



PRESS RELEASE

Attention: News Editor

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SPURGEONS' CENTRE FOCUSES ON BIRMINGHAM'S HARD-TO-REACH FATHERS

FROM staying and playing to mixing fruit smoothies, the role of dad should be celebrated daily.

That's the Fathers' Day message from Anthony Road Children's Centre in Birmingham.

'Fathers' Day is very important but we need to look beyond the cards and presents on this one day,' said Aggie Kent, Operational and Deputy Children Centre Manager at Anthony Road. 'Many dads need encouragement and advice to fulfill the role effectively throughout the year.'

Children's centres are often perceived as the preserve of female workers but the Anthony Road centre in Birmingham has a full-time male worker, Sham Hussain, whose sole remit is to look after dads in the area. On average, Sham will see some 40 each week, helping them find work or training courses. For many English is not a first language so he will help them in this area as well.

All week, in the run-up to Fathers' Day, health days have taken place in a local school. Dads have been shown how to make healthy, fruit-based smoothies, received a BMI (body mass index) check and full information on healthier life styles. Free radio-operated pedometers have been offered to the first 10 dads to turn up!

'Many dads are hard to reach, but can play a vital role in their children's development,' said Aggie Kent. 'Mums are traditionally seen as the major focus for child-rearing but we encourage dads to take their children to nursery, attend stay-and-play sessions and get involved in their children's lives. It can make a real difference to both the dad and child.'

Anthony Road Children's Centre is a Sure Start and Spurgeons project. Spurgeons have several projects across Birmingham and the West Midlands which include children's centres and young carers, bereavement and parenting projects.

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• Issued for Spurgeons by Stephen Goddard Associates: 01744 733898 or 07930 198209.

Notes for editors

* Spurgeons was founded in 1867 when Anne Hillyard, a London widow, read an article by famous Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon and donated £20,000 to found an orphanage for fatherless boys.

** Spurgeons maintains a distinctly Christian ethos with numerous projects working with vulnerable children and young people across the UK and more in a number of locations internationally.

www.spurgeons.org