

A Day in the Life of a Father

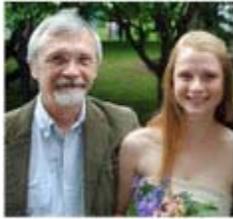
We invited you to contribute to a special feature for this issue of the Link focused on fatherhood. We wanted to hear from fathers themselves and get a peek at their lives, so we asked *fathers* to offer a paragraph or two describing a day in their lives, and to include a photo of them with their children. These are *linked* from the Link to the *HFNY website*. If you enjoy reading these and want to add your own, it's not too late. Feel free to share this invitation with all fathers: program staff and participants, or even a father or two in your own life. They can write something themselves or dictate their words. Please send the submissions and photos to ebutowsky@preventchildabuseny.org.

Enjoy!

From William Perry, Broome County



This is about a day in the life of a dad with a 12-year-old daughter. My daughter was going to her first dance on September 16th. It was her homecoming- semiformal and this was a little traumatic to me as a dad. Now being in this field for some time I know you have to verbalize your thoughts to help ease your child's reactions and concerns. This means discussion of feelings, a difficult topic at best, so I explained to my daughter that I was unhappy she was going to the dance because it meant she was growing up. The outcome of this was, she cries and says "I don't want to grow up too quickly on you!" Mom helped to downgrade the situation. Next, just before she left for the dance, I had gotten her flowers from "Daddy." The outcome of this was, she cries again and we have red eyes in the picture leaving for the dance. Lastly, when she saw the red-eyed pictures, she cried....



From John Heck, Albany

A memory of my daughter Molly occurred at a travel soccer game when she was about 11. It was a tight match and we were up by one goal with not much time left and Molly broke away from the other players and dribbled the length of the field and scored from 20 yards out to seal the victory. I was the flag person on one sideline and after she scored, she sprinted over to me and gave me a big hug. She wanted to celebrate with me first and I was a very proud soccer dad.



Also from John Heck, Albany

When Eli was little, we had a very strict vegetarian diet. No meat, lots of brown rice, tofu and vegetables. We used to send cooked rutabaga cubes as a snack for day care. When we went to my mother's house for Easter dinner, he had ham for the first time and he has never looked back. The boy is an earnest, dedicated carnivore. He will not eat brown rice to this day.

From Adam Waufle, Herkimer County



I am a single dad of a beautiful 3 year old girl. A typical day in our house changes week to week. I work a swing shift at a factory and every week I change shifts. This week I'm on 1st shift, next week it will be 2nd shift, and the following week it will be 3rd shift, and then it will start all over again. Daycare has been a challenge. Family has helped a lot and as much as they can.

Irelynd is in daycare the weeks I work the 1st shift. Finding a routine is very hard. We don't ever get to do the same things to call a steady routine, like we don't consistently eat together everyday, and there are weeks when I'm not there to put Irelynd to bed or be with her when she wakes up.

I do make sure we take a walk everyday. It's the one consistent thing we do together everyday to catch up and spend time together. When we do have "normal" days we play hard. Irelynd is almost completely potty trained. It took a while, but we are getting there.

Being a single father is not an easy job, but being a single dad has made me the man and better person I am today. I wouldn't change my life for anything in the world because I know my daughter is being cared for and she will always have whatever she needs.

I take great pride in my situation because not enough single dads get enough credit for the hard work that they put forth.

From Justin Worman, Delaware County

In the morning we would get up around 7:00 to bring my wife Kelly to work so I could have the car in case we needed to some things around town. Trystin, my son would sleep the whole ride to work and back and was ready to play when we got home. I would feed him and change him and then we would play on the floor for a while, or in the bouncy chair. Then he would be ready for another nap and that was when I usually would do at least the dishes and some laundry. I tried to get some housework done while he was sleeping. When he woke up, I would let him relax and watch TV, entertain himself for as long as he would. Sometimes he would want to play with me in an hour and sometimes it would be half an hour, just depending on the day and his mood. I would give him lunch and then it would be time to either go get his brother and sister, or go get his mom.