

# IDAHO DADS MATTER!

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

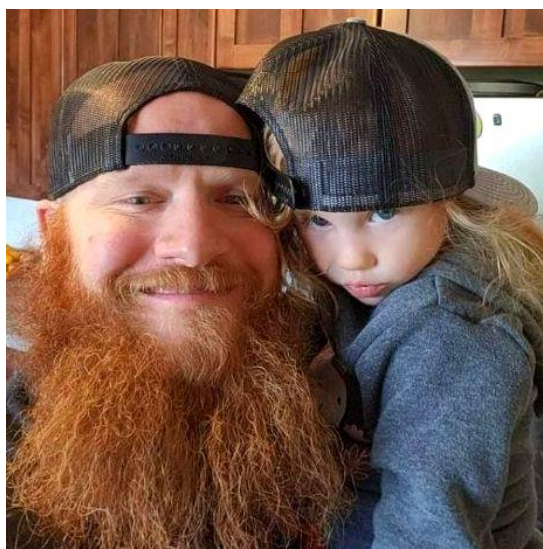
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## The Always-Teaching Dad

*...Gives His Daughter Tools for the Future*

ST. ANTHONY—Liviah Long, 2, walks to the shed daily with her father to get food for the family's pigs, turkeys, and ducks. "She's got chores, so she's caring for things already," he said proudly. "There's lots of animals for her to interact with when you count our two pit bulls and the deer and moose that come in."



"We live on the river, so we like to go out and fish and throw rocks in the water, and just going on nature walks," he said warmly. "I'm a stay-at-home dad now, so we get to hang out all the time," he explained.

"Liviah knows I love her no matter what. She also knows that when mom or dad says something, we mean it and she needs to do it. We love her, but she's expected to do stuff," he said. The nightly family routine includes dad and mom reading stories to their daughter who, says her father, "really loves her books."

"I love watching her figure things out. She comes into the shop, and we work on my motorcycle together. She grabs tools and figures out how to use them without me teaching her," he said. "I like watching her brain work and figure

things out."

Asked what advice he might offer other dads, Cody Long said this: "Be present in their lives; that's your job. Be present, and when they grab your hand, you go do stuff with them. Get off the couch."

"I used to work with high-risk youth, and 99% of them didn't have dads. You just being present and invested in your kids' lives makes all the difference. You're going to make mistakes; that doesn't matter," he said, "because if you're there and present, you can fix things and it's okay to say you were wrong or that you messed up," he notes. "Just be there so they understand that in the hard times (and) in the good times, you're there. Period."

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— Cody Long