

Reading survey shows Kiwi dads want to read more to their kids

A survey¹ released by Paper Plus Group today on the reading habits of New Zealand parents shows only six per cent of households name dads as the main reader of stories to their children.

Three out of four dads want to read more to their children, stating a lack of time as their main barrier to doing so.

While mothers are the main story reader in the household, fathers who responded to the survey indicated that the overwhelming majority of them (94%) are reading to their children at least once a week.

Books, as well as dads as reading role models, are hugely important to a child's development, says Tom Nicholson, Professor of Literacy Education at Massey University.

"Having a male role model when it comes to reading can have a really positive effect on a child. When fathers take an active role in their child's reading and education, he or she is more likely to do better at school," says Tom.

"Boys tend to dislike reading much more than girls and they over-represent in remedial reading classes - so dads reading to boys especially, is a really important message to get out there to New Zealand fathers."

Professor Tom Nicholson has a number of tips for dads when reading to their kids:

- Make the first line of the story sound really exciting
- Change your voice according to the characters and the action
- Pause at the end of sentences for dramatic effect
- Slow down as you reach the end of the story.

Sam Shosanya, Paper Plus Group CEO, says they carried out the survey ahead of Father's Day to gain insights into the reading habits of New Zealand parents, particularly fathers, when it comes to their children.

"Of the dads reading to their children, it's great to see more than a third (35%) are reading daily with their kids, with most dads reading three or more books a month to their children. We know dads are reading role models, especially to boys, and books play a very important role in a child's relationship with their dad."

The survey identified Hairy Maclary as the favourite books Kiwi parents like to read to their children.

"Hairy Maclary books have been long-time top sellers in our stores and it's pleasing to see the books are still at the top of many parents' list," says Sam.

¹ Survey results from 9,182 respondents from the Paper Plus My Beal Deal and Fly Buys database members

“We think reading a bedtime story is a great way to end this Father’s Day and a book, whether for dad to read to himself or to the kids, is a perfect gift,” says Sam.

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