

Dad to Dad: Parenting Like a Pro

☒ *Just in time for Father's Day– the book Dad to Dad: Parenting Like a Pro. Written by our pediatrician colleague, Dr. David Hill, this North Carolina based Pediatrician brings a humorous, yet practical perspective on fatherhood. His book includes chapters on nontraditional parenting relationships, talking to kids about sexual development and helping your child sleep. Two Peds in a Pod is pleased to give you a sneak peek:*

Dads are not good for kids just because we do the same stuff moms do. That's not to say doing that stuff isn't important; it's critical! Mothers and fathers have a similar effect on their children's moral development, social competence, school performance, and mental health. There is a reason, after all, it takes 2 parents to make a baby, and not just because it's more fun that way.

Probably the most accurate generalization about dads versus moms is that fathers play more. In the first 4 years of a child's life we tend to focus on activities that involve touch and stimulation, like tickling, wrestling, and playing an airplane. It's our job, in other words, to get kids all wound up so they won't go to bed, to make them laugh until they pee on themselves. (Note: If this happens, be a good sport and help with the clothing change; after all, it is your fault.) During middle childhood, we're more likely than mothers to get out and do stuff, like take walks, go fishing, or see a ball game. Are you surprised? No, you are not. You already knew that from watching sitcoms.

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Some people might still call this a man's world, but the corners of it devoted to child care can sometimes feel downright unfriendly to fathers. I recall times when, taking my young children to the playground, moms actually got up from a park bench where they had been talking and moved over to the next swing set. It's possible they were just following the shade, but I couldn't help looking around to see if my picture was stapled to a nearby utility pole.

As an involved father you might expect everyone you encounter to smile and praise you or tell you how impressed they are at what you're doing. At times you will get this reaction. Some people seem amazed I can get my kids out of the house wearing 2 matched shoes. In fact, one of my pet peeves is when the children's clothes clash and someone says, "Daddy must have dressed you today." I want to look that person dead in the eye and say, "You don't know me very well, do you? My daughter here left the house in a perfect little outfit, but she threw up on that one, and this is what was in the trunk of the car. Now stand back— she's looking a little pale."

David L. Hill, MD, FAAP

excerpted with permission, from *Dad to Dad: Parenting like a Pro*

Dr. David Hill is a pediatrician, writer and father of 3. He believes humor is essential to surviving parenthood. He has put this theory to the test at various times as a stay-at-home dad, a primary breadwinner, part of a 2-working-parent family, and a single father. He is vice president of Cape Fear Pediatrics. As a writer, Dr. Hill has composed and recorded humorous commentaries for National Public

Radio's All Things Considered and NPR affiliate WHQR. *Dad to Dad: Parenting like a Pro* is available at bookstores everywhere and through Independent Publishers Group and the American Academy of Pediatrics bookstore.