



## Daddy's girl

A woman's relationship with her father shapes her future expectations of men

By JOANNE RICHARD, TORONTO SUN

Father knows best?

Father-daughter activities promote bonding, fun and communication, so be sure to find the time, says Dr. Terri Orbuch, of the website [detroitlovedr.com](http://detroitlovedr.com).

Generally, it is not what you do that is important, but that you do something with your daughter, she says. Time is what daughters want from their dads.

"One thing I encourage fathers to do is schedule father-daughter dates with their daughters," says Orbuch. "This could be dinner out or simply asking your daughter what she would most want to do with you on your special night out. When you give her the responsibility of making a decision, it is best for both father and daughter."

Also, she stresses, make it a point to eat dinner together as many nights as possible. Start a tradition of discussing the best thing that happened to her that day. "If you aren't able to do dinner together, set aside a specific special time of the day to call her, e-mail her or spend time with her. Ask her questions about her day and what happened to her at school, work or with friends.

"When you do spend time together, focus on the positive," the relationship expert stresses. "Instead of constantly telling her what goes wrong or what needs to change, begin to concentrate on what she does right and what works. Foster her unique gifts and abilities. That way, she will ... come to you for support and encouragement, because she knows you think highly of her."

Adds Burlington therapist **Marilyn Belleghem**: "Talk and listen. Do something with your daughter she likes to do -- take her shopping, go for a walk, a bike ride or to the library. Find mutual ground and have one-on-one time with her. Ask her to help with something, take her to something you like and teach her about it. Get past the gender difference and treat her like a person."