

**You're going to  
be a dad!**



# You're going to be a dad!

**If you're reading this leaflet, it's highly likely you've found out that you are going to be a dad. Congratulations!**

You may be feeling a mixture of emotions about this news. Maybe you're thrilled and excited, or scared and apprehensive. Perhaps you've planned for this moment and you're ready for whatever fatherhood brings. Then again, maybe the news of a baby has come as a complete shock and you're quaking in your boots!

If the latter is true for you, don't panic - there are others before you who have felt the same and gone on to be fantastic dads. Hopefully, you have some time to prepare yourself for fatherhood, but even if you don't, remember - it's never too late to become a great dad!

**Incredibly, when a dad-to-be thinks positively about his baby, and imagines being an involved father, this actually affects the attachment he forms with his unborn child. It also impacts how well he relates to his child when it's born\*.**

It is such a simple thing to do, but it has profound consequences.

Here are some thoughts and questions to get you started on your parenting journey:



\*For more information see "The Life of Dad: The Making of the Modern Father" by Dr Anna Machin

## What kind of dad would you like to be?

You are unique to your baby. Children often have other father figures in their lives – male role models, such as teachers, youth workers, coaches, uncles – but you are your child’s father. Sons can learn how to be men and daughters can discover what to expect from men by watching their dads.



Q

- What kind of dad do you think you'll be?
- What would you like your children to see and experience?

You may have been raised by a great father and have decided to follow his example in how you raise your own child. Or perhaps your dad wasn't so good and you've decided to do things differently.

Q

- If you've never known your own dad, have you had any other father figures who you've respected? What did you like about them?
- How could you model those characteristics to your own child?

## What do you think your son or daughter will be like?

Some parents refer to their baby using a nickname before he or she is born, and begin to imagine what their child will look like.

Q

- Do you have a nickname for your baby?
- Have you thought about which names you like?
- How do you imagine your child will look?



## What would you like to share with your child?

You may be imagining the things your child will like doing, such as riding a bike, reading books, climbing trees, playing football, learning a musical instrument or twirling about the room, dancing for family and friends.

Q

- What sort of activities do you think your child may enjoy?

You may have a hobby, interest or passion of your own that you'd like to share with your child.

Q

- What interests of your own are you looking forward to sharing with your child?
- What kind of things do you imagine you will do together? Climb mountains, ride bikes, read stories?
- When will it be practical for you to start doing these things?

At certain stages of pregnancy babies can hear and respond to noises from the outside world. So if you are able, you could share some things before your child is born. Maybe try playing your favourite soothing music (not too loudly!) near to your partner's bump, or reading a story to the bump. It may feel a bit odd, but it's worth giving it a go.

Do you have thoughts about what you would like your child to believe? This may be a religious belief, a moral one or just that a particular team is the best in the world!

Q

- What values and beliefs would you like to pass onto your child?
- How will you model those values and beliefs?
- Are there any objects you'd like your child to inherit from you – things with meaning that you'll pass onto them when they are old enough?

## How will you prepare yourself to become a dad?

Studies have shown that an involved father makes a lot of difference to a child.

Q

- How will you train yourself to be the best dad you can be?

You may decide to read some articles or books. Perhaps you'll go on a parenting course. Or maybe watch some videos about being a dad. Chatting stuff through with your partner can help you plan what type of dad you'd like to be too.

Q

- What would you like to chat through with your partner before your child is born?

You may decide to talk with your mates who are already dads, or maybe you're the trailblazer when it comes to fatherhood! Becoming a parent can cause mental strain in fathers as well as mothers and getting into the habit of talking to others is a great technique for helping you cope.

Even just thinking about some of the questions in this leaflet is a great start in preparing for fatherhood. Remember, thinking and dreaming can actually increase the bond you have with your baby in the months to come.



You are embarking on a new stage of life with new responsibilities and new opportunities. No doubt, there will be good times and bad, laughter and tears. There may not be much time to think when the baby arrives, so it's good to take time to prepare yourself for all that lies ahead. Hopefully this leaflet has helped you begin to do that as you take on a much needed and very valuable role: being a dad. Congratulations again, and enjoy fatherhood!



Find out more about being a great dad on our website: [cff.org.uk/dads](https://www.cff.org.uk/dads)

Care for the Family seeks to promote strong family relationships and help those who face family difficulties

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