

Being a Dad

English



Dads in all communities and cultures are very important for families. There are many ways to be a dad. How dads do some things in Australia may be new to you.

Dad and families

Dads have a big role to play in the family, and how children grow and learn.

Families benefit when dads:

- > are kind and patient
- > show respect for all family members
- > are involved in caring for children
- > protect children from harm
- > get help when needed.

Some dads coming to Australia find their role in the family changes. They may be more involved in parenting, especially if there is less extended family support than before.

A kind, caring dad makes the whole family stronger.



Being a dad can bring you lots of joy. You are an important part of the family.

Let children help you do things. It may take longer but really helps them learn.



What dads can do

Dads in Australia are encouraged to help children grow and learn by:

- > spending time with them, talking, playing and having fun
- > being involved in their daily lives:
 - feeding, bathing, dressing young children
 - taking them to school, doctors
 - being involved in children's sports or other activities
- > sharing books with children - in English or another language
- > telling stories from their own life or culture.

Dads can teach their sons to be kind and caring, and their daughters to expect respect in their relationships.

Dads and mums working together

Families are stronger when dads and mums have a good relationship, even if they don't live together. It is important for dads to respect all women in the family.

It helps when:

- > dads show they care. Help mum rest, relax, take a break
- > mums and dads share parenting tasks, and make decisions together.

If there are problems, don't fight in front of children or say bad things about their mum. There are services that can help with family relationships.

What about discipline?

Discipline means guiding children and helping them learn the behaviour you expect.

It helps children learn when you:

- > are patient and explain what you want and why it is important, as many times as you need to
- > stay calm, even if you feel angry
- > try to understand why children are 'misbehaving'
- > talk with them and come up with solutions together.

Smacking or punishing children does not help them learn. They might obey but miss the chance to practise solving problems. Harsh physical punishment of children is against the law. There are services that can help if you have ongoing concerns.

Dads are role models for their children. Always behave how you would like your children to behave.



Dads are important too. Take a break when you can, do things you enjoy, and look after your health. See a doctor if you often feel tired, unwell, sad or angry.

When dads have problems

If there are problems in your life, it can be harder to be a dad.

There may be:

- > memories from the past
- > worries about loved ones left behind
- > problems with health, jobs, visas, alcohol, gambling, drugs.

It can help to:

- > contact a service. Dads are welcome and some have special programs for dads
- > let children see you improving things. They learn about solving problems from you.

Whatever is going on, you can still be a great dad. Make sure children know you love them.

Keep your family strong by protecting them from violence.

Family violence

Sometimes dads and others use violence at home. This is never OK in any culture or community. It is against the law in Australia.

Violence can be:

- > physical, such as hitting, pushing
- > emotional, such as making threats, shouting, telling lies about someone, making people feel bad
- > controlling what people do.

Violence harms everyone in the family. Children are harmed by the stress of violence even if they don't see or hear it. It changes how their brain works and they can't grow or learn as well. Violence at home makes it harder for adults to care for children.

If you feel very angry or that you might hurt your family, leave until you are calm. Make sure children are safe first. Take steps to learn better ways.

If there is violence
in your home get help
straight away. If there is
immediate danger, phone
the Police on 000.

Services

Emergency

000 Police, Fire, Ambulance
13 14 44 Police attendance if there is a problem but no immediate danger

Interpreters

Interpreting and Translating Centre

1800 280 203, 8.30am-5pm, Mon to Fri
Phone or face to face interpreters www.translate.sa.gov.au

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)

13 14 50 any time day or night for phone interpreters
www.tisnational.gov.au

Parenting

Parent Helpline

1300 364 100 for advice on child health and parenting

Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS)

1300 733 606, 9am-4.30pm, Mon to Fri for an appointment
Free service for babies and young children aged 0-5 years. Nurses can help with children's health, eating, sleeping and development
See www.cyh.com for child health and parenting information

Lutheran Community Care Family Zone

8349 6099, 9.00am-4.00pm, Mon to Thurs, 9am-3pm Fri
2 Belalie Road, Ingle Farm
Dads' parenting groups, playgroups and support for dads
www.lccare.org.au

Raising Children Network

Parenting information and videos in many languages
<http://raisingchildren.net.au>

Parenting SA

Other multicultural Parent Easy Guides and general Guides on a wide range of topics, including 'Being a Dad', 'What is your parenting style?'
www.parenting.sa.gov.au

Family relationships

Mensline Australia

1300 789 978 any time day or night
Talk to a male counsellor about wellbeing, relationships or family concerns www.mensline.org.au

Relationships Australia (Multicultural Services)

1300 364 277 or 1800 182 325 (country callers) 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri

- > Support for family relationships, children and teens, gambling, domestic violence, HIV, hepatitis www.rasa.org.au
- > Help for families after separation
www.rasa.org.au/services/post-separation/family-dispute-resolution

AC Care - Communities for Children (CfC)

1800 880 913
Services for children 0-12 and their families in the Limestone Coast, Murraylands and Riverland, including parenting programs for dads
www.accare.org.au/family-children

Emotional health and wellbeing

Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service (STTARS)

8206 8900, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
81 Angas St, Adelaide; 11 Wehl Street, Mt Gambier
For anyone affected by events such as war, violence, loss of loved ones before coming to Australia www.sttars.org.au

Beyond Blue

1300 224 636 any time day or night or chat online
Information and support if someone feels sad or worried
Information in many languages www.beyondblue.org.au

Lifeline

13 11 14 any time day or night if someone feels sad, worried or thinks they may harm themselves www.lifeline.org.au

Family violence

To get help with anger or violence

Domestic Violence Crisis Line

1800 800 098 any time day or night for services that can help
<http://womenssafety.org.au>

See also Australian Refugee Association, Australian Migrant Resource Centre and Relationships Australia on this page.

Multicultural services

AMES Australia

7224 8550, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
Ground floor, 212 Pirie Street, Adelaide
7224 8500, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
2/59 Commercial Road, Salisbury
Settlement services for refugees and newly arrived migrants
www.ames.net.au/locations/find-sites

Refugee Health Service

8237 3900 or 1800 635 566 (country callers) 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
21 Market Street, Adelaide
Health service for newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers

Australian Migrant Resource Centre

8217 9500, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
23 Coglein Street, Adelaide
Settlement, family relationships and family violence services for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers
See www.amrc.org.au for metro and country locations

Australian Refugee Association

8354 2951, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri
304 Henley Beach Road, Underdale
8281 2052, 9.30am-4.30pm, Mon to Fri
1 Brown Terrace, Salisbury
Assistance and support for refugees
www.australianrefugee.org

This Parent Easy Guide is one of 9 developed by Parenting SA for families from new and emerging multicultural communities in South Australia. We would like to thank the many services and families that generously contributed their knowledge and expertise to the Guides, especially families and staff members whose photographs appear in them.

Parenting SA is a partnership of the Department for Education and the Women's and Children's Health Network.

Phone (08) 8303 1660
www.parenting.sa.gov.au

Parent Easy Guides are free in South Australia

Important: This information is not intended to replace advice from a qualified practitioner.

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