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## **Sustainable Development Goals and Gender Equality**

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**In Scotland and elsewhere, a far  
greater proportion of equalities  
funding is directed at women and  
very little at men/fathers**

**Empowering women and girls is critical but changing the way men and fathers are perceived and the roles and behaviours they adopt in society is also vitally important.**

**‘Families, Fathers and Children’  
project funded by the Equalities  
Unit of the Scottish Government  
since 2008**

**Main focus of work has been to  
add a fathers' dimension to  
existing activities and services**

**Examples are the non-resident  
parents guide for schools and the  
Dads2B CD-ROM ante-natal  
resources**

**Recent work has focused on pre-birth and early years. This coincides with a number of important changes in national guidance.**



**New ante-natal education  
materials**

**New Health Visiting pathway**

**New assessment process for  
families**

- **Fathers often not mentioned**
- **No specific advice on positive father involvement**
- **Few images of fathers in informational or publicity material**

**Contribution to reviews of guidance materials**

**Some materials reviewed and complementary information on fathers made available.**

**New materials better but still not fully inclusive – for example HV pathway asks repeatedly about domestic abuse, the assumptions being that father is not present and that he is likely perpetrator.**

**Ante-natal parent education generally gender neutral but refers to ‘women and partners’**

## Why does this matter?

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**A new baby puts families under additional stress in various ways and there is a high incidence of relationship breakdown in the first year of life**

**Outcomes are better for children who have positive father involvement in their lives**

**Children who experience inequality in other ways are also less likely to benefit from the constructive support of a father**

**Unequal parenting highly correlated with gender inequality in a general way**

**The vast majority of publicity material for public services that work with families contained no or few images of fathers**

**Much of the guidance for staff working in ante-natal and early years services makes limited reference to fathers**

**Fathers are represented as  
optional or, worse, as risky or  
dangerous**



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Scottish Families Information Services - to h...  
https://www.scottishfamilies.gov.uk

Scottish Family Information Service  
Information for parents and carers of children and young people

Home Local Area Information Scotland Wide Information Get In Touch Useful Links

We Provide Free, Impartial Information for Families

Search type: National Information | Category: Select a Category... | Keyword: | Reset | Search

### Welcome to Scottish Families

Providing free, impartial information for families such as:

- Childcare availability in your area including: nurseries, childminders, playgroups and out of school care
- Pre-school education places for three and four year olds
- How different types of childcare are organised and what to look for when choosing a service
- Organisations offering support, information and guidance at local and national

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**Tweets** Follow

**ScottisFIS** @ScottisFIS 8 Mar  
Happy International Women's Day! #ScotFIS

**Play Talk Read** @playtalkread 6 Mar  
Celebrate World Book Day by finding out what the top children's books are in Scotland. Can you guess what was... fb.me/Zu7EhVTF  
Retweeted by ScottisFIS

**Most official guidance  
national and local for  
parents had no images of  
fathers**

**Even when there  
were, they were far  
fewer even in recently  
produced material**

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**Pre-birth to three  
national curricular  
guidance has three  
pictures of fathers  
and twenty of  
mothers**

**A small but important  
victory!**



# National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland | 2010





The Scottish  
Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

# National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland | 2014



**What needs to be  
done?**



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- Review images in all material
- Make sure that positive images of fathers and children are presented
- Review guidance and resource materials for practitioners
- Make staff aware of research evidence
- Train staff in methods of positive father involvement

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- **Pay specific attention to families where traditionally fathers may be less likely to be involved in their children's upbringing**
- **Provide supportive services and resource materials specifically for fathers**
- **Make service settings welcoming and inclusive**
- **Take steps to increase male representation in the early years workforce**
- **Include non-resident and separated fathers**
- **Encourage fathers to use parental leave entitlement**

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**Thank you**

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