

# TOOLKIT



# DADS

TAKE YOUR CHILD TO  
SCHOOL DAY



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION  
[fldoe.org](http://fldoe.org)

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# Research and Overview

The continuum of research, policy development and program implementation related to family involvement supports emphasis on engaging fathers as a means of increasing student achievement.

Annual one-day initiatives have been promoted by various states to highlight the significance of a child's father or male caregiver in his or her education. Typically, initiatives are held in the fall and align to other Back-to-School activities.

J. Michael Hall, of Strong Fathers<sup>1</sup>, noted that from his organization's work with fathers, greater participation is realized when programs are:

- Interactive (Activities include engagement between father and child);
- Relational (Fathers learning from other fathers); and
- Relevant (Link to learning).

Those practices closely align to Process Conditions emphasized in the Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships<sup>2</sup>. The conditions highlighted in the framework are important to building the capacity of families and schools to effectively partner in ways that improve student outcomes.

More than 30 years of research findings maintain the belief that a positive relationship exists between increased family engagement and student academic success. Although specific research into the impact of the father's role in a child's academic development is growing, findings<sup>3</sup> suggest that when fathers are actively involved in their child's education, students:

- Perform better academically;
- Have fewer discipline problems; and
- Become more responsible adults.

One meta-analysis<sup>4</sup> found that the overall effect of the involvement of fathers in education was positive regardless of the child's age, race and expression of involvement.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.strongfathers.com](http://www.strongfathers.com).

<sup>2</sup> Mapp, K. L., & Kuttner, P. J. (2013). *Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, SEDL. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/familycommunity/partners-education.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> A Call to Commitment: Fathers' Involvement in Children's Learning. (2000, June 1). Retrieved April 14, 2015, from <http://www2.ed.gov/pubs/parents/calltocommit/index.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Jeynes, W. H. (2014). A Meta-Analysis: The Relationship Between Father Involvement and Student Academic Achievement. *Urban Education*, 0042085914525789.

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## TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY

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## Pledge

**As a father, stepfather, grandfather, uncle, brother, foster father or significant male role model, I pledge to:**

-  *Support my child's teacher and school in providing a high-quality education and ensuring that education remains a priority in my household.*
-  *Set high expectations for my child's educational success.*
-  *Stay informed about my child's academic and behavioral progress.*
-  *Volunteer at my child's school throughout the year when possible.*
-  *Encourage my child to do his/her best every day.*

# School Planning Support

While planning for Dads Take Your Child to School Day, consider the following:

✓ **Assembling a site planning committee**

- Bring together a team of school leadership, representatives from the School Advisory Council (SAC) and/or school-based parent organization (PTA/PTO).

✓ **Identifying a launch location**

- Consider suitable spaces for a large group, e.g., media center, cafeteria or courtyard.

✓ **Planning activities for the day**

- Invite students to give their perspective on what their dad's or male role model's involvement in their school means to them. Testimonials and/or video uploads can be submitted to the school leading up to the event and played during the program. Provide dads with a similar opportunity.
- Develop resource stations where fathers or father figures can visit to obtain information about the school, volunteering and their child's education.
- Take photos of dads and students to be displayed during the event. Provide dads a copy of the photo or let them know where photos can be accessed.
- Offer a meal or refreshments.

✓ **Engaging local businesses, faith-based partners and community leaders**

- Contact leaders in the community to inform them about activities planned for Dads Take Your Child to School Day and share ways they can support the event.

✓ **Advertising and promoting**

- Reach out to all dads and male role models. Keep in mind some may not be as confident or as comfortable participating in the event, so brainstorm innovative ways to encourage and support participation.
- Distribute flyers at parent meetings such as open house, through afterschool programs, and use school's automated phone system to inform families.
- Post or display Dads Take Your Child to School Day flyers or logo in places frequented by the community, on social media, in the school's newsletter and on the website.
- Ask local newspaper(s), radio and television stations to share information about the event.
- Make announcements about Dads Take Your Child to School Day during school and community events (e.g., performances, sporting events, etc.).
- Share information with organizations that can help promote and support the event.

✓ **Pairing students**

- Identify students in need of a male role model.
- When discussing the initiative with local leaders, request assistance in recruiting mentors for those students in need of a male role model.
- Request that fathers who would like to support students who do not have a dad or male role model able to attend the event, be paired with a student.

✓ **Capturing attendance and gathering contact information**

- Keep track of the number of fathers and male role models who attend. This will allow you to chart growth in participation.
- Share your total number of participants on social media as a challenge to increase participation district wide.
- Gather and provide contact information to share news of future events, activities and opportunities for volunteering, mentoring and family engagement.

✓ **Other considerations**

- Organize parking, traffic flow and school bells.
- Coordinate security and check-in procedures.

✓ **Continuing participation throughout the year**

- Partner with local organizations to host an event that emphasizes interaction between dad and child.
- Encourage dads and male role models to sign up for volunteering and to participate in school events such as career day, reading night or field trip.



## Suggested Activities

The activities suggested are designed to engage dads, or male role models, and their children in a fun and creative way. Each activity can be completed indoors or outdoors as indicated. The table provides a description of the activity and instructions (which can be modified as appropriate), items needed and a suggested timeframe. Note that at least one or more individuals are needed to facilitate activities. Offering prizes (e.g., stickers, books, fun pencils, etc.) is a great way to reward teams for their effort!

Activity	Indoor/ Outdoor	Instructions	Items Needed	Timeframe
<p><b>Flash Speed Race</b> – At this station, dad and child will test their math skills and speed as they race to complete the challenge in less than five minutes.</p>	Outdoor	<p>Dad and child will each race to a 20-yard marker (cone) and solve a grade-level appropriate word problem. Once they solve the problem, they must both dash back to the starting line and beat the five-minute countdown.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 20 yards of open space</li> <li>• Cones</li> <li>• Stock of grade-level appropriate word problems</li> <li>• Stopwatch</li> </ul>	3 – 5 minutes
<p><b>Joker's Wild</b> – At this station, dad and child will test their addition, subtraction and multiplication skills in hopes of selecting the Joker as a wild card.</p>	Indoor	<p>Separate a deck of cards by color (red and black) and ensure that each deck has a Joker (wild card). Give each team (dad and child) a stack of either red or black cards to place face down on the table. If a team has red cards, then they will subtract card values (for this game, subtract the smaller value from the larger, e.g., <math>5 - 2 = 3</math>). If they have black cards, then they add card values. With either a red or black card, they may choose to multiply card values. Each player will draw a card, place it face-up on the table and then take turns in providing the correct answer. If a Joker is selected, then the player may select a number from 1-12 in place of a card value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deck of cards</li> <li>• Table</li> </ul>	10 – 15 minutes
<p><b>Make a Mask with Dad</b> – At this station, both dad and child can be given creative license to design a mask that relates to their identity.</p>	Indoor	<p>Using a template (can be found online), trace and then cut out felt masks and embellishments (i.e., stars, lightning bolts, wings, etc.). Hole-punch each side of the mask and insert a ribbon or elastic string in each side – test the length and tie each end. Next, adhere embellishments using fabric glue. Glitter and/or permanent markers can also be used to create designs linked to their superhero identity.</p> <p><u>TIP:</u> Precut masks of various colors to expedite time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assorted felt</li> <li>• Fabric glue</li> <li>• Glitter</li> <li>• Hole-punch</li> <li>• Mask and embellishments template</li> <li>• Permanent markers</li> <li>• Regular glue</li> <li>• Ribbon or elastic string</li> <li>• Scissors</li> </ul>	5 – 10 minutes



Activity	Indoor/ Outdoor	Instructions	Items Needed	Timeframe
<b>Rescue Dad from The Scrambler</b> – At this station, children must rescue dad from the villain – The Scrambler.	Indoor	Have dad sit down in a chair then tie him up in streamers. Then give the child two minutes to rescue dad by unscrambling the given word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair</li> <li>• Stock of scrambled words on note cards</li> <li>• Streamer</li> </ul>	3 – 5 minutes
<b>Spider Web Bean Bag Toss</b> – At this station, dad and child will test their throwing accuracy by tossing the bean bag in the web.	Indoor or Outdoor	Using either masking tape or sidewalk chalk, design a spider web with designated places on the web where players can receive 10, 20 or 30 points. The outer web level will be worth 10 points, the next web level 20 points and the innermost level 30 points. Place a line marker about five feet from the spider web so that they may toss the bean bag from that marker. Whichever section of the web the bean bag lands in, dad and child will receive the designated amount of points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bean bags (3 to 4)</li> <li>• Masking tape or sidewalk chalk</li> </ul>	5 – 10 minutes
<b>Strike Out The Villain Bowling</b> – At this station, dad and child will attempt to strike the villain.	Outdoor	Set up 10 pins (can be empty water bottles, soda bottles or plastic bowling pins). Decorate them with supervillain face cut-outs. Use a plastic or rubber ball to knock down as many pins as possible in two rolls. Each pin that is knocked down can be worth two points and if all pins are knocked down in the first roll, the player will receive an additional 10 points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empty bottles (10-any size)</li> <li>• Plastic or rubber ball</li> <li>• Villain cut-outs</li> </ul>	5 – 10 minutes







[INSERT DATE]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We would like to invite all of our families to our **DADS TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY** event! On September \_\_, 20\_\_, from \_\_\_\_ am to \_\_\_\_am, we encourage all fathers to take their children to school and stay for a few activities. Activities will include: [\[INSERT DETAILS ABOUT ACTIVITIES PLANNED\]](#). All father figures are welcome including: stepfathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers, foster fathers and other significant male role models.

This initiative's intent is to highlight the significant difference fathers and father figures can make by taking a more active role in their children's educational experience. When fathers play an active role in a child's education, children perform better academically, have fewer discipline problems and become more responsible adults. We hope all fathers will take this opportunity to become more familiar with our school and staff, and that you will return often.

What about moms? Although the event is centered on fathers, mothers and other family members are also invited to participate. Moms are vital in the lives of their children and are often the parent who is more involved in their children's education. **DADS TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY** is an opportunity for us to shine the spotlight on dads and encourage men to get more involved.

For more information about **DADS TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY**, please contact [\[INSERT CONTACT NAME\]](#) at [\[INSERT CONTACT EMAIL, PHONE, ETC\]](#). We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME/TITLE]

[INSERT DATE]



[TITLE/NAME]  
[ORGANIZATION NAME]  
[ADDRESS]  
[CITY, STATE ZIP CODE]

Dear [INSERT NAME OF ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE]:

[INSERT SCHOOL NAME] is strongly committed to our students' future and academic success. On September \_\_, 20\_\_, we are participating in **DADS TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY**, and we are reaching out to local organizations for support in this event.

This initiative's intent is to highlight the significant difference fathers and father figures can make by taking a more active role in their children's educational experience. When fathers play an active role in a child's education, children perform better academically, have fewer discipline problems and become more responsible adults.

During this event, fathers are encouraged to take their children to school and participate in [INSERT DETAILS ABOUT ACTIVITIES PLANNED]. All father figures are welcome including: stepfathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers, foster fathers and other significant role models. Many students are in need of male role models, and we welcome the support of community partners by supporting us on the day of the event as well as helping us spread the word in the days prior.

We hope your organization will participate in **DADS TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY** at [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]. [INSERT SPECIFIC REQUESTS SUCH AS DONATIONS, MENTORS, VOLUNTEERS, AS APPROPRIATE].

For more information, please contact [INSERT CONTACT NAME] at [INSERT CONTACT EMAIL, PHONE, ETC]. We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME/TITLE]

YOU'RE INVITED TO

DADS

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**WHO:** Fathers, stepfathers, grandfathers, uncles, big brothers, foster fathers and other significant male role models in our schools and classrooms

**WHEN:**

**WHERE:**

**CONTACT/RSVP:**

**NOTES:**

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