

10 Ways for Divorced Dads to Stay Connected to Their Kids

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The movie *Moneyball*, nominated for 6 Academy Awards, is based on Michael Lewis's book of the same name. *Moneyball* follows the 2002 Oakland Athletics and their general manager Billy Beane's attempts to assemble a winning franchise. In the film, Beane (Brad Pitt) and assistant GM Peter Brand (Jonah Hill) are faced with very little money to field a competitive team and decide to take a sophisticated, statistical-crunching approach towards scouting and analyzing players. In the process, the Athletics win 20 consecutive games, an American League record, with a bunch of rag tag players other teams overlooked.

A major theme of the movie is Beane's relationship with his daughter, now that Beane is divorced and his ex has remarried. After the A's had so much success, the Boston Red Sox attempted to hire Beane and relocate him to the East Coast. And, in typical Red Sox fashion, they offered him a bunch of money to do it. Beane contemplated it...until

[this pivotal song from his daughter changed his mind.](#)

All Pro Dads are huge in the lives of their children, whether they live with them or not. Here are 10 Ways for Divorced Dads to Stay Connected to Their Children .

1. Honor and respect their mother:

Kids know what's going on. They can read between the lines. They observe and they tend not to forget. Be kind to their mother, be cooperative, be positive, and never talk bad about her in their presence.

2. Step up and parent:

Base the relationship on the fact of parenthood and reinforce the built-in expectation that comes with the role. Don't act like you're trying to win your kids' friendship. You are the dad, end of story. Be one.

3. Refrain from competition with their mother:

Our children don't need you to be their friend, the "fun" parent, or the amusement park away from home. Your children need – and want – a home-away-from-home that feels like home. Kids connect to real life and being with dad needs to feel normal above anything else.

4. Maintain a lifestyle the kids can easily interface with:

Part of being a parent is having a life the children can enter comfortably. Is your house or apartment child friendly? Do you maintain a clean and hospitable environment? Is your place a safe place for the kids? Being a divorced dad cannot be a return to your "bachelor pad" days.

5. Game night:

Make being with dad special – but not in an extravagant way. Set up a regular "game night" routine

and be consistent. Interaction by design leads to more natural interaction across the board.

6. Read books “together:”

So you miss them when they’re with their mom. Fair enough. How about getting two copies of the same book, reading at the same pace, and then talking about it when you are together?

7. Keep in the education loop:

Parent-teacher conferences, field trips, class parties, school plays. Be there. Make sure your children know that they are your priority. Not “fairly high on the list” but THE number one priority for dad.

8. Be conspicuously accessible:

Conspicuously accessible means you answer their calls, return emails promptly, ask them about their important stuff and listen with attentiveness. Learn about and practice “active listening” skills.

9. Be their friend on Facebook:

Be a consistent part of your children’s online community if they are on one. Don’t embarrass them, don’t comment on everything they ever post, and don’t try to “friend” all their contacts. But do maintain a visible presence. This is part of being in their neighborhood.

10. Consistency:

We’ve mentioned this in more than one of these 10 suggestions. But it deserves a category all of its own. Kids are creatures of routine. Routine is how they learn security and where they belong. Make sure you are part of that definition of security. Make sure you are where they belong. You can’t do this any other way than one step at a time, predictably, and over the long haul.

Huddle up with your children tonight by calling/emailing/texting your kids that you love them.

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