



## Canadian men between the ages of 18-34 say they still feel under pressure to “man up”

*Over half of Canada’s young men are reluctant to talk about their feelings for fear of being seen as less masculine, according to new research.*

- **Nearly a third (29%)** of Canadian men feel under pressure to behave in a masculine way.
- **Over half (59%)** of Canadian men feel society expects them to be “emotionally strong and not show weakness”.
- **Over a third (37%)** of Canadian men will not talk to others about how they feel to avoid appearing ‘unmanly’; yet **over three quarters (80%)** think talking is an effective way to deal with problems.
- **Nearly half (44%)** of Canadian men aged 18-34 feel pressure to be manly, compared with only 16% of men over 55.

Toronto, Canada | Thursday, October 10, 2019 - Over 50 per cent of Canadian men aged 18-34 have avoided talking out about their problems for fear of being seen as less of a man, according to a new report released today by Movember, coinciding with World Mental Health Day.

The study, “Perceptions of Masculinity & The Challenges of Opening Up” is based on research commissioned by Movember and carried out by Ipsos MORI which surveyed 4,000<sup>i</sup> adult males aged between 18-75 across Canada, the USA, the UK and Australia. Despite significant awareness that talking openly is an effective way of dealing with problems<sup>ii</sup>, findings indicate that younger men in particular are reluctant to do so. In fact, nearly half (44 per cent) of Canadian men aged 18-34 say they feel pressure to be manly, compared to 16 per cent of men over the age of 55.

Nearly one in ten (8 per cent) Canadian respondents say they “always” or “frequently” change their behaviour in order to appear more masculine, while 7 per cent of Canadian men reported that they are “always” or “frequently” mocked for not being manly enough. Just under half (45 per cent) of Canadian men surveyed regret opening up about their problems and nearly half of these men said the experience would prevent them from doing so again. On a positive note however, more men report having had a positive experience (51%) than a negative one (31%) when they have talked openly with others about a problem.

The research also indicates nearly a third of Canadian men (29 per cent) say they felt under pressure to behave in a masculine way, with 59 per cent believing that society expects them to be ‘emotionally strong’ and to not show weakness.

“Although we’ve made great strides in raising awareness of the challenges in men’s mental health and the importance of speaking up especially when you’re struggling, it is worrying that Canada’s young men are still feeling under pressure to conform to age-old, masculine stereotypes that stop them from talking about the things that keep them up at night,” says Brendan Maher, Movember’s Global Mental Health Director. “We know that bottling up your feelings isn’t the best way of dealing with mental health challenges so we need to continue tackling these outdated ideas which are harming men.”

Brendan Maher says, “Being seen as emotionally strong or stoic isn’t necessarily a bad thing – there’s a time and a place for it. But if the pressure to uphold this façade means that men can’t talk about their problems, then that can have a really negative impact on their mental wellbeing.”

This research comes at a critical time for men’s health, particularly men’s mental health. Globally, three out of four suicides are men and it remains the biggest cause of death for men under the age of 44. Risk factors that increase a man’s vulnerability to poor mental health and suicide include relationship breakdown, acute stress, persistent low mood and social isolation. While most Canadian men believe that speaking out is an effective way to deal with problems (80 per cent), the research

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shows that a fifth of men (20 per cent), say they are unlikely to speak with someone if they are experiencing problems that they are finding difficult to cope with.

The annual Movember campaign, best known for encouraging men to grow moustaches during the month of November to raise funds for men's health, is committed to tackling the crisis through its investment in mental health early intervention and suicide prevention programs.

"Taking part in Movember is about doing things differently," says Brendan Maher. "As well as raising funds for men's health, you act as a brave, hairy billboard for starting deeper and meaningful conversations. We encourage everyone to sign up to take part and to be there for the guys who matter in their lives, through good times and bad."

For more information or to view the report in its entirety, visit [Movember.com](http://Movember.com).

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**Note to Editors:**

Movember strongly encourages the inclusion of appropriate help-seeking information for stories about suicide and mental illness. For support at any time, day or night, we encourage Canadians to reach out to one of the following services: Suicide Prevention Service (Toll Free: 1-833-456-4566 - ENG, 1-866-277-3553 – FR) or the Kids Help Phone (1-800-668-6868). For more help-seeking information, visit [Movember.com/findhelp](http://Movember.com/findhelp).

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**About Movember:**

Movember is the leading charity dedicated to changing the face of men's health around the world. With a singular goal to stop men dying too young, the charity supports the following causes: prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health and suicide prevention. Since 2003, the support of more than 5 million participants has funded over 1,250 innovative projects across more than 20 countries. To donate or learn more, please visit [Movember.com](http://Movember.com).

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<sup>i</sup> Ipsos MORI conducted a quota survey through its online panel of 4,000 men aged 18-75 across the UK, America, Canada and Australia (1,000 respondents in each country). Response quotas were set based on age, region and working status and the final data were weighted to reflect these profiles. Fieldwork ran from 30th July – 12th August 2019.

<sup>ii</sup> Three quarters of men (77% global combined, UK 77%, Australia 74%, USA 77%, Canada 80%) think that talking is an effective way to deal with problems, and 76% (UK 77%, Australia 76%, USA 75%, Canada 74%) believe that talking openly can have a positive impact on mental health.