

# IDAHO DADS MATTER!

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

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## The Ready-to-Help Dad

*... Puts His Children at the Top of His Priorities*

McCALL—Steve Keaveny lets Sam, 5; and Ben, 4, use him as a cushion against life—literally. “There’s lots of jumping off the top bunk. I don’t jump off the bed; I’m the one who gets jumped *on*,” he explains. “They crawl up, get to the top, and they jump on the ‘landing zone’—that’s me,” he said with a laugh.



Sam likes riding bikes with his dad and building with LEGOs too. “On a normal bike-ride day, we go to our neighborhood park and get hot chocolate along the way to mom’s work,” Steve explained. “Sam has lots of LEGOs and building blocks, and there’s lots of fixing things together. Both kids like to be involved when I work on the bikes. We have a ‘project bike’ they can wrench on that I don’t really care about the outcome, so they can work on that bike and have fun,” he said.

“This morning we played with blocks and then we did some juicing. Sam was really excited about juicing, so we picked up the blocks first because I’m trying to instill a little bit of ‘wrap up our last activity’ with them. “Today (the juice) was apples and cucumbers. They just like the process of it. I make it in a way (that) they like to drink it. If they don’t finish it, I can drink it,” Steve explained.

“Ben likes to ride shotgun anywhere I go. He enjoys reading books in the middle of the day and building things with LEGOs and blocks. I teach them the things they need to do—reading, writing, doing math—along with the things they’re interested in. When they express genuine interest in something I’m doing, I try to lay that instruction to their level and make it engaging for them,” he said.

A daily family tradition finds Steve and the children’s mom, his wife, Amanda, sharing warm comments with the kids nightly. “I’m kind of saying, ‘thank you for being part of a great day,’” he said. “Love your kids, make the most of every day, and encourage their interests and aptitudes. Let them see your gratitude for them.”

**“Give them positive reinforcement as often as you give them direction.”**

— Steve Keaveny