

GOOD DADS 2.0

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of Module 2, participants will be able to do the following:

- Recognize that a family, like any successful building project, needs a plan with measurements and standards to ensure success.
- Explain why standards matter to building and to families.
- Define “value” and describe the relationship between values and standards.
- Identify personal values important to a safe, stable, and happy home.
- Explain how and why values change as one matures.
- Explain how the values of a parent might influence a child’s wellbeing.

MODULE 2

MODULE 2 OVERVIEW

SITE AND BUILDING PLANS: YOUR FAMILY'S FOUNDATION

5 min.

I. What's New with the Crew?

Use this time for dads to update the group about what is going on in their lives. Facilitators should ask about work, relationships, etc. Consider using "What's New with the Crew?" activity suggestions in the Facilitator Guide Appendix to spark conversation.

10 min.

II. Following the Plans

View "Contractor Clip" video and discuss the kinds of plans required to build a house. Talk about why having a plan and sticking to it is important. Optionally view the "Participant Q&A" Video Module to spark additional conversation.

15 min.

III. Plumb Bobs, Levels, Lasers, and Squares

Mini-lesson on the importance of measurement tools in construction and how they relate to values and standards in one's family.

15 min.

IV. What's in Your Building Code?

Participants explore how their values and standards may have changed over time.

20 min.

V. What Standards Do You Stand for?

Participants stand on an imaginary line according to what standard they say they believe or value. The goal is to explore unexamined assumptions.

20 min.

VI. Nailing it Down

Participants draw and compare two symbolic homes: one from their family of origin and the other an ideal home they want for themselves in the future.

5 min.

VII. Checking for Square

Participants may begin to question some of the values they hold, become even firmer in their beliefs, or think about changing the things they do because of the impact these values may have on their children. Facilitators should solicit questions from the group.

MATERIALS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Contractor Clips
- ☐ Equipment to show Contractor Clips
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Whiteboard and/or newsprint
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Colored markers
- ☐ Smaller markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils (optional)
- ☐ Blank sheets of printer paper
- ☐ Facilitator toolkit: Plum bob, square, level, hammer, and nails
- ☐ Participant Guides

I. WHAT'S NEW WITH THE CREW?

Use this time for dads to update the group about what is going on in their lives. Facilitators should ask about work, relationships, etc. See **Appendix A** for ideas to spark conversation.

II. FOLLOWING THE PLANS *Page 1 Participant Guide*

View Contractor Clip #2

ASK: Why are site and building plans important for a successful outcome?

ASK: Why is it important to check your work as you go?



Open the session with a discussion on why site and building plans are critical to a successful outcome. Ask participants to do a **Paired Share** to talk about something they tried to build as a child that they constructed without a clear plan (e.g. a tree house, a hiding place in the woods, a blanket fort in the living room). How did it work out? How did that structure stand the test of time?

Make the following key points:

A construction team can't measure their success without first understanding the goals for the project, i.e., the building plan.

Every construction team will approach a new project with specific standards and goals determined by the site and building plans. No matter what the structure looks like in the end, adherence to those plans is critical for a sound structure.

Goals or values inform our standards and serve as a measuring stick or standard for success.

Site plans tell us what is most important to the homeowner. Do they want a garage or a carport? Do they want three bedrooms or four? Do they want a porch or deck? It all depends on what the future occupant values. Each house is unique in that it suits the specific purposes and values of the owners.

Likewise, because each family unit is different, no two ways of leading a family will look the same. Good fathers understand the importance of parenting their children in ways that fit the individual needs of the children and the priorities and goals of the family.

Values might look different, but the goals are often the same.

When children construct a tree house, their primary concern is to get it built so they can start playing in it. They skip most of the math and just make their best guesses as they go using whatever they have at hand. Little or no consideration is given to standards for being square and plumb. But what is the price of that quick and easy method of construction? Does it last? Is it strong and stable? Is the tree house they build in July the kind of place they want to hang out in January?

The overall goal of a sound structure remains the same.

Without a solid plan, a contractor and his team will have a slim chance of building a sound structure. What's important to remember is that a construction crew's goal remains the same for each build: to create a stable and functional space that suits the needs of the future owner(s). While site plans and building plans vary, and different contractors have different approaches, the end goal is consistent from project to project. The building must be safe for all who live there, meet the code of the community, and meet the needs and dreams for the residents who will live there.

The same can be said about successful families. Most people want a happy family. They want a strong, safe, and secure relationship with the people they love. Some are just much better at connecting this goal with the actual values and activities that help them achieve their dreams.

There is a cost to breaking "rules" with your plan.

Some architects can probably design houses that break a lot of the typical "rules" about square lines and flat walls, and if they are very careful, it might even work well enough. But it's going to be a particularly difficult and expensive house to build. That doesn't mean it can't be done, but reality is out there waiting to remind the architect and builder that choosing to break those rules of reality has a cost. Many times messing with the typical rules and standards is expensive and asking for trouble.



ASK: In what ways have people experimented with standards or rules for a family? How have those experiments or changes worked?



View Participant Q&A #2 (Optional)

III. PLUMB BOBS, LEVELS, LASERS, AND SQUARES *Page 2 Participant Guide*

The most important tools in home building appear to be inactive.

The most important tools in building a home don't dig holes in the ground, cut a board, shape concrete, drive screws, or hammer nails. Rather, the most important tools just lie there. They lie there and measure where we are. Plumb bobs tell us which way is up or down. Levels tell us if everything is straight. Squares tell us where things are in relation to each other. And lasers today are used very creatively to tell us all kinds of information about where we are.

What do all these tools have in common? They all connect to some kind of universal force, a "Known Constant" that tells where we are in relation to that constant. It's kind of like how sailors used the North Star to know where they were when at sea. In the same way, plumb bobs and levels connect directly to planetary gravity to provide their data. Lasers and squares attach themselves to an established reference and they tell us where we are in relation to that.

Our values are much like that universal force of gravity, or that straight line reference we can measure against.

When we know and understand what we think is truly important in life, many of our choices become easier to make. For many of us, those values come from our faith, our parents, our closest friends, our most important life experiences, and perhaps what is sometimes called our "world view." These influences come together inside of us to create our idea of right and wrong. This is that internal truth detector inside of a person going off and saying, "Yep, I think that is right." They basically held up their personal "plumb bob" next to what was said and found that it was straight up and down.

A father's values are critical to his family's happiness, safety, and security.

As fathers, it is critical that we approach building our lives and homes according to those values we know we can trust to be true and real. When we do, the quality shows in the outcome. Have you ever heard of a builder that tells his prospective clients that he doesn't care about getting his work square or his lines straight? Probably not. Most of them will tell you that they believe in only doing the very best quality work every time.

But have you ever heard someone actually getting poor quality work from a builder they hired? How could it be that someone does poor quality work if they tell you they believe in only the best quality work? They said their values were all about quality work, but in reality, their values were closer to trying to get by with doing shoddy work and maybe passing it off as quality.

Fathers can say that they hold certain values and they believe all the right things, but their true values are reflected in the homes they build for their families. Children have their own little plumb bobs and levels inside their hearts and minds. They see how their parents use or don't use theirs and they are learning what is important from them. They are watching to figure out which way is up.

ASK: In what ways do other folks run their families differently from the way you run your family?

ASK: What is your definition of the word *value*?

ASK: What kinds of values do you see as important for a man to be a good dad? Why are these important?

ASK: How do your values or standards affect the way you live your life?

IV. WHAT'S IN YOUR BUILDING CODE?

Page 3 Participant Guide

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: Instruct participants to put a check-mark in the appropriate column to indicate the value of each item—*Very Important*, *Somewhat Important*, or *Least Important*. Then have participants go back through the table with two different colors of pen, pencil, or highlighter to mark five items **most** important and five items **least** important to them.

WHAT I VALUE	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	LEAST IMPORTANT
Being well-known in the community.			
Personal appearance.			
Having successful children.			
Being happily married/in a committed relationship.			
Being a great dad.			
Having fun.			
Having the respect of others.			
Financial security.			
Having and enjoyable job.			
Spending time with friends.			
Helping others in the community.			
Having a nice car.			
Living by my faith/beliefs.			
Having a healthy sexual relationship with my partner.			
Expressing my creativity (music, writing, drawing, etc.)			
Having trustworthy friends.			
Being fit and healthy.			
Living according to my cultural traditions.			
Attaining higher education (after high school).			
Caring for aging parents.			
Owning a home.			
Traveling.			

CONSTRUCTION CREW ACTIVITY

Page 4 Participant Guide

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: When participants have finished filling out the table, instruct them to form groups of 3–4. Invite them to brainstorm 1–2 more values that aren't on the list already and write them down on page 4 of the Participant Guide. Then allow 5 or so minutes as the group works through the rest of the questions on page 4.



ASK: How are your values similar or different from the family in which you grew up?



ASK: How do your values influence your day-to-day decisions?



ASK: Which values are more difficult to live by?

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: Ask participants to share what they discussed and wrote in the Construction Crew Activity. Consider writing the main takeaways on a piece of chart paper or a dry-erase board at the front of the room.

V. WHAT STANDARDS DO YOU STAND FOR?

Page 5 Participant Guide



Tighten the Bolts:

This activity is most effective if you have participants actually stand on an imaginary line according to what standard they say they believe or value. Doing this requires a room large enough for participants to stand and physically move themselves from one side of the room to another. If the meeting room isn't big enough, consider using a hallway. Head outside if weather permits. If using the imaginary line is impossible, you can use the alternate activity below.

Why do we hold certain beliefs or values?

If you hold a certain belief or value, it is important to know why you hold that value. Are you just saying it because you heard your father say it, or do you truly stand by it? You may hold a controversial belief or value. When talking about beliefs and values, it is important to understand that others may not agree with us, but by having a calm, clear discussion, both parties can gain knowledge and understanding of each other.

SAY: The following statements are designed to help you see what you value. After each statement rank your agreement with the statement on a scale from "1" to "10," with "1" being "Strongly Disagree" and "10" being "Strongly Disagree." Don't worry, there's plenty of room in the middle.

1. Men and women can care for children equally.
2. Fathers should stop showing affection to their sons when they become teenagers.
3. Once you have a child, you become a man.
4. Men who father children should be forced to pay child support.
5. A man who shows his emotions too often should be considered weak.
6. It is a woman's responsibility, not a man's, to use birth control.
7. A man should take any job available to support his family.
8. There are things a man should never tell his partner.
9. Marriage messes up good relationships between men and women.
10. It is not a father's job to do things like change diapers, bathe, or feed young children.

VI. NAILING IT DOWN *Page 6 Participant Guide*

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: Display and consider passing around the construction hammer and large nail. The following suggested narrative should be relayed in your own words to facilitate/initiate the discussion.

Our values create our limits, but they also define our freedom.

If we follow our values, there may be things that we cannot do. They might be things we once believed were fun or good, but if they don't agree with our values we will either have to jettison the value or the thing we used to like to do. This means we are taking on certain limits to our freedom. Freedom is generally thought of as a good thing, and limits are not. How do we handle this?

ASK: How do our values define our freedom? Is that a good thing? Is freedom without limits a good thing?

Values are bigger than the moment.

If you build a house, how long does gravity affect the house? Can we get by with ignoring some of the rules now and then? If I'm on a diet to lose weight before summer, could I have a banana split after supper tonight? If I'm hyper-allergic to shrimp, can I eat a few of them now and then?

Perhaps we may feel like it is too late to make some changes that our values suggest we should make. For instance, one dad thought he was so addicted to cigarettes that he just didn't think he could ever get free from them, even though his values had grown to where he didn't agree with smoking anymore. He tried repeatedly to stop smoking but never was able to quit. He was afraid his sons were going to take up smoking because of his example. How does he reconcile this?

Values must be compatible with one another.

What happens when our values come into conflict with one another? How do we deal with the idea that two different values that we have determined as "true" don't agree with each other? For example: What happens when we know about something evil happening, perhaps a crime or injustice of some sort, and we find out that the person responsible is hiding from law enforcement? Or perhaps a person has mistreated someone's sister and so they are avoiding the brother? Which weighs more, our value for seeing justice done or our value of not getting involved in telling or "ratting someone out?"

Our values are the heritage plans we pass to our sons and daughters.

Most people gain at least some of their values from their parents. Dads have the opportunity, and perhaps we should say the privilege, to send their values into the future of the world through the children they raise. What do you think would be most valuable to your children and their children for you to send them long after you are gone?

Understanding your values means recognizing where you came from.

It is important to ask yourself why you believe the things you do. The goal is to truly stand by one's values, not do claim you believe something just because it's easy or expected.

As we have learned, no two men grew up in the exact same environment, meaning our values can change as we learn more about the world and our place in it.

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: Using concepts from the Word Bank on page 6 of the Participant Guide, each participant should use pencils, pens, markers, colored pencils, or other media to draw their childhood home on a separate sheet of paper. This drawing will be compared to their ideal home drawn in Module 1.

Make clear that the goal is not necessarily to draw a faithful representation of their actual home, but rather to illustrate symbolically what it was like growing up.

Word Bank

Sturdy	Fun	Organized	Annoying
Energetic	Spooky	Safe	Quiet
Chaotic	Falling Apart	Cozy	Welcoming
Proud	Harmony	Sad	Lonely
Shame	Ugly	Expensive	Big
Tidy	Small	Messy	Flimsy

When dads have had enough time to draw their childhood homes, prompt participants to draw their ideal home using the same concepts from the word bank. Make clear that the goal is to illustrate a happy home symbolically, and that an artistic talent for realism is not important.

The purpose of the Word Bank is to get participants thinking about how to describe their childhood environments, safe or unsafe. It can be a jumping off point, and participants do not need to have each word in the bank represented in their final illustrations.

When everyone has finished their illustrations, ask for volunteers to show their work to the group and describe the symbolism of the homes.



Tighten the Bolts:

In some classes, facilitators may find that there is not enough time in the lesson to cover the Nailing it Down activity described above and in Page 6 of the Participant Guide. The Nailing it Down activity is optional, and in some cases, may be best suited as homework for participants.

VII. CHECKING FOR SQUARE

After completing the activity on page 6, you may begin to question some of the values you hold or become even firmer in your beliefs and why you do the things you do.

A construction crew regularly performs a series of checks and inspections to make sure it's up to code before moving onto the next step in the process. After all, without a good foundation, the home has a slim chance of enduring harsh weather or standing the test of time.

Good fathers must do the same thing by asking themselves if their values are truly sound. This sort of reflection isn't always easy, but it's important to know where you stand with your values and why. This way, you and your family can make it through hard times together because of the unity you establish and the strong foundational values you set.

It's important to ask yourself why you believe the things you do. The goal is to truly stand by one's values, not to simply claim you believe something just because it's easy or expected. Ask yourself: Are my beliefs and actions up to code?

SAY: In the minutes we have left before dismissal, think about the things you value and write on one or more of the following questions:

- Can I explain any discrepancies between what I value and how I behave?
- What happens when I do not behave according to my values?
- What did I value as a child? How have my values changed over the years?
- What values do I want to pass onto my children? Are there any I want to change so they do not inherit them?
- How will I communicate and lead my children in my most important values?