

FATHERHOOD NEWSLETTER



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Welcome to the first issue of the Oklahoma State Department of Health Maternal and Child Health Division's Fatherhood newsletter! We hope to connect with dads across Oklahoma to provide information, solicit feedback on what needs Oklahoma men face and offer resources to help you be the healthy, balanced, and engaged father you want to be.

We want to know:

- **What are you facing right now that you could use support with?**
- **What issues in your life are affecting your ability to be a better father?**
- **Do you have a positive relationship with your child(ren)'s mother?**

Please connect with us! Contact our Fatherhood Initiative Project lead James Craig Jamescc@health.ok.gov (405) 426-8089

Are you struggling with depression or anxiety?

41 in 10 fathers are diagnosed with postpartum depression. It is important to know that you are not alone, and that there is support. Postpartum Support International (PSI) offers a monthly "chat with an expert" for dads the first Monday of each Month at 7pm Central. The Call in number for the chat is 1-800-944-8766 code 73162#. They also have a monthly support group and phone line.

Go to <https://www.postpartum.net/get-help/resources-for-fathers/dads-mental-health/> for more information.

**Preparing
for a
Lifetime**
It's Everyone's Responsibility

Talking with your kids about COVID-19

1 Show your kids through your actions the behavior you want to see. Children will react to and follow your reactions. They learn from your example. If you are able to remain calm, listen to their feelings, and offer them reassurance that this is a tough time but temporary, they will have an easier time dealing with the changes.



Did you know?

2 The way dads play with their kids is different than moms and vitally important. Often fathers are down on the floor wrestling, tossing their children up in the air, catching them, and engaging in rough-and-tumble play in a way that is often different than how moms play. Research shows this type of play gives kids a sense of security in being able to regulate their emotions and that they feel more relaxed, connected, and happy after roughhousing.



New dad tool for your toolbox for February: How to change a diaper

Step 1: Before starting, be sure that all of your supplies are within reach: clean diapers, baby wipes, washcloth, diaper cream, and clean clothes (in case the diaper has leaked)

Step 2: Place your baby on her back on a changing table, washable pad or thick towel. Unfold a clean diaper and lay it to one side. Remember, while it may be months before your baby is able to roll over, keep a hand on him at all times when he's on the changing table to ensure he doesn't roll off.

Step 3: Put another clean diaper beneath your baby in case she pees or has a diaper with poop.

Step 4: Wipe from front to back, being careful to clean inside all the creases. If your baby has had a bowel movement, use the unsoiled parts of the dirty diaper to clean up as much of the mess as possible.

Step 5: To prevent diaper rash, let the area dry completely before putting on diaper cream and/or a clean diaper. Apply more diaper cream or ointment on areas that look pink and rashy.

Step 6: Lift your baby's legs and place the clean, unfolded diaper that you set aside earlier under the child's bottom. If you have a boy, make sure his penis is pointing down. Pull the front of the diaper between his legs and fasten.

Step 7: To contain the odor and mess, roll up the dirty diaper before disposing of it. Don't forget to wash your hands with soap and warm water when you're finished!

Practicing gratitude

3 Many families have dinner together at least a few days of the week. One activity that you can incorporate into your meals together is the practice of sharing one thing each meal you are grateful for. There are several studies that show practicing the act of gratitude builds their self-esteem and belief in positivity and engagement in the world outside of themselves. Making this a regular practice increases a feeling of positivity in their lives and yours.



Need Resources?

Call 211 or go to <https://www.211oklahoma.org> for help with housing, food, utilities, mental health, transportation, COVID-19 information, or other needs.

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³McCullough, M.E., Emmons, R.A., and Tsang, J. (2002). The grateful disposition: A conceptual and empirical topography. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 112-127.

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