

GOOD DADS 2.0

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of Module 1, participants will be able to do the following:

- Understand the goals, format, and content of *Good Dads 2.0*.
- Explore and discuss the similarities between constructing a house and building a home for one's family.
- Describe the relationship between values and standards.
- Explain why standards matter to building and to families.
- Identify personal values important to a safe, stable, and happy home.
- Explain how the values of a parent might influence a child's wellbeing.
- Work together to determine acceptable group behavior.

MODULE

1



MODULE 1 OVERVIEW

BUILDING YOUR FAMILY'S FOUNDATION

- I. Welcome to *Good Dads 2.0*

Read the **Letter from the Contractor** and introduce the course. Talk about why a strong foundation is important to building a safe, stable structure—and why the same is true for safe, happy families.

5 min.

II. Down to the Basics

View **Contractor Clip #1** and discuss what it takes to be a good contractor. Optionally view **Participant Q&A Clip #1** to spark additional conversation.

10 min.

III. Following the Plans

View **Contractor Clip #2** and discuss the kinds of plans required to build a house. Talk about why having a plan and sticking to it is important. Optionally view **Participant Q&A Clip #2** to spark additional conversation.

10 min.

IV. Plumb Bobs, Levels, Lasers, and Squares

Explore the importance of measurement tools in construction and how they relate to values and standards in one's family.

15 min.

V. Construction Crew Goals & Habits of Good Builders

Participants begin to envision the kind of home they would like to have for themselves and their children.

15 min.

VI. What Standards Do You Stand for?

Participants stand on an imaginary line according to what standard they say they believe or value. The goal is to explore unexamined assumptions.

20 min.

VII. What's in Your Building Code?

Participants explore how their values and standards may have changed over time. Consider how a parent's values impacts children and families.

25 min.

VIII. Construction Crew Expectations & Training Take-Aways

Collaborate to establish the standards or rules for the group and its dynamics. Before dismissal, participants should record things they want to remember from today's class. Facilitators should solicit questions from the group.

5 min.

MATERIALS CHECKLIST

☐ Contractor Clips

☐ Whiteboard and/or newsprint

☐ Blank sheets of printer paper

☐ Audio/Visual equipment

☐ Pens

☐ Participant Guides

☐ Music

☐ Markers, crayons and colored pencils

GOOD DADS 2.0 • FORGE EDITION

MODULE 1

I. WELCOME TO *GOOD DADS 2.0*

SAY: Welcome to *Good Dads 2.0*. To introduce you to the class, I'll start by reading a **Letter from the Contractor**. This letter tells you a little about the course and what you can expect to get out of it.

Years ago I did some volunteer work with children who grew up in a remote part of the Ozarks. We take electricity for granted, but these children never had it. They didn't know how to read, and they hadn't been to school. They lived in a home without running water and had never seen a flush toilet. There was a time when most children grew up lacking these things and knew how to function well in a world without them. Today that would be unthinkable. Today different skills and abilities are needed.

The children I met were temporarily housed in a group setting to be evaluated for their emotional, social and cognitive abilities. They may have been 10 or 12 years old, but when it came to anything considered “modern,” they were infants. They had to learn what they needed to know to function in a very different world from the one they had known. They had to function in settings with modern plumbing and electricity. They needed to master reading and basic mathematics as a foundation for further growth. They needed to grasp the essential parts of relating to others in a more formal setting like school.

In some ways, they were building an entirely new structure, a new place to live. Early settlers may have constructed log cabins with hand-hewn logs they harvested themselves, but considerably more knowledge and skills are needed to build a foundation and construct a house in which today's family can live and grow. A number of different tools, skills and abilities are required to construct a sound structure, a safe environment. Anyone who has helped build or remodel a house today knows there is typically one person known as the contractor.

The contractor understands the many different parts that must come together to accomplish

the final goal—a house in which to live. These parts begin with footings to form a firm foundation. Framing, trusses for a roof, and shingles come next. Windows and doors complete the exterior. With a dry enclosure in place, electrical work, plumbing, and drywall can proceed. Finally, cabinetry, painting, flooring and finishing occur. In short, a lot of different skills and abilities are required to build a house in today's world.

In a similar way to the children referenced above, many dads grew up in a home that left them unprepared to handle the challenges of being a parent today. One or both of their parents may have struggled with addiction and/or mental health concerns. There may have been abuse and neglect. Emotional support and encouragement were scarce.

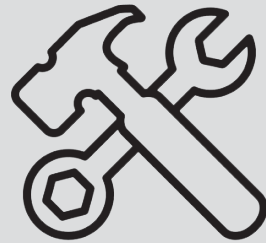
Good Dads 2.0 recognizes that some dads face more obstacles than others to becoming the kind of father they would like to be. It appreciates the difficulty associated with trying to construct a happy home when the only home you've known was not safe and sound. It assumes the challenges exist but also believes they can be overcome with training and support. That's what **Good Dads 2.0** is all about—helping any dad build the kind of home he's always wanted for himself and his family.

Join us now as we work together to build a community where many more families are living in homes that are skillfully and wisely constructed by the dads who reside there with the ones they love.

Jennifer L. Baker, PsyD
Founder and Executive Director, Good Dads

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Tighten the Bolts



Many of the participants in your *Good Dads 2.0* class are likely to be visual learners. For that reason, we recommend facilitators use a toolkit containing various "tools of the trade" to reinforce the course's themes. Hold up and consider passing around a hammer, screwdriver, wrench, level, tape measure, etc., when the group discussion calls for it. You can use whatever tools you already have in your workshop or assemble an inexpensive toolbox using tools you might find at a secondhand store or yard sale.

Make the following key points:

Good Dads 2.0 offers skills and strategies for dads at any stage of life.

*You may be the father of a toddler, teenager, or newborn. You may be a stepfather, grandfather, or father-figure. You may live with your child, share custody of your child, or be separated from your child more often than you would like. You may be a stay-at-home dad, a 9-to-5 dad, or a dad who travels for work more days than not. Good Dads offers tools, guidance, and support for all kinds of dads. Sometimes specific skills and strategies are necessary. **Good Dads 2.0** focuses on the basics, the essentials, and the requirements for success in building a happy family—regardless of your stage in life.*

A strong foundation is required for success in any area of life.

Without a good foundation it's difficult or nearly impossible to erect a sound structure. In this lesson we'll begin by talking about basic foundational habits required to be a good father by comparing being a good dad to building a solid, stable house. We'll begin by considering what previous participants in the Good Dads program think about the program.

II. DOWN TO THE BASICS *Page 1 Participant Guide*

 View Contractor Clip #1

 **ASK:** What did you hear in the Contractor Clip? What traits do all good contractors share?

 **ASK:** What else does it take to be a good contractor? What kinds of attitudes and habits do they have? Why?

 **ASK:** Why is it important to plan ahead for a project?

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: Answers may vary, but be sure you cover the following areas as well. They serve as an overview of what the dads in your class can expect to learn as they progress through the material.

- Construction Know-How
 - Site and House Plans
 - Tools of the Trade
- Skills of the Trade
 - People Skills
 - Leadership Skills

Construction Know-How

You can learn what you need to know to build a sound family.

You aren't born knowing how to build a house, but you can learn. Some kids grow up in homes with a dad who is handy with tools. They know what to do because they've been exposed to the tools of the trade since they were quite young. Other kids have to learn the various skills associated with construction. It's the same way with being a good dad. Some kids have it easier than others, but the good news is that everyone can learn the information and skills associated with being a good dad.

Site and House Plans

Every contractor has two kinds of plans—one for the site or location of the house and the second for the house itself. Being certain of your goals, the kind of home life you want for you and your family, helps to make everything clearer and easier in life.

If you don't know where you're headed, then any destination will do. Most folks, however, do want specific things for themselves and their children. In our sessions together, we will explore what you really want for yourself and your family. The goal is to help you clarify what is most important for you rather than allowing others, or our culture in general, to make that decision for you.

Tools of the Trade

Success is linked to the tools or strategies you use to achieve it.

Every reputable builder wants a solid structure when the project is complete, but only some have the strategy to help them achieve this goal. And let's face it, some tools are better for the job than others. Once you've decided on the kind of home you want, you'll need the tools to help you achieve that dream.

Skills of the Trade

Having the right tools is not enough. You must know how to use them.

Plumbers, electricians, framers – each trade has specific, associated tools. It's not enough to have the tools. You must know how to use them. In a similar way, good dads know what their children need from them and demonstrate their skill in meeting those needs. They know what to do and follow through on doing what needs to be done.

People Skills

Knowing the personalities, interests, desires, strengths, and weaknesses of your individual crew members is critical.

Teamwork is critical in building. From the contractor to the architect, lender, foreman, landscaper, etc., each person has a job to do and a vital step in the process. Communication, knowing your limits, and knowing those of your team are essential. Nobody would expect the plumber to suddenly assume the roofing job.

Just as a contractor knows the skills and abilities of his subcontractors (plumber, electrician, framer, etc.), their background, strengths and weaknesses, so a good father is a student of his children—their temperaments, interests, and abilities. This knowledge and understanding is essential to helping everyone on your crew function at their best.

Leadership Skills to Follow the Plan

Being a good dad involves knowing what you're telling yourself about your role as a father.

Follow the plan. A good contractor will tell you that deviations from the established plan are costly. They can cause delays or other setbacks that mean the project won't succeed. It takes a strong, dedicated leader to stick with the plan even when conditions are difficult. Good dads and builders both understand the importance of long-term commitment when things don't go as planned or the project is more complex or challenging than first imagined.

 **View Participant Q&A #1 (Optional)**

III. FOLLOWING THE PLANS *Page 2 Participant Guide*

 View Contractor Clip #2

 **ASK:** Why are site and building plans important for a successful outcome? Why is it important to check your work as you go?



Open the session with a discussion on why site and building plans are critical to a successful outcome. Ask participants to do a **Paired Share** to talk about something they tried to build as a child that they constructed without a clear plan (e.g., a tree house, a hiding place in the woods, a blanket fort in the living room). How did it work out? How did that structure stand the test of time?

Make the following key points:

A construction team can't measure their success without first understanding the goals for the project, i.e., the building plan.

Every construction team will approach a new project with specific standards and goals determined by site and building plans. No matter what the project looks like in the end, adherence to those plans is critical for a sound structure.

Goals or values inform our standards and serve as a measuring stick or standard for success.

Site plans tell us what is most important to the homeowner. Do they want a garage or a carport? Do they want three bedrooms or four? Do they want a porch or deck? It all depends on what the future occupant values. Each house is unique in that it suits the specific purposes and values of the owners. Likewise, because each family unit is different, no two ways of leading a family will look the same. Good fathers understand the importance of parenting their children in ways that fit the individual needs of the children and the priorities and goals of the family.

Values might look different, but the goals are often the same.

When children construct a tree house, their primary concern is to get it built so they can start playing in it. They skip most of the math and just make their best guesses as they go using whatever they have at hand. Little or no consideration is given to standards for being square and plumb. But what is the price of that quick and easy method of construction? Does it last? Is it strong and stable? Is the tree house they build in July the kind of place they want to hang out in January?

The overall goal of a sound structure remains the same.

Without a solid plan, a contractor and his team will have a slim chance of building a sound structure. What's important to remember is that a construction crew's goal remains the same for each build: to create a stable and functional space that suits the needs of the future owner(s). While site plans and building plans vary, and different contractors have different approaches, the end goal is consistent from project to project. The building must be safe for all who live there, meet the code of the community, and meet the needs and dreams for the residents who will live there.

The same can be said about successful families. Most people want a happy family. They want a strong, safe, and secure relationship with the people they love. Some are just much better at connecting this goal with the actual values and activities that help them achieve their dreams.

There is a cost to breaking "rules" with your plan.

Some architects design houses that break a lot of the typical "rules" about square lines and flat walls, and if they are very careful, it might even work well enough. But it's going to be a particularly difficult and expensive house to build. That doesn't mean it can't be done, but reality is out there waiting to remind the architect and builder that choosing to break those rules of reality has a cost. Many times messing with the typical rules and standards is expensive and asking for trouble.

 **ASK:** In what ways have people experimented with standards or rules for a family? How have those experiments or changes worked?

 View Participant Q&A #2 (Optional)

IV. PLUMB BOBS, LEVELS, LASERS, AND SQUARES *Page 2 Participant Guide*

The most important tools in home building appear to be inactive.

The most important tools in building a home don't dig holes in the ground, cut a board, shape concrete, drive screws, or hammer nails. Rather, the most important tools just lie there and measure where we are. Plumb bobs tell us which way is up or down. Levels tell us if everything is straight. Squares tell us where things are in relation to each other. And lasers today are used very creatively to tell us all kinds of information about where we are.

What do all these tools have in common? They all connect to some kind of universal force, a "Known Constant" that tells where we are in relation to that constant. It's kind of like how sailors used the North Star to know where they were when at sea. In the same way, plumb bobs and levels connect directly to planetary gravity to provide their data. Lasers and squares attach themselves to an established reference and they tell us where we are in relation to that.

Our values are much like that universal force of gravity, or that straight line reference we can measure against.

When we know and understand what we think is truly important in life, many of our choices become easier to make. For many of us, those values come from our faith, our parents, our closest friends, our most important life experiences, and perhaps what is sometimes called our "world view." These influences come together inside of us to create our idea of right and wrong. This is that internal truth detector inside of a person going off and saying, "Yep, I think that is right." They basically held up their personal "plumb bob" next to what was said and found that it was straight up and down.

A father's values are critical to his family's happiness, safety, and security.

As fathers, it is critical that we approach building our lives and homes according to those values we know we can trust to be true and real. When we do, the quality shows in the outcome. Have you ever heard of a builder that tells his prospective clients that he doesn't care about getting his work square or his lines straight? Probably not. Most of them will tell you that they believe in only doing the very best quality work every time.

But have you ever heard someone actually getting poor quality work from a builder they hired? How could it be that someone does poor quality work if they tell you they believe in only the best quality work? They said their values were all about quality work, but in reality, their values were closer to trying to get by with doing shoddy work and maybe passing it off as quality.

Fathers can say that they hold certain values and they believe all the right things, but their true values are reflected in the homes they build for their families. Children have their own little plumb bobs and levels inside their hearts and minds. They see how their parents use or don't use theirs and they are learning what is important from them. They are watching to figure out which way is up.

? **ASK:** In what ways do other folks run their families differently from the way you run your family?

? **ASK:** What is your definition of the word *value*?

? **ASK:** What kinds of values do you see as important for a man to be a good dad? Why are these important?

? **ASK:** How do your values or standards affect the way you live your life?

V. CONSTRUCTION CREW GOALS

Page 3 Participant Guide

ASK: Imagine that you are building a new home for your family. How many rooms will it have? What does this look like? Who is present? What are you doing?

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: Instruct participants to draw a picture of a “good dad” with the people he loves and the home where he hopes to live using the space provided on page 3 of the Participant Guide. Remind dads that the emphasis is not on “artwork,” but visualizing how a “winning family” looks. Reassure them that stick figures are acceptable. Encourage as much detail as possible in the time limit.

Small Group: Form groups with two or three other dads per group. Share and explain your house plan to them. If you choose to use a separate sheet of paper for this exercise, drawings may be hung around the room for encouragement, inspiration, and continued new vision in a positive direction.

Make the following key points on the habits of good builders and their crews:

Builders perfect their trade skills with practice.

Good construction crews know how to work together. Visit the building site of a good team, and you’ll see how the crew members listen to each other, help each other, and work together to accomplish a common goal. A contractor with a reputation for great work doesn’t become good overnight, but with continued work and practice, new skills become successful habits that help workers accomplish their goals.

Likewise, good fathers understand the importance of repetition for skills both they and their children need to carry out with regularity, e.g., expressing strong emotions, communicating well under pressure, and resolving conflict.

Identify strengths and weaknesses.

One person doesn’t build a whole house. It takes many tradesmen working together to erect a sound structure. Take time to learn your strengths and be honest about your struggles. Learning when and where to rely on others is a positive indicator of good mental health.

Great construction crews work together to accomplish a goal. So do good families. Good builders know how to help each member of the crew feel valued and important for the role they play. Likewise, good dads help every member of the family feel accepted, loved, and valued for who he/she is.

Conditioning.

Building is hard work, and you don’t build your muscles overnight. Stay with the program, the day-to-day work of construction, and you will get stronger. You will be better at becoming the dad you really want to be.

It is one thing to learn a new skill and quite another to perfect it. Good tradesmen know the importance of practicing something over and over again until it can be consistently executed under myriad conditions.

VI. WHAT STANDARDS DO YOU STAND FOR?

Page 4 Participant Guide

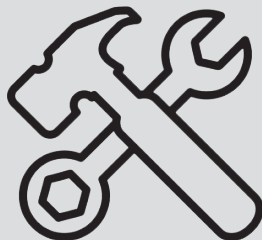
Why do we hold certain beliefs or values?

If you hold a certain belief or value, it is important to know why you hold that value. Are you just saying it because you heard your father say it, or do you truly stand by it? You may hold a controversial belief or value. When talking about beliefs and values, it is important to understand that others may not agree with us, but by having a calm, clear discussion, both parties can gain knowledge and understanding of each other.

SAY: The following statements are designed to help you see what you value. After each statement rank your agreement with the statement on a scale from “1” to “10,” with “1” being “Strongly Disagree” and “10” being “Strongly Disagree.” Don’t worry, there’s plenty of room in the middle.

- 1. Men and women can care for children equally.
- 2. Fathers should stop showing affection to their sons when they become teenagers.
- 3. Once you have a child, you become a man.
- 4. Men who father children should be forced to pay child support.
- 5. A man who shows his emotions too often should be considered weak.
- 6. It is a woman’s responsibility, not a man’s, to use birth control.
- 7. A man should take any job available to support his family.
- 8. There are things a man should never tell his partner.
- 9. Marriage messes up good relationships.

Tighten the Bolts



This activity is most effective if you have participants actually stand on an imaginary line according to what standard they say they believe or value. Doing this requires a room large enough for participants to stand and physically move themselves from one side of the room to another. If the meeting room isn’t big enough, consider using a hallway. Head outside if weather permits. **If time is a concern, select only three or four statements from the list above** that are most likely to result in vibrant discussion throughout your group.

If using the imaginary line is impossible, encourage your participants to indicate whether they agree or disagree with the statement by filling in the appropriate bubble on page 4 of the Participant Guide.

VII. WHAT’S IN YOUR BUILDING CODE?

Pages 5–6 Participant Guide

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: Instruct participants to put a checkmark in the appropriate column to indicate the value of each item—*Very Important*, *Somewhat Important*, or *Least Important*. Then, have participants go back through the table with two different colors of pen, pencil, or highlighter to mark five items **most** important and five items **least** important to them.

WHAT I VALUE	VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	LEAST IMPORTANT
Being well-known in the community.			
Personal appearance.			
Having successful children.			
Being happily married/in a committed relationship.			
Being a great dad.			
Having fun.			
Having the respect of others.			
Financial security.			
Having an enjoyable job.			
Spending time with friends.			
Helping others in the community.			
Having a nice car.			
Living by my faith/beliefs.			
Having a healthy sexual relationship with my partner.			
Expressing my creativity (music, writing, drawing, etc.)			
Having trustworthy friends.			
Being fit and healthy.			
Living according to my cultural traditions.			
Attaining higher education (after high school).			
Caring for aging parents.			
Owning a home.			
Traveling.			

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: When participants have finished filling out the table, instruct them to form groups of 3–4. Invite them to brainstorm 1–2 more values that aren’t on the list already and write them down on page 6 of the Participant Guide. Then allow 5 or so minutes as the group works through the rest of the questions on page 6.

ASK: How are your values similar or different from the family in which you grew up?

ASK: How do your values influence your day-to-day decisions?

ASK: Which values are more difficult to live by?

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: Ask participants to share what they discussed and wrote in the Construction Crew Activity. Consider writing the main takeaways on a piece of chart paper or a dry-erase board at the front of the room.

VIII. CONSTRUCTION CREW EXPECTATIONS

Page 6 Participant Guide

ASK: What do you expect from the group? What standards or rules are important to you? How would you like to be treated? Write your response after each of the areas listed on page 6 of the Participant Guide.

Attendance:

Confidentiality:

Respect:

Behavior:

TRAINING TAKEAWAYS Back Page Participant Guide

SAY: In the time we have remaining at the end of each class, there will be room to write reflections and takeaways. You can also ask me questions in the minutes we have left before dismissal.