

Do Fathers Have To Be Mothers?

Webster's Dictionary defines "androgyny" as, "having the characteristics of both sexes."

Is it true that fathers have to be mothers?

No, they need to be fathers. While many men feel inadequate when it comes to parenting a child, they may think that they have to "mimic" what the mother does to feel comfortable in this role. While all parents learn by "doing" on the job, fathering is not mothering any more than mothering is fathering.

Fathers are quite capable of changing diapers and feeding an infant formula in a timely manner even without prior "experience."

During pregnancy some men gain weight, experience morning

sickness, and suffer postpartum depression. In fact, one study found that if fathers were involved in the daily care of their infants during the first eight weeks after childbirth, the babies were more socially responsive and able to withstand stressful circumstances later during their school years.

Fathering is important to the well being of children's development over time. Research has found that fathers play with their children differently, using fewer toys, when mothers were not present. Men encourage their children's curiosity in the solution of intellectual and physical challenges, support children's persistence in solving problems, and do not become over solicitous with regard to

their children's failures.

As boys grow up, their natural instinct to nurture is often repressed by society's interpretation of the expected "male role." It has been found that boys will show this natural instinct to nurture after the birth of siblings, the entrance of pets into the family, or through concern for the physically vulnerable. Boys may not outwardly exhibit a strong nurturing tendency, but it is there.

Take a close look at the things your son does in your home, and determine if he exhibits a natural nurturing instinct. You will probably find instances when he has.

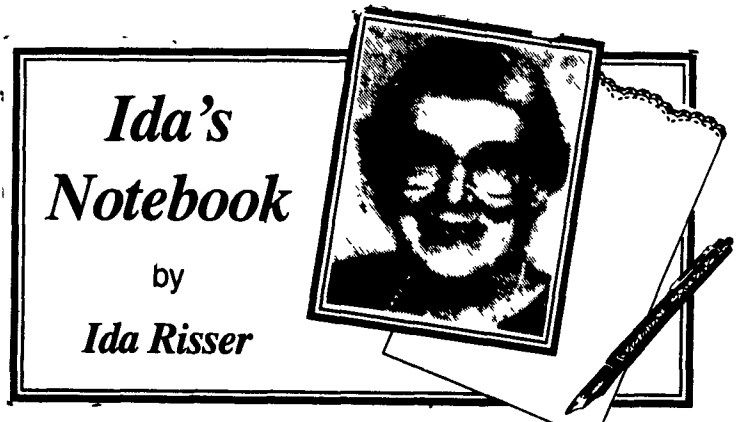
So, if men have the nurturing instinct built in, why do they often feel uncomfortable showing it?

As a society somewhere along the way, openly nurturing fathers became taboo. You could feel it, but you just couldn't show it in public.

Men, it's time to reawaken your instincts and become the nurturer you were intended to be!

Your children will thrive on it, their mother will truly appreciate it, and you will find that fathering is the most satisfying thing you will ever accomplish in life.

Being an active nurturing father is a precious gift to a



When I was hunting the spelling of a particular tree that grows on a farm near me, I came across my father's 1945 account book. The tree that I was interested in is the Royal Paulownia named for a Russian princess.

It is a rapid-growing tree that resembles a catalpa. The fragrant upright violet flowers grow in clusters. The lightweight whitish wood is exported to Japan for furniture.

But back to the account book that I found. It certainly is interesting to compare prices. Somehow I cannot get accustomed to

child.

For those of you who are already active nurturing fathers, our hats off to you because you are a mentor to your own sons.

today's prices. He paid 50 cents for a haircut and 15 cents a gallon for gas. A battery for his tractor was \$14.95, and five gallons of oil was \$4.25. The coal that he purchased cost \$13 per ton and that was delivered.

He bought a 40-foot ladder for \$5 and a New Idea spreader for \$215. The taxes were in the hundreds instead of the thousands. A bushel of seed corn was \$9, one hundred pound of timothy seed \$10 and five bags of seed Cobblers \$22.50. The 5-10-10 fertilizer cost him \$38 per ton.

Each year he bought chicks and raised them in a round metal brooder house. They needed a lot of attention. When they were grown a huckster came each week to buy the eggs. Some chickens were dressed and sold on the Northern Market in Lancaster together with honey and black walnuts.

Even though prices were low compared to today, I'm sure the income from the farm was low too. He sold five lambs for \$31 and one bull for \$200. He fed steers and also raised tobacco to pay the bills.

His personal expenses for the year were listed as: two shirts \$2, two overalls \$3.78 and shoes repaired \$3. Not everyone wrote down each penny that they spent as he did.

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