

National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse Guidelines for Working with Fathers

1. Always have high expectations for all fathers with whom you work.
2. Never be judgmental. Recognize your biases and manage them.
3. Start where the father is, not where you think he should be, or where stereotypes may lead you.
4. Be respectful and understand cultural definitions of masculinity.
5. Communicate on as even of playing field as possible, do not assume superiority.
6. Be patient and willing to hang in there as most fathers in the system will experience ups and downs throughout the process.
7. Demonstrate genuine and ongoing caring.
8. Earn their trust through honesty.
9. Utilize language and messages to which men can respond.
10. Ask explorative questions in a non-threatening manner.
11. Allow time for the father to respond to your questions.
12. Allow conversation to occur with fathers while doing something else
 - i. i.e. while watching the child(ren) play together
13. Do not make false promises.
14. Assume that men can be reached, look for ways to meet specific needs and be prepared to follow-up.
15. Try to relate to the father in a genuine way.

Source: National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (2012)

