

# IDAHO DADS MATTER!

A Specialty Publication Featuring Idaho Parents

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## The Dive-Right-In Dad

*...Trusts His Ability to Communicate with his Son*

COEUR D' ALENE—C.J. Stark and his son Leon, 7, may be settled in on the sofa watching another episode of the old TV show *Family Matters* if you stop by their place. You might see father and son walking



around Midtown, Coeur d'Alene, too, talking about anything and everything with Leon leading the conversation with questions. C.J. says trust and conversation are keys to successful parenting. “I didn’t have bad parents; I really have great parents,” he said.

“Growing up in my house you couldn’t really tell your family what you were up to as a kid, or if you were doing something you shouldn’t.” So, all topics are on the table with Leon, C.J. said. “I want him to be able to talk to me about anything, and

I make it a point to ask him if there’s anything bothering him.”

Dads need to be lighthearted where possible, says C.J., thus creating an atmosphere where just about everything can be worked out by simply talking things out. “If my kid is throwing a fit, I just try to get him out of it by making him laugh,” he said. “I don’t ever really get angry with him, and he doesn’t really get in trouble if he does something that he’s not supposed to do; my parenting doesn’t really revolve around punishment.”

Asked what he’d tell other dads, C.J. said this: “Be in every part of your child’s life. Believe that you’ve got what it takes to be a good dad and trust that your child will learn from you and thrive. It is this belief that makes parenting worth the effort.”

**“Believe you’ve got what it takes to be a good dad and trust your child will learn from you.”**

— C.J. Stark