



Movember calls on dads to brush up on parenting skills with world's first Online Parenting Programme aimed at Fathers

'Family Man' designed to improve parenting confidence and mental health of fathers

Ahead of Father's Day on Sunday, 20th June, men's health charity Movember are calling on dads to brush up their parenting skills with the world's first online parenting programme aimed at fathers.

Movember's [Family Man](#) is a free, online course designed to equip dads (and mums) of children, aged between two and eight, with the practical skills to manage challenging child behaviour and improve their parenting confidence and mental health.

Family Man was designed with fathers in mind and aims to boost dads' tool kits in parenting, in turn leading to better psychological wellbeing for both parent and child. Improvements in child behaviour may be seen within as little as two weeks.

A wide body of research shows that parenting interventions are more effective when both parents are involved. ⁱ Yet, for most parenting programmes, only a fifth (20 per cent) of participants are fathers. ⁱⁱ

Research indicates that financial costs, work commitments, lack of time, as well as a reluctance to seek help may be possible barriers for many dads.

Jane Endacott, Director of Digital Health Mental Health and Suicide Prevention at Movember, said: "Being a parent can be a very rewarding experience, but it isn't always easy. Dealing with meltdowns in the supermarket or a child who repeatedly ignores instructions can be incredibly stressful.

"It can cause friction at home and over time that can impact the whole family's mental wellbeing.

"There is a huge amount of research that shows parenting is more effective when it's done as a team. We know that when all available parents are engaged in parenting decisions, it benefits the whole family."

Although the interactive programme – which is comprised of three 20-minute animated episodes – can be used by any parent or caregiver, Family Man is thought to be the first online programme that is primarily aimed at fathers.

Each episode features a father as the main character who is faced with challenging child behaviours in different situations such as a battle over the dinner table or a tantrum in public.



Users are given a number of possible behaviour in each situation, and the outcomes of each option are clearly explained, which helps the user understand the best possible parenting response.

Adapted from a successful evidence-based programme called ParentWorksⁱⁱⁱ which was designed by Professor Mark Dadds at the University of Sydney, Family Man has been vetted by a global panel of psychologists and parenting experts.

The results of an open trial of the ParentWorks programme, which was tested on 456 parents and published in the journal of Child Psychiatry & Human Development last year, found significant decreases in parent-reported child emotional and behavioural problems and parental mental health problems in those who took part.

Professor Dadds said: “Evidence-based parenting programmes are effective in reducing behavioural problems, yet few involve the participation of fathers.

“Our study of ParentWorks showed that this type of intervention was successful in reducing child behavioural problems, ineffective parenting, couple conflict, and improving parental mental health. “We were able to recruit a large number of dads to take part, and both fathers and mothers seemed to benefit equally from the programme.

“Family Man was designed to be accessible to all families and may be especially useful in rural and remote areas, where resources can be hard to access.

“It is delivered online, without the support of trained practitioners, which overcomes a key barrier for many parents.”

The mental health of fathers has been an increasing consideration in Movember’s recent programme rollouts. As part of the charity’s Social Connections Challenge, aimed at identifying strategies that will strengthen the social connections of men who are struggling with isolation and anxiety, Movember has partnered with MR PORTER Health in Mind, the content and fundraising initiative from the online destination for men’s style [MR PORTER](#), to fund a new mental health and wellbeing app for Fathers Network Scotland.

Fathers Network Scotland is a national charity working across Scotland, with the mission to drive positive cultural change by engaging local organisations, communities, and individuals to inspire and empower fathers. The app will provide their network easy access to mental health support, 24/7 365 days a year and allow users to anonymously search and contact hundreds of mental health support services with geolocation technology, while providing them with advice and support-based content, alongside access to a peer-to-peer chat service.

See Movember’s Family Man online parenting programme here:

<https://familyman.movember.com/>

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About Movember

Movember is the leading charity changing the face of men's health on a global scale, focusing on mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer.

The charity raises funds to deliver innovative, breakthrough research and support programmes that enable men to live happier, healthier and longer lives. Committed to disrupting the status quo, millions have joined the movement, helping fund over 1,250 projects around the world.

In addition to tackling key health issues faced by men, Movember is working to encourage men to stay healthy in all areas of their life, with a focus on men staying socially connected and becoming more open to discussing their health and significant moments in their lives.

The charity's vision is to have an everlasting impact on the face of men's health. To donate or learn more, please visit Movember.com.

ⁱ Lundahl BW et al (2008) A meta-analysis of father involvement in parent training. *Res Soc Work Pract* 18(2):97–106

Huntington C, Vetere A (2015) Coparents and parenting programmes: do both parents need to attend? *J Fam Ther* 38(3):409–434

ⁱⁱ Fletcher R, Freeman E, Matthey S (2011) The impact of behavioural parent training on fathers' parenting: a meta-analysis of the Triple P-Positive Parenting Program. *Father J Theory Res Pract Men* 9(3):291–312

ⁱⁱⁱ Piotrowska, P.J., Tully, L.A., Collins, D.A.J. *et al.* ParentWorks: Evaluation of an Online, Father-Inclusive, Universal Parenting Intervention to Reduce Child Conduct Problems. *Child Psychiatry Hum Dev* 51, 503–513 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-019-00934-0>