

# Together

## Moms & Daughters

Meagan Clanahan with her daughter Quinn

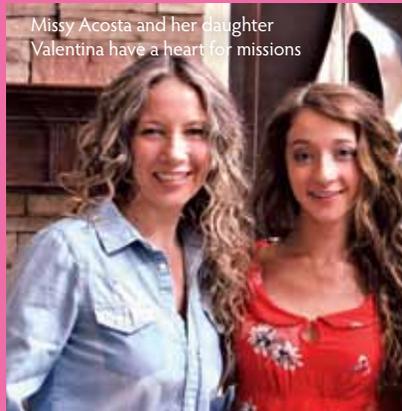
Ashlynn snuggling with her mom, Kristi Wees



Caitlyn and Dawn Mortus enjoy shopping together



Missy Acosta and her daughter Valentina have a heart for missions



Erica Stidham at the park with her daughters, Brea and Brooke



# Time

Experts say the same-sex parent is the most important role model in a child's life. Here are some great tips and local ideas for making the most of your mother-daughter or father-son relationship.

*Written by Kirsten Cornell*

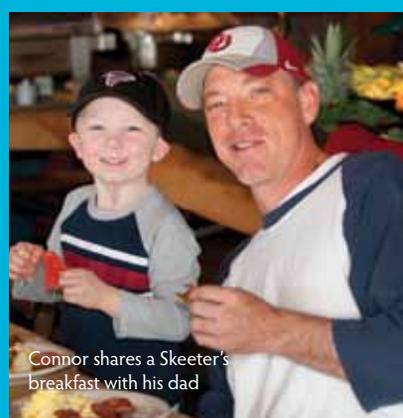
Photo by Aubrey Torrey

Justin Phillips clowning around with his son, Rocco

## Dads & Sons



Kyle with his dad at Katy Budget Books



Connor shares a Skeeter's breakfast with his dad



Cale Hanson has always had his dad's support in athletics



Ray and Brayden Mastroleo cheer on the Texans together

The roles of parents in children's lives reach far beyond fulfilling their basic needs. Kids need a strong parent connection to help build them into successful adults.

"A child begins to identify with their same-sex parent at a very young age," explains Susan Sowell, MA, LPC-S, director of counsel at Kingsland Baptist Church. "Parents serve as the primary role models teaching them how to behave as men and women." When a child misses out on the love and blessings that come from a connection with their same-sex parent, it can leave them feeling insecure and fearful, in addition to being more vulnerable to making poor choices.

### Darling Daughters

Most young girls start out idolizing their mothers. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, they look to how they react to situations and how they carry themselves and take cues from them on how to interact with others socially.

Katy mom Cheryl Graves and her daughter Analise love doing crafts together. "I think mother-daughter time is important because it shows her that she is valued as an individual, that I love her very much, and enjoy her company." Laura Carter looks forward to her Friday date night at Willie's Grill with her daughter Brooks. "We bring out the best in each other," Laura smiles. "We learn and grow from one another in ways that make us each a better person."

In order to cultivate the results you desire from your child, it is imperative that mothers spend quality one-on-one time

with their daughters. "Developing a close relationship takes commitment, intentionality, and vision," adds Sowell.

### Building Boys

In the same note, sons are greatly influenced by the example their fathers set for them. Whether we realize it or not, fathers are building their boys to become men. "A son watches what their father does, how he treats their mother, and what his father values in life," explains Sowell.

"I think father-son time is important to him because he is always eager to learn and get better at what we are doing," says David Barragan about his son David Jr. "At the same time, I also try throwing in life lessons while having fun." Chris Murff is intentional about instilling independence and achievement in his son Caden through playtime at the park. "Playing with daddy is different from mommy's nurturing and protective nature and creates a forever lasting bond," he adds.

"When a father chooses to spend time with his son and is a man of honesty and integrity, then this gives his son a road map on how to navigate through a world that is pulling men away from their home and family," says Sowell. A son will learn his father's values and embrace those values as his own.

Wherever you are in your relationship with your son or daughter, it's not too late to pour into their lives. Tell them you love them every day, give plenty of hugs, listen to them, and commit to making their relationship with you a priority. **KM**

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Laura Carter and her daughter Brooks enjoy a close bond with each other

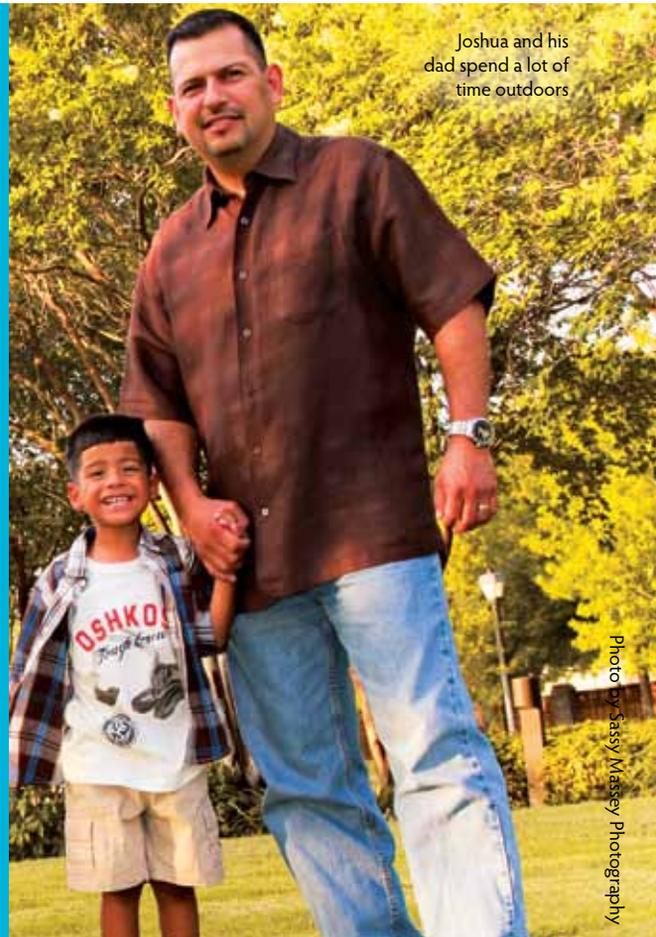
Photo by Mannion's Memories

## Mother & Daughter Together Time Tips

1. Sign up for a jewelry making class together at Multiplicity in historic Katy.
2. Get dressed up and have a tea party with some winter melon black tea from Kim's Tea House.
3. Get your hair done together at Pari's Gallery, BH Hair Studio, or Simply Irresistible.
4. Pick up two copies of the same book at Katy Budget Books for a mom-and-me book club.
5. Get a cookie at Nestle Tollhouse Café at LaCenterra then hit Justice for some cute clothes.
6. Paint ceramics at Plaster Fun House and Ceramics.
7. Get dolled up and go to the Santikos Palladium.
8. Head to a local nail salon for mommy-daughter mani-pedi's.
9. Order matching pajamas from pajagram.com and have a mommy-daughter movie night.
10. Go to lunch at D'Amico's Italian Market Café followed by a movie at Cinemark.

## Father & Son Faves

1. Play a round of blacklight miniature golf or laser tag at Tilt Studio.
2. Hit Midway in historic Katy for some of the best barbecue in town.
3. Take aim at sporting clays at American Shooting Centers.
4. Head to Houston Fun Plex for bumper cars, rides, arcade games, and endless play.
5. Go to Mary Jo Peckham Park or other local pond for a day of fishing.
6. Enjoy a game of billiards or bowling at Times Square Entertainment.
7. Practice your golf swing and enjoy some food at TopGolf.
8. Visit Texas One Athletics and book their batting cage for a half hour of practice.
9. Go to Katy Mills' Jump Street for boundless bouncing and fun.
10. Find your way to Steak 'n Shake and have a pancake eating contest with their all-you-can-eat pancake special.



Joshua and his dad spend a lot of time outdoors

Photo by Sassy Massey Photography