



The Role of the Father in Child Development

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Not so far back in American history the ideal father was a reliable breadwinner and stern disciplinarian who remained otherwise aloof from day-to-day child rearing duties. But the reality of fatherhood has always been more dynamic than the ideal, and the father's influence on a child's social, emotional, and intellectual development is as profound as it is complex. Over the past two decades, an explosion of research has transformed our understanding of both historical archetypes and contemporary relationships between father and child. In this third edition of Dr. Michael Lamb's remarkable *Role of the Father in Child Development*, a team of leading experts provides a complete and up-to-date summary of the current scholarship on fathers and fatherhood, father-child relationships, and the influence of the father on the development of the child. This edition is characterized by a broader view of the social context within which these relationships take place, including ethnicity, marital quality, and the operation of particular ideals of fatherhood. The book begins with an overview of the father's role, a look at paternal imagery in psychology and religion, and a historical review of the changing ideals of fatherhood. This is followed by an examination of the marital context in which fatherhood conventionally takes place and the different levels, sources, and consequences of paternal involvement with the child. The next four chapters examine the father-child relationship at different stages of the child's development and, taken together, constitute a study in the evolution of this relationship and its effects (both direct and indirect) on child development. The book concludes with explorations of nonconventional or particularly difficult relationships, including those experienced by divorced fathers, stepfathers, gay fathers, adolescent fathers, abusive fathers, and fathers of children with disabilities. For developmental, family, and clinical psychologists, child psychiatrists, researchers, social workers, and anyone involved in developmental psychology or child custody issues, this book offers rich detail, authoritative analysis, and profound insight into one of the most important relationships that any child will ever have. "...provides a much-needed resource for the student and the serious researcher." --Child Development Abstracts and Bibliography "...a much-welcomed addition to an emerging literature on the father's contribution to child development ...an important book deserving a place on the shelves of developmental psychologists." --Contemporary Psychology "...a worthwhile investment for all interested in the study of the family and in the current thinking and knowledge about paternal contributions to socialization and personality development." --Child Development Abstracts and Bibliography "Lamb ...has done a fine job, both of integrating major perspectives on the role of the father in child development and of taking a critical look at some of the classic literature in the area." --Joy Osofsky, Contemporary Psychology

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