Dad, You Can't Make Up for Lost Time

You just can't do it. You try: But you've been working long hours and losing touch with our children. Maybe you're a divorced father who realizes you haven't even seen the kids in a while. But, you can't make up for lost time with your kids. All we can do is start from today and do a better job at consistently spending regular time with our kids.

When we let our children down at one time or another, it's natural to want to make it up to them. That's a good instinct to have. But unfortunately, too many of us channel our healthy resolve into wild extravaganzas with our kids because we want to make things right.

Whenever I go to a Kansas City Royals baseball game, I can't help noticing the kids in the stadium who have been "loaded down" by their fathers, with so much baseball paraphernalia that they could open their own stand in the parking lot. The kid can't decide whether to wave his pennant, his inflatable baseball bat, or his giant foam "We're #1" hand. Not a vendor goes by without the father signaling, reaching for his wallet and buying the child peanuts, popcorn, Cokes, and hot dogs.

It's true that most kids love baseball games and amusement parks, but we need to realize that these "blow-outs" are only one side of a huge pendulum swing. A month of not hearing from their father and then "POW." Two weeks of scarcely seeing Dad around the house and then "POW." It can really shake a kid up.

All kids have a deep need to feel loved by their fathers. If you are away from your kids, a phone call once a week is more beneficial to them than four trips to Disney World strewn haphazardly throughout the year.

Children need regular and predictable contact with their dads. Twenty years from now, what would you want your child to remember about his relationship with you? A roller coaster ride? A ninth-inning grand slam home run? If you're like me, you'd rather have him say that he remembers many times with you, and none of them really stick out in his mind because the event itself wasn't important - he simply cherished the chance to spend time getting to know his dad.

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