

Star tips on parent roles

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HE may be known as a Hollywood bad boy, but Russell Crowe knows a thing or two about raising good boys.

The Aussie actor is giving parenting advice on a DVD guide for new mums and dads.

The Raising Children DVD, to be given to the parents of every child born over the next two years, features tips and real-life experiences from celebrity and everyday parents.

Crowe, whose infamous phone-throwing temper tantrum in a New York hotel got him arrested in 2005, is also a devoted dad to sons Charlie, 3, and Tennyson, 1.

Australian Family Association Victorian president Angela Conway said Crowe was an authentic role model for new parents despite his bad boy past.

"He is a doting dad," Ms Conway said. "What parents need is practical advice that is authentic and realistic."

"They need to know it's workable, realistic and practical, and if this helps to do this, it's great."



Best advice: Prime Minister John Howard and some young mates launch the childhood advice DVD. Picture: Graham Crouch

The interactive, five-hour DVD is a guide to parenting children for the first five years. It covers basics about child health, development and care, as well as information about family management and available resources.

Other celebrity parents include athlete Jana Rawlinson (nee Pittman), Wallabies star Lote Tuqiri, and television presenter Johanna Griggs. Everyday mums and dads also offer advice.

Crowe talks of the need for dads to step in to give mum a break.

"Your job is being supportive . . . whether that's going out and buying pickles at 3am when she's pregnant or whether that's doing whatever you can to make sure she's getting enough sleep when she's in the feeding process with the baby," the Oscar winner says.

And hurdles champion Rawlinson shares her experience with the painful breastfeeding condition mastitis after the birth of son Cornelis last year.

Advice on newborns includes information on breastfeeding, bottle-feeding, changing nappies and wrapping infants.

There are also tips on baby safety, including first aid and preventing accidents.

Discouraging bad behaviour and encouraging good are a focus of the toddler section, which also urges parents to avoid physical punishment of children or rewarding them with food.

The Federal Government has tipped in \$2.7 million for the distribution of the DVD, launched yesterday by Prime Minister John Howard, as part of parenting kits.

All information on the DVD was reviewed by at least two childhood experts.

One of the expert reviewers, Prof Lesley Barclay, said the DVD was of extremely high quality.

Mr Howard said the DVD would be a great resource.

"Whatever our views may be on other things, there is a united commitment in the Australian community to the absolutely irreplaceable value in providing a secure and loving environment for every child that is born into this world," he said.