

IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM

# Let's create stronger school communities

Engaging dads and supporting schools to build  
stronger family partnerships, for the children.







## **We know that an effective father has a profound impact on the health and wellbeing of a child.**

The Fathering Project improves child development outcomes by engaging fathers and father-figures through programs, activities, evidence-based resources and tactical learning strategies.

Everything we do, from research to the development of outreach programs, is designed to improve the lives of children and their journey towards adulthood.



## WHY WE'RE FATHERS FIRST

**Fathers have a significant impact on academic achievement as well as the social and emotional wellbeing of their children.**



Research shows that schools that specifically target fathers will see better outcomes for kids.

### Why directly target fathers?

- Children do better in school when their fathers are involved in their school, regardless of whether their fathers live with them or live apart.
- Children whose fathers participate in school activities, meetings and events also enjoy school more, are less likely to have behaviour issues and are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Fathers are more likely to engage in school if they are directly invited or targeted.

### OUTCOMES:

- Increased student connectedness with school
- Increased physical activity and better health outcomes
- Increased self-esteem and resilience
- Reduced bullying behaviours
- Reduced delinquent behaviours
- Reduced engagement in unhealthy and risky behaviours
- Reduced alcohol, tobacco and drug use
- Increased social responsibility and social maturity
- Reduced suicide and self-harm
- Reduced substance abuse



## INVOLVING DADS IN SCHOOLS

Engaging mothers and fathers is significant in contributing to school success, for children of all ages.



There are benefits to dads, mums and the entire school community, though the kids have the most to gain.



The Fathering Project In Schools is an initiative that aims to support stronger partnerships between parents and schools, with an emphasis on engaging fathers and father-figures.

We know that a working partnership between the family and the school can have an enormous impact on the success, happiness and health of children. The evidence around the impact of engaged fathers on a child's wellbeing and educational outcomes is considerable.

Fathers have a vital role in the school and this is a 'Fathering Effect' we are determined to maximise.

Research shows that when schools have an emphasis on specifically engaging fathers, they will see more significant benefits for their students and for the school community as a whole.\*

\* Martin, K, Wood, L (2013). The Fathering Project; Projected Social and Economic Benefits. The University of Western Australia, Perth, Western Australia. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Fathers' Involvement in Their Children's Schools, NCES 98-091, by Christine Winquist Nord, DeeAnn Brimhall, and Jerry West, Washington, DC: 1997. (NCES, 1997)

## THE FATHERING EFFECT

# The whole school community benefits.



### School Staff

- Enhanced student wellbeing allowing for readiness to learn
- Improvements in academic development of students
- Increased student respect for school leaders, teachers, and other staff
- Decreased student behaviour issues leading to more time for teaching and learning
- Improvements in attendance leading to more continuity of learning in classes



### Families

- All family members feel welcome and valued in the school environment
- Parents and carers are supported to engage with their child's learning
- More families are given appropriate opportunities to engage in the school
- Increased diversity in families and family members engaging with the school
- More consistency between home and school messages and values

Children whose fathers participate in school activities, meetings and events also enjoy school more, are less likely to have behaviour issues and are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities.



### Dads

- Improved self-efficacy
- Positive communication skills
- Increased connectedness with the family, children and school
- Recognition of the importance of their role as a father
- Increased ability to address challenges faced by their kids
- Increased involvement in the school
- Consistent, supportive parenting styles



### Kids

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



## OUR KEY AREAS

# The Fathering Project supports schools in two key areas.



### Key Area 1: Dads Groups

Dads Groups help to engage fathers and father-figures in the school. Dads Groups provide a safe, inclusive and positive environment where fathers and father-figures can gather, share, and learn with each other, and with their kids.

### Dads Groups are run by dads, for dads

- The Fathering Project supports the dads and the school to establish the group
- The Fathering Project provides evidence-based resources and educational material to the Dads Groups



## What do Dads Groups do?

The key role of the Dads Group is to plan and host activities within the school community. The activities provide the opportunity for dads and father-figures to connect, share unique experiences and learn from evidence-based resources and tips on how to support their kids in this ever changing world.

### THE ACTIVITIES TYPICALLY INCLUDE:

- 'Dads and Kids' activities per school year
- 'Dads Only' activities per school year
- The Fathering Project events

Every group is unique, so choosing the strategies that will be effective to gather the most dads are at the discretion of each Group Leader. Activities might include barbeque's, event days, camping events, and dad catch-ups. We provide members with a list of event ideas, planning resources and fathering thoughts - but they're welcome to come up with ideas that better suit them and their community.



### THE BENEFITS OF DADS GROUPS\*

# 98%

of dads reported feeling more connected to other dads

# 82%

of dads had more awareness of their impact on their child

# 75%

of dads became more engaged in conversation with their children

\* The Fathering Project: Research Evaluation Outcomes, 2017.

## ★ Key Area 2: Family Partnerships

The Family Partnership component provides schools with access to online tools and evidence-based resources to support school partnerships with families, with an emphasis on engaging fathers.

While many schools have actions in place to target families, most have told us that fathers are generally under-represented within the families that do engage with them.

We have developed the Partnerships Planning Tool, which provides a framework of evidence-based actions and resources to help schools work more closely with parents - and in particular fathers.

### KEY FEATURES OF THE PARTNERSHIPS PLANNING TOOL

The innovative planning tool helps schools to further develop their family partnerships actions.

- The tool uses a quick and easy survey for school staff to review the school's current actions and automatically generate a strategic plan for improvement.
- The tool also provides a framework of evidence-based strategies, suggestions from schools and other resources to support the school's actions.



### BENEFITS OF THE PARTNERSHIPS PLANNING TOOL

- **An online planning tool** to benchmark the school's current actions, identify strengths and needs, and plan for improvement to strengthen family partnerships with an additional emphasis on fathers.
- **Provides a range of strategies, tips and resources** to fast track implementation of the school plan to improve family partnerships.
- **Supports actions across 7 core elements** of Family Partnerships (which have been developed to align with National, State and Territory policies and key accountabilities):
  - School culture of partnership
  - Welcoming school environment
  - Communication
  - Engagement in school
  - Learning at school and home
  - Family learning and support
  - Decision making

HOW IT WORKS

# Our Dads Groups and Family Partnerships create a holistic program for your school.



**DADS GROUP LAUNCH**  
**THE FATHERING PROJECT:**  
 conduct a school launch, welcoming dads and assisting to identify group leaders

**DADS GROUP LEADERS:**  
 access tools, learning materials and guides online

## Dads Groups

**DADS GROUP LEADERS:**  
 plan and host events, supported by TFP team

**DADS GROUP MEMBERS:**  
 enjoy spending time with their kids, upskilling as fathers and being connected to their school community



**IN SCHOOLS LAUNCH**  
**PLANNING TOOL:**  
 benchmark survey

**PLANNING TOOL:**  
 resources help to implement action plan

## Family Partnerships

Review annually with the same process, starting with the planning tool

**PLANNING TOOL:**  
 strengths and opportunities identified

**PLANNING TOOL:**  
 action plan reviewed and refined

**PLANNING TOOL:**  
 action plan generated





## OUR IN SCHOOLS FRAMEWORK

# Our programs align with national, state and territory family partnerships frameworks.

The Family Partnerships Planning Tool has been developed so it can be easily used by schools for planning and reporting according to their particular needs.

### SEVEN CORE ELEMENTS OF FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

#### School culture of partnership

#### DESIRED OUTCOMES

A school community culture of respectful relationships between the school and families. This allows all parties to collaborate as partners in the education and wellbeing of the children.

#### Welcoming school environment

All members of the school community are active participants in building a welcoming school environment that values diversity, and fosters positive, respectful relationships.

#### Communication

Effective communication is established as a two-way exchange between families and schools. This involves information sharing and opportunities for schools and families to connect and collaborate.



#### Engagement in school

Strategies encourage active participation in developing, building and sustaining partnerships to support engagement in student learning and school activities.

#### Learning at school and home

The school collaborates with families to foster positive attitudes towards learning and build their capacity to support their children's education and wellbeing at home and at school.

#### Family learning and support

The school provides learning opportunities for families, to support enhanced student learning, safety and wellbeing.

#### Decision making

Families are encouraged to participate and collaborate in meaningful school community decision making processes.

## THE PLANNING TOOL

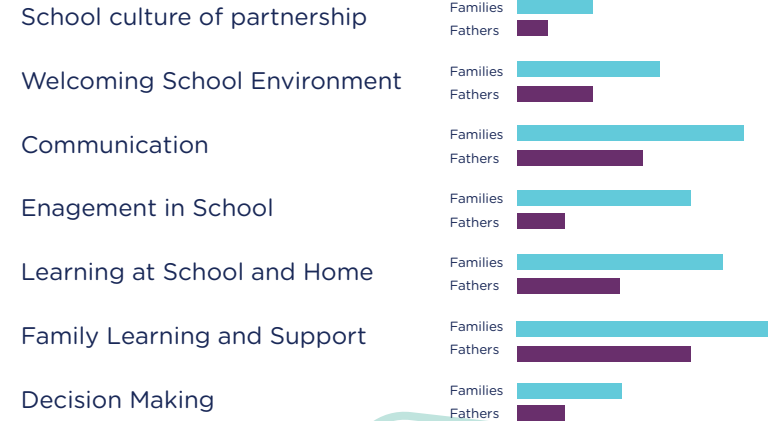
# We strengthen family partnerships by assessing actions, strengths and needs.

The aim of the planning tool is to benchmark your school's current actions, identify strengths and needs, and plan for improvement to strengthen your family partnerships, with a focus on engaging fathers.

## How it works

- Saves time and fast tracks your school's progress in review and planning, allowing you to focus on improvement.
- Automatically analyses your input and generates an action plan to improve the school family partnerships.
- Strengths based which enables the school to identify, celebrate and promote what they're already doing well, in addition to identifying areas for improvement.
- Links to evidence-based strategies and toolkits within the Partnerships Planning Tool to address areas of need.
- Provides valuable data and content for the school's annual reporting.
- Analyses your current activities to compare overall partnerships with families, with specific actions to partner with fathers.

## FAMILY PARTNERSHIP RATINGS



**Section 1**

**School Culture of Partnership**

There is a school community culture of respectful relationships between the school and families to collaborate as partners in the education and wellbeing of the children.

**Q1.1** Provide a family and school partnership policy to support a culture of partnerships with families that has been developed collaboratively with families?

	No Activity	Low Activity	Moderate Activity	High Activity	Sustained Activity
Family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fathers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q1.2** Provide a family and school partnership policy to support a culture of partnerships with families that has been developed collaboratively with families?

	No Activity	Low Activity	Moderate Activity	High Activity	Sustained Activity
Family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fathers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q1.3** Provide a family and school partnership policy to support a culture of partnerships with families that has been developed collaboratively with families?

	No Activity	Low Activity	Moderate Activity	High Activity	Sustained Activity
Family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fathers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Q1.4** Provide a family and school partnership policy to support a culture of partnerships with families that has been developed collaboratively with families?

	No Activity	Low Activity	Moderate Activity	High Activity	Sustained Activity
Family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fathers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## REGISTERING

You can register for The Fathering Project In Schools online and our staff are available to assist at every step of the way.

## REGISTRATION SUPPORT

Contact us on **1300 FATHERS** or [admin@thefatheringproject.org](mailto:admin@thefatheringproject.org)

## ONGOING SUPPORT

Once you've signed up, we'll provide ongoing resources, online tools, event opportunities and Dads Group Leader support and mentoring.

## ANNUAL FEE CONTRIBUTION

Schools are asked to contribute \$1000 + GST annually.

## INCLUDED IN YOUR FEE

- 12 months access to The Fathering Project In Schools Program
- 12 months access to the Partnerships Planning Tool
- Access to evidence-based strategies and resources
- Ongoing support to schools
- Launch event, and supporting resources, for the school to establish and sustain their Dads Group
- Toolkit to assist the new Dads Group, including a range of merchandise for the school and dads (school posters and polo shirts, etc.)
- 12 months access to the Dads Group Portal, which provides activity ideas and calendar, plus additional content and educational resources
- Ongoing support to Dads Group Leaders and Dads Groups
- Dads Groups monitoring, reporting and evaluation