

## LOOK HOW FAR WE HAVE TRAVELED ...

Seven years ago we wrote our first official Father's Day email. Comparing then and now, we can quickly see how the courageous steps of everyday fathers (and mothers) - are helping us collectively rewrite history.

We can see this in the "first step" stories we shared with you seven years ago. Read on to see what these dads are doing today.

We can see this in the sage advice given by organizations like NYC Dad's group. They are celebrating their fifth anniversary this year! Read on for five truths they've discovered about dads.

### ***Most importantly ...***

We can see this in the historical event taking place ***next week - the first of its kind discussion at the White House on the state of working dads.***

ThirdPath Institute with a number of leading experts, working dads, business leaders and Administration officials will be in attendance to share insights, explore the roles of dads today, and discuss how businesses can create win-win cultures that enable working dads to be more involved parents and better employees.

Once again this important milestone was achieved because a courageous dad went the extra mile to make sure men's voices were included in the national conversation about working families (culminating in a different White House Summit at the end of June).

***We at ThirdPath have always known that men can play an important role in nurturing their children just like women - and often all that is required is the encouragement to take that first step.***

As we look ahead, we want to encourage more men to take this step - whether as the father of a child, or as men supporting more dads to be heard. Women can also play a role by supporting their partners, brothers, uncles or grandfathers to take that first step too.

***Collectively we are rewriting history in a way that will have a positive impact on our families and in our society as a whole.***

Read on to see just how far dads have traveled these past seven years. Or join us on June 12th at 12:30pm ET when Dr. Kyle Pruett participates in our next Thursdays with ThirdPath call.

**Dr. Pruett is one of the experts attending the White House discussion on fatherhood.** The call will be a great opportunity to learn more about Dr. Pruett's ground-breaking book - *Fatherneed* - as well as a chance to gain an insider's look at what happened on June 9th at the White House Summit on Working Fathers.

Happy almost Father's Day!  
/Jessica and the ThirdPath team

## Father's Day Message

2007 / 2014 ...

*In celebration of Father's Day, we asked some of the men involved in our work to share their first steps to becoming involved parents. We hope you find their responses as inspiring as we did!*

**Sean - 2007 primary parent of a young school aged daughter and son. 2014 Sean and his wife have now reversed roles.**

### First Step -

Our first step was rather simple - my wife got pregnant. When this happened, lots of family history came forward for both of us, and the simple result was that we both wanted a parent to be at home with our child full-time.

At that time, she loved her job in advertising, and I was ambivalent, at best, about my job as a lawyer. I am not sure who raised the possibility of me staying at home first, but once it was on the table it just made sense. So after her maternity leave ended, I began to stay home with our baby son.

**Today:** We had a second child, and for over eight years I fashioned a career out of my interest in writing that included part-time teaching at the college level and freelance writing. All of my work flexed around the children's schedules. More recently my wife and I traded roles. Now she is the parent who is with them after school, but the patterns set in the early years mean I still play a very active role.

**Bill - 2007 Shared Care father of three young boys. 2014 Bill has launched a whole new career.**

### First Step -

The first step for me was taking paternity leave when I was at a large law firm.

The policy was gender neutral and allowed for three months paid leave. Although not used very much by the men at the firm, I took advantage of it and that really helped give me clarity about how important it was for me to make space in my life to spend significant time with my children. I ended up extending that leave for an additional month (unpaid) and when I returned back to the firm, I negotiated a schedule where I worked one day from home. That was the start.

Ultimately I realized that none of the law firm environments I had been in were consistent with my goal of balance, and I moved to a compliance role at a financial services firm. After a year there, I negotiated a reduced hour schedule like my wife had done.

**Today:** I went back to school, and I have now started my own web design business based out of my home. This gives me the flexibility to be available for my sons (now ages 16, 14 and 9) when they are home from school.

My wife has continued to work at the same company and she is currently working a full-time schedule.

*Mario - 2007 Shared Care father of a ten year old son - can you believe Mario's son is now 17!*

**First Step -**

Before my father died, I had wanted to make changes in my life. After his death, I felt the urgency to make them. My son was three and one-half years old, and up until then my wife had been the stay at home parent and I had worked full time. So the first step for me was to take a 3-month leave of absence from work to be with my family and explore new careers. During this period, I gathered information on the training time and cost to switch careers, as well as expected income and expenses in the career. I then built spreadsheets to figure out the feasibility for me and my family.

I talked to my wife a lot... I'm not sure if talking was helpful or terrifying for her.

After a year or so, I began negotiating a severance package for myself. It took about 5 or 6 months to finalize, but I subsequently left my employer and began my new more flexible career.

**Today:** Mario is still happily employed in his "new" more flexible career.

## What We Know About Dads ...

*Excerpted from a New York Family magazine article.*

*Authors: Lance Somerfeld and Matt Schneider*

***We've learned a lot about fatherhood these past five years and wanted to share some observations from the front-lines:***

**1) *Dads can hack it:*** When a dad takes his child on public transportation, goes grocery shopping, or bakes the cupcakes for the school bake sale, he's over praised by strangers for displaying even the most basic level of involvement in his children's lives. The bar is still set extremely low for fathers. We're asking society to elevate their parenting expectations for us. We can deliver. Just give us the chance.

**2) *Dads LOVE talking about parenting:*** There's a mystique that dads keep their feelings inside when it comes to important topics like parenting and relationships. Want to hear a great example of dads talking about what it's really like to be an actively involved parent? [Click here](#).

**3) *Dads want it all:*** New and expectant dads are worried about how to be successful at work and successful at home. We encourage dads to figure out what benefits they have at work and use them, to be transparent with supervisors so they know that being a parent is important, and to carve out special time each week to tune in and do something you enjoy with your children.

**4) *Dads want to be on the team:*** Our children need to be fed, cared for, brought to school, assisted with homework, and shuttled to practice. Domestic chores like laundry, cleaning the home, and paying bills need to be tackled. We've drawn the conclusion that all of this is much easier as a high performance tag team of two. Too frequently, moms feel as if they're the only one that can properly care for their child and dads are pushed aside. Please let us fail miserably, pull ourselves up, and learn from our mistakes so we can be capable partners.

**5) *Dads are all different:*** Research shows that fathers are more physical with their children. Frankly, we see plenty of dads on both sides of the spectrum. Bottom-line: Children benefit from being exposed to a range of parenting styles so feel free to find your rhythm, go with your gut, and embrace your differences.

***Want to learn more? Join us next week for ThirdPath's Thursday call with Dr. Kyle Pruett. Here's a [brief outline of Dr. Pruett's book - Fatherneed](#).***