

Celebrating Father's Day: Toyota Employees Share the Best Advice From Their Dads, Proudest Moments as Parents and More

June 14, 2024

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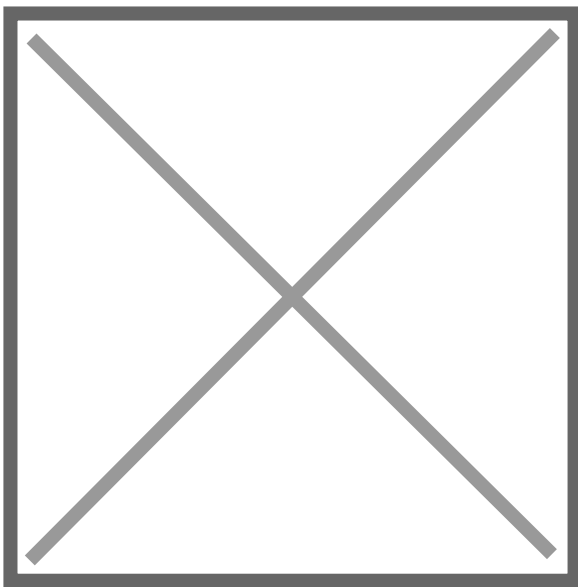
Strong, selfless, and caring are just a few words that some Toyota employees use when describing their fathers. The employees also said their fathers' character and encouraging words impacted their personal and professional lives.

Today, the valuable lessons that their fathers and father figures have instilled in them remain. The positive words and support from their fathers reflect on how they navigate their careers and parent their own children.

As working parents, some Toyota employees are also members of Parents of Toyota, a business partnering group (BPG) at Toyota Motor North America (TMNA). The organization aims to support employees who are parents with the tools and educational resources they need to succeed in both areas: parenthood and business.

"I think the BPG provides a lot of opportunities for leadership and engagement across various working levels as well as work groups," says Kristi Sampson, a senior analyst on the accessory field operations team at TMNA and cochair of Parents of Toyota.

The lessons and advice they've received from their fathers continue to be their guiding lights throughout their parenting and professional journeys. The support and camaraderie that employees experience through the Parents of Toyota BPG are also beneficial and helpful in developing their careers and roles as working parents.



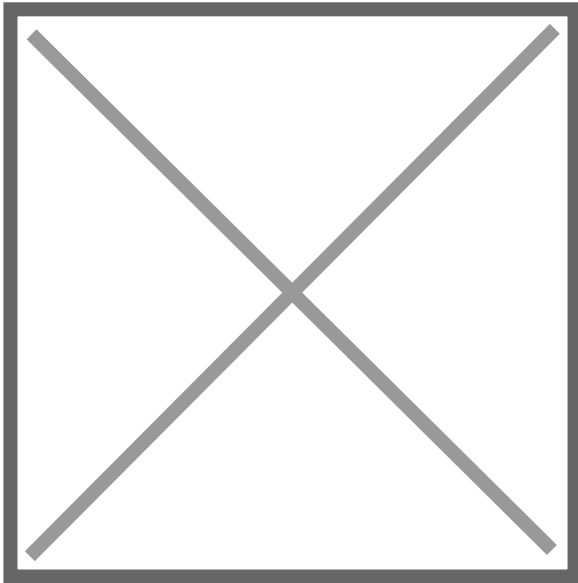
The Power of Self-Confidence

Jessica Wilson, a senior IT compliance analyst at Toyota Financial Services (TFS), was taught the importance of self-confidence from a young age.

"My dad has always taught me to believe in myself," she says. "He taught me that I could do anything in life if I put in the work and believed. This advice has impacted my career and life when being faced with new challenges that I internally feared."

Those sage words have helped the mom of three tackle the challenges that come with parenting a child with specific health needs.

“My parents’ parenting style made me feel warm, loved, and comfortable,” Wilson says. “I want my boys to feel the same and more!”



Like Father, Like Son

Kevin Vybihal, a quality engineer in Service Information and Publications at TMNA, believes the importance of teaching his children how to learn from their mistakes.

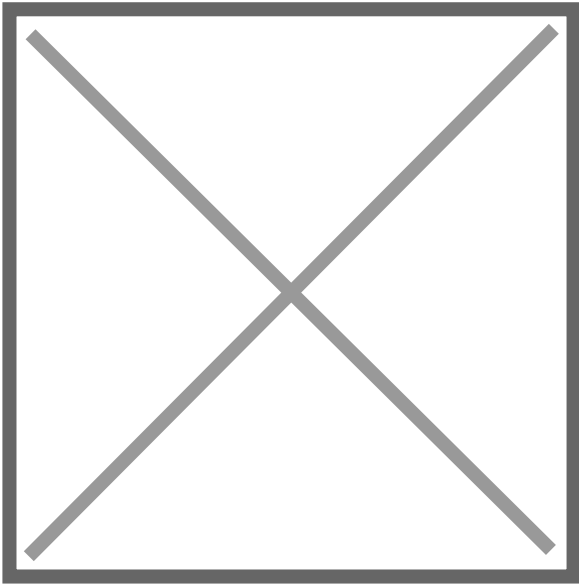
“I think the proudest moment of being a parent is seeing all my children pick themselves up after struggling, learn from their mistakes, and see positive end results,” says the father of four. “Whether it is school-related, sports, an activity or hobby — it means that my wife and I have taught them one of the most important life goals: to never give up on yourself, keep moving forward and to take whatever life has to throw at you and turn it into something positive.”

Vybihal, who’s been with TMNA for three years, credits his father for being an important role model in his life.

“My father is a hard worker,” he says. “Watching him work from sunup to sundown as a child was both inspiring and eye-opening. What I have learned is how to prioritize work when required, but to never put it above my family.”

He has his dad to thank for helping him to be an attentive father and also for inspiring his career path.

“If it wasn’t for my dad being a Toyota master technician growing up, I don’t know if I would be at Toyota today,” he says. “So, I have him to thank for that, because Toyota is an amazing company to work for!”



Never Giving Up

For Stacey Harris, a reinsurance operations manager at TFS, her father's strong work ethic has been a tremendous influence on her career.

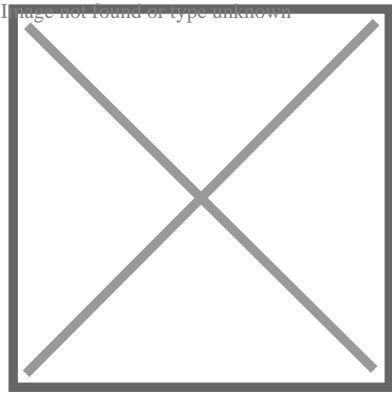
"My father is a very hardworking and family-oriented person," says the 10-year Toyota veteran. "He is the image that I see as a dedicated father that would do anything to make sure his children are given all the opportunities that he never had."

Harris often reflects on the times when her dad supported her extracurricular sporting activities.

"My fondest memory with my dad is when I would travel for tennis tournaments and see him enjoy the experience of traveling, but also seeing his support of me regardless of the outcome," she says.

The mom of one credits that positive outlook to how she operates in the workplace. Always doing your best and never giving up is what her parents taught her, and those wise words have benefitted her professionally.

"This advice has impacted my career, because during tough or difficult projects, I am able to stay focused and not give up with the tough workload," Harris says. "This has allowed me to grow my career and work experiences through the various departments I've worked in."



Stepping Up to the Plate

Brandon Hennessy, a consultant in product development and program management at TMNA who lost his dad when he was young, thanks his stepdad for stepping up and being an incredible father figure. He credits him for being a major influence on his life.

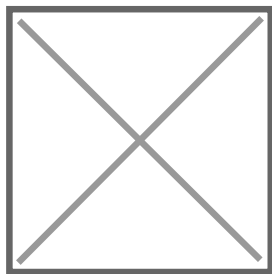
“He is a strong leader,” he says of his stepfather. “He means the world to me. I now know just how hard he worked to set me up for a good life and everything he did to sharpen and coach me into the man I am today.”

That coaching has come in handy for him as the father of an infant and a two-year-old.

“My stepfather’s guidance has helped me when it comes to the ‘think long term’ mentality,” he says. “Doing things that are hard now for my boys’ benefit even if they don’t necessarily like it at the moment, like having firm boundaries with our toddler. The mentality of doing the hard things now to help your kids succeed later is something that has influenced the way I parent.”

As a new parent who’s worked at the company for three years, Hennessy leans on Parents of Toyota to provide that supplemental support that some parents need in those early years.

“The opportunities to learn from others who have walked the parenting journey before me as working professionals,” he says of what he values the most about being a Parents of Toyota member. “I am early on with a couple of young kids, so being able to hear how others have navigated their careers, as well as parenting, has been incredibly valuable to me.”



Cultivating a Solid Community

Mindy Patton, a dealer-lending audit analyst at TFS, believes having a BPG like Parents of Toyota is crucial for working parents.

“I believe it’s extremely important for all companies to have BPG groups such as this one to support parents who may not necessarily find this core group of people outside of work,” she says. “Toyota makes it easy for others to find their community based on their very own hobbies and lifestyles.”

The mom of two, who has been with the company for four years, is grateful that she found a support group that makes a positive difference.

“As a young mom, I never really had a community of people that I could relate to or share similar bonds with,” she says. “So, I joined Parents of Toyota with the intent of ‘finding my people’ and engaging in activities that my children can benefit from that we can also do together.”

She adds, “I’ve been able to meet like-minded parents who have children the same age as mine. My son, Marcus, has been able to attend one of the Bring Your Kids to Work Day events and was able to gain insight into everything Toyota has to offer.”

Patton hopes that she can expose her children to different things just like her father did with her.

“My dad is the most selfless, caring human being you will ever meet,” she says. “My parents made sure they gave me experiences through traveling and exposed me to different cultures, which has helped me and has significantly molded me into the person that I am today. I now try to do the same with my children. I allow them to be who they are and remind them of who they can become through exploration of different places and people.”