



GIPSMEN



Who is GIPSMEN?

GIPSMEN is group of dads or father figures of students at GIPS, who aim to socialise and have fun on occasions, to build friendships, better understand what is going on at the school, and in their kid's school life, and in doing so become better dads.

GIPSMEN is not a fundraising initiative. It does not require any time commitment from GIPS dads, other than of a social nature.

GIPSMEN is supported by Garry Collins and the School Council. Pleasingly **Nathan Gilliland**, one of GIPS newest dads, has offered to be a teacher representative who will aim to join us at functions, help provide a link between dads and the school.

What is *The Fathering Project*?

GIPSMEN will also be supported by the **Fathering Project** – a non-for-profit charity set up in through the University of Western Australia, which seeks to inspire fathers and father figures to become better for the sake of our kids. The Fathering Project provides information (such as by weekly email tips), and advice, encouragement and ideas, through school-based dads groups such as GIPSMEN. Originating in Perth, the Fathering Group now has partnered with several hundred schools around the county.

The Fathering Group highlights that fathering is not an issue that is talked a lot about amongst fathers, yet there are enormous benefits for both dads and kids when dads feel supported and informed to enable them to be the best fathers they can be. They point to research which shows a positive relationship with your kids means they are less likely to use illicit substances, have improved mental health and a stronger sense of worth resulting in less self-harm and suicide, better in health and general wellbeing, further developed cognitive ability, and perform better in schools. (see table below)

<http://thefatheringproject.org/> The best way to be a better dad is to be aware of the need to spend quality time, to learn how to be better and to regularly practice positive behaviours. Your journey as a father will affect your kids' life. And it perhaps the most important job we can ever do.

What's coming up?

GIPSMEN will begin on our Father's Day breakfast this Friday, 1 September, with a breakfast and some fun activities. We will also have Ian Coutts from the Fathering Project, to say a few words.



We are aiming to organise four GIPSMEN functions for the year – approximately one each term. They will kick off in an informal and low-key nature, such as after-works drinks, or a kebab night. Over time, if there is interest, we can build on this to add guest speakers, and Father-Kids events, such as min-golf, orienteering, play/cultural nights, VFL/ local footy matches, CBD visitor attractions, and even the lofty goal of an annual father & kids camp, which some other primary schools do very successfully (eg StKilda Primary).

Dads, really hope to see you at the Brekky and get behind some our GIPSMEN gigs!

Kind Regards

Bryan McMeikan

GIPSMEN Coordinator

bryandsas@hotmail.com 0456 192199

Fathering Project – Research

Developmental Area	Characteristics of a Father
Child Development	Especially important to impact in the birth – 6 years: Affection Play – rough & tumble Risk
Social Skills & Relationships	Accessibility Engagement Responsibility
Mental Health & Self Esteem	Warm Supportive Involved Engaged
Tobacco, Drugs & Alcohol	Model appropriate behaviour Early conversations Agreed behaviours Convey skills for issue management
School Engagement & Performance	Perceptions of importance of school School involvement Father-teacher relationship quality
Bullying	Support Low levels of father child conflict Communication Meet child's friends
Adolescent Sexual Behaviour	Manage media 'sexualisation' of children
Delinquent Behaviours	No convictions by father Appropriate modelling Values
Overweight/Obesity & Physical Activity	Own health & wellbeing Verbal encouragement Play with & challenge kids Paying of sports fees