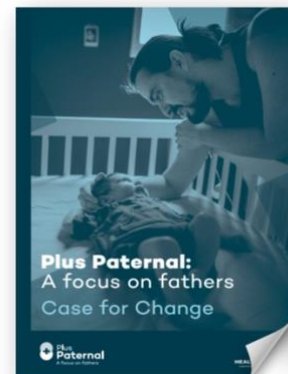




YOUR INFORMATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

In 2020, we saw increasing recognition of the physical and mental health needs of men who plan to become fathers and those who are already fathers. One new initiative was the federally funded [Plus Paternal: A focus on Fathers](#) and its [Case for Change campaign](#). MAPP's lead investigator, Dr Jacqui Macdonald, joined the national 'round table' in developing the Case for Change and was a panelist on the campaign's [Voice of Fathers webinar](#).



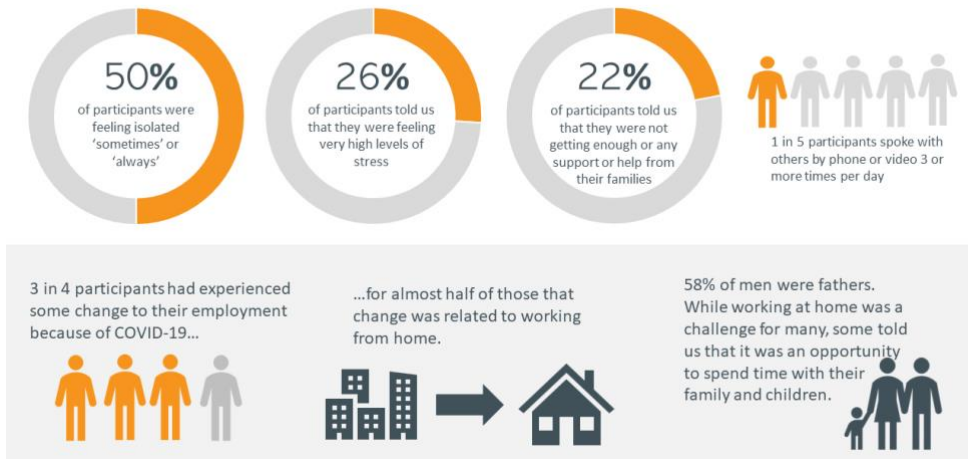
Disturbed sleep is one of the most challenging aspects of new parenting. Sleep problems both cause and are caused by stress and mental health problems. In 2020, [The Australian Fatherhood Research Consortium](#) published two studies on paternal sleep problems: the first, [a literature review](#); the second, [a study combining MAPP data & 3 other Australian studies](#).



Many men face barriers to accessing the health system. In 2020, MAPP's lead investigator, Dr Jacqui Macdonald, led an Australian Department of Health literature review of these barriers and opportunities to overcome them. We reviewed more than 700 articles. The review will be released in 2021.



KEY FINDINGS FROM OUR COVID SURVEYS



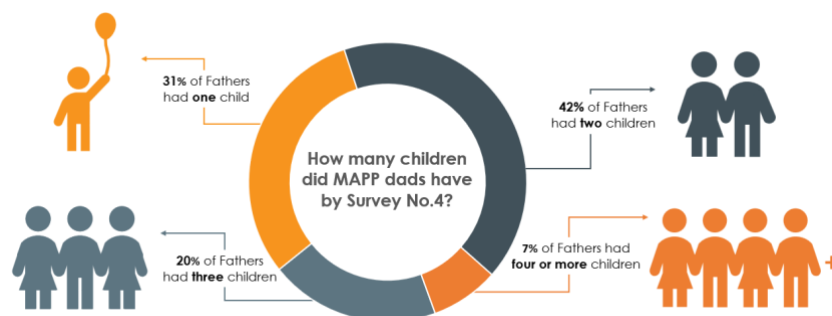
This year, the MAPP study added two short surveys to our study to capture the COVID-19 pandemic impacts on Australian men. Our questions focused on exposure to the virus, mental health and wellbeing, social connection and significant life changes during lockdown. We are collaborating with the [Burnett Institute](#) and researchers from the [Australian Fatherhood Research Consortium](#) to analyse this data.



Our project coordinator, Kayla Mansour, also began her PhD in November in which she will explore men's social connections. Her first study will investigate predictors of men's loneliness during COVID-19, which coincides with Australia's national campaign to [end loneliness together](#). Future studies in her PhD will examine men's social connections over time as some have children and others do not.

We draw on a range of strategies to cope with stress. During Covid-19, we found that acceptance was a common strategy used by MAPP participants and it was linked to lower levels of mental health problems. In 2021, we will release our full set of findings on men's coping patterns before and during the pandemic.

TRACKING THE TRANSITION INTO FATHERHOOD



ANGER AND DEPRESSION

In recent years, a number of studies have shown that when men become depressed it is common for them to also feel angry. We explored this in MAPP participants and found 5 distinct group profiles of men's symptoms of depression and the ways in which they felt angry.

The first group had no clinically relevant symptoms of depression or anger. In the other 4 groups, 2 groups had mild symptoms and 2 had severe symptoms of depression. At each level of depression, the groups were split again into mild and severe levels of wanting to express anger physically such as wanting to bang or hit something or somebody. In our participants who were fathers of babies 18 months and younger, we explored whether these group profiles predicted how the family was functioning. We found that in all 4 groups with some symptoms, the men felt lower levels of social support and they disagreed more with their partners about parenting.



Men in the group with the highest anger also struggled more to bond with their babies. These were not uncommon concerns and reveal the importance of recognising anger as a possible symptom of men's depression and understanding that it can impact on many aspects of family life.

If you or someone you know have regular feelings of anger, then it is worth telling your doctor or you can find out more about depression in men from [BeyondBlue](#). You can read the MAPP study [here](#).

LOOKING FORWARD



What's next for The MAPP Study?

In 2020, we **completed data collection for MAPP's 4th annual survey**. We have also had many men complete their 5th and final survey! By the end of 2021 all MAPP data will be collected! This means we will be able to examine patterns in men's wellbeing, their social connections and life challenges and successes over the span of five years. We have a number of PhD and Doctoral students using the MAPP data for publications. Their research focuses on:

- Paternal anger and infant wellbeing
- Loneliness and social connection
- Reflective functioning
- Coping repertoires and mental health

While we're busy analysing the data from the first four surveys, some participants will continue to complete their fifth survey. **Wave 5 is the final wave of the study.** We are hugely grateful to all MAPP participants and we will continue to keep you informed on the information we gather and our efforts to build awareness and support for men's health.

MAPP PARTICIPANTS: UPDATE YOUR DETAILS

Your involvement in the MAPP study is unique and irreplaceable!

Please keep us up to date with your best contact details.



To update your details, **fill in our online form:**
<http://mappresearch.org/participants>

Or contact the research team:

Phone: (03) 9244 3820

Email: mapp@deakin.edu.au

