

# Fathers Play a Critical Role! Actions to Promote Gender Equality

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Fathers and father figures, including adoptive fathers, stepfathers, coaches, and teachers, play a critical role in shaping children's understandings and expressions of gender norms and roles.

Over the years, fatherhood has been gradually shifting away from restrictive gender norms that perpetuate unequal gender roles. Today, due to ongoing gender advocacy, fathers increasingly recognize the importance of their role in promoting gender equality. Still, there is more work to be done to empower and support fathers in this role.

This infographic shares how fathers can be intentional in their everyday actions to challenge stereotypes and support gender equality.

## Consider the following interactions between Matt and his father, Jackson:

### Jackson challenges Matt's gender role assumptions

Matt sees his father doing the dishes and says, "It's a girl's job." Jackson explains that responsibilities are not determined by gender, "Matt, everyone has to help out in the kitchen, including you and your sister. This is how your mother and I work together as a team."



### Jackson debunks Matt's gender stereotypes

Matt's sister, Anna, wants to join a football team. Matt laughs at his sister and says, "Girls can't play football! They're way too weak." Jackson overhears this and tells Anna, "She is strong and can play any sport she wants." He tells Matt, "Being a girl does not mean your sister is weak."

### Jackson encourages Matt to express a wide range of emotions

Jackson starts to cry after learning their family pet has passed away. Matt is surprised and says, "Don't be so sensitive, Dad. Men don't cry." Jackson responds, "Everyone is allowed to cry when they are sad. It is good to express your feelings." Hearing that, Matt feels comfortable telling his father how upset he is about losing their pet and they share a hug.



The responsive interactions between Matt and Jackson demonstrate an ongoing commitment to challenge gendered norms and advance gender equality. These interactions have a lasting impact on a child's development and wellbeing, and can foster a more inclusive society where everyone can thrive regardless of gender.

◆◆◆ **Support fathers in using everyday actions in the home to instill positive societal change and advance gender equality among future generations!** ◆◆◆



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