

**# 264 11/15/04 Dad can teach how men think and act**

One responsibility that a dad has to his daughter is to teach her how men think and behave differently from women. Many girls will absorb some information just by living in the same household as a dad and brothers. However, talking about it helps her understand that a behavior is not unique to the men in her home, but can be expected from other men in her life.

First, consider the difference between the “fix-it” man and the “nurturing” woman. The fact that Dad does not sit on the edge of her bed and tend to her needs when her wisdom teeth have been removed does not mean he does not care. It is more in his nature to have found the appropriate doctor to do the surgery, made the money to pay the bill and gone to the pharmacy to pick up medicine. He can say, “Guys are not that great at being caretakers, but if you want something, just let me know.” This message conveys important information: men are not designed to be nurturers, and men like to be told what women want.

Also consider that a man’s primary need is respect and a woman’s primary need is love. Paul wrote, “However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.” Ephesians 5:33. Men need to be respected for what they do. That might mean praising him for success in his career, acknowledging that he has repaired something in the house or thanking him for running an errand. Women need to be loved for who they are. That can be expressed by treating her gently, telling her she is beautiful and letting her know that she is worthy of protection.

A father teaches by the way he treats his wife. He also teaches if he says something like, “I know you think that I work too many hours. I will try to come home earlier when you have a game. However, you need to understand that one way men show families love is by providing for financial needs. Hopefully, I can find a balance between spending time with you and making money to meet your needs.”

I have only given two examples of gender differences. A father who helps his daughter understand the many differences is giving her a head start on understanding the future men in her life.