

Dad's role should be guide instead of buddy

Continued from Page 1

because of work and other commitments... It would have been nice to have the real man as opposed to all the rigid rules."

"It was always there physically. I watched TV with him and things like that, but I was never close to him emotionally," added another father during the seminar. "There was little affection."

Overall, those who attend such seminars resolve to be better fathers — more attentive and more supportive of their children.

Easily said, but increasingly far more difficult to put into practice.

For one, fathers themselves have been conditioned to be stoic in the face of strife — never to touch, feel or show emotion. To ask them to change overnight is perhaps unrealistic, considering they were never granted such affection.

"Were you in the 5 percent of fam-

ilies where your feelings as a male were important? Or, were you in the typical family where your feelings were not validated as a male," Winkler said. "I think we're making a change... but that needs to be stepped up a bit."

In general, everyone agrees the parenting game has changed. This can be attributed to the usual things: both parents working, kids having more outside influences to compete for their attention and role models becoming increasingly scarce.

The lack of role models is why Sims believes fathering has to extend beyond one's own children to kids in the neighborhood or church. It may be a simple word of encouragement or providing an ear to listen to their concerns.

"All children are our children," Sims said. "If we don't father globally, we're not going to change the problems children face today."

Give positive messages to encourage children

Continued from Page 1

An evaluative compliment might be something like, "Oh, you look pretty." But if the child has her dress on backwards and two different socks, even she would know she doesn't exactly look fit for the cover of Glamour magazine.

Descriptive praise may be more honest, complementing her initiative and thanking her for saving you time by not having to dress her.

"The imagery is how we are talking to them, how we are praising them," Cox said. "That will do more to change behavior in the long run."

Album appears monthly

The Eccentric Newspapers Monthly Album is published the third Monday of each month and is reserved for residents and former residents of The Eccentric circulation area.

Photos and engagement or wedding announcements are due Tuesday, May 5, for the Monthly Album to be published Monday, May 18. Photos and engagements or wedding announcements are due Tuesday, June 2, for the Monthly Album to be published Monday, June 15.

Engagement announcements will be accepted no later than 45 days prior to the wedding. Wedding announcements must be submitted within 60 days following the wedding. Wedding announcements received past the 60-day deadline

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Photos submitted should be black and white glossy, preferably a vertical shot and 5x7 inches in size. Color photographs can be submitted but will not reproduce as well.

Please put an identifying name and daytime phone number on the back of the photo. Due to the volume of photographs handled, The Eccentric Newspapers is not responsible for any that may be lost or damaged. Photos may be picked up two weeks after publication and will be held for 60 days.

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moral perspectives
Rabbi Irwin Groner.

Center creates extended family

This last decade has been a time of major sociological change, dramatically affecting the fabric and structure of the American family. Separation and divorce rates have escalated as a result of the high rate of mobility.

The support system of family and friends of one's own community no longer exists for many families. Grandparents no longer live, for the most part, near their children and the extended family exists in nostalgia, but not in reality. An increasing number of women are pursuing careers outside the home and this requires that both mothers and fathers reformulate their roles as parents.

The birth of a child marks the beginning of a new life for the developing infant, but also a new way of life and a new set of challenges for each parent. Many of today's parents are isolated from personal support and bombarded with theory. What and who to believe? Where to go? Whom to talk to? Difficult questions, with no clear answers.

PARENTS NEED help in developing parenting skills — namely, the active roles a mother and father assume during the formative years of raising children. It is acknowledged that these very early familiar relationships and experiences help shape a child's personality in view of himself/herself in the world.

Research in child development demonstrates that infants and toddlers are sensitively attuned to their environment. Even during the earliest stages of life, a child is capable of observing and integrating the personal world of sights, tastes, smells, textures, sounds and objects. Interactions with parents, siblings, adults and peers become familiar and anticipated.

In the past, the extended family unit provided rich resources; members offered each other support, guidance and child care during the early stages of family development.

In today's modern society, adults are now turning toward their peer group and community institutions for this information and support, and to create a feeling of belonging.

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A new and fruitful concept is now being introduced — The Parenting Center. The Parenting Center provides a framework in which young families can socialize with each other, share views on child raising, and establish a peer support group.

The PRIMARY aspect of the program is to create an extended family and sense of community and offer parents support, information and guidance during the important years of early childhood development.

A noted expert in this field recently stated: "People making is our most important challenge during these last years of the 20th century. This generation holds the key for reshaping the world by the kind of people it develops."

The Parenting Center provides a home away from home for families and their young children. It offers a resource center for parents and a play center for the child within a healthy, caring environment.

While this concept has, to my knowledge, been implemented in only a few synagogues, churches or community centers, it holds great promise for the future and offers the opportunity to renew and restore the strength of the family as the primary institution of the American way of life.

Rabbi Irwin Groner is with Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Southfield.



Marie Jermov (left), Kate Pawlikiewicz and Brian Paul help distribute baskets as part of the Farmington Area Community Women Easter Giving Tree Project.

Easter Giving Project done

The Farmington Area Community Women (FACW) conducted its annual Easter Giving Tree Project. There were 206 names available on the trees which were at the First United Methodist Church, the Farmington and Farmington Hills Public Libraries, and three metro area banks.

Community residents made up Easter baskets for children enrolled in the Farmington District Headstart Program (and their old-

er siblings). The baskets were picked up by FACW members on April 8 and delivered to the Farmington Community School. They were distributed to the children the following week by teachers and staff from the Headstart program.

People interested in joining the Farmington Area Community Women may attend their Swing Social/Membership Drive 7:30 p.m. Monday, May 18.



In concert

James Van Valkenburg, a Farmington resident and assistant principal in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, was one of 180 musicians invited to perform in the "Heroes of Conscience" concert April 5 in New York. The concert was a special tribute dedicated to the members of the anti-Nazi resistance in Germany during the reign of Hitler.

Off the Cuff wants your suggestions

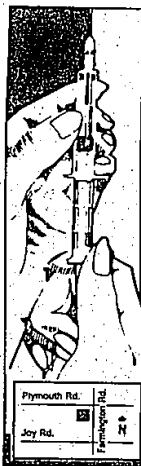
Got a suggestion for an individual The Eccentric can highlight in Off the Cuff, an occasional feature that focuses on ordinary people with extraordinary flair for fashion? If you know an Observer & Eccentric area

resident — man, woman or child — with a distinctive clothing sense, be it classic, trendy, homespun or outrageous, give us a call at 644-1100 Ext. 243.

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