



## Pearson and Connections Academy Survey of American Dads - June 2021

### ABOUT THE SURVEY

In March 2021, Pearson and Connections Academy released the results of a new [opinion poll](#) of US parents to gain insights into family living and learning during the pandemic. The survey revealed that **84% of Dads said they became more involved in their child's education, and it was an experience they found "gratifying."**

We took a closer look and conducted a poll of Dads who got more involved in their child's education to understand how much these fathers gained and the impact of this involvement on their relationships with their children and families overall.

We surveyed 1,000 male parents with children in grades K-12 from across the US who said they took a more active role in their child's education. The survey was administered by Dynata and was in field in May 2021.

### RESULTS

#### TOP FIVE STATS

*Among Dads who said they took a more active role in their child's education throughout the pandemic...*

- 89% of Dads report that being part of their child's learning experience has allowed them to grow closer with their child. (90% understand their child better)
- 86% of Dads report that - with their increased involvement in their child's education - they have gotten closer to their spouse or partner.
- Dads plan to stay involved with their child's education but 73% are concerned that going "back to normal" will impact their ability to maintain involvement.
- 89% of Dads agree that they have more respect and understanding for others who were more involved in their child's education.

- 75% of Dads agree that they missed out by not being a bigger part of their child's education previously.

## KEY FINDINGS

From Parent Pulse Report:

- **84% of Dads said they became more involved in their child's education, and it was an experience they found "gratifying."**

From New Survey of American Dads:

*Among Dads who said they took a more active role in their child's education throughout the pandemic...*

### **An Unexpected Gift from the Pandemic: More time with Dad**

***By taking a more active role in their child's education this past year, Dad's report greater understanding of their child, family bonding***

- Regardless of grade level, there was consistent involvement by Dads in their child's education during the pandemic. Some of the biggest surprises for Dads were learning about their child's social life, forging a better relationship with child than what was thought possible, and child not being as academically strong as assumed.
  - Nine out of ten Dads surveyed say that they understand their child better (90%) and that being part of their child's learning experience has allowed them to grow closer with their child (89%).
  - 82% of Dads realize their child is "different at home than they are at school."
  - 74% of Dads agree that their child struggles with the social aspects of school.
  - 85% of Dads say their child is more mature "than I realized."
  - 62% of Dads say their child is not as strong academically as they had thought.
- Nearly all the Dads (96%) polled said that online school has allowed them to be more involved in their child's education than when they were in a brick-and-mortar school. As we dug deeper into that involvement, communicating with their spouse/partner about their child/children's learning needs (78%) and helping with homework (78%) rose to the top.

### **Pandemic Dads Want to Do More**

***Dads plan to stay more involved in their child's education but worry that a "return to normal" will impact involvement levels.***

- The pandemic provided the opportunity for Dads to connect with their children. As Dads look towards the future, the majority plan to become more involved or maintain their level of involvement with their children. The top ways these Dads will stay at that level are by continuing or establishing routines, helping with homework and connecting with teachers.
- Dads have concerns as things return to normal, however. Even with wanting to stay involved/become more involved, 73% of Dads agree that they are concerned that they will not be able to maintain the level of involvement they want as things return to normal.

**When Dad grades online learning...**

***Dads overwhelmingly support online learning and believe their child learned things like time-management and is now more confident learning online.***

- From the Dads' perspective, online school appears to be working as 86% of fathers polled agree their child has adapted to online learning well, 84% agree that their child is better at time management now and 81% agree their child is more confident while learning online.
- Nearly all the Dads (96%) polled said that online school has allowed them to be more involved in their child's education than when they were in a brick-and-mortar school.

**A Better Understanding of Child, Spouse/Partner and Teachers**

***Dads now report better communication with their spouse or partner regarding their child's learning and realize they had been missing out by not being as involved in their child's education before.***

- While the pandemic certainly took a mental toll on their families (75% agreed), positives emerged. Nearly 9 in 10 of Dads agree their family has gotten closer while learning at home, that they understand their child better, and that they have more respect and understanding for others who were more involved in their child's education.

- 75% of Dads surveyed said, "I feel like I missed out by not being a bigger part of my child's education previously."
- 78% of Dads say they communicate better with their spouse or partner regarding their child's learning needs.

#### **TOP FIVE OPEN-ENDED ANSWER QUOTES**

- "I think it made us grow closer because we saw each other at our worst and our best. We both had to apologize a number of times."
- "Completing a task together is always a challenge, but then there is growth."
- "Being involved with her learning, we've bonded closer, we trust each other that we can get through tough problems if we stick together."
- "I want to be more invested in his life when I can be."
- "I was able to learn more about her school life with friends and teachers and learned I don't have to worry so much about her, she's really growing up."