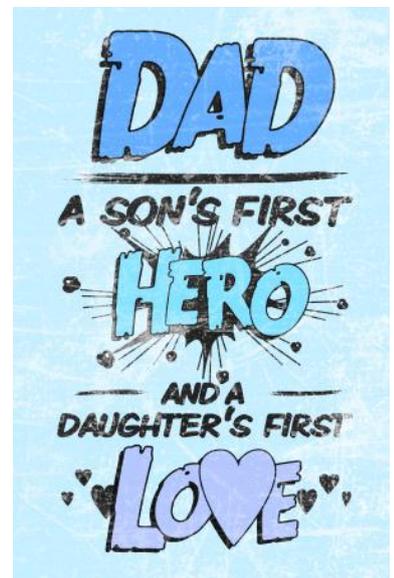


FATHERS' NIGHT



Ideas for a Fathers Night

In Face Book a new Father wrote, "*One of life's greatest compliments is that my son copies everything I do. One of life's greatest fears is that my son copies everything I do!*"

It is true. What we do speaks louder than anything we might say to our children.

It is also true that we are human and we'll never do everything perfectly.

What we can do is to choose to allow the Holy Spirit to guide us and transform us into the models who actions speak louder than words.

A Fathers Night can be a great way to have a time of family fun and interaction that create shared faith community memories while encouraging and inspiring our dads to be great models to their children.

Remember that as some families do not have Dads at home, the invitation can be extended to Grandads, uncles or family friends who play a mentoring role in the childrens lives.

Below are a smorgesboard of ideas and activities that might help to "kick start" putting together a significant event for your Dads around Fathers Day.

Theme

It is easier to plan the night if you pick a theme so that the activities are reinforcing that one main message.

Themes can be written up on a big poster for the night and given as a "Take it Home" reminder such as our Father's Day theme..

"Dad a son's first hero, a daughters first love."

Activities

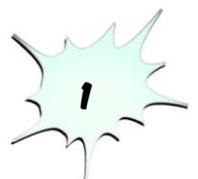
Choose a variety of activities that families can choose from that they think would best suit the ages and interests of their children.

Start with some fun games. A couple of ideas..

Shoe Scramble



1. Divide the families into groups of approximately 12 (people) and have them sit in circles around the room.
2. Tell the groups that you will be asking them to remove their shoes and put them into one huge mixed up pile in the centre of the room (that is one pile for everyone in the room, not a pile per group). The point of the game is to be the first team to have all their correct shoes back on. Group members find each others shoes, not their own.
3. Tell them they will have one minute before you start the game to work out a strategy of how they are going to achieve this!
4. After the one minute strategy time, have everyone take their shoes off and put them in the pile.
5. On "go" each person in the circle takes a turn to go and find the shoes of another person in their circle and help them to put them on, do up the laces etc. Once that person has their shoes on, it is their turn to run to the big pile and find a pair of shoes for the next group member.
6. The winner is the first group to all have their shoes on at which point they stand up to indicate they have finished.



Night-Glow Bowling



Night-glow bowling is super fun and the materials are easy to find. You will need:

1. Large water bottles or large tall clear containers of some sort that can be knocked over. 1.5 litre bottles are a perfect size for bowling pins.
2. Glow sticks! Chose multi colored ones so the bowling is more colorful!. (Try a \$2 shop or <http://www.glowsticksltd.co.nz>)
3. And, of course, water if your containers weren't already filled. ;)
4. Soccer balls for bowling balls.



After breaking the glow sticks and shaking them to get the glow effect open up the water bottles and place one in each of them. You can use between seven to ten bottles. Seven bottles works well for the smaller children as they that can't knock as many down.

Turn the lights out and start bowling!!

Night bowling is a hit with all ages.



Fathers Talk

In a separate area have a Dad with older children share his **parenting insights** or his "**fathering journey**" with the Dads. (See website *Father's Day Talk Ideas* for material and inspiration for this).

Share the **parenting tool** : Thumbs UP Thumbs DOWN and give out Fridge Magnets (see website *Take it Home*).

You may like to use the **bookmarks** (see website *Take it Home*) and write a personal note to the Dads from your church on the back.

Hand out the "Faith Begins @Home Dad" by Mark Holmen **book** as a gift.

Food!!

Idea: While the Dads are listening to a talk the children can be making dinner/supper.

Have pizza bases ready bought or prepared and the children choose their Dads favourite toppings (eg pizza sauce base, ham, pineapple, red pepper, salami, tomato etc and of course lots of grated cheese!)

While half the group is preparing dinner in the kitchen the other half can be making a Father's Day gift of their choice (see website *Kids Church Ideas, Crafts & Activities* for ideas).

For dessert, the other half can swap to the kitchen and make icecream sundaes for their family selecting the toppings everybody in their family likes (chocolate or raspberry sauce, marshmallows or m&ms etc).

Blessing and Prayer

After dinner and the giving of their Fathers Day gifts finish the evening with a time of blessing and prayer.

Choose from the ideas below:

1. Following in our Dads Footsteps

Write the following words on foot prints and laminate. Place the footprints around the edge of the room.

God behind me

God before me

God beneath me

God above me

God is with me

God within me

God in those I see around me



Dads pick up a led tealight candle to carry representing your children.

Read the words on each footprint as a reminder that they do not walk alone. The Lord is there present to help you be the Dad that the Lord wants your children to follow.

Your children can "follow in your footsteps" carrying their own light and reading the words on each footprint as a reminder that they also do not walk alone.

2. Thumbs up Thumbs Down

*Use the "Thumbs Up Thumbs Down" parenting tool to share together as a family and to pray for each other (see website *Take it Home*).*

3. Blessings

Have family groups sit around and have the children share what they appreciate about their Dad.

Then have the Dad pray a blessing over his children

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make His face to shine upon you.

And be gracious to you.

May the Lord continue to look upon you with favour and give you peace.

I love you. Amen.

Then have the children pray this blessing over their Dad.

(Print out copies of the blessing so that Dads can take them home and continue to daily bless their children).