

# IDAHO DADS MATTER!

*A Specialty Publication by The Down To Earth Dad® Featuring Idaho Parents!*

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## Operation Fatherhood

*...The Task at Hand is Being the Best Dad Possible*

CASCADE—Fatherhood is more exciting, challenging, and rewarding than being a soldier, firefighter, or deputy sheriff, says Mike Lacroix. “I’ve fought wars—I was in the military for 10 years—and I’ve done some awesome firefighting and I’m currently in law enforcement but raising kids has been, hands down, the absolute best experience of my life,” he said proudly.



The father of four who used to camp on smokey forest floors on the fire line now camps with his eight-year-old daughter, Lyndie on the living room floor and casually explores the woods with Michael, 4, before or after playing catch in the yard.

“Lyndie and I just put a pillow and blanket on the floor and try to simulate camping outdoors. We stay up and giggle and I tell her stories about bears and wolves,” he said. All that carpet camping serves as practice for Lyndie for the family’s much anticipated annual summer camping trip to Glacier National Park.

Mike’s daughter Hallie 6, likes hearing her dad’s true childhood stories at bedtime, and Jaycie, 2, really likes her father to read *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do you See?*

Children need dads engaged in their lives, says Mike. “I didn’t have that growing up; I made a commitment to do things better. Children with involved fathers are fortunate,” he said, noting he and the children’s mom (Mike’s wife, Darcie) strive to be involved parents at school and home.

Asked what words of encouragement he’d offer other fathers, Mike said this: “Be present. Love them unconditionally, teach them the right things—the right path to go down. They’re young and they don’t know the way. Sometimes it takes a few—even constant—reminders for them to figure things out, but we’ve (dads) just got to have grace for them and allow them to learn.” Then there’s one of the hardest things about parenting, according to Mike Lacroix: “Sometimes, we must allow them to fail so they can learn on their own.”

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