Love and Acceptance Are Crucial to Development Worldwide\(^1\)
Carol Church\(^2\)

If you’ve ever traveled to another country, perhaps one far across the world, you may have been struck by the universal nature of the tender and sometimes tricky relationship between parent and child. Now a new analysis of 36 studies from 18 countries, published in the journal *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, confirms some important truths about how parents can affect their children for a lifetime (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012).

All in all, these studies looked at the experiences of more than 10,000 children and adults who were asked questions about whether they felt wanted and loved by their parents. They also completed tests rating aspects of their personality (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012).

Children and adults who felt more accepted by their parents scored significantly higher on the positive personality traits measured in the study. They were less aggressive and hostile and more emotionally stable and responsive. They felt more positive about the world and themselves and more able to get what they wanted out of life. This relationship was stronger for children, but persisted well into the adult years (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012).

Importantly, *fathers’* affection for, and acceptance of, their children was just as important or even, in some cases, *more* important than mothers’ affection and acceptance. The authors of the study say these findings are a crucial reminder of the central role of fathers, pointing...
out that at times there is an “inappropriate tendency” (ScienceDaily, 2012) to focus solely on mothers. Around the globe, a father’s love and acceptance is also vital to children’s development.

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References

ScienceDaily. (June 28, 2012). *A father’s love is one of the greatest influences on personality development*. Retrieved from http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/06/120612101338.htm