

By Sarah Womack, Social Affairs Correspondent Daily Telegraph

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Fathers should strip off their shirts before holding their newborn babies to aid the "bonding" process, says a booklet funded by the Government.

The pamphlet, which has prompted accusations about interference from the nanny state, also recommends that they should gaze into their baby's eyes for short periods to develop the child's brain.

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It also suggests that fathers should be rewarded with gift vouchers if they attend antenatal classes.

The booklet, Including New Fathers: A Guide for Maternity Professionals, has been published by Fathers Direct, a publicly funded charity that advises the Government on fatherhood.

About 2,000 copies of the guide have been produced at a cost of £10,000 and it will be given to medical staff.

Caroline Flint, the minister for public health, says in the booklet: "We want the father to be part of the experience. We find him invaluable."

Duncan Fisher, the chief executive of Fathers Direct, said that the guide was necessary because there was "compelling evidence that demonstrates the strong impact that fathers have on the health and well-being of mothers and babies, especially as fathers' involvement increases during pregnancy, at birth and in baby care".

He added: "Appealing to the needs of the baby can be a powerful motivator for getting fathers to change negative behaviour."

The pamphlet also recommends that fathers should be taught how to bathe a newborn before they are allowed to leave the hospital.

Critics said the booklet was intrusive and patronising.

Robert Whelan, the deputy director of the think-tank Civitas, said: "This is a complete waste of money and an intrusion into family life.

"How does the Government think the human race has survived all these years?"

Prof Frank Furedi, the author of Paranoid Parenting, said: "It is treating men as complete morons who can't work out for themselves how to wash their child's ears."

Fathers Direct said that under the Gender Equality Act public authorities must have "due regard" to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the sexes.

The charity received £435,000 in Government funding last year and £45,450 from the Big Lottery Fund.

- Mothers are bathing their toddlers too often which can lead to skin problems such as eczema, warns a study from Mother and Baby magazine.

Elena Dalrymple, the editor, said: "It is not a good idea to bath baby every day - two or three times a week is plenty."

Advice for expectant males

- "Fathers like mothers can enjoy a mutual gaze with a baby for short periods before the baby becomes tired. This is part of the development of the baby's brain."
- "All-male antenatal sessions work well - men talk a lot more about their feelings and worries among men."
- "Men are not inherently less able to care for babies. The key is practise - 45 minutes a day is sufficient to reach high skill levels with a baby."

- "Mothers have notes they fill in during pregnancy. Fathers should have them too as this helps them reflect on their own experience of the pregnancy."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/06/04/nfathers04.xml>

Treating Men as Morons

June 4, 2007

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT

RUSH: This is a story again from the UK Telegraph. "Fathers should strip off their shirts before holding their newborn babies to aid the "bonding" process, says a booklet funded by the Government. The pamphlet, which has prompted accusations about interference from the nanny state, also recommends that they should gaze into their baby's eyes for short periods to develop the child's brain. The booklet, Including New Fathers: A Guide for Maternity Professionals, has been published by Fathers Direct, a publicly funded charity that advises the Government on fatherhood." We actually need the government telling us how to raise our kids. "Look your baby in the eye." I bet nobody ever thought to do that on their own, did they? You let the social services people find out that fathers are taking off their shirts to hug little babies... wait 'til mom gets mad at dad, calls social services, ho-ho-ho-ho. You know that will happen. "Prof Frank Furedi, the author of Paranoid Parenting, said: 'It is treating men as complete morons who can't work out for themselves how to wash their child's ears.'"

It is treating men as morons. In fact, we've got the audio from the Lowe's ad that we talked about on Friday that led to such stirring discussions on this program. Let's go to audio sound bite number two. This is the audio from the Lowe's ad. If you weren't with us on Friday, what happened was that a guy called about this ad and said, "I'm sick and tired of these commercials making us men look like absolute idiots and brainless and so forth." I hadn't seen the ad, so I had to take everybody's word for what it said. This launched a very fascinating, as all discussions are here, discussion on advertising and what it means and how to watch it. So here's the audio of the Lowe's ad, which dovetails with this story from the UK treating men as complete morons.

WIFE: Honey, look, isn't this tile perfect? It's called Roman stone.

HUSBAND: Too hard to install.

WIFE: Nice detail.

HUSBAND: Intricate. Too hard to install.

WIFE: And this detailed border.

HUSBAND: Too hard to install.

LOWE'S WOMAN: By the way, it's easy to install.

HUSBAND: Really?

MALE ANNOUNCER: At Lowe's, we not only have a huge selection of tile, but we make it easy to find the right look for you.

WIFE: Well, what do you think?

HUSBAND: You were right, I was wrong.

MALE ANNOUNCER: Lowe's. Let's build something together. Come to Lowe's now and get 20% off all special-order flooring. Now through July 8th.

RUSH: (Laughing.) Too hard to install, too hard to install, you were right, I was wrong. That's funny.

END TRANSCRIPT

http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/home/daily/site_060407/content/01125106.guest.html