
What is Dads Express?

Origins

Dads Express arose from the 'It Can Be Done' Conference held in May 2002 (see www.mensproject.org/issues/icbd.html). Feedback from this event indicated that there was a desire to have further opportunities for those interested in work with fathers to meet and share experience. A planning group was formed to bring this ideal forward and they established "Dads Express".

Our Definition of "Father"

A "father" is ... any man in a significant parenting relationship with children and young people regardless of circumstances.

Vision

Our vision is of a society in which all men who parent play a full role in family life and are encouraged, enabled, supported and resourced to do so.

Mission

To establish and maintain an informal community of interest - comprised of individuals and organisations, men and women - that is committed to ensuring that men who parent can become "good enough fathers" rather than "perfect fathers".

Aim

To organise an annual Standing Conference on fatherhood.

Objectives

- ❑ Establish a Planning Group to organise the annual event.
- ❑ Collate a database of people interested in fathers' work.
- ❑ Encourage the development of focus groups.
- ❑ Maintain a "virtual community of interest" via email groups.

Value Base

Dads Express ...

- ❑ views fathers as a diverse group of individuals who have a range of needs which must be met in a variety of ways;
- ❑ acknowledges that the roles of fathers and mothers are inter-dependent, complementary and equally valuable;
- ❑ advocates a culture wherein the active involvement of fathers in family life is the norm;
- ❑ recognises the valuable contribution that fathers can and do make to family life;
- ❑ believes that there is a need for increased support for all fathers;
- ❑ supports expressions of fatherhood which promote positive interaction with both mothers and children.

Area Covered

Dads Express operates primarily within the geographic north of Ireland i.e. Northern Ireland and the counties near the Border.