

# IDAHO DADS

# MATTER!

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## The Tries-Hard Dad

*...He Sings the Song of Fatherhood Proudly*

POST FALLS—Single dad Mike Gallagher played in pickup bands in his teens and 20's, but he only recently re-entered the music space he loves so much, singing songs and playing instruments with his boys at home.

"I got married and we started having kids in my late 20's and that's when I kind of stopped playing music," he explained. "And now that we have the boys, I've really reinvigorated my love of music again. I've taken them to concerts at the park and we'll go to weeknight music events in summer. Michael (10) gets right next to the band and dances, and he loves talking to musicians," he said proudly.



William, 4, "has his own playlist," says his dad. "He loves singing and listening to music—anything from nursery rhymes to Linda Ronstadt to The Beatles to Frosty the Snowman. "I grew up listening to music around my father, so I just assumed that was what you did with your kid, right?"

His youngest son's passion for music is surpassed only by his desire to wrestle his father—anytime and anyplace—indoors and outside. "I try and give him as much (physical) attention as I can. I'm an active guy, so I try to get him outside as much as possible," Mike said. "He likes reading books and being involved in the stories (so) I act out the characters and he gets a kick out of it," Mike said.

"It's nice seeing Michael on the couch reading on his own. I've given him the old 'Hey, instead of iPad time, why don't you read for 15 minutes?' nudge. The boys have a lot of the same interests as me, but really, it's a matter of, 'Hey guys, this is what I love. This is what I enjoy. Would you guys like to be a part of it?'"

Asked what advice he'd offer other dads, Mike said this: "Spending time is vital, even though you don't get much time to yourself. My biggest challenge is my patience. One of my triggers is a messy room. It's just I feel like in my head that if I'm organized, I can deal with life, but if my house is disorganized it just messes up my mind. Sometimes I'll raise my voice to (Michael) and it's not his fault. So, what I've been starting to do is instead of going in there and just being like, 'Michael, what's wrong? Why can't we do this?' I start to say, "okay, let's start by picking up a few things, and see if that works better. Listen to them; just hear what they need. I can't say I'm very successful at that, but I try my best."

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— Mike Gallagher