

IDAHO DADS MATTER!

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The Sage Dad-Grandpa

...He Listens More Than He Talks, and Kids Have Lots to Say

CASTELEFORD—Rick Rodgers knows a thing or two about interacting with Idaho youth. That’s because he’s the father of four adult children, grandpa to eight kids, and he’s talked with hundreds of Magic Valley 4-H’ers across four decades as a leader and beef committee member in the program, and he’s a Castelford School District bus supervisor who has driven many students.



He’ll be the first to admit that he doesn’t know everything. Even so, he knows he’s learned plenty about listening to Magic Valley children and youth who have plenty to say to attentive adults.

“I’ve always enjoyed helping out in 4-H programs trying to help kids learn the value in life,” he said. “I’ve worked with different aspects of kids in different capacities, and I’ve found that if you’re honest and positive toward them, then most of the time they’ll respond to what you want them to do,” says Rick. “(But) if you’re always angry at them, or you come across as thinking they should just listen to you—which sometimes they should—then communication is tougher.”

Sharing his parenting and grandparenting philosophy, Rick Rodgers said this: “The biggest thing is teaching children to be respectful to one another and to adults—teaching them how to help others. Motivate kids to do their best and be positive toward them. Treat them as if they are a positive entity—the things they’re saying and doing. If you make mistakes, learn from them, and try to do better next time,” he said.

“Listening is one of the bigger things because if you’re not listening to a kid and they think they’re talking to nobody—even though you’re right there but not actually listening—then that’s a way for kids to lose interest in talking to anyone and they don’t want to help out as much with anything. I think a dad needs to pay attention to his kids and be consistent and respect his kids all the time—even though the answer they wanted was ‘yes’ and you told them ‘no,’” Rick said, noting this applies to children on the school bus and yes, even to his beloved grandchildren whom he looks forward spending lots of time with this summer.

“The biggest thing is teaching your children and grandchildren to be respectful to one another and other people.”

— Rick Rodgers