PARENTS FIRST
Parental Involvement and Children’s Well-Being

Youths who experience higher levels of parental involvement and a closer relationship with their parents are less likely to exhibit behavioral problems and to engage in risk behaviors. In addition, they tend to achieve better grades and higher levels of education and to experience better emotional health.

- **Emotional Health.** Compared with peers whose parents are often absent throughout the day, teens whose parents are present when they go to bed, wake up, and come home from school are less likely to experience emotional distress. Teens were less likely to experience emotional distress if their parents were in the home when they awoke, when they came home from school, at dinnertime, and when they went to bed. They were also less likely to experience emotional distress if they engaged in activities with their parents, and if their parents had high expectations regarding their academic performance. In addition, those who had low self-esteem were more likely to experience emotional distress.¹

- **Self-Esteem.** Youths whose parents exhibit love, responsiveness, and involvement tend to have higher levels of self-esteem and internal self-control. Parental love, responsiveness, involvement and non-coercive, democratic discipline had a strong association with adolescent psychosocial development as measured in global self-esteem, feelings of internal control and ability, and susceptibility to negative peer pressure.²

- **Educational Attainment.** Students whose parents are more involved with their schooling tend to complete higher levels of education and are more likely to graduate from high school than peers whose parents are not so involved. Students whose teachers reported higher levels of parental involvement were more likely to graduate high school or earn a GED than peers whose parents were not so involved, and those who did not graduate were more likely to have completed a higher grade in high school. The more years a parent was involved, the greater was this association with educational attainment.³

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¹ Emotional Health.
² Self-Esteem.
³ Educational Attainment.
* **Behavior.** On average, adolescents whose fathers are more involved in their lives and discuss important decisions with them exhibit lower levels of aggression and antisocial behavior than peers who experience less paternal involvement. The greater the fathers’ involvement was, the lower the level of adolescents’ behavioral problems, both in terms of aggression and antisocial behavior and negative feelings such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. Fathers’ involvement was measured by the frequency with which fathers discussed important decisions with and listened to their adolescents, whether fathers knew who their adolescents were with when not at home, and whether fathers missed events or activities that were important to their adolescents. Other measures included as adolescents’ reports of closeness to their fathers, whether their fathers spent sufficient time with them, and how well they shared and communicated with one another.4

* **Delinquency (Boys).** Adolescents who experience supportive and affectionate relationships with their fathers are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior than peers who do not experience such a relationship. Paternal supervision, as well as supportive and affectionate father-son relationships, discouraged juvenile delinquency, regardless of a youth’s delinquent friends, perception of trouble in the neighborhood, and/or positive attitudes about breaking the law.5

* **Sexual Behavior.** Youths whose parents discuss with them sexual behavior standards are more likely to be abstinent. Youths whose parents talked to them about right and wrong with regard to sexual behavior were significantly more likely to be abstinent than peers whose parents did not.6

* **Teen Pregnancy.** Teenage girls who experience father absence are more likely to become pregnant than girls whose fathers are consistently present. Even when controlling for differences in family background, father absence was associated with the likelihood that adolescent girls will be sexually active and become pregnant as teenagers. This association was strongest for daughters whose fathers were absent when they were younger. Compared with the pregnancy rates of girls whose fathers were present, rates of teenage pregnancy were seven to eight times higher among girls whose fathers were absent early in their childhoods and two to three times higher among those who suffered father-absence later in their childhood.7

* **Tobacco Use.** On average, adolescents who are strongly connected to their parents and other family members are less likely to smoke cigarettes. All youth surveyed (grades 7-12) were less likely to smoke cigarettes if they had high levels of connectedness to parents and other family members. Those in grades 9-12 were also less likely to smoke if their parents were present in the home more often, if they engaged more often in activities with their parents, and if they perceived that their parents had high expectations for their educational attainment. Youth in all the grades were more likely to smoke if cigarettes were easily accessible in the home.8

* **Substance Abuse.** Compared with other peers, adolescents who report having a positive relationship with their fathers are less likely to smoke, drink alcohol, or use marijuana. Adolescents who reported having more positive relationships with their fathers were less likely to smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol or use marijuana compared to peers who reported having less positive relationships with their fathers. This was true taking into consideration a variety of factors: the quality of adolescents’ relationships with their mothers, parental monitoring, mothers’ and fathers’ parenting styles, fathers’ biological status, parental education, parental employment, number of children in the family, whether family received public aid, adolescents’ age, gender, race/ethnicity, and school enrollment status.9
- **Academic Achievement.** On average, youths whose fathers engage in leisure and educational activities with them achieve better grades than peers whose fathers spend less time with them. Pre-teens whose fathers spent leisure time away from the home (picnics, movies, sports, etc.) with them, shared meals with them, helped with homework or reading, and engaged in other home activities with them earned better grades in school, on average, than peers whose fathers spent less time with them. Similarly, teens whose fathers engaged in activities in the home and outdoors, spent leisure time, and talked with them earned better grades, on average, than teens whose fathers spent less time with them.¹⁰

Footnotes

FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR FATHERS AT SOUTHRIDGE SCHOOL

HOLY MASS
- Daily 12 noon Mass at the Chapel of the Holy Family.

RECOLLECTIONS
- 1st and 4th Sunday Recollection for Fathers (Holy Mass for the Families at 11 am)
- 3rd Thursday Recollection (with Benediction) at Molave Study Center

BASIC CATHOLIC DOCTRINE CLASSES
- Every Saturday, 10:15 – 11:00 am at the Academic Office Conference Room, 2nd floor Main Building (for fathers)
- Every 4th Sunday, 8:30–9:10 am (for Afternoon School fathers)
- Every 4th Sunday, 9:15 - 10:45 am (for Afternoon School mothers)

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION WITH SCHOOL CHAPLAIN
- By appointment

FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR MOTHERS AT WOODROSE SCHOOL

THEOLOGY CLASS - every 1st and 2nd Thurs, 9 to 10 am, Function Room

RECOLLECTION - every 3rd Thursday, 9:15 - 11:00 a.m. & every 4th Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

CONFESSION - Monday to Friday except Wednesday, 9 am - 12 noon

For inquiries, you can contact PAREF Woodrose School at 850-6380 to 83; 809-5508 or 807-6735 (local 123 for the Chaplain's Office or 118 for the Family Orientation Office or locals 120, 151, 152 for the Central Communications Office)

RETREAT SCHEDULES FOR FATHERS

Feb 4-7 Thu-Sun Tagaytay Conference Center
Feb 18-21 Thu-Sun Makiling Main House (inv'tl)
Mar 3-6 Thu-Sun Makiling West Wing
Mar 10-13 Thu-Sun Makiling West Wing
Mar 17-20 Thu-Sun Makiling West Wing
Mar 24-26 Thu-Sun Makiling Main House
Mar 24-26 Thu-Sun Makiling West Wing
Mar 24-26 Thu-Sun Tagaytay Conference Center
Apr 28-May 1 Thu-Sun Makiling West Wing
May 12-15 Thu-Sun Makiling West Wing

For reservations and inquiries, please contact Ms. Leila Lerios of the Philippine Foundation at 817-2318 local 201 or 0928-5063688 or email philfoundation@pldtdsl.net.

The Parents Formation Office welcomes personal write-ups about parenting principles and experiences.
Please email them to mronawat@southridge.ph