

Father's Day: Dads Make a Difference in Our Lives

Purpose

In this session, participants prepare to celebrate Father's Day by looking at various examples of dads and father figures from movies and connecting those clips with their own experiences. They then prepare an 'ad campaign' about their dads to celebrate his role in their lives.

Session at a Glance

7:00 p.m. Welcome and Introductions

7:05 p.m. Opening Prayer

7:10 p.m. Ice Breaker: Father's Day Trivia

7:20 p.m. Dads and Father Figures

Extend the Session: Advice from Dad (add 10 minutes)

7:40 p.m. Ad Campaign about Dad

8:05 p.m. Closing Prayer

Extend the Session: Advice from Dad (10 minutes)

Divide participants into small groups of four or five. Give each group a marker and a half-sheet of newsprint. Ask them to brainstorm all the advice or quotes they can remember their dad saying. List these on the newsprint. Share with the whole group. What similarities and differences are there between the groups? What 'dadisms' seem to be universal?

Extend the Session: Giving Thanks—Prayer and Food (90 minutes to 2 hours)

After the session, ask participants to invite their dads (or other father figure in their life) to a thanksgiving prayer service and meal. Ask the young people to bring a picture of themselves with their dad to the event. Post these pictures on one wall under a banner or sign that says "Thanks, Dad! You Make a Difference to Me!"

Prayer Service

Gather

Sing "I Will Lift Up Your Name" by Steve Angrisano and Tom Tomaszek (*Spirit & Song*, OCP).

Prayer Leader: (*begin with the Sign of the Cross*)

God of heaven and earth,
You have created everything around us.
Help us discover the gifts you have given us,
and use them to bring good to others.
We thank you for your unconditional love;
help us show others the same love.
In your Son's name, we pray. Amen.

Listen

Invite the volunteer to proclaim Luke 15:3-7 (Parable of the Lost Sheep). Allow a few moments of quiet after the reading.

Respond

Prayer Leader: (*invite the dads and then the youth to repeat these lines after you*)

Dads: God, turn my heart toward you. I want to love my child as much as you love me.

Youth: God, turn my heart toward you. I want to love my dad as much as you love me.

Dads: Help me be the best dad and father I can be. Help me to be slow to anger, quick to praise, and ready to forgive.

Youth: Help me be the best teen I can be. Remind me to listen, be respectful, and honor my dad.

All: God, help us love one another.

Go Forth

Blessing of Dads and Their Children

Invite the dads and their son/ daughter to stand facing each other.

Prayer Leader: *(ask the young people to place their hands on the shoulders of their dads and to repeat after you)*

God, bless our fathers and dads with your love. (they repeat)

Give them wisdom and patience. (they repeat)

Give them gratitude and a sense of humor. (they repeat)

Prayer Leader: *(ask the dads to place their hands on the shoulders of their son/daughter and to repeat after you)*

God, bless my son/daughter with your love. (they repeat)

Give them wisdom and patience. (they repeat)

Give them gratitude and a sense of humor. (they repeat)

Invite participants to offer each other a sign of peace.

Materials Needed

- Nametags
- Markers
- **Handout 1, Father's Day Trivia**, one per two participants
- Pens
- Television or projector and DVD player

Note to Leader: Your audio visual set up needs to be adequate for everyone to be able to hear and see the movie clips.

- Movies (see #3 in Prepare in Advance)
- **Resource 2, Dads in the Movies**, for session leader
- Bible, colorful tablecloth, pillar candle, matches or light stick
- Poster paper, one sheet per participant, with a few extra sheets
- Magazines
- Scissors, glue sticks
- Construction paper, various colors
- **Resource 3, What Makes a Dad**, for reader at closing prayer

Prepare in Advance

1. Make arrangements to post the Father's Day ad posters in the gathering area of your church on Father's Day weekend.

2. In preparing for this session, take into consideration those young people who may not have a dad or step-dad in their lives. Perhaps an uncle or grandfather or family friend is the one who ‘fathers’ the young person. When leading the session and asking participants to reflect and share with one another, mention grandfather, etc. along with dad and step-dad.
3. Following the directions in the session outline, make an ad about your dad as an example to show the participants.
4. Select which movies you will use for the “Dads and Father Figures” portion of the session (see **Resource 2, Dads in the Movies**). Suggestions include:
 - Father of the Bride* (Touchstone, rated PG, 105 minutes, 1991)
 - Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (Paramount, rated PG-13, 127 minutes, 1989)
 - Parenthood* (Universal, rated PG-13, 129 minutes, 1989)
 - The Pursuit of Happyness* (Sony, rated PG-13, 117 minutes, 2006)
 - Uncle Buck* (Universal, rated PG, 100 minutes, 1989)
5. Invite two young people to be readers for the closing prayer. One will proclaim Sirach 3:1-16 and the other will read the poem on **Resource 3, What Makes a Dad**.
6. Set up your meeting space so that everyone can enjoy the movie clips. Cue the first DVD to the appropriate starting point.
7. Set up a prayer focus by covering a small table with a colorful cloth. On the table, place a Bible, candle, and matches or light stick.
8. Set up tables for refreshments and sign-in. Have one or two people at the sign-in table with a check-in sheet and name tags. (*Skip the nametags if participants know each other and you know them. However, if they wear nametags, you wear one, too.*) **Hospitality is important:** As the facilitator, do not use the gathering time before the session begins to take care of last minute preparations. Spend the time moving among the participants, greeting and speaking with them.

Session Outline

Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

Greet the participants warmly as they arrive and give everyone a nametag. If there are folks that are new, allow them to introduce themselves and receive a warm welcome to the evening. Introduce tonight’s session in these or similar words:

Welcome, and thanks for joining us tonight as we prepare to celebrate Father’s Day with our dads and step-dads. We include, too, those who father us—grandfathers, uncles, older brothers, and family friends. Let’s get started!

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Prayer Leader: (*begin with the Sign of the Cross*)

Abba Father,

Tonight we take time to think about the relationship we have with our dads and those who are fathers to us. We thank you for their presence in our lives. May we cherish and love our dads, step-dads, and grandfathers. We ask this in your name. Amen.

Ice Breaker: Father’s Day Trivia (10 minutes)

Divide participants into pairs, and give each pair a copy of **Handout 1, Father’s Day Trivia**. Ask them to complete the brief quiz and then share the results in the large group.

Dads and Father Figures (20 minutes)

Gather the participants together and make sure all will be able to see the movie clips. Use the process on **Resource 2, Dads in the Movies**.

Ad Campaign about Dad (25 minutes)

Give each participant an index card and pencil. Ask them to think of as many things as they can of what they have learned (and are learning) from their dad. Jot these ideas on the front side of their index card. These ideas may be specific ("how to fish") or general ("try my best no matter what"). Allow about five minutes.

On the back of the index card, ask the participants to select one of their ideas and to put the idea into a one-sentence statement. For example, a current Meals on Wheels ad campaign features Richard Gere and his father, Homer Gere. The caption reads, "My dad teaches me how to act every day of his life." Allow about five minutes.

Once the participants have narrowed their idea and written a sentence about it, offer these directions for their ad campaign:

We don't always tell our dads how great they are or what we have learned from them. For Father's Day, we're taking the opportunity to create an ad campaign about and for our dads. Using the supplies on the tables, create an ad for Father's Day about your dad. You can draw, cut pictures from magazines, etc. to develop your ad based on the sentence you wrote on the back of your index card.

Show the participants the sample you made in advance of the session.

Allow 20 minutes for them to complete the ad posters. Let them know that these will be posted in the gathering area of the church on Father's Day weekend.

Closing Prayer (10 minutes)

Invite the participants to gather in the prayer area with their ad (poster).

Gather

Prayer Leader: *(begin with the Sign of the Cross)*

God,

In your love and wisdom you created everything.

We ask you to bless our fathers and dads. Help them continue to be good men who love, inspire, and guide us to be the best people we can be.

Grant that we continue to love, honor, and respect them always. We ask this in your name. Amen.

Listen

Invite the volunteer to proclaim Sirach 3:1-16. Allow a few moments of quiet after the reading, and then invite the second reader to share the poem, What Makes a Dad.

Respond

Prayer Leader:

I invite each of us to think of something about our dads for which we are grateful. One by one we'll name the thing we're thankful for, and our response will be: **Thank you, God, for dads**. After you offer your prayer of thanksgiving, place your ad poster around our prayer table.

After everyone has offered a prayer and placed their ad poster around the prayer table, say:

We learn from a very early age the perfect prayer that Jesus taught us. This prayer is the prayer that Jesus himself prayed to his Abba, his dad, his father. Let us pray this prayer together. Our Father ...

I invite you to offer each other a sign of peace.

Go Forth

Sing “Malo! Malo! Thanks Be to God” by Jesse Manibusan (*Spirit & Song*, OCP).

Announcements and Refreshments (15 minutes)

Make any needed announcements, thank the young people for their participation, and invite them to enjoy some refreshments.

This session was written by Cheryl Tholcke, Coordinator of Youth Ministry Services and Project Coordinator of Youth Ministry Access, Center for Ministry Development, Sacramento, California.

Handout 1

Father’s Day Trivia

Sonora Louise Smart Dodd of _____, Washington started the tradition of Father’s Day in honor of her dad.

- a. Tacoma
- b. Seattle
- c. Spokane
- d. Yakima

In 1916, U.S. President _____ approved the idea of observing an annual Father’s Day.

- a. Theodore Roosevelt
- b. Woodrow Wilson
- c. William H. Taft
- d. Warren Harding

In _____, U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father’s Day.

- a. 1964
- b. 1965
- c. 1966
- d. 1967

Other countries which celebrate Father’s Day:

- a. Australia, Canada, Ireland, India
- b. New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom
- c. None of the above
- d. All of the above

Match these fathers and kids:

- 1. Jawaharlal Nehru
- 2. Kirk Douglas
- 3. Martin Sheen

4. Pandit Ravi Shankar

- a. Norah Jones
- b. Emilio Estevez
- c. Michael Douglas
- d. Indira Gandhi

Resource 1

Father's Day Trivia—Answers

Sonora Louise Smart Dodd of _____, Washington started the tradition of Father's Day in honor of her dad.

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- a. Theodore Roosevelt
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- d. Warren Harding

In _____, U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day.

- a. 1964
- b. 1965
- c. 1966**
- d. 1967

In addition to the U.S., other countries which celebrate Father's Day:

- a. Australia, Canada, Ireland, India
- b. New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom
- c. None of the above
- d. All of the above**

Match these fathers and kids:

- a. Jawaharlal Nehru (4)
- b. Kirk Douglas (3)
- c. Martin Sheen (2)
- d. Pandit Ravi Shankar (1)

- 1. Norah Jones
- 2. Emilio Estevez
- 3. Michael Douglas
- 4. Indira Gandhi

Resource 2

Dads in the Movies

Directions: For the “Dads and Father Figures” portion of the session, select two or three of the suggested movies. For each movie listed below, you will find the clip(s) to show as well as discussion questions to use with the participants.

Father of the Bride (Touchstone, rated PG, 105 minutes, 1991)

For those who might be unfamiliar with this movie, provide a brief synopsis of the movie’s plot, and then introduce the clip they will see:

In this movie, Steve Martin plays George Banks, the father of a young woman, Annie, who is engaged to be married. It’s an understatement to say that George worries about everything and he is sad his ‘little girl’ will soon be married.

Clip #1: Begin as Annie is sitting outside on the patio after an argument with her dad about her fiancé, Brian McKenzie, and end after they finish an impromptu basketball game. The scene is Chapter 3, “1 on 1” (14:08-17:13).

Discussion Question(s):

What do you and your dad have in common? What do you and your dad enjoy doing together?

Clip #2: Begin as George informs his wife and daughter that the wedding guest list must be trimmed down, and end with George saying, “From that moment on, I decided to shut my mouth and go with the flow.” The scene is in Chapter 8, “Guest List Negotiations” (47:20 to 50:26).

Discussion Question:

Dads make sacrifices—large or small—for their children all the time. Think of a time when your dad sacrificed for you. What did he do? What was your response?

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade (Paramount, rated PG-13, 127 minutes, 1989)

For those who might be unfamiliar with this movie, provide a brief synopsis of the movie’s plot, and then introduce the clip they will see:

In this third installment of the Indiana Jones movies, Indy’s father, Professor Jones, played by Sean Connery, is kidnapped for the information he holds—in a diary—about the location of the ‘holy grail’—the cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper. It’s up to Indy—who doesn’t have the greatest relationship with his dad at this point in his life—to save his dad and protect the grail from the Nazis.

Clip #1: Begin as Indy enters the room where his father is being held captive and end when the woman says, “You should have listened to your father.” This scene begins in Chapter 14, “Family Reunion” (47:39) and ends in Chapter 15, “What Book?” (52:39)

Note to Leader: If time is an issue, begin and end the scene in Chapter 15, “What Book?” (50:20-52:39).

Discussion Question:

We don’t always listen or pay attention to what our dads tell us. Think of a time when you should have listened to your dad and didn’t. What were the consequences of not paying attention to him?

Clip #2: Begin as Indy and Professor Jones are having a drink together and as Professor Jones says, “What do you want to talk about?” This scene is in Chapter 23, “A Rebuke.” Begin at 1:14:00 and end at 1:15:00.

Discussion Question:

What piece of advice do you remember your dad giving you? Why do you remember this advice? How has this advice made a difference in your life?

Parenthood (Universal, rated PG-13, 129 minutes, 1989)

For those who might be unfamiliar with this movie, provide a brief synopsis of the movie's plot, and then introduce the clip they will see:

In *Parenthood*, Steve Martin and Mary Steenburgen play the Buckmans, parents of several children in a complicated, somewhat chaotic extended family. Gil Buckman is working hard to balance family and work life. His sister and younger brother each have family struggles of their own.

Clip #1: Begin where Kevin learns that Cowboy Dan won't be at his birthday party and end after his dad falls off the horse and then stands up. This scene is in Chapter 10, "The Birthday Party." Begin at 58:00 and end at 1:03:17.

Discussion Question:

Recall a time when your dad came through for you; a time when he made right something that was going wrong. What was the situation, and how did he make it right?

Clip #2: Begin where Jason Robards, playing the role of grandpa Frank Buckman, is talking with his youngest son, Larry, trying to help him get out of trouble with loan sharks. End when grandpa talks to his grandson, Cool, and asks him: "Would you like to stay here with us?" and Cool answers, "Yes." The scene is in Chapter 14, "Kevin's Big Catch" (1:37:47 to 1:40:11).

Discussion Question:

We look to our dads to take care of us, protect us, and explain things to us. Think of a time when your dad had to explain something that was hard to understand or even scary. How did he help you know that you would be all right and that he would be looking out for you?

Pursuing Happiness (Sony, rated PG-13, 2006)

For those who might be unfamiliar with this movie, provide a brief synopsis of the movie's plot, and then introduce the clip they will see:

In this movie, Will Smith plays Chris Gardner is a single father who is taking part in an unpaid internship as a stockbroker-in-training with Dean Witter in San Francisco. Eventually, he and his son, Christopher are evicted from their apartment and then their motel room and have to live in homeless shelter. Through it all, Chris does everything he can to provide for his son while working toward his dream of a career that will provide them both with security for the future.

Clip #1: This clip shows Chris getting his birthday present wish—a basketball! The scene is in Chapter 6, "Birthday Wishes" (22:26-23:04).

Discussion Question:

All of us at one time or another make a wish for something special and hope we get it. Recall a time when you received something you wished for—for your birthday, or Christmas, or another special occasion. What was it? How did you feel when you got it?

Clip #2: Begin as Chris is working in the office at Dean Witter at the end of his internship, making 'cold calls' as part of his training as a stockbroker. End when he picks up Chris at the day care center. This scene is in Chapter 28, "Happyness" (1:48:25-1:52:16).

Discussion Question:

In this scene, we see Chris being rewarded for his hard work and sacrifices during the internship program—he gets the stockbroker job! But his joy isn't complete until he shares it with his young son, Christopher. Is there a time you remember when your dad couldn't wait to share something with you? Is there a time you remember when you couldn't wait to get home and share something exciting with your dad?

Uncle Buck (Universal, rated PG, 100 minutes, 1989)

For those who might be unfamiliar with this movie, provide a brief synopsis of the movie's plot, and then introduce the clip they will see:

In this movie, Uncle Buck is the last option for his brother and wife, who need someone to watch their kids while they visit her father who is recovering from a heart attack. John Candy plays Uncle Buck, a bachelor who is almost as much a kid as the ones he is supposed to watch. However, Buck eventually rises to the occasion.

Clip #1: Begin as Miles is doing the dinner dishes, and end after the scenes of a restless night sleeping. The scene is Chapter 6, "Running the Asylum" (30:38-36:39).

Discussion Question:

In this scene, we see the youngest, Maizy—who misses her mom and dad, try to convince Uncle Buck to let her sleep in her parents' room where he is sleeping. Uncle Buck can't say no to those big brown eyes, and he relents. Can you remember a time when you asked and asked (or even begged) your dad for something, and he finally said yes? What was the situation?

Clip #2: Begin as Uncle Buck is cooking an extra-large pancake for Miles' birthday and end with him wishing Miles a happy birthday. The scene is Chapter 9, "Party Time" (45:39-46:22).

Discussion Question:

Think of a time when your dad did something special for you, something you weren't expecting, or something out of the ordinary. What did he do, and what was the occasion?

Resource 3

What Makes a Dad

God took the strength of a mountain,
The majesty of a tree,
The warmth of a summer sun,
The calm of a quiet sea,
The generous soul of nature,
The comforting arm of night,
The wisdom of the ages,
The power of the eagle's flight,
The joy of a morning in spring,
The faith of a mustard seed,
The patience of eternity,
The depth of a family need,
Then God combined these qualities,
When there was nothing more to add,
He knew His masterpiece was complete,
And so, He called it ... Dad.

~Author Unknown~