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Shhhh... What no one ever tells you about sex p.134

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Give her your undivided attention—not your advice.

What *not* to say to a friend who's struggling with infertility

"Have you tried IVF/acupuncture/headstands?"

"So often, the instinct is to fix things. What's more important is to listen," explains Barbara Collura, executive director of Resolve, the national infertility association. "If you want to talk, I'm here—that's all I wanted my friends to tell me," says Colleen Dippel, 39, who struggled with infertility for years before giving birth to her son and adopting her daughter. "Each infertility case is unique, so advice doesn't help. Knowing there's someone to talk to is what friendship is really about."

"Just relax and it will happen." "There are so many myths about fertility issues," says Kristin Foristall, 34, who used IVF to have her daughter. "I tried relaxing. I stopped drinking coffee. I meditated. Sorry, that didn't fix my problem. Science did!" In fact, a recent study found that stress does not compromise a woman's chance of getting pregnant. Plus, such comments risk minimizing a friend's situation, Collura says.

"I know you're going to be upset, but I'm pregnant." Sharing pregnancy news—yours or a mutual friend's—is tricky, but don't assume you know what reaction you'll get. "Most women want to hear about other people's baby news, in a matter-of-fact way and early enough so they're not the last to know," says Collura. As Peggy Strickler, 39, who went through infertility treatments for seven years before having her son, says, "There is a mix of feelings, certainly, but happiness for a friend generally prevails." —ERIN ZAMMETT RUDDY

IS HER DADDY MORE IMPORTANT... THAN YOU?

Sit your husband down for this one: According to Dr. Peggy Drexler's new book, *Our Fathers, Our Selves*, a father's care might determine whether or not your daughter will be a success. She talks us through it.

Q: Why is the father-daughter bond so key?

A: Research shows that fathers nurture their daughters' capabilities in different ways than mothers do: They'll help their kids deal with frustration by showing them how, if they stick with a task, they'll work past the hard part. Studies also show that daughters who are close to their dads tend to do better in school than girls who do not have that same type of father-daughter relationship.

Q: What was your most surprising finding?

A: That no matter how successful they are as adults, women still crave their father's approval. And they're more willing to forgive their dads for transgressions than they are their husbands, moms, or coworkers. Dads typically aren't around as much, so they become idealized. Kids think their mothers are fair game in terms of criticism and their fathers are more perfect.

Q: So what should a mom do to help?

A: It's simple: Encourage your husband and daughter to spend time alone together. It will help them create their own experiences, and that's what's truly important. —E.Z.R.



Sometimes father does know best!

The slacker mom dictionary

Here, *your* words for the shortcuts that make modern motherhood possible. June Cleaver is rolling; we're laughing!

Dunch: (*noun*) When you give your kids lunch so late, it might as well be dinner.

meTunes: (*noun*) Listening to whatever you want as loud as you want because it's your damn car.

(So what if your son can sing along to that wildly inappropriate new Eminem song?)

Cupfakes: (*noun*) Buying store-bought treats for your kid's class birthday, then roughing up the icing so they look homemade.

Wardrobe momfunction: (*noun*) When you drive your kid to school in your pajamas, wearing no bra, and the perfect skinny-jeaned PTA mom leans in to chat about the bake sale.

Swathing: (*verb*) Considering your kids' dip in a swimming pool as their bath for the day.



(fig. A) Cupfakes