



# San Diego Unified School District

## Fact Sheet

### Dads Club

Research conducted by the U.S. Department of Education determined that children whose fathers are involved in their education experience higher rates of academic success. Father involvement also reduces all issues related to problem behaviors including truancy, suspensions and expulsions. Involved fathers help boost student self-esteem and self confidence. A father's active interest in all aspects of his child's life, including the child's "school life" provides not only a stable foundation of love but also demonstrates that education has masculine value worth a father's time and attention. Dads Clubs is a strategy designed to harness all the benefits that father involvement brings to educating young people.

A *Dads Club* is a school-based group of concerned and involved males whose mission is to increase the involvement of fathers and/or other caring adult male role models in their children's lives and education and encourage active participation in classrooms and school activities. Establishing a *Dads Club* offer fathers and other important adult male role models (uncles, older brothers, grandfathers, step fathers) ongoing opportunities to positively contribute to their children's educational lives as well as to their social, cognitive, and emotional development, critical for academic success and developing healthy relationships.

In 2002, through a partnership with the Parent Academic Liaison Program, Fred Carson started *Dads Clubs* at four of the district's lowest performing elementary schools. Since its inception, *Dads Clubs* have continued to gain popularity. In 2006-2007 *Dads Clubs* was active at more than 20 elementary schools. Expanding positive ways for family men to contribute to the success of students at the secondary level is a current goal.

Every school committed to increasing meaningful parent involvement opportunities can start a *Dads Club*. With ongoing support from school staff, family men will step up and take leadership roles, generate ideas, and find a variety of valuable ways to contribute to the school's effectiveness. Activities are generally held once a month at times determined by the members.

Educational activities include *Reading with Dad*, in which dads read together with their children, modeling important reading strategies while helping motivate students to read for fun. *Math Games with Dad* involves playing fun math games to help students and parents explore numbers and develop mathematical understanding together. *Science with Dad* and *Writing with Dad* are new sessions being currently developed. Also included are discussions on topics related to parenting and learning English as a second language. *Dads Clubs* sponsor family events such as bringing in authors to discuss books and community experts to explore financial literacy to help parents save for their children's college tuition. Healthcare topics such as diabetes, asthma, nutrition, and how to obtain health insurance are also explored. *Dads Clubs* also sponsor events highlighting the contributions of mothers. Other activities include relationship building events such as father-daughter dances, fishing trips, arts and crafts, movie with dads, school-community clean-up days, and the ever popular event, *Donuts with Dad*. These activities reinforce the importance of fathers and other adult male role models and the positive differences they make in their children's academic success and lives in general.

Many members of established Dads Clubs are willing to support the formation of new *Dads Clubs* at other sites. Please contact Fred Carson, the *Dads Club* Director at (858) 717-7162.

### SUMMARY

#### Start a *Dads Club* in 8 Steps:

1. Contact Fred Carson, the *Dads Club* director at (858) 717-7162.
2. Meet with the principal to explain the *Dads Club* program to identify and discuss your school needs/projects.
3. Plan and publicize an informational meeting to form a *Dads Club*.
  - Identify and invite community leaders and families
4. Host a meeting.
  - Discuss the idea and purpose.
  - Provide articles/brochures.
  - Appoint someone to take notes.
  - Identify Dads interests and obtain commitment.
  - Define the group's purpose.
  - Pass out sign-p/phone/fax/email information sheets.
  - Schedule next meeting with date/time/place.
5. Schedule monthly meetings, plan the event and publicize it.
6. Identify possible Dads Club leaders.
  - Identify two primary objectives.
7. Plan a *Dads Day* or event
  - Get support from principal/teachers/PALs/other *Dads Clubs*
  - Advertise *Dads Day* six weeks in advance.
8. Host the 1st Annual *Dads Day*.
  - Present *Dads Club* concept.
  - Ask for volunteer commitments.