

Relationships Australia

VICTORIA

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Media release

What does being a cool dad mean in 2008?

Do you rejoice in being a dad, and see it as high up on your priority list? Then you are part of today's generation of 'cool dads', who see fathering as something really important, rather than putting it way down their list behind the demands of work.

That's the message from Relationships Australia (Victoria) counsellor Tony Gee, who is also part of DadsLink, a group set up to promote and encourage dads to be the best fathers they can in a challenging world.

"Today, cool dads are those who spend time nurturing their kids and putting the time into developing a relationship with them. They are rounded individuals who cuddle their children as well as play kick to kick with their sons and daughters in the park – surely part of any Australian child's cultural heritage!" Tony said.

Dads should be congratulated for having come a long way from their fathers' and grandfathers' generations, when their role in childbirth was to hand out the cigars outside the labour ward, be the stern disciplinarian with the stiff upper lip and leave management of the children to their wives.

"Today's young dad is often seen wheeling the pram to the local café on a weekend morning for a latte and a babycino while mum has a sleep-in – that's when he's not taking the older ones to Auskick or ballet class," Tony said.

"With Father's Day this weekend, it's worth remembering that being attuned to the needs of the family is a good start to being a great dad. Being a committed dad and taking responsibility for developing a strong individual relationship with your children, rather than leaving it all to your partner is the way to go."

Tony said developing strong individual relationships enabled dads to maintain the links with their children should their parental partnership break up.

Relationships Australia (Victoria) congratulates Victoria's fathers on their special day on Sunday, and invites dads of all generations and their families to a special DadsLink Father's Day Brunch in Riversdale Park, Riversdale Road, Middle Camberwell.

DadsLink is a joint initiative of RAV, YMCA and the Life Is Foundation. More information: www.relationships.com.au or www.ymca.org.au/dadslink

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