



The New Father: A Dad's Guide to the First Year (New Father Series)

By Armin A. Brott

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An indispensable handbook on all aspects of fatherhood during the first 12 months, by the author of *The Expectant Father*.

The essential handbook for all things first-year father is now fully updated and revised. Not only will new dads get a month-by-month guide to their baby's development, men reading *The New Father* will learn how they change, grow, and develop over the first twelve months of fatherhood.

In each chapter, Brott focuses on What's Going On with the Baby; What You're Going Through; What's Going On with Your Partner; You and Your Baby; Family Matters; and more. The latest research, as well as time-honored wisdom--and humor, thanks to New Yorker cartoons and Brott's light touch--make *The New Father* indispensable for the modern father who doesn't want to miss a moment of his child's first year.

What's new?

- How technology is changing fatherhood
- Changing definitions of fatherhood
- Changes in the way society deals with dads—from changing tables in public men's rooms to workplace flexibility
- Research proving that a father's love is just as important as a mother's
- How being an involved dad rewires a man's brain
- How changes in women's roles in the family affect dads and their roles
- Special concerns for: young dads, older dads, at-home dads, unmarried dads, dads in same-sex couples, dads in blended families, dads of kids with special needs, and men who became dads with the help of technology
- The special impact dads have on girls and boys
- Specific strategies dads can use to get—and stay—involved in their children's lives
- Updated resources for new fathers

Not to mention new research and information on:

- How to understand what your baby is telling you
- Babies' amazing abilities
- Baby massage--they love it!
- The latest on vaccinations and healthcare
- And much, much more

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Editorial Review

Review

"In this third of his perfectly targeted book series for the modern dad, Brott demystifies child development ... and make[s] fathers... enjoy the vital role they play in their kids lives even more. A great addition to any parenthood library." —*Child* magazine

"Read a book? Who has time? But you'd be wise to find some so you can take advantage of a fabulous resource . . . The New Father." —*Sesame Street Parents*

"This book would make a great gift for any new dad." —Lawrence Kutner, Ph.D., columnist, *Parents* magazine

About the Author

Armin A. Brott has devoted the last 15 years to providing men with the tools, support, and knowledge to help them become the fathers they want to be—and their families need them to be. His seven critically acclaimed books for fathers have sold well over a million copies. Titles include *The Expectant Father: Facts, Tips, and Advice for Dads-to-Be* and *The Military Father: A Hands-on-Guide for Deployed Dads*. He has written on fatherhood for hundreds of newspapers and magazines and is a frequent guest on such television programs as the Today Show. He also writes a nationally syndicated newspaper column (Ask Mr. Dad), and hosts a syndicated radio show (Positive Parenting). He lives with his family in Oakland, California.

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Introduction

Nobody really knows how or when it started, but one of the most widespread—and most cherished—myths about child-rearing is that women are naturally more nurturing than men, that they are instinctively better at the parenting thing, and that men are nearly incompetent.

The facts, however, tell a very different story. A significant amount of research has proven that men are inherently just as nurturing and responsive to their children's needs as women. What too many men (and women) don't realize is that to the extent that women are "better" parents, it's simply because they've had more practice. In fact, the single most important factor in determining the depth of long-term father-child relationships is opportunity.

Basically, it comes down to this: "Having children makes you no more a parent than having a piano makes you a pianist," writes author Michael Levine in *Lessons at the Halfway Point*.

Men and women parent differently in a wide variety of ways:

- Dads tend to play more with their children than mothers do, and that play tends to be more rough-and-tumble and more unpredictable than mothers'. In other words, dads are more likely than moms to become human jungle gyms.

- Dads tend to emphasize independence more than moms and give children more freedom to explore. If a baby is struggling to grab a toy that's just out of reach, mothers are more likely to move the toy closer, while dads are more likely to wait a little longer, seeing whether the baby will be able to get it. Moms are more likely to pick up a toddler who's fallen, while dads are more likely to encourage the child to get up on his own.
- Dads tend to use more complex speech patterns than mothers, who tend to simplify what they're saying and slow it down. Dads also tend to ask their babies more open-ended questions (who, what, where, when, why) than moms, an approach that helps kids expand their vocabulary.
- Dads tend to think more about how a child will fare in the world as he or she grows; moms tend to think more about the child's emotional development. When reacting to a test score, for example, a dad might be concerned about how the score will affect the child's future plans and ability to be self-sufficient, while a mom is more likely to be concerned about how the score makes the child feel.
- Dads tend to represent the outside world while mothers represent the home. You can see this almost anywhere where parents are out with their babies: Dads tend to hold their children face out, while mothers hold them face in.

Please keep in mind here that I'm talking about general *tendencies*. Plenty of moms wrestle with their kids and use big words, and many dads rush to pick up fallen toddlers and hold their babies facing inward. The point is that they parent differently—not better or worse, just differently. And children benefit greatly from having plenty of exposure to both sides.

It shouldn't come as a surprise, then, that fathers have very different needs from mothers when it comes to parenting information and resources. But more than a decade into the twenty-first century, the vast majority of books, videos, seminars, and magazine articles on raising kids are still aimed primarily at women and focus on helping them acquire the skills they need to be better parents. Fathers have been essentially ignored—until now.

HOW THIS BOOK IS DIFFERENT

Because babies develop so quickly, most resources aimed at parents of infants (babies from birth through twelve months) are broken down by month and focus mostly on how babies develop during this period. That's pretty important stuff, so we spend a little time covering similar territory. However, the primary focus of *The New Father: A Dad's Guide to the First Year* is on how *dads* change, grow, and develop over the first twelve months of fatherhood. That's an approach that has rarely, if ever, been tried.

Going from *man* to *father* is one of the most dramatic changes you'll ever experience. It'll force you to rethink who you are, what you do, and what it means to be a man. Your relationships—with your partner, your parents, your friends, your coworkers—will change forever as you begin to reevaluate what's important to you and reorder your priorities. Some parts of the man-to-father transition are sudden: one day it's you and your partner, the next day you've got a baby. But for the most part, fatherhood is a gradual, ever-changing process that will last your entire lifetime. Most of us develop and change along fairly predictable lines, but the journey is always a little different for everyone.

The first year may be the most important one in your development as a father. It's the time when you start forming those all-important parent-child bonds and start laying the foundation of your lifelong relationship with each other. It's also especially interesting because the growth and development you experience during these first twelve months is kind of a condensed version of what you'll go through over the rest of your life as a parent.

Each of the chapters is divided into several major sections:

What's Going On with the Baby

This short section is designed to give you an overview of the four major areas of your baby's development: physical, intellectual, verbal, and emotional/social. A lot of what you're going to experience as a father is directly related to, or in response to, your children. So knowing the basics of your baby's growth will help put your own growth into better perspective. Please remember, however, that babies develop at different rates, and that the range of "normal" behavior is very wide. If your baby isn't doing the things covered in the predicted month, don't worry. But if he's more than a few months behind, check with your pediatrician.

What You're Going Through

Because the things new dads think, worry, panic, dream, and rejoice about have largely been ignored in parenting books, many men think the feelings and concerns they have are abnormal. In this section we dig deep into what new fathers go through and the ways they grow and develop—emotionally and psychologically—over the course of their fatherhood. You're a lot more normal than you think.

But wait, there's more...

What's Going On with Your Partner

One of the most important parts of being a good dad is being a good spouse. That's why I'm including special sections in the first several chapters that deal with your partner's physical, emotional, and psychological recovery and specific ways you can help.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marie Michael:

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