



# **SURVEY OF FATHERS' INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING**

## ***Summary of Study Findings***

**May 2009**

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# Survey of Father's Involvement in Children's Learning

## Summary of Study Findings

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### Overview

The National Center for Fathering (NCF) and the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) have partnered together to assess the degree of involvement and support that fathers provide to their school-age children.

The findings of this survey expand upon a similar survey originally conducted in 1999, providing an assessment of the changes in father engagement over the last ten years. Both sets of data were collected through a single-stage, random dial, national phone survey of 1,000 individuals ages 18 and over.

### Key Findings

**Over the last ten years, a number of key gains were made that show fathers have significantly increased their involvement with their children at school.** Increases were made with fathers:

- |  |            |                       |
|--|------------|-----------------------|
| • Walking/taking their child to school | 38% to 54% | +16 percentage points |
| • Attending class events               | 28% to 35% | +11 percentage points |
| • Visiting their child's classroom     | 30% to 41% | +11 percentage points |
| • Volunteering at their child's school | 20% to 28% | + 8 percentage points |

**Fathers also significantly increased their interaction with teachers, school officials and other parents.** Fathers increased their engagement by:

- |   |            |                       |
|---|------------|-----------------------|
| • Attending parent-teacher conferences    | 69% to 77% | +8 percentage points  |
| • Attending school meetings               | 28% to 35% | +7 percentage points  |
| • Attending school-based parents meetings | 47% to 59% | +12 percentage points |

**The single largest gain over the past ten years was a 20 percentage point gain in meeting with other dads for support.**

**While the gains above are encouraging, significant opportunities for increased father involvement remain as measured by the percentage of dads answering that they “never” engage in the following activities:**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • Read to their child                   | 39% |
| • Visit their child's classroom         | 32% |
| • Volunteer at their child's school     | 54% |
| • Have lunch with their child at school | 74% |

## DATA SUMMARY

### Fathers' Involvement in Children's Education

<u>How Often Do You/Does Your Child's Father...</u>	<u>At Least Once or Twice a</u>			<u>Never</u>	
	<u>Month</u>			<u>Oct 99</u>	<u>May 09</u>
	<u>Oct 99</u>	<u>May 09</u>	<u>+/- Chg</u>	<u>Oct 99</u>	<u>May 09</u>
	%	%		%	%
Praise/reward child for good schoolwork	85	86	+ 1	8	5
Discuss child's school progress with mother	84	86	+2	9	9
Help child in extracurricular activities	71	75	+4	19	21
Help child with homework	74	78	+4	18	19
Read to child	55	55	0	40	<b>39</b>
Walk/take child to school	38	54	<b>+16</b>	52	39
Attend class events	34	45	<b>+11</b>	31	32
Meet with other dads for support	17	37	<b>+20</b>	76	52
Visit child's classroom	30	41	<b>+11</b>	37	<b>32</b>
Attend school meetings	28	35	<b>+ 7</b>	34	24
Volunteer at child's school	20	28	<b>+8</b>	58	<b>54</b>
Have lunch with child at school	9	14	+5	77	<b>74</b>

### Frequency of Involvement

<u>You/Your Child's Father Always or Sometimes</u>	<u>Always or Sometimes</u>			<u>Never</u>	
	<u>Oct 99</u>	<u>May 09</u>	<u>+/- Chg</u>	<u>Oct 99</u>	<u>May 09</u>
	%	%		%	%
Reviews and signs child's report cards	76	82	+6	21	18
Attends parent/teacher conferences	69	77	<b>+8</b>	29	23
Attends school-based parents meetings	47	59	<b>+12</b>	52	40

## Fathers' Awareness of Children's Education

<u>You/Your Child's Father.....</u>	<u>Says "Yes"</u>		
	<u>Oct 99</u>	<u>May 09</u>	<u>+/- Chg</u>
	%	%	
Believes child is getting a good education	88	86	-2
Confident that child is safe at school	81	87	+6
Knows the name of child's physician	78	79	+1
Discussed school safety issues with child	74	75	+1
Knows the name of child's teacher	74	78	+4
Helped child w/school project in past six months	63	73	+10
Knows the name of child's counselor	38	44	+6

### Study Partners

#### **The National Center for Fathering**

The National Center for Fathering is a non-profit research and education organization whose vision is to see every child with an involved father or father figure. Based in Kansas City, its mission is to inspire and equip men through research, training, programs and resources to be the fathers, grandfathers and father figures their children need. The Center's website at *fathers.com* serves as the portal to its many initiatives including Championship Fathering, WATCH D.O.G.S., the Father-Daughter Summit, Fathering Court, and training for dads and father trainers and coaches. Its CEO, Carey Casey, is the author of *Championship Fathering* (May, 2009).

#### **National PTA**

PTA comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of parent involvement in schools. PTA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who wants to be involved and make a difference for the education health, and welfare of children and youth.