

# Dad: Kiss your son for Father's Day

We were at a party a few weeks ago. Although the party was in honor of the teen-aged son of the host and hostess, the father refused to kiss his son following the toast — even after the boy's mother asked him to. Is this common?  
T.C., Farmington Hills

A California survey shows that of every 100 teen-aged boys, 80 are never kissed by their fathers. While it is not usually acceptable to have extreme displays of affection in public, certainly an affectionate show of pride and approval from father to son would have been appropriate and appreciated at that time.

But fathers especially have been conditioned against displaying their feelings.

Some misinterpret physical contact between parent and offspring as a form of perversion. However, there is a difference between a kiss of pride and a passionate smooch. And a fatherly squeeze or pat on the head is not the same as a lustful caress.

Some parents are actually shy and find it difficult to show their emotions. Others may not realize the importance of open demonstrations of love throughout childhood.

Feelings of confidence and self-worth, and the development of mutual feelings of love come about only through shared affection and caring.

COMMUNICATION OF affection begins early when the infant first recognizes the parent's face and smiles at it. This occurs around the second month and can be the beginning of reciprocal feelings of love — If the parents continue to respond and relate



Parents may not realize the importance of open demonstrations of love throughout childhood. Larry Miller and his son, Jared, demonstrate here.

feelings of love back to the child.

It is not enough to have great feelings of love for your child. What good is it to the child if he never experiences that love, never even knows of it? Love is a learned feeling. Parents must take the time to express their loving feelings to their children.

On this Father's Day, let your child know how you feel. Hugs, kisses, hand-



Pat Bordman

holding, knee sitting, cuddling, patting on the back, hair ruffling are all ways of expressing loving feelings.

But breaking the ice may have to start with the child as it did when that child was an infant. Love beads may be just the personal gift to rekindle those family expressions of love.

Patricia Bordman, a freelance writer and photographer, has a

master's degree in Early Childhood Education. She has taught elementary school and conducted workshops and lectures.

Mrs. Bordman welcomes suggestions and comments. Please write her c/o the Observer & Eccentric Newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

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## volunteers

The Oakland County Volunteer Bureau, a program of the Volunteer Action Center of United Community Services, has weekly listings of volunteer opportunities. Further information about these and other volunteer needs at over 200 agencies may be obtained by calling the bureau at 642-7272. Any non-profit organization needing volunteer assistance may also call the bureau.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES GUIDE** — If you are interested in helping others, opportunities to volunteer are always available. Persons and groups interested in offering their time and talents can receive free copies of the Volunteer Opportunities Guide. Community service needs in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties.

**PARENT EDUCATION VOLUNTEER** — Avondale Youth Assistance in Auburn Heights works to prevent juvenile delinquency. Volunteers are being recruited to work with their Parent Education Program scheduling speakers and publicizing workshops as well as some clerical work. A school year commitment is asked.

**FAMILY AIDES** — Family Focus in Birmingham has openings for family aides to work as a "friend" to a family. Volunteers will share homemaking and child rearing skills as well as provide information about resources available. Persons 21 and older are asked to commit to four hours per week for at least 8 months. Extensive training starts shortly.

**ACTIVITIES AID** — You can have a good time while getting to know older individuals as an activities aide at the Hilton Convalescent Home in Ferndale. Volunteers age 18 and older who are able to commit to three hours per week can become involved in visiting patients, conducting activity programs and transporting patients.

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