIPTION

Remember when you held your first baby in your arms and -- probably not out loud -- asked yourself “Now what do I do?” You didn’t get an answer, did you?

At work, a job description helps you on task for your company. But what about a “job description for dads – of all ages – to think through issues, plan our stragedy, and begin to put it into place.

First, it’s vital that you recognize and understand your father’s impact on your life, because that’s where you first received messages about what a father does. None of our fathers were perfect, so it’s important for us to understand their shortcomings as well as carry forward their strengths.

Then, talk intentionally with your wife. She is an essential partner, and like you, how father related to her as a little girl will influence her expectations for you.

Discuss all of these issues. Help her understand your ideas about fathering and listen closely to her perspective. Ask her what she expects of you as a father. Get specific. Talk about daily caretaking duties, the amount of time spent with the kids, discipline, navigating work and family issues, and moral and spiritual training of the priority of your marriage.

Once you’ve defined what is realistic to expect from yourself as a dad, I suggest *verbalizing your commitment to that role*. Define “father” as a verb not a noun. Resolve to live out your commitment to your children day by day.