

explore their own strengths and ability to do new things, and their impact on the world around them.

Toddlers must also learn how to express and regulate emotions, and acquire the ability to control their behaviour. Fathers play an important role in this respect, as well as showing the child expected behaviour in a society. In addition, fathers influence children's development through direct teaching, that is, instructing children on what is right or wrong especially where it is an only child.

Fathers of Children at Primary schools

As children reach school age they begin to engage in more adult like tasks. The more actively involved and interested a father is in his children's care and education, the more intellectually developed his children are. One reason for this is that when fathers are involved they tend to provide better economic support for their children. Children with better economic support have access to more educational resources and have better opportunities to learn. Children in two parent families where the father cares therefore perform better in school.

Another reason is that fathers spend time with school going children and help them with their homework/studies. All children benefit from such assistance. Further, the influence fathers have on the children's intellectual development is not limited to helping with school work, but also extends to positive influence on the children's thinking skills.

Absent Fathers

Unlike in traditional societies, many children living in modernized communities have non-resident fathers. These are fathers that do not live with their children. Such children do not gain from the benefits associated with living with both parents, which include development of high self-esteem, responsibilities, social behaviour and better adjustment to different situations. Specifically, the presence of fathers has the following effects on children:

1. Boys gain in;
 - a) Gender role development – Fathers who are affectionate, competent, decision-makers and who are involved in family functions have positive impact on the masculine identity of male children. As a result, their sons get a feeling of security and self confidence.
 - b) Cognitive development – Sons of nurturing, competent fathers earn higher scores on achievement and intelligent tests, as well as higher grades in school.
 - c) Social emotional development – Nurturing and competent fathers raise sons with high self-esteem in elementary school, good personal adjustment in college age and successful heterosexual.
2. Girls raised in families with a loving and respected father are most likely to:
 - i) Become healthy, well-adjusted young women
 - ii) Feel a sense of pride in their femininity