

How To Be An Effective Father

A key difference that separates effective fathers from all other fathers is that they really know their children

Effective fathers know what hurts and haunts their children as well as what brings them joy and pleasure. These fathers know what makes their children different from every other child in the neighborhood. They are aware of the various shades, colors, and hues of their children's personalities.

Ken R. Canfield, author of *The Seven Secrets of Effective Fathers*, surveyed 4,000 men to determine what contributes to effective fathering. As a result of his studies he discovered that good fathers knew the following specifics about their children:

- When his child had a difficult day;
- When his child was upset about something;
- The names of his child's best friends;
- What encouraged his child the most;
- When he had hurt his child's feelings;
- His child's strengths and weaknesses;
- When his child was embarrassed;
- What motivated his child;
- Most of his child's recent disappointing experiences.

Effective fathers aggressively pursue knowledge about their children for two important reasons, notes Canfield. "First, so that they can help create the conditions under which this unique personality (their child can best blossom and prosper; and second, so that by recognizing danger signals, they can alert themselves to situations where their children need guidance and intervention.

Good fathers **look, listen and learn**. They are always on the lookout for healthy role models. They listen to other successful parents, seeking to learn from them better and more effective ways to father their own children.

"Effective fathers know they need support and dare not be afraid to ask for it," says Paul Lewis, author of *The Five Key Habits of Smart Dads*. "They talk to other fathers and perhaps choose one as a model or mentor. They consult with their children's teachers, coaches, neighbors and relatives. They read books about fathering and attend workshops. Effective fathers put fathering high on their agendas and use all the resources available to them.