

Fatherhood lessons to help families stay together

4th January, 2015



The British government has started a new project to help men manage the responsibilities of fatherhood. Fathers will be able to attend workshops and take lessons on

how to be a better father. The new scheme hopes to slow down the rate of family breakdown in the U.K. Over a million British children are growing up without a father. A survey said that a 16-year-old in Britain is more likely to own a smartphone than have a father. One of the project's leaders, Iain Duncan Smith, told Britain's Daily Mail newspaper that: "It is not only the bond between a mother and her child which makes a real difference to a child's life. It is the bond between a father and his child too."

The new classes will be for men only. They will prepare fathers for how having a new baby will change their relationship. Lessons will help new fathers to develop relationship and communication skills. Other classes will help them to understand what can go wrong and where to go for further support. Mr Smith wants the rate of divorce in the U.K. to go down. He said: "Divorce does harm to children, affecting everything from school work to eating habits, as well as their relationship with mum and dad." He spoke of the importance of helping families, saying: "If we are serious about promoting a strong society, then we also have to be serious about seeking to support and strengthen families."

Sources: *Daily Mail / Telegraph / BBC*

Writing

Being a father is more difficult than being a mother. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

government / responsibilities / lessons / scheme / growing up / smartphone / bond / classes / relationship / support / divorce / eating habits / importance / society

True / False

- The British government has started fatherhood lessons for men. T / F
- The government hopes to stop families breaking up. T / F
- More UK 16-year-olds have a smartphone than have a father at home. T / F
- A newspaper said the mother-child bond is the most important. T / F
- Mothers and fathers can attend the fatherhood classes. T / F
- Classes will tell fathers where they can go if they need help. T / F
- A Mr Smith said divorce had no effect on children's eating habits. T / F
- Smith said the government is not serious about strengthening families. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. project | a. alter |
| 2. manage | b. probable |
| 3. rate | c. encouraging |
| 4. likely | d. cope with |
| 5. bond | e. more |
| 6. change | f. help |
| 7. further | g. scheme |
| 8. support | h. trying |
| 9. promoting | i. speed |
| 10. seeking | j. relationship |

Discussion – Student A

- What do men need to do to prepare for fatherhood?
- What do you think men should learn in the fatherhood classes?
- How does a new baby affect the relationship between the parents?
- How serious a problem is divorce?
- What should couples do to avoid divorce?
- How does divorce harm children?
- How important is a strong family?
- What questions would you like to ask the class leaders?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. help men manage the responsibilities | a. communication skills |
| 2. Fathers will be able to attend | b. a mother and her child |
| 3. growing | c. strengthen families |
| 4. likely to own a | d. their relationship |
| 5. the bond between | e. workshops |
| 6. having a new baby will change | f. further support |
| 7. develop relationship and | g. of helping families |
| 8. where to go for | h. of fatherhood |
| 9. He spoke of the importance | i. smartphone |
| 10. seeking to support and | j. up without a father |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of the fatherhood lessons project?
- How difficult is it to be a good father?
- What advice would you have for new fathers?
- What are the main responsibilities a father has?
- How can governments help reduce family breakdowns?
- Should children stay with the mother or father after a divorce?
- How are fathers and mothers different for a child?
- Are (would you be) a good father / mother?

Spelling

- started a new rojpccte
- help men anameg
- eadttn workshops and take lessons
- A ysuevr said that...
- more elylik to own a smartphone
- makes a real nerfeifdce to a child's life
- They will rpeaper fathers for...
- change their iaoiepshnltr
- where to go for frruhet support
- the cipoemrnta of helping families
- promoting a strong ictyeso
- support and sntheenrtg families

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. i	4. b	5. j
6. a	7. e	8. f	9. c	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Energy

You think it is most important for a father to have energy. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): a sense of humour, intelligence or patience.

Role B – A sense of humour

You think it is most important for a father to have a sense of humour. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): patience, intelligence or energy.

Role C – Intelligence

You think it is most important for a father to have intelligence. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): a sense of humour, patience or energy.

Role D – Patience

You think it is most important for a father to have patience. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): a sense of humour, intelligence or energy.

Speaking – Father

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things a father should have at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| • cooking skills | • patience |
| • fitness | • a sense of humour |
| • energy | • playfulness |
| • time | • fairness |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.