

Outfit yourself for the hike into the jungle of fatherhood

Most men have evolved to the point where we see nothing feminine—nothing threatening to our manhood—about child-rearing. And that's a wonderful thing. But diaper bags still hark to an era when only Mommy lugged around Junior and his diapers, wipes and bottles of formula.

Last year Marcus Melnick of Buffalo Grove created a solution to that problem: the Tactical Daddy vest. Equipped with 16 pockets small enough for Cheerios and roomy enough for dirty diapers, the khaki garment resembles something nature boy Jack Hanna would wear.

"I hated my wife's diaper bag," said Melnick, who as a public-safety analyst with the Glencoe Police and Fire Departments orders uniforms. "Whenever I would reach into it, I'd pull out makeup or girlie stuff. Whatever I needed was always at the bottom."

No longer.

Dads can earmark certain pockets for certain items and be able to operate under even the harshest conditions—diarrhea at the mall, for example, or crankiness at a funeral.

"Not only is this vest innovative but it's practical," said the father of two. "I will be driving with it on, and if my son asks for a juice box, I already know what pocket it's in."

The Tactical Daddy line has expanded to include pants, shirts, kids' clothes and even an action figure whose kung fu grip can be used to pinch his nose.

Tactical Daddy vests start at \$64.99.

Find details at tacticaldaddy.com, or meet Melnick next weekend at the Chicagoland Kids Expo at the Renaissance Convention Center in Schaumburg. Visit ChicagoKidsExpo.com.

—Chris McNamara



Doesn't matter what the crisis is—a need for a diaper, a juice box—Marcus Melnick is ready with the Tactical Daddy vest.

Send Guy Page comments, questions or suggestions to rwerland@tribune.com