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### The Importance of Fatherhood

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# The Importance of Fatherhood

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Trevor O'Reggio, PhD



# The Family Circle

In His wisdom the Lord has decreed the family circle shall be the greatest of all educational agencies. It is in the home that the education of the child is to begin. Here is his first school...the lessons that will guide through life – lessons on respect, obedience, reverence, and self control...if the child is not instructed aright here, Satan will educate him through agencies of his choosing. How important then, is the school in the home.(AH, p. 182)

The future of the rising generation is in the hands of parents; for, in a great measure, they hold within their control the destiny of their children both for time and for eternity....(Ellen White ST December 19, 1878)





# Is it possible?

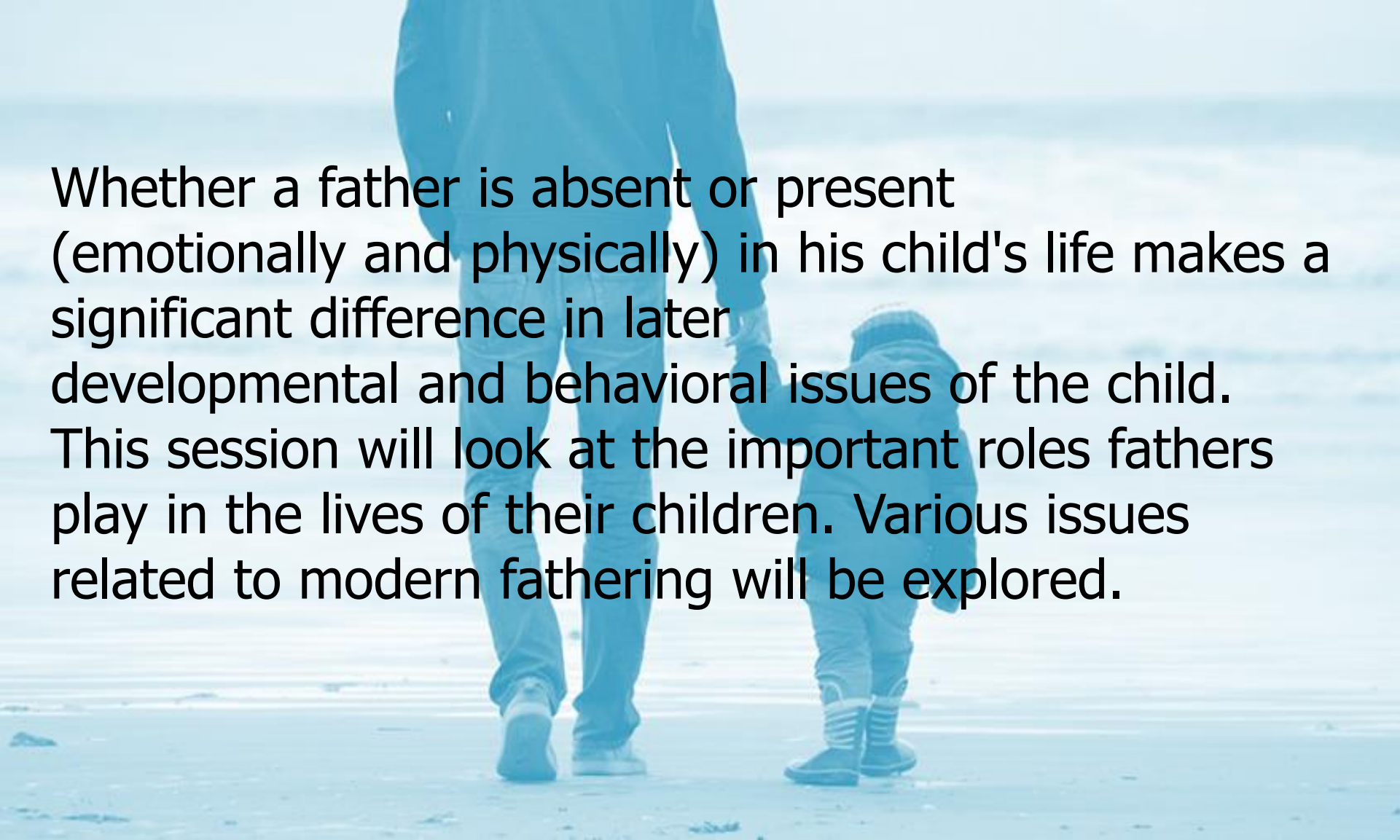
Raising Godly Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Psalm 127:3 (ESV)

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.

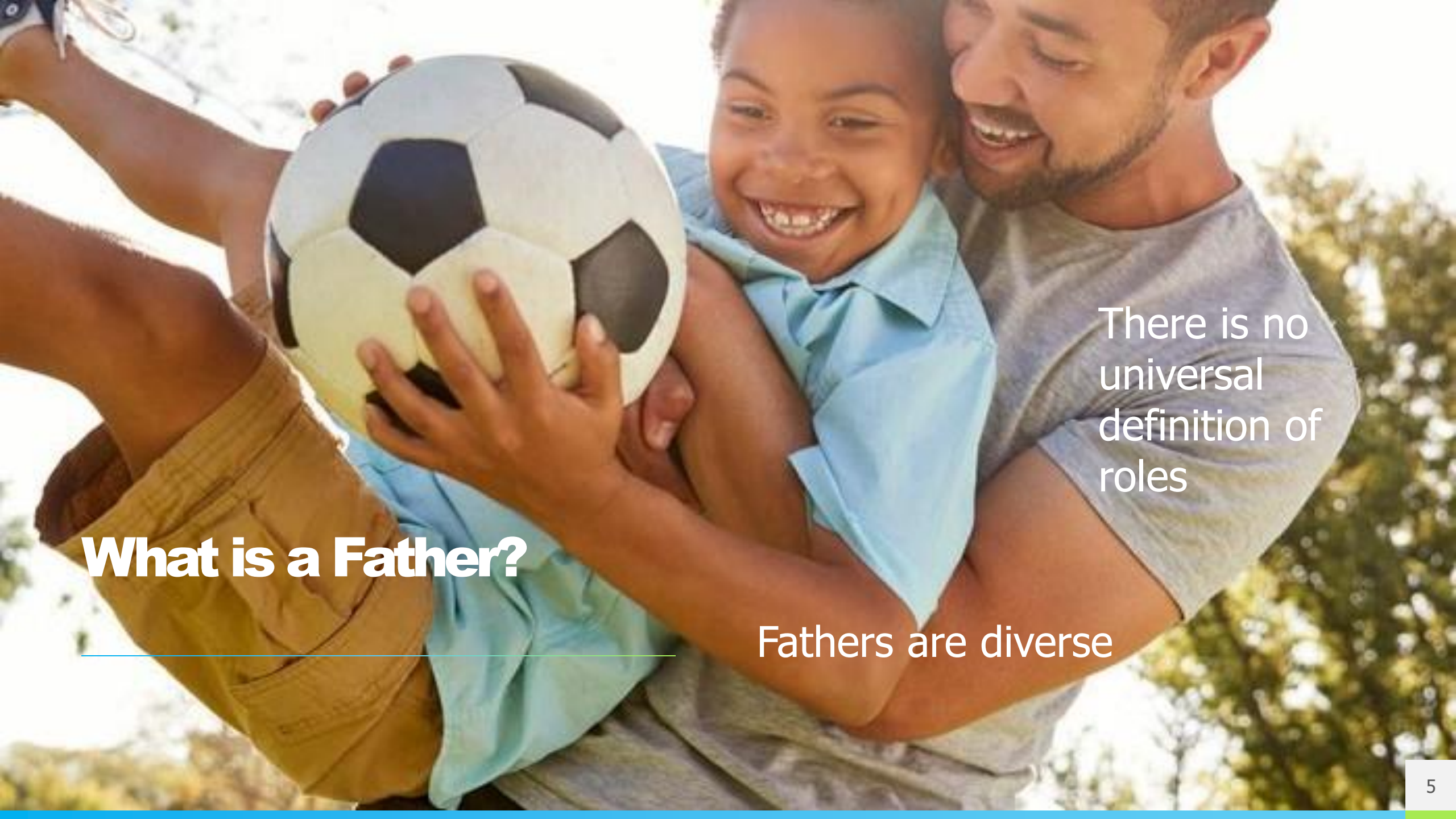


# Introduction

A photograph of a person and a child walking on a beach, with the person holding the child's hand. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The person is wearing a dark jacket and jeans, and the child is wearing a dark jacket and pants. They are walking away from the camera towards the ocean.

Whether a father is absent or present (emotionally and physically) in his child's life makes a significant difference in later developmental and behavioral issues of the child. This session will look at the important roles fathers play in the lives of their children. Various issues related to modern fathering will be explored.





## What is a Father?

There is no universal definition of roles

Fathers are diverse

# What is a Father?

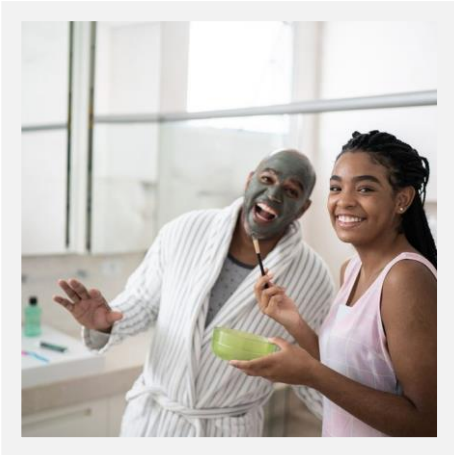
The act of being a father, as opposed to merely fathering a child.



Bread-winning



Nurturing



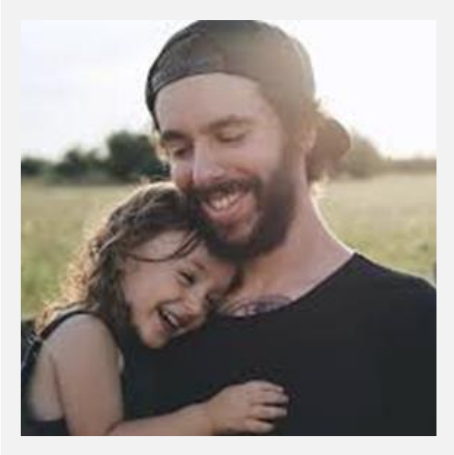
Modeling



Socialization of children

# What is a Father?

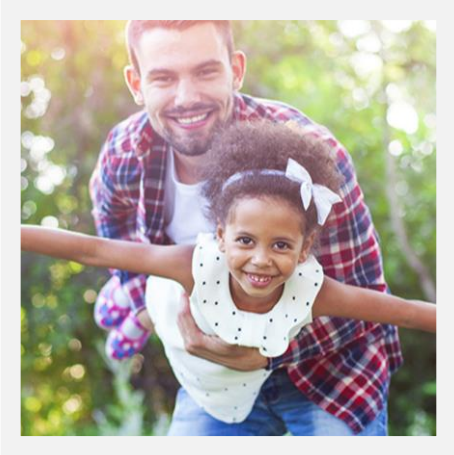
The act of being a father, as opposed to merely fathering a child.



Involvement in their children's lives



Moral and spiritual development



Providing a sense of stability



Availability/Accessibility





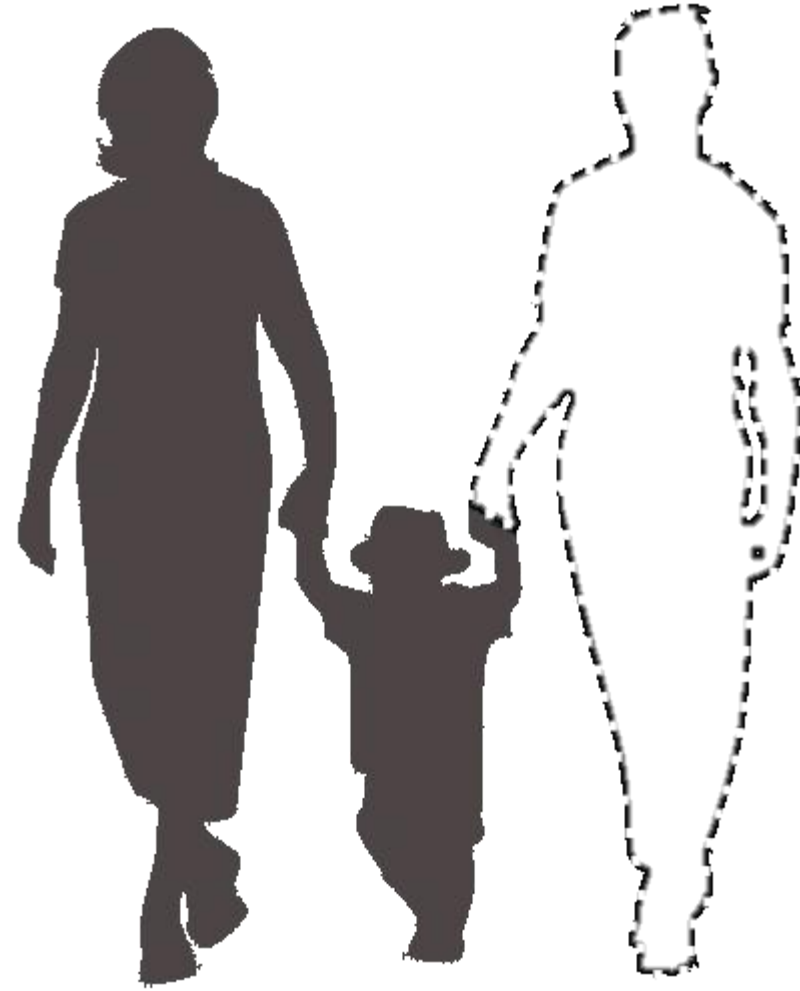
# Father Absence -

A Critical Problem

- More than 27 million children - 39% of all US children - now live apart from their father. In a typical year, well over one-third of these children won't even see their dad.
- More than half of all European-American children and three-quarters of all African-American children born since 1975 will live some portion of their formative years with only one parent and in the vast majority of these cases, it's the father who is absent.

# Father Absence - - the costs are high

- School dropouts-repeat grade
- Substance abuse
- Teen pregnancy
- Crime and violence
- Child poverty
- Child abuse/neglect



# Father Absence - - the costs are high



- Father-absence is a contributing factor to these kinds of social problems
- Unsuccessful socialization of children.
- Emotional absence
- Teen suicides



# Father Absence - - Areas of impact on children

- Academic achievement
- Gender-specific development
- General behavioral adjustment
- Aggression in male children



A photograph of a man and a young girl in a living room. The man, on the left, is wearing a light blue patterned button-down shirt and dark trousers. He is holding the girl's hand, and they appear to be dancing. The girl, on the right, has a large, curly afro hairstyle and is wearing a grey t-shirt and a white tutu. She is smiling and looking down. The background features a light-colored sofa, a white wall with square panels, and a window with sheer curtains. A potted plant is visible on the right side of the frame.

# Why Are Fathers So Important?



## **Father Present -**

- The involved father's role
- Fathers are also nurturing
- Availability/Accessibility-physical and emotional presence increase wellbeing
- Day to day care: children social and emotional skills developed during direct care activities bathing/feeding



# Father's presence

- Infants have improved cognitive development
- School age children have higher academic achievement
- Fathers involved in schools associated with higher likelihood of a student mostly getting As
- Children who are close to their fathers have higher educational and occupational mobility.
- Father is capable as mother in nurturing and care giving
- Father child bond can parallel mother child bond
- Father's love is as significant as mother regarding positive outcomes for children

The potential role of the father at each developmental stage that children pass through.

- During pregnancy and birth
- In the toddler years
- In the preschool years
- For school-aged children
- For adolescents
- Young adult children



## Why Are Fathers So Important?

Father's role critical at every stage of development



A photograph of a man and two young boys outdoors. The man is in the foreground, smiling broadly, wearing a white shirt. He is carrying two young boys on his shoulders. The boy on the left is wearing a blue and white striped shirt, and the boy on the right is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a lush, green outdoor setting with rocks and plants.

# Characteristics of Effective Fathers



# Characteristics of Effective Fathers

**While each father is a unique person who parents in his own style, there are some characteristics that effective fathers have in common**

- 
- Involvement
  - Support
  - Love

- 
- Discipline
  - Time
  - Consistency



# Fathers As Moral Leaders

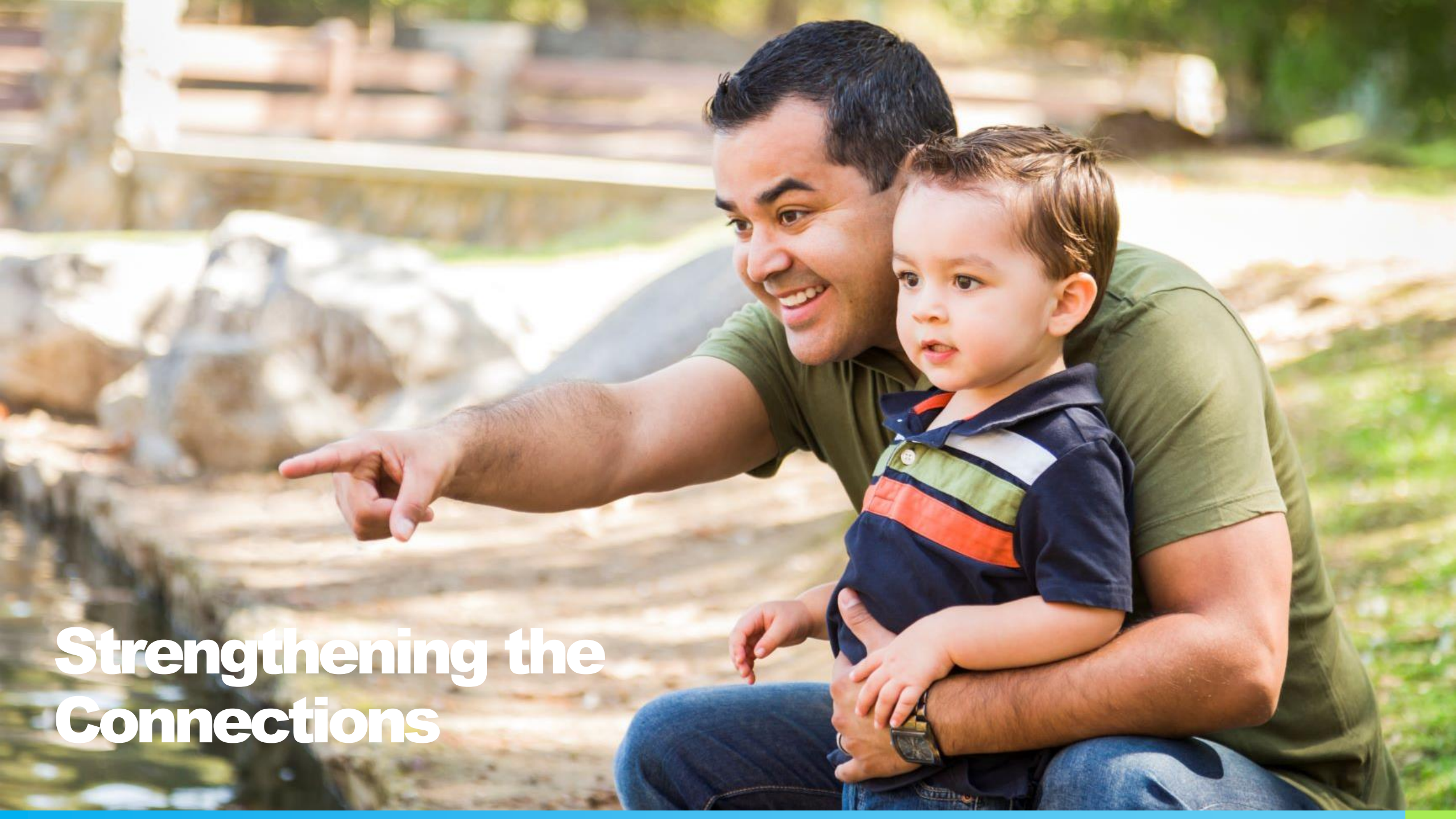
- Development of moral and spiritual beliefs in children.
- Parents as teachers of values.
- Fathers as models of masculinity.
- Fathers as moral guides.
- Moral leadership and shared responsibility in the family.



## Fathers as Moral Leader

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# Strengthening the Connections



# Strengthening the Connections

A Critical Problem

- At home-loving their mother
- At work
- At school
- At the doctor's office
- At school programs



- In legal situations
- In divorce
- In parent education classes
- In fatherhood programs
- In marriage or family partnerships



# Strengthening the Connections

A Critical Problem



# Father and play



- Play- one area where fathers tend to be more involved
- Tend to be vigorous, and physical in play
- Father-child play is associated with higher language and cognitive skills.
- Play helps children to take initiative, explore, take chances, overcome obstacles, self control, deal with setbacks and defeats, self regulation and controlling aggression.
- Coach of children's soccer team
- Family Play night
- Playing with my kids and teaching them different sports

# First Principle: Love

Value them –Praise/Affirm often – twice as much as criticism

- Not Flattery



# Second Principle: Discipline

## Discipline

- Clear boundaries should be set
- Focus on what your child does right
- Rewards are more effective than punishment
- Punishment reserved for rebellion





# 3<sup>rd</sup> Principle: Consistency



## Consistency

Parent to Parent – must be on same page and agree on training, discipline, rewards, and show no partiality

Pray for wisdom for each Situation to Situation

## 4<sup>th</sup> Principle: Example

- First introduction to God is the one we model to our children...are we loving, patient, kind, firm, forbearing, and etc.
- Most values are caught by the example of the Life
- “Do as I say and not as I do” Does not Work! Need true model of life principles



Father must be ENGAGED in the Child's Life

- Should be active in parenting
- "Go see your mother" is a copout or vice versa....should both be involved
- Quality always trumps Quantity: Even if busy make dedicated times per day to engage with your children
- Always try to be at special events and meaningful occasions for your child
- Make memories by having enjoyable outings or times, does not need to be costly trips. Your child will enjoy just being with you.
- Trip to Panama and Canada.



**5<sup>th</sup> Principle: Be Engaged**



# 6<sup>th</sup> Principle: Religious Training

## Religious Training (Cont.)

- Lead them to personal devotion
- Expose them to complex themes as soon as they are ready
  - Salvation
  - Origin of Sin
  - Death
  - Righteousness by Faith
  - Worship
  - Prayer



# Biblical Fathers

- Abraham
- Respects, honors, believes God
- Leads his family
- Teaches his family-Gen 18:17 Abraham will command his children and his household after him
- Generous and noble-rescues his nephew, intercedes for Sodom
- Abraham's failures-Hagar, Lies,



# David-

- Fathers must be willing to discipline their children when they do wrong 2 Sam 13- David refused to administer discipline to his son.

Fathers must forgive and seek restoration with their children

2 Sam 13:38-14:1-28 David refused to forgive and restore Absalom

Fathers must teach their children what is important in life. 2Kings 2:2

David gives his last charge to his son- "Be strong, act like a man, observe what the Lord your God requires, walk in obedience to him"





# Joseph-father of Jesus

**Righteous/Just**

**Honorable**

**Patient/not rash**

**Self-controlled**

**Caring/loving**

**Sensitive to God's voice**

**Obedient to God's command**

**Responsible**

**3 principles from the carpenter**

**1. Measure twice, cut once**

**2. Use the right tools for the job.**

**3. Take care of your tools and they will take care of you**

