



TIP SHEET

TIPS FOR ENGAGING DADS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS (for professionals)

We know:

- » Over 80% of Dads work fulltime and want to be more involved in family life.
- » Over 70% rated finding time for key relationships with partner and kids as biggest concern.

We may get into the habit of saying “the Dad’s are hard to reach”, but it isn’t really helpful – If we take working hours into account and are specific about inviting Dads and partners – they ARE reachable. Around the time of pregnancy and birth is the easiest – as most partners will attend a scan with their pregnant loved one – and over 85% of Dads and partners attend the birth. They visit in hospital and are home for at least a few days with new baby.

Sometimes small changes make a big difference – like ensuring there are photos of Dads and babies/children up around your service (you can order some posters from Brimbank Dads, we can also provide resources and tip sheets designed for Dads).



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SEE THE BRIMBANK DADS WEBSITE
There's lots of opportunities to get involved
and enjoy being an active Dad!

www.ds.org.au



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Research suggests the way forward is to –

- » **Offer after hours and weekend appointments** where possible, or refer new parents to programs that do (e.g. extra support via Family Foundations and HOPE both free home based programs running in Brimbank)
- » **Ask specifically when Dads are available**
“Is there a day when your partner may be able to get home earlier to attend?”
- » **Offer activities to Dads so they can DO things** with their children (see our Dad n Me activities over the page), rather than only education or resources
- » **Have resources on offer for partners to pass on** – “You may like to take this Fathering tip sheet home for your partner to read.”
- » **Direct Dads to a one stop on line place** for information and events – (Brimbank Dads web page is at www.ds.org.au)
- » When you have Dads attend early childhood settings **ASK them directly what they would like** to support their parenting
- » When Dads do attend appointments or events **ask THEM about their child** – what is going well, and about any areas they want help. Acknowledge that they have a unique perspective that may be different to Mum’s
- » **Brush up on father inclusive practice** (free workshops for professionals running at Brimbank Council in November, enquire via scott.hall@ds.org.au)
- » **Be specific and invite Mums and Dads/ partners to events** and appointments rather than writing Dear Parents, as fathers are not used to being included yet and can assume parents means just Mums.

