

mom's minute

# Dads Helping Dads



Bruce Collins

The Fatherhood Collaborative of San Mateo County brings together more than 30 organizations and agencies throughout the county to support the role of fathers, and men in general, in the lives of children. The collaborative recently became an advisory board to the county Board of Supervisors.

It helps fund programs such as family reunification efforts and YMCA camping trips for fathers and children, and organizes dad and kid events. Upcoming events include Dad & Me @ the Park, June 14 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Coyote Point Park, and Dad & Me @ the Library, June 10 at 7 p.m. at the Burlingame Library and June 14 at 2 p.m. at the Belmont Library.

Bruce Collins, a senior deputy probation officer for the county, chairs the collaborative. He lives in San Bruno with his wife, Rhonda, and three children: Xavier, 15, Xeryus, 13, and Xenia, 10.

For more information, visit [fatherhoodcollaborative.org](http://fatherhoodcollaborative.org).

**Do people still need to be told the message that fathers are important?**

I don't think they need to be told, but I think it needs to be reinforced. Men don't share with other men. You have to develop a platform or a forum where they can let their guard down and

know, "I'm not in this alone. Why don't we share and come together to find solutions."

**Why is it important for children to have fathers in their lives?**

Our belief, and statistics prove it, is when kids get a balance from mother and father, from male and female, you come out with a healthier, more well-rounded child. It shows up in the development of social skills, attitudes toward education and self worth. And if we say dads only, we are missing men making a significant difference in children's lives – coaches, uncles, neighborhood friends.

**What challenges do dads face in being actively involved with their kids?**

Being kind of excused, in the sense that Mom will take care of it. You have to make that stand and make your presence known that you're involved equally in your child's life. We don't want dads to be excused. We want them to be involved.

**What's your favorite way to spend Father's Day?**

Just hanging out with the family. Now that I play golf, they bombard me with golf stuff, but to have my kids around me, I can't think of a better way to spend Father's Day. I feel blessed with the opportunity to be a father.

– Janine DeFao

green family

## clean green



Because there is little regulation of cleaning chemicals, there are virtually no labeling requirements to let people know what they are exposing themselves and the planet to. Instead, it is up to us to use alternative products, which can be as easy as rummaging through the pantry. Baking soda (removes stubborn surface stains and odor, cleans silver, avoids clogged drains), distilled white vinegar (removes stickers, odors, and stubborn surface and toilet stains, cleans silver and no-wax floors, unclogs drains), cream of tartar (scrubs sinks and bathtubs), lemon juice (cleans brass, copper, bronze, and aluminum), hydrogen peroxide (alternative to bleach), castile soap (made of olive oil), and water make excep-

tional, safe, and cheap cleansers that are often overlooked.

If concocting the correct measurement of ingredients seems too much like a science experiment, try non-toxic, environmentally-friendlier, and widely accessible brands like Method, Seventh Generation, Simple Green, Earth-Friendly Products, Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day, Enviro-Magic, Ecover, EnviroSafety, and De-Solv-it that all use plant-derived oils to clean and disinfect.

While harsh chemicals may make cleaning seem easier, greener cleaners can get the job done just as well and a whole lot healthier for all of us and our environment.

– Tiffany Carboni