

A MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE



Dads – Listen, Appreciate, Play!

By Greg Browne, LCSW

Dads... Here's a way to put a smile on your kid's face that won't cost you a penny. Take a moment to be truly present with your children. Play with, listen to, and appreciate them in an unhurried way for a few moments each day. By doing this you will convey unconditional love and acceptance of them as a person even if you don't always accept their behaviors. Being focused on your child, even for just a few minutes, takes patience and heart. Challenge yourself to really listen; ask open-ended questions and show interest by listening more and taking less.

Remember to appreciate and acknowledge what your kids are doing well. Catch them in the act of being good! This will build their confidence and self-esteem.

Last but not least, don't forget to get down on the floor and play, maybe even act a little silly and see what happens. You just might be surprised by the smile it brings to your child's face...and your own!

A little can go a long way!

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