



**YEAR
OF THE
DAD**



FATHER PROOFING

Guidance for Marketing
and Communications

FACTSHEET

Resources for
Employers & Organisations



This document is designed to highlight the importance of 'father proofing' your work to ensure that dads are fully included, and to give you some practical ideas about how to do that.

Father-proofing consists of reviewing policies, practices and services to ensure that the language and examples used draw equally upon men and fathers as they do upon women and mothers.

What is "Father Proofing"

Father-proofing is a way of encouraging greater inclusiveness.

Why 'Father Proof'?

Realisation of the value of involved fathers at all levels of society has grown in recent years and expectations have grown apace.

The value of involving fathers is based on four principles;

- it increases children's well-being.
- it boosts men's self-esteem and improves well-being and purpose in life.
- it boosts social and community resources by, for example, helping out others with parenting, and by participating in group play in local parks.
- it makes for greater equality in the home.

Agencies ought to consider what they can do to support greater father involvement in all aspects of their work. The information set out below will help you include dads in your policies and activities, for example by promoting shared parental leave.



'Father-proofing' in action...

Reviewing publicity materials can result in quick wins by simply ceasing to perpetuate stereotypes and starting to show a father presence in homes, family life and elsewhere such as schools and the social lives of children.

Advertising products which assume that mum will be purchasing food for children are an example of how not to include dads.



How to include and involve dads?

Some actions you may consider taking are:

- **Display positive images of fathers** in internal and external marketing and communications materials; have you fatherproofed your foyer and other public spaces, are there only women's magazines available in waiting areas?
- **Consider the use of language** in communication with parents to ensure that fathers as well as mothers feel included. Most fathers don't feel included when the word 'parent' is used. When writing about parents, use the terms 'father' and 'mother'. Consider having a regular 'Fathers' Day', when fathers bring their children to work.
- **Include fathers' views** when canvassing opinion and communicate directly to them as dads or fathers rather than as 'parents'. This might involve canvassing at times and places suitable to fathers e.g. when they have a baby and before they take leave from work.
- **Be inclusive when recording any information to do with mums and dads** ensuring that there is equal space given for the father's name, address, and telephone number.
- **Correspondence to parents** should have a father's and mother's name on it. This is a simple step that shows that fathers' participation is also highly valued. This practice also serves as a means of contacting the father if he does not live in the child's home.
- **Address men as fathers too**, acknowledging the value of a man's identity as a father.
- **Share the evidence** which reinforces the difference a positive male role model can make to children's well-being.

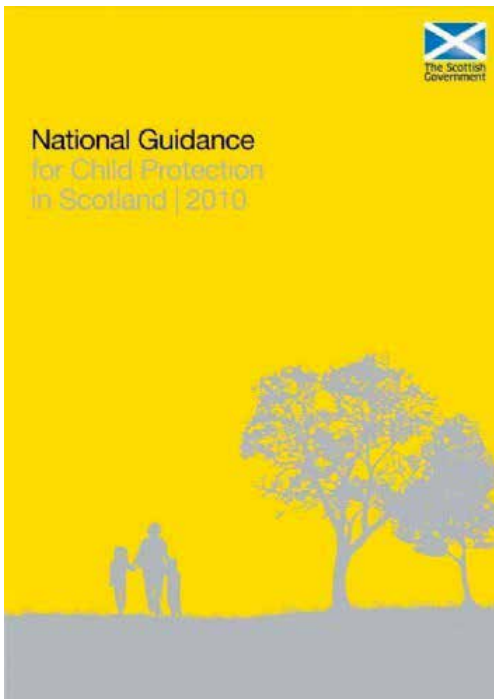


The Organisational Ask

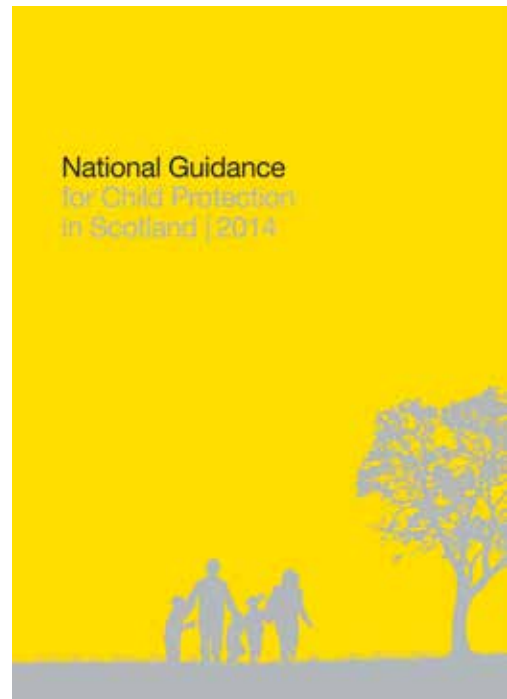
There are additional steps you can take at a wider organisational level to develop a fully father-inclusive culture, such as;

- High quality leadership that exemplifies policy and practices necessary for father-inclusive practice e.g. a Fathers' Champion in your place of work.
- Explicit policies and practices targeted at engaging fathers or including fathers in the work that is done, e.g. by asking 'is there a fathers' dimension here?'
- An explicit and shared recognition by management and senior staff that involved fathers make a significant difference to children and young people's lives and those of mothers.
- The creation of a better knowledge base of fathers in your organisation or those served by your organization by collecting information and data and sharing this evidence with other organisations.

Father Proofing in Action



Before



After

Additional resources for employers, service providers and families are available at:
www.yearofthedad.org

 [#yearofthedad](https://twitter.com/yearofthedad)

 www.facebook.com/yearofthedad

 www.youtube.com/fathernetscot

 [@yearofthedad2016](https://www.instagram.com/yearofthedad2016)

