Promotional Guide
This document describes the promotional support materials available for the Me and My Dad Web site.

Fathers play a vital role in the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual development of their children. Creating father-friendly environments benefits children, men, women, and communities.

The Me & My Dad Web site is the cornerstone of Iowa State University Extension’s fatherhood programming. This guide will help you share this valuable resource in your community.

Thanks for helping strengthen relationships between dads and kids. Let me know how I can support your work in this area.

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A Resource for Iowa Fathers
Me and My Dad is a Web site that provides information to help strengthen relationships between dads and kids. Statistics show that children with active dads are more likely to have good grades, positive problem solving skills, good health and close friendships, and to demonstrate empathy and compassion. Children who have involved fathers generally become adults with a higher sense of satisfaction with life, more education, higher income, more stable jobs, and stronger and longer marriages.

About the Me and My Dad Web Site
The Me and My Dad Web site helps fathers become more involved in their children’s lives. The most popular pages are Did You Know, Parenting Together, and Dads at a Distance. This site was launched October 2000 after two years of market research and a pilot, and has an international audience with hits from over sixty countries.

The Iowa Fatherhood Initiative
The Me and My Dad Web site is part of the Iowa Fatherhood Initiative, which includes an array of resources from various state entities. See: www.dhs.state.ia.us/fatherhood/.

Promotional Support Materials
The following materials and activities are available to help you promote the Me and My Dad Web site and initiative in your county. Check the “For Staff” section of the Me and My Dad Web site for more information.

Me and My Dad Bookmark
This piece describes how active dads provide a positive influence on their children, and promotes the Me and My Dad Web site. Order quantities from Extension Distribution, reference: SP 202.

Usage Suggestions
Distribute the bookmarks to local Boys and Girls Club facilities, bowling alleys, malls, libraries, coffee shops, childcare centers, mini golf courses, and more. Hand them out at county fairs and other local family-oriented community events.

PowerPoint Presentation
The “Dads Make Difference” PowerPoint presentation features related research, parenting tips, and promotes the Me and My Dad Web site.
Usage Suggestions
Present to Extension Councils, 4-H committees, community leaders and decision-makers, worksite programs, professionals, parents, and grandparents.

Display
A set of colorful, laminated, informational graphics have been developed for use in the oak frame display cases.

Usage Suggestions
Each family life specialist will receive a complete set of graphics, and should coordinate a reservation and checkout system for these displays. A set is also available through Extension Distribution. Feature the display at community events like the county fair and places families might see the display, such as your library, schools, the Boys and Girls Club, childcare centers, local churches, malls, or bank lobbies.

e-Postcard
An electronic postcard will be linked from the Me and My Dad Web site.

Usage Suggestions
Click on the e-postcard link and follow the instructions to personalize your message, and send an e-postcard to tell friends, family, and other colleagues about the Me and My Dad site.

News Releases — Usage Suggestions
Send a release to your local media contacts with a “pitch” to run the story using a local angle. For example: Ask a well-known father in your community if he would talk to the local media about the benefits of being an active parent.

Fun and Games — ideas for county fair and other community events
Several activities can be done at your county fair or other community event. Use your display graphics as visual support, and have plenty of bookmarks ready to give away to everyone who participates.

Here are the activity descriptions, including a list of needed materials, how to carry out the activity, and suggested prizes. Have fun and put your own creative spin on these ideas!

Goin' Fishing
Equipment and supplies needed:
- Me and My Dad display
- Two to three swimming noodles cut in half to form four to six “fishing poles”
- String (several pieces about three feet long)
- Clothespins (one per pole)
- Blanket or plastic tablecloth
- Me and My Dad bookmarks, 4-H stickers, ISU pencils, etc. for prizes

Volunteers: three youth, one adult (minimum, can add more as needed)
Directions: Cut noodles in half to form “fishing poles.” Tape a string on the end or make a hole in the end of the noodle and tie the string on. Tie a clothespin to the other end of the string. Hang the blanket/cloth between two tables or other structure about three to four feet off the ground to form a “fishing hole.” Two volunteers hide behind the blanket and clip a prize onto the clothespin at each end of the pole as participants take turns fishing. At least one adult and one youth volunteer to stand outside the blanket and invite children, fathers, mothers, grandparents, and caregivers to “Go Fishing.” State the Rules: Everyone wins, it is free. While kids are fishing, the adult volunteer tells about the Me and My Dad Web site and hands the bookmark to the adult caregiver.
More Fun: Offer a drawing for a real fishing pole to all fathers and grandfathers who visit the display. Collect names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses so you can contact the winner and invite all to a parenting or fathers’ group later.

Base Walk
Equipment and supplies needed:
- Me and My Dad display
- Four carpet squares or baseball bases
- CD/tape player
- Music such as “ISU fight song,” etc.
- Me and My Dad bookmarks or balls, 4-H items, etc., for prizes

Volunteers: At least one adult, at least two youth
Directions: Set up the bases like a baseball diamond about four feet apart. One volunteer stands on the pitcher’s mound and gives instructions. One volunteer runs the tape player and stands next to home plate. The third volunteer invites people to participate in the game and talks about the Me and My Dad Web site to adults passing by. Game is played like musical chairs except everyone wins. When the music stops whoever is on home base gets a prize and then steps out of the game.
Continue play until everyone wins. You can add people at any time.

More Fun: Give away tickets for a local sporting event (or ISU games if you get a sponsor!) to children and an adult male.

**Hot Shot**

*Equipment and supplies needed:*
- Me and My Dad display
- Me and My Dad fact sheet
- Child-sized basketball hoop
- Small ball
- Tape
- Me and My Dad bookmarks or balls for prizes

*Volunteers:* One to two adults, three youth (one to stand at free throw line to help each person take a turn, one “re-bounder,” one to hand out prizes, rotate every 15 minutes)

*Directions:* Set hoop in a location where many people can watch (you will draw a crowd). Step off two steps (toe to heel) from the hoop and mark on the floor with tape; mark another line two steps (toe to heel) farther out; mark the third line two more steps out (total—six shoe lengths from the basket). Every person gets three shots, starting at the third line and moving closer each time. Participants get a prize after their third shot whether they make a basket or not. Because this is such a popular game, you may want to limit players to one prize, but allow them to play as many times as they would like AFTER everyone else has a turn.

More Fun: Before someone shoots, announce a father fact. Hand out bookmarks to all adults in attendance or offer a drawing for an ISU basketball to all fathers who visit the display (you also may let kids sign up their dads, mothers sign up their husbands, etc.).

**My Favorite Things**

*Equipment and supplies Needed:*
- Several easels
- Several flipcharts
- Assorted markers (about five to six for each flipchart)
- Me and My Dad display

*Volunteers:* Two to three, or one for every two flipcharts

*Directions:* Set up flipcharts at varying levels, from ground level to adult standing-height. Write at the top of each: “My Favorite Things to Do with Dad or Grandpa.” Invite participants to write a word or draw a picture about their favorite thing to do with a father figure in their life. Encourage them to write their name and age beside their drawing. Give each person a bookmark when he or she finishes drawing. Post the pages around the display. Save the drawings to learn about the interactions that are meaningful for people in your area. Plan a county-wide father/child event in the next year.

More Fun: Offer free passes to a local museum or art gallery for every child who brings an adult male.

**Father’s Day — a special opportunity to reach fathers in your community**

Father’s Day provides a special opportunity to reach out to fathers. Early to mid June is an ideal time to organize a special Me and My Dad display in your community. Complement the display with a featured family activity and bookmarks, and you’ll have a good opportunity to provide father-friendly information.

**Partnerships — ask others to spread the word**

Contact organizations in your community that serve families and describe the Me and My Dad initiative. Invite them to include the Me and My Dad URL in their electronic and print newsletters, and provide a link from their Web sites. Give them a supply of bookmarks for distribution. Encourage them to use the display.

**Thank you!**

Thank you for your assistance in promoting the Me and My Dad initiative. Your efforts bring value to the families in your area.