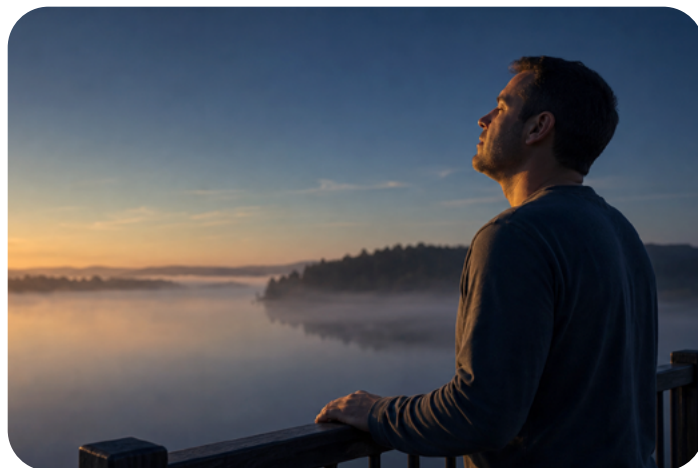


FATHERING STRESSORS

Quick Confidence Builds are brief activities that practitioners can use when working with dads in face-to-face or virtual group-based or one-on-one settings. (The group-based version is described first.) These activities help build fathering confidence, a vital factor influencing dads' involvement in their children's lives.

Dads only need pen and paper to write down information when instructed. The practitioner needs only something to record on when instructed, such as a flip chart or whiteboard when working with dads face-to-face or a virtual whiteboard or chat when working with them virtually. Estimated times include reflection, discussion, and facilitator feedback. The exact timing will depend on many factors, such as facilitator experience and skill, the size of a group, how comfortable dads are in sharing their experiences and ideas, and their commitment to growing in their fathering.



Source: The activities are inspired by *The 24:7 Dad: 12 Habits of Confident Fathers* by NFI President Christopher A. Brown. Visit confidentfathers.com to learn more about the book released on June 2, 2026!

Quick Confidence Build: My #1 Stressor

Time: 20-25 minutes (group-based); 10-15 minutes (one-on-one)

The Goal: Help dads identify the stressor affecting their fathering the most—and take a first step toward reducing or eliminating it.

Why This Matters: Stress can make it harder for dads to be patient, focused, and fully present. When dads reduce the stressors within their control, they're better able to show up for their children and build confidence in their fathering.

The Activity (Group-Based)

Step 1: Today's Fathering Stressors (3 minutes)

(Write "Causes of Stress =" on a flip chart or whiteboard.)

SAY: Everyone has stress in their life, but being a parent comes with its own stress.

ASK: What about being a father right now creates or causes stress?

(Record their responses.)

Step 2: My Stressor (10 minutes)

SAY: Take two minutes to reflect on what's causing you the most stress in being a father. Write it down and why it's causing the stress. Use the list we just created for inspiration.

(Give them time.)

SAY: We'll take eight minutes to go around the room and have everyone share the cause of their stress and why it's causing stress. Share only the cause and why it causes stress. Keep it brief so everyone has time. Listen carefully to what causes others stress and write those causes down if they also cause you stress.

Step 3: Refining My Stressor (2 minutes)

SAY: Now that you've heard what's causing the most stress for other dads, take two minutes to reflect on whether you want to change what's causing you the most stress. If you change your mind, write down the new cause and why it's causing stress.

Step 4: Reducing or Eliminating the Stressor (8 minutes)

SAY: Take two minutes to reflect on how you could reduce or eliminate the cause of your stress. Write it down. It's okay if you don't know.

(Give them time.)

SAY: I'll call on you one at a time to share your cause and how you could reduce or eliminate it. As each dad shares, I want everyone to listen carefully in case you have an idea that might help the dad sharing.

(Have as many report back as you have time. Encourage others to suggest specific actions, not general advice.)

Step 5: Wrap Up (1 minute)

SAY: Stress is a natural part of being a father. While some causes of stress are beyond your control, many are within your control and can be reduced or eliminated. Doing this will help you focus even more on the joy of fathering. Write down one action you'll take this week to reduce or eliminate the cause of your stress.

The Activity (One-on-One)

Step 1: Today's Fathering Stressors (2 minutes)

(Write "Causes of Stress =" on a flip chart or whiteboard.)

SAY: Everyone has stress in their life, but being a parent comes with its own stress.

ASK: What about being a father today creates or causes stress?

(Record his responses.)

Step 2: My Stressor (3 minutes)

SAY: Take two minutes to reflect on what's causing you the most stress in being a father. Write it down and why it's causing the stress. Use the list we just created for inspiration.

(Give him time.)

SAY: Tell me the cause and why it's causing stress.

Step 3: Reducing or Eliminating the Stressor (3 minutes)

SAY: Take two minutes to reflect on how you could reduce or eliminate the cause of your stress. Write it down. It's okay if you don't know.

(Give him time.)

SAY: Share your cause and how you could reduce or eliminate it.

(Share any ideas that might help.)

Step 4: Wrap Up (2 minutes)

SAY: Stress is a natural part of being a father. While some causes of stress are beyond your control, many are within your control and can be reduced or eliminated. Doing this will help you focus even more on the joy of fathering. Write down one action you'll take this week to reduce or eliminate the cause of your stress. Then share it with me.