

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Over 40% of Fathers Never Read to Their Children

A 1999 poll commissioned by the National Center for Fathering discovered that 40.2% of fathers *never* read to their children. In the national telephone survey, parents of school-aged children were asked, "How often does your child's father read to your child?" 34.0% of fathers self-reported that they never read to their child. Mothers, when asked the same question, reported that 45.5% of the fathers of their children never read to them.

Research has shown that parental involvement contributes significantly to a child's success in school. This is particularly true for fathers. The National Center for Fathering poll was commissioned to determine the current level of father involvement in education. The study also revealed:

- Fathers have little knowledge about their children's learning environment. Less than half (40.9%) of fathers between the ages of 25 and 44 know the name of their child's teacher. Only 18.8% of the group know the name of their child's school counselor.
- Fathers are only moderately involved in their children's school. 32.4% of fathers never attended a child's class event or school meeting. 77% of fathers have never had lunch with their child at school. 58% have never volunteered at their child's school.
- Safety concerns and getting a good education are very important to fathers. 64.9% of fathers feel their child is getting a good education and 60% feel their child is safe at school.

Ken Canfield, Ph.D., founder and former president of the National Center for Fathering, views these results as a call to action, "Father involvement is critical to a good education. Our children need their dads! Take time to read a book with your child. Make a visit to their school. Get to know their teachers. All of these will make a huge contribution to your child's success. If we don't respond in this hour of need, who will?"

The study consisted of a random sample of 894 individuals, 18 and older, from available residential phone number in the contiguous United States. The data were weighted on an individual basis to give appropriate representation of demographic factors. These findings have a plus/minus variation of 3%. Since 1990 the National Center for Fathering has sought to champion the role of responsible fathering by inspiring and equipping men to be more engaged in the lives of children. The Center conducts extensive, ongoing fathering research across the nation in order to develop practical resources to equip fathers.