

Father's Day

On 5th July 1908, a church in West Virginia, US sponsored the first event in honour of fathers. It was a Sunday sermon in memory of 362 men who had died the previous December in an explosion at the Fairmont Coal Company mines. Many of the men who died were fathers and grandfathers.

A year later, a young woman called Sonora Smart Dodd decided to try to get an official day to honour all fathers, started. Her mother had died when Sonora was 10 years old. She was one of six children who had all been raised by their single father.

She went to churches, the YMCA, shopkeepers and the government, to try to get support to start a national day for fathers.

She was successful! The 19th June 1910 was the day chosen by Washington State to celebrate fathers.

At first, Father's Day was not thought to be as important as Mother's Day, and people thought it was actually just an excuse to sell things in shops.

However, Sonora was outraged and said:

“Either we honour both of our parents, mother and father, or let us desist from honouring either one.”

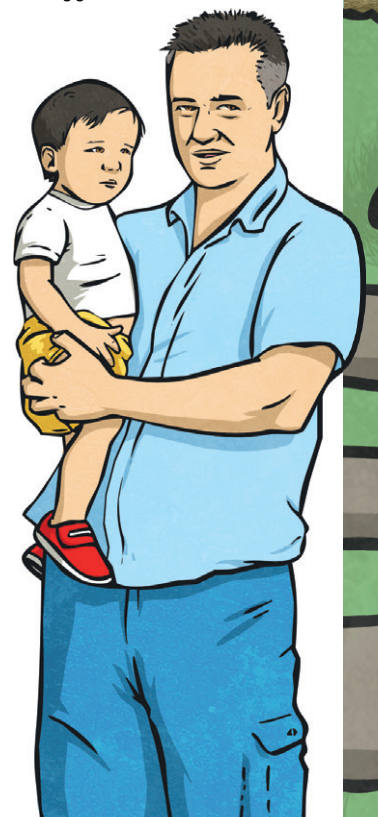
Finally, in 1972, President Richard Nixon made Father's Day an official national holiday.

There are no set traditions on how people celebrate Father's Day, but it is a great time to appreciate any man who plays the role of a father, whether they be a grandfather, uncle or other member of the family who has looked after us.

Did you know?

In the UK, Father's Day is celebrated each year on the third Sunday of June.

Often fathers are given socks and ties, or sports and electronic equipment as a gift, although all dads are different, and will be grateful for different kinds of presents. A homemade card is always a good option, or breakfast in bed.



Questions about Father's Day

Answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. What happened on the 5th July 1908, in West Virginia?

2. Why do you think Sonora Smart Dodd was so determined to have a national day just for fathers?

3. What does the word 'outraged' mean?

4. What date was chosen for the first official Father's Day?

5. When will Father's Day be celebrated next year?

6. What was the name of the man who made Father's Day a national holiday?

7. Who else might be celebrated on this day?

8. What does 'appreciate' mean?

9. How will you celebrate Father's Day?

Questions about Father's Day

Answers

1. What happened on the 5th July 1908, in West Virginia?
The first sponsored event took place to honour fathers (who had died in a mining accident).
2. Why do you think Sonora Smart Dodd was so determined to have a national day just for fathers?
Because her mother had died and her father raised her on his own.
3. What does the word 'outraged' mean?
That she was angry.
4. What date was chosen for the first official Father's Day?
19th June 1910.
5. When will Father's Day be celebrated next year?
On the third Sunday in June.
6. What was the name of the man who made Father's Day a national holiday?
President Nixon
7. Who else might be celebrated on this day?
Grandfathers, uncles, male family members or friends who are a father figure.
8. What does 'appreciate' mean?
To say 'thank you' or feel grateful.
9. How will you celebrate Father's Day?
Pupil's own response.