

Brain steroids make good dads

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Testosterone in males is generally associated with aggression and definitely not with good parenting. Insights from a highly social fish can help understand how other androgenic steroids, like testosterone, can shape a male's parenting skills, according to a recent Georgia State University research study.

Once bluebanded gobies become fathers, they stay close to the developing eggs, vigorously fan and rub them until they hatch, and also protect them from mothers who would eat them.

By injecting a series of chemicals into the brains of these fathers, the research team temporarily altered their brain androgens and also their level of parental care.

As a result, the researchers found that brain androgens actually promote good parenting.

The study is published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*.

More information: Pradhan DS, Solomon-Lane TK, Willis MC, Grober MS. 2014 A mechanism for rapid neurosteroidal regulation of parenting behaviour. *Proc. R. Soc. B* 281: 20140239.
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Provided by Georgia State University

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