**Daughters need their dads, too**

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There's a growing awareness of a father's importance in the life of his daughter. Both the academic world and the general population are recognizing that a dad's influence goes beyond the "little girl" years into adulthood, and is an important complement to her mom's vital role.

A recent study from the University of Texas connected father involvement with less sexual activity among teenage daughters.

We're doing everything we can to let dads know how important they are to their daughters. At our Father-Daughter Summit events, we meet dads from around the country who are eager to understand the unique needs of their daughters, ready to learn better communication and desire to maintain a relationship of openness, honesty and affirmation.

If you talk with the daughters, they'll share how they want to know and be known by their fathers. They are ready to move beyond any past disappointments and look to the future with hope.

Not long ago, after an event to promote one of our Summits, a woman named Melinda approached one of our staff members and said, "Thank you for your message to fathers. I'm 36 years old, happily married, the mother of two boys, and I have a master's degree in counseling. But what I have never had is a relationship with my father."

She continued, in a broken voice, "I've wondered if there's something wrong with me that has kept my dad away."

Melinda's words provide a clear picture of the need for events like our Father-Daughter Summit, and the need for all of us dads to connect in an affirming way with our daughters. If they know that we love them, believe in them, and are doing what we can to help them succeed, it will make a world of difference.

**ACTION POINTS**

* Have flowers delivered to your daughter "just because."
* Block off 2 hours on your calendar and surprise your daughter with lunch, whether she's two or twenty.
* Ask the mother of your daughter or another woman close to her how you could be a support to your daughter during this time.
* Write your daughter a letter listing specifically what you appreciate about her. If she is very young, plan to present it to her on her 10th birthday.
* Ask your daughter to tell you about her friends, or the young men in her life.
* Carry out all of the above in appropriate ways for your sons as well.