

# 2019 Health and wellbeing Survey Results



## Who took part?

- **117** Total number of survey respondents who said they were father to a child currently aged no more than 5 years old

## How did fathers describe themselves?

- **95% (111 of respondents) said they were biological fathers**
- 3% (4) said they were a father-figure/stepfather\*
- 6 did not answer the question
- \*NB all of these 4 fathers also defined themselves as biological fathers.

## Dads Age (117 respondents)

- **82% were aged 25-44**
- 9% were aged under 18
- 1% was aged 18-24
- 9% were over 45

## Relationship (111 respondents)

- 87% (97) said they were living together with their young child(ren) and their mother
- 8% (9) were living separately but had regular contact with the child(ren)
- 5% (5) were living separately and had little or no contact

## Number of children (114 respondents)

- 85% (97) had 1-2
- 12% (14) had 3-4
- 3% (3) had +5

## Highest education level (114 respondents)

- 58% (66) had a university education
- 25% (29) had attended further education
- 17% (19) had a secondary education

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## Physical health

90 of 117 dads scored their physical health over the last 12 months. Of these,

- 42% (38 dads) said it was good/very good
- 13% (12 dads) said it was bad/very bad
  
- 16% (19 dads) rated their physical fitness as bad/very bad in comparison to others of their age.

long-term illness, health problem & disability

- 13% (15 of the 117 dads) said they had a long-term illness/ health problem/ disability which limits their daily activities/ work/ care provided to their child.

Keeping fit and healthy in the last 12 months,

- 51% (more than half of the 90 dads) had tried to eat a healthy diet
- 38% had tried to reduce their stress levels
- 22% had taken up a more active lifestyle
- 22% had reduced or given up drinking alcohol

Sleep

- 65% cited sleep problems as having impacted negatively on their motivation to maintain a good level of health.

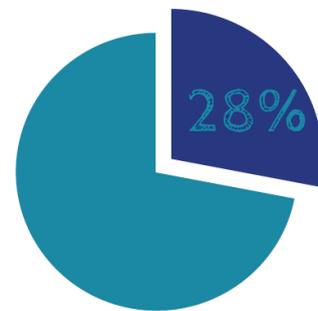
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## Mental health

102 dads who scored their mental health and wellbeing said it was:

- 5% very good
- 23% good
- 43% average.
- 23% bad
- 5% very bad



My mental health is bad or very bad

## Happiness with relationships

97 dads rated their contentedness with their partner/mother of their child

- 51% (49 dads) said they were content (24%)/completely content (27%) with the relationship.
- 26% said they were not content/ not at all content with it.
- **86% (85 of 99 dads) who rated their relationship with their child/ren, said they were content/completely content**
- 47% (45 of 96 dads) said they were content/completely content with relationships with wider family
- 43% (42 of 98 dads) said they were content/completely content with relationships with friends.

## Happiness with life

Of the 99 dads who rated their contentedness with their life

- 33% said they were content/completely content
- 33% were not content/not at all content
- 33% were neutral

Of the 103 dads who rated their level of concern with 'everything that is happening in the world these days'

- 46% said they were concerned/completely concerned
- 27% were not/not at all concerned.

Of the 104 dads who rated their optimism about the next 12 months

- 43% said they were optimistic/completely optimistic

Of 105 dads, who rated how much meaning they feel their life has.

- 47% said the things they do in their life are worthwhile
- 26% said it was not worthwhile.

- 49% said they have purpose
- 30% said what they lacked purpose

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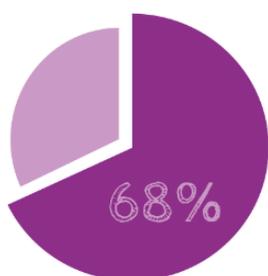
## The cause of stress

When asked what had caused them significant stress during the last 12 months:

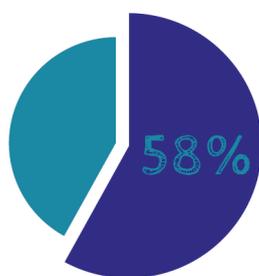
- 59% (69 of 117 dads) said their workload or responsibilities
- 44% cited other work issues
  
- 56% said the same of their own mental health
- 35% said this of the mental health of someone close to them
  
- 47% said the same of financial or housing worries.

## Impact of becoming a father on own mental health

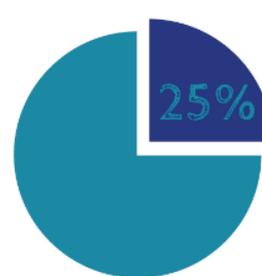
- **68%** (80 of 117 dads) **said it has been one of the greatest experiences of their life**
- 46% said it had made them focus less on themselves, and more on their partner and child(ren).
  
- **58%** (68 dads out of 117) **said their mental health has suffered since the arrival of their youngest/only child**
- 32% said it has added to existing stress in their relationships.
- **25%** **said they feel like they cannot cope and that they are not a good dad.**



One of the greatest experience of my life



My mental health has suffered



I can't cope & I am not a good dad

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## Seeking Support

Of the 68 fathers who said their mental health had suffered

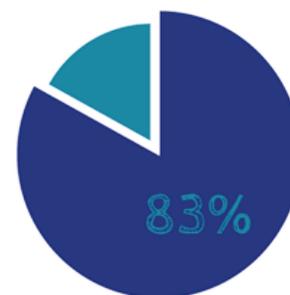
- 50% (34 dads) have looked for support.

This group have looked for/received support from various sources:

- 56% have spoken to their GP, and 44% to another professional
- 59% have shared how they feel with their partner, and 47% with friends
- 53% have looked for/received support online
- 18% from a men's support group

- 85% (29 out of 34 dads) of the group who looked for support said they had looked for professional support/advice. Of these,
  - 17% said it was easy to find the kinds of support they needed
  - **69% said it was possible but not easy**
  - **14% said it was not possible.**

- 69% (20 out of 29 dads) who received professional advice said it was useful, somewhat useful
- 10% (3 dads) felt it was useful as far as it went
- 10% (3 dads) said it was not useful
- 7% (2 dads) felt their concerns were dismissed
- 3% (1 dad) felt it was harmful



Getting support for my mental health was either not easy or possible

## Didn't Seek Support

Of the 68 fathers who said their mental health had suffered

- 50% (34 dads) didn't look for support, of those:
  - 62% said they hadn't done so because they felt they could sort things out on their own
  - 26% said they didn't know where to turn for support
  - 24% said they didn't feel ready to talk about how they felt

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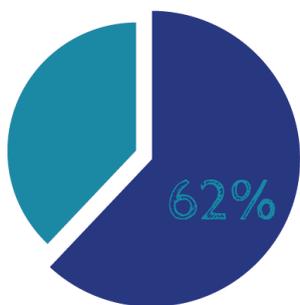
## Impact of dads' mental health problems on relationships

86% of dads (98 out of 117) answered the question about feeling down/distressed and whether this got in the way of good connections with their children

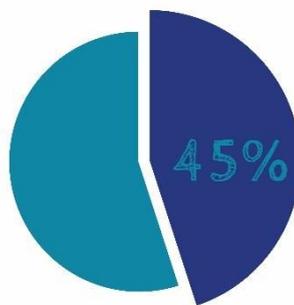
- 58% of dads (68 out of 117) who said their mental health had suffered since the birth of their youngest/only child
- Among this group, **62% said it did get in the way of good connections with their children (52% said yes sometimes; 10% said yes often).**

Among the 117 respondents,

- **45% (53 dads) said their relationship with their child's mother had changed for the worse since their child/ren arrived** - 26% said it had got better
- 36% said they don't spend as much time with their mates as they used to, and they are sad about this.



Feeling down or distressed gets in the way of good connections with my kids



My relationship with mum changed for the worse

## Partners' mental health and its impact

84% of dads (98 out of 117) answered the question about whether their partner had suffered from poor mental health since the birth of their young child; of these,

- 76% (74 dads) said yes.

In this group,

- 74% (55 dads) said their partner's difficulties made them feel more stressed;
- 33% (25 dads) said they felt it was having a negative effect on their kids.
- 29% said it was ok, we seem to manage well.

## Engagement by professionals treating partners

- 81% (60 of the 74 dads) who said their partner had suffered from poor mental health since the birth of their young child said she had received professional advice/support.
- Of these, 77% (46 dads) said they were not kept informed/engaged by the professional.