

we're fathers first



Effective fathering means
a generation of kids with
happier, healthier futures.





the fathering project

Effective fathers have a profound impact on their children's lives.

As Australia's leading fathering not-for-profit initiative, we engage fathers through programs, activities, evidence-based resources and targeted learning strategies to raise up the role of fathering and inspire men to be the best dads they can be.

Everything we do, from research to outreach programs, is designed to better children's lives through the power of effective and engaged fathers.



the fathering effect

The evidence is clear: the knock-on effect of an engaged and effective father is felt not only in the family, but in society as a whole.

This ‘ripple effect’ has been established from a study by Dr Lisa Wood and Estee Lambin in 2013, showing how increased engagement of fathers and father-figures can greatly shape their children’s health and wellbeing.

“We shouldn’t underestimate the vast importance of fathers in children’s lives, not only because children ‘need and love their dads’, but also because of the significant impact that fathers have on the social, cognitive, emotional and physical well-being of children from infancy to adolescence and with lasting influences into their adult life.”

— Lisa Wood: **How Fathers and Father-Figures Can Shape Child Health and Wellbeing, 2013**



Our resources and activities

We provide evidence-based activities and resources to equip fathers to be the best they can be.

*The Fathering Effect Model,
backed by the research of
Dr Lisa Wood, 2013*



Engagement of fathers

Dads engage in our activities and programs such as Dads Groups, increasing their understanding of the role of effective fathering.



Improvement in fathering skills

Through increased engagement, we see an improvement in fathering skills – resulting in greater family dynamics and functionality, involvement at school and parental warmth.



The impact of improved fathering

The cumulative effect of improved fathering is remarkable; we see a number of positive outcomes across the board:

- **Improved child development**
- **Improved health outcomes**
- **Improved school results**
- **Improved functionality of at-risk families**
- **Reduced substance abuse**
- **Reduced crime**
- **Reduced suicide & self-harm**



We know from research that engaged and supportive fathers or father-figures can significantly impact a child's development, wellbeing and health.



fathering for the future

One of our key focusses is proactively preventing children from harm; to address problems before they become one.



Fathers can have a powerful and positive impact upon their child's self-esteem, resilience and connectedness to school.

All of these factors have been proven to be key protective elements in preventing children from substance abuse, crime, child suicide and self-harm.¹

The Fathering Project seeks to prevent these issues from arising by taking a proactive approach through prevention and education programs. We encourage fathers and father-figures to put fathering first, for the sake of their kids.

We work with schools, workplaces and community groups to engage fathers and

provide opportunities for them to connect and engage with each other, and their children.

- **We provide fathers with tips for how to better connect and communicate with their children as they grow and develop;**
- **We provide information and tips on how to respond to current and common issues that may effect children and families;**
- **We provide opportunities for fathers to meet other fathers and share their experiences, challenges and learnings.**

1. Rosenberg, J; Bradford Wilcox, W; The Importance of Fathers in the Healthy Development of Children: (2006)



**We surveyed hundreds of dads in
Dads Groups across Australia:**

98%

of dads reported
feeling more
connected to
other dads

75%

of dads became
more engaged in
conversation with
their children

82%

of dads had
more awareness
of their impact
on their child

68%

of dads reported
spending more
time with their
child as a result

fathering together

Dads Groups provide an environment where dads can upskill and become more engaged with their kids.



A core focus for The Fathering Project is building communities of dads in schools, workplaces and community groups.

Our Dads Groups provide a relaxed environment where fathers can gather, share, learn and laugh. The Groups are self-supporting, collaborative and provide incredible benefits to the communities in which they exist.

- Dads Groups help men by enabling them to gather and share experience and dialogue about fathering – they create a sense of mateship and support;
- The groups inspire dads and father-figures to engage and communicate with their kids through activity and play;
- The groups create a positive learning environment for men by embedding key information into engaging and informal activities.

furthering fathering

Our research and evaluation provides us with insights that spark conversations, inform our activities and drive action.

We focus on ongoing research and evaluation to ensure our programs are effective in delivering measurable outputs and have an impact on the individuals who engage with them.

Through this research, we strive to keep pace with the ever changing world that our children and young people are growing up in. We create and provide the best possible resources and supports to meet the needs of fathers and father-figures.



Our research areas:

- **How fathers and father-figures shape the health and wellbeing of children;**
- **The impact of The Fathering Project Dads Groups in the school environment;**
- **The development of The Fathering Project Impact and Logic Models;**
- **The review of current evidence around the impact of fathering;**
- **Aboriginal Fathering Program by Aboriginal Men;**
- **The changing roles of fathers in the home, in the workplace and in society as a whole.**

“Fathers self-efficacy and warmth in parenting are the most powerful predictors of children’s improved health, academic, social and emotional outcomes”

— Lisa Wood: *How Fathers and Father-Figures Can Shape Child Health and Wellbeing*, 2013



As fathers and father-figures, it's so easy to get lost in our other roles and forget what our first job is, yet, it's the most important job we'll ever do.

What we do, or don't do as dads, has an enormous impact on the happiness and health of the kids we love.

Father-figures can help build resilience, self-respect and emotional intelligence.

Dads can give kids a sense of self-worth, just by showing up and being there.

Yes, it's a big job. But you don't have to go it alone.

The Fathering Project is here to help you put your fathering first.

We're here for you so you can be there for them.

Because **we're fathers first.**



get involved at thefatheringproject.org | 08 6488 3182