



Australian Fatherhood
Research Consortium

Australian Fatherhood Research Symposium 2019

May 2nd – 3rd | Melbourne, Victoria



| @ausfatherhood | #AFRS2019

Deakin Downtown

TOWER 2 LEVEL 12/727 COLLINS ST, MELBOURNE VIC 3008

The Symposium is under the auspices of the Family Action Centre, The University of Newcastle and The Centre for Social and Early Development, Deakin University.



Program

Day 1: Thursday 3rd May

8:45	Arrive, sign in, and hang up posters
9:15	Welcome and overview of AFRS <i>Dr Jacqui Macdonald, Deakin University</i>
9:30	Keynote Presentation: <i>Prof John Aitken, University of Newcastle</i> 'The Science of Fatherhood – toxins, trends and treatments'
10:30	Sharing Our Work: Interactive poster and introduction session
11:00	Morning tea
11:30	Australian Fatherhood Research Consortium Snapshot
12:30	Sharing Our Work: Interactive poster and introduction session
1:00	Lunch
1:45	Keynote Speaker: <i>Emma Walsh, Parents at Work</i> 'Normalising the conversation about men taking parental leave'
2:45	Sharing Our Work: Interactive poster and introduction session
3:20	Afternoon tea
3:40	Plenary Session: Translating fatherhood research into policy Panel: <i>Glen Poole, A/Prof Rebecca Giallo, Emma Walsh</i> Chaired by <i>Richard Fletcher</i>
4:45	Short Break
5:00	Keynote Speaker: <i>Prof Paul Ramchandani, Cambridge University</i> 'Fathers' play and depression' (via live video link)
6:00	Drinks @ Bar Nacional
6:45	Dinner @ Chiara Restaurant

Day 2: Friday 4th May

8:30	Arrive and sign in
8:45	Review of Day 1 and explanation of Day 2 <i>Chaired by Dr Karen Wynter, Deakin University</i>
9:00	Interactive Session: Strategies and Barriers to Father-Inclusive Practice <i>Chaired by Prof Jan Nicholson</i>
10:30	Morning tea
11:00	Panel Session: 'The AFRC Collaboration: What matters, how it works, and are we ready to translate?'
12:00	AFRC Group Meetings Session 1 – Intervention & SCP Groups
1:00	Lunch
1:45	AFRC Group Meetings Session 2 – Literature & Data Analysis Groups
2:45	Big Table Discussion: 'Bringing It All Together: Future directions for the AFRC' <i>Chaired by Dr Jennifer StGeorge</i>
3:15	Poster Awards
3:30	Close

About the Australian Fatherhood Research Consortium



The **Australian Fatherhood Research Consortium (AFRC)** formed following the 'Fatherhood Research Symposium II (FRS-II): Theory, Measurement, Policy and Practice', held in 2017. The AFRC has three key aims: (i) to advance the science of fatherhood; (ii) to inform practice and policy that supports men and their families; and (iii) to promote healthy inclusion of fathers in family life.



To guide the AFRC collaboration, four groups were formed within the AFRC to specialise in different aspects of research and practice. The **Data Analysis** group was created to enable better collaboration across studies with research data on fathers, and is led by Dr Jacqui Macdonald of Deakin University. The **Intervention** group was created to bring together researchers, practitioners, and policymakers interested in contributing to the development and evaluation of intervention programs for fathers, and is led by Dr Eileen Dowse of the University of Newcastle. The **Literature Review** group was formed to evaluate and synthesise the existing literature on fathers, and is led by Dr Karen Wynter of Deakin University. The **Science Communication** group was formed to translate the AFRC group's findings from the research domain into the public domain to improve policy and practice, and is led by Aladdin Jones and Sam Teague. Finally, the **Paternal Perinatal Depression Network** formed in 2019 to advocate for and contribute to a national approach to supporting fathers' mental health in the perinatal period. The group is led by Associate Professor Richard Fletcher.



Find out more:

Web: mappresearch.org/fatherhood-consortium

Twitter: @ausfatherhood



Keynote Presentations



Prof John Aitken: 'The Science of Fatherhood – toxins, trends and treatments'

The 2012 New South Wales Scientist of the Year says the 'urgent need' to develop better contraception is demonstrated by the 46 million abortions performed worldwide every year due to people falling pregnant unintentionally. In Australia one in five pregnancies are aborted each year, equalling around 70,000 terminations, many in the under 19 or over 40 age groups.

A world-first female contraception developed by Professor Aitken's research group that simultaneously paralyses sperm and protects from sexually-transmitted diseases is currently undergoing safety trials. In addition to this potentially revolutionary contraception for women, Professor Aitken and his research team are chasing the holy grail – a male contraceptive pill. "Male reproduction is much more complicated. You're not trying to stop the ovulation of one egg a month. You're trying to stop the production of a thousand sperm a second,".



Emma Walsh: 'Normalising the conversation about men taking parental leave'

Emma is the founder and CEO of Parents At Work which provides parental leave and return to work programs to major corporations. In 2017, as part of a global initiative to advance parental leave equality for fathers and to encourage organisations to adopt a shared parental leave approach in Australia, Parents At Work commissioned 'Swedish Dads' photographer, Johan Bävman to take a series of 'Aussie Dads' photographs. The exhibition was launched in Australia at the Opera House last year as part of a wider Global Parental Leave Equality Campaign to initiate policy and cultural change in workplaces and to normalise the conversation around men taking parental leave.



Professor Paul Ramchandani (via live video link): 'Fathers play and depression'

Paul Ramchandani is LEGO® Professor of Play in Education, Development and Learning at Cambridge University, UK. He leads a research team investigating the role of play in children's early development. He also works as a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist in the UK National Health Service. Paul has been one of the most influential researchers in the area of fathers' mental health. While he was a child psychiatrist in London he led a major research group at Imperial College investigating fathers depression and family wellbeing. His 2005 paper in The Lancet on paternal depression and child development has been cited more than 700 times. In his current role he is investigating how fathers' play impacts on children's development.



Interactive Sessions

Sharing our work: Interactive Poster Sessions

Presenters have 3 minutes (only) to speak about each poster followed by 2 minutes to answer a question from the floor. Abstracts are listed on the following pages. Prizes will be awarded for the best student poster and the best overall poster. Judges of the poster competition are: (i) Dr Eileen Dowse, an academic from the School of Nursing and Midwifery at Newcastle University, and is also a registered nurse and midwife. Eileen also leads the AFRC's Intervention group; (ii) Dr Matthew Roberts is a specialist psychotherapist in private practice, with a key interest in healthy parenthood. He worked as a perinatal psychiatrist at Mercy Health O'Connell Family Centre for the past decade, and is also a member of the AFRC Science Communication and Policy group; and (iii) Andy Symons, a Deakin University psychology student. Andy completed his Honours in Psychology at the University of Melbourne in 2018 and is currently in the Master of Psychology (Clinical) program. In a prior career, Andy worked as a videographer for Ambulance Victoria and Channel 7.

Plenary Session 1: 'AFRC Snapshot'

This plenary will provide a brief overview of the Australian Fatherhood Research Consortium, and will showcase the work of the AFRC over the past 12 months. Each AFRC Group leader will present on behalf of their group, including: Dr Jacqui Macdonald from Deakin University and Dr Liana Leach from the Australian National University on the Data Analysis group; Dr Eileen Dowse from the University of Newcastle on the Intervention group; Dr Karen Wynter from Deakin University on the Literature Review group; and Sam Teague from Deakin University on the Science Communication and Policy group.

Plenary Session 2: 'Translating Fatherhood Research into Policy'

This interactive plenary session discusses how fatherhood research can make a meaningful impact in policy landscapes. Chaired by Associate Professor Richard Fletcher with panel members: Glen Poole, Development Officer from the Australian Men's Health Forum, Associate Professor Rebecca Giallo from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, and Emma Walsh, CEO of Parents at Work.

Interactive Session: 'Strategies and Barriers to Father-Inclusive Practice'

Chaired by Professor Jan Nicholson, La Trobe University, this session aims to bring together the expertise of the AFRC to identify successful strategies in meaningfully engaging fathers in services and agencies who support families. These may be services primarily for children, 'parents', or families. They could also include relationships services, specialist women's services, and specialist services for men and/or fathers. The AFRC will compile the data from this exercise to produce a discussion paper authored by all AFRC members detailing the current challenges in father-inclusive practice in Australia, successful strategies and the key barriers that need to be addressed in the future.

Panel Session: 'The AFRC Collaboration: What matters, how it works, and are we ready to translate?'

This session follows the AFRC Snapshot presented on Day 1, which reviewed the current AFRC Collaboration Model and provided a brief update from each of the current AFRC Groups. The AFRC group leaders will discuss how their group's collaboration has evolved since the last consortium meeting in 2018. Members are invited to discuss how the AFRC Collaboration Model can be developed to support new group collaborations across new domains.

AFRC Working Group Meetings

AFRC Members are invited to meet with their working groups. New groups will be formed after emerging from Plenary Session 3 'The AFRC Collaboration: What matters, what works, what translates'. The group meeting sessions have been split in two to allow for individuals that may be members of multiple groups.

Big Table Discussion: 'Bringing It All Together: Future Directions for the AFRC'

In 2017, the Australian Fatherhood Research Consortium was born during a big table discussion at the culmination of the symposium. It turned out to be a fruitful process, so we're doing it again. This final session aims to consolidate the work achieved across AFRC 2019, and document the AFRC's plans before the next symposium. This session is chaired by Dr Jennifer StGeorge, University of Newcastle.

AFRC Groups

Since its conception in 2017, the AFRC's activities have been supported through the collaboration of four working groups: the Data Analysis group, the Literature Review group, the Intervention group, and the Science Communication and Policy group. Open discussions at FRS-II (2017) resulted in the decision to focus on a specific domain for activities between the 2017 and 2019 symposiums. The theme of '*Sleep*' was chosen due to its significance as an issue for fathers, and also its relevance to many other aspects of wellbeing. In 2019, the AFRC model was expanded to include the Paternal Perinatal Depression Network. Descriptions of the groups are provided below.

Data Analysis



The Data Analysis group aims to identify available data from existing population-based studies that allow secondary data analysis. Activities have been focused on examining the relationship between paternal sleep and paternal mental health using the combined data of four Australian longitudinal studies: the Triple B Pregnancy Cohort Study, the Peel Child Health Study, the Personality & Total Health (PATH) Through Life Study, and the Men and Parenting Pathways (MAPP) Study.

Lead by Jacqui Macdonald, with group members: Eileen Dowse, Elizabeth Duursma, Lauren Francis, Liam Graeme, Liana Leach, Nyanda McBride, Jennifer StGeorge, and Karen Wynter.

Contact: jacqui.macdonald@deakin.edu.au

Literature Review



The Literature Review group aims to review and synthesise the existing literature on topics of interest to the AFRC. Since the last symposium, the Literature Review group has been reviewing the existing literature relevant to:

- Fathers' sleep, sleepiness, sleep disturbance, fatigue in the first 12 months postpartum; and
- Aspects of fathers' wellbeing associated with infant sleep and sleep disturbance in the first 12 months postpartum.

Lead by Karen Wynter, with group members: Laura Di Manno, Eileen Dowse, Lauren Fisher, Richard Fletcher, Jacqui Macdonald, Nyanda McBride, Sam Teague, and Nathan Wilson.

Contact: karen.wynter@deakin.edu.au

Intervention



The Intervention group aims to conduct research that leads to the development of evidence-based interventions to help improve fathers' experiences. The group has focused specifically on developing appropriate interventions that reduce the impact of sleep deprivation/disturbance on family functioning. The group is currently reviewing feedback from a reference group of fathers and mothers of 6-36 month infants/children with problematic sleep to provide formative input into the interview and survey questions.

Lead by Eileen Dowse, with group members: Elaine Bennett, Sarah Blunden, Dawson Cooke, Greg Fairbrother, Richard Fletcher, Tess Knight, Angela McKee, Jacqui Macdonald, Nyanda McBride, Natalie Pierssene, Sherrian Price, Nicole Stephenson, Jacqueline Walker, and Karen Wynter.

Contact: eileen.dowse@newcastle.edu.au

Science Communication & Policy



The Science Communication and Policy (SCP) group aims to promote the AFRC as a leading group on fatherhood research, promote the work of AFRC members, and promote informed conversations about fatherhood. This is achieved through the creation of resources and campaigns on healthy fatherhood.

Lead by Aladdin Jones and Sam Teague, with group members: Dominic Alford, Thomas Docking, Chris May, Jeremy Macvean, Glen Poole, and Matthew Roberts.

Contact: aladdin.jones@gmail.com or sam.teague@deakin.edu.au

Paternal Perinatal Depression Network



In 2019, the AFRC model expanded to include a new collaborative working group: the Paternal Perinatal Depression Network. The group was formed to advocate for and contribute to a national approach to supporting fathers' mental health in the perinatal period.

Lead by Richard Fletcher, with group members: Dominic Alford, Elaine Bennett, Heidi Bergmeier, Paul

Craven, Thomas Docking, Eileen Dowse, Richard Fletcher, Monya Gangemi-Murch, Alan Gemmill, Jane Kohlhoff, Nick Kowalenko, Lisiane La Touché, Bruce Laing, Jacqui Macdonald, Robert Mills, Louise Newman, Grainne O'Loughlin, Mitzi Paderes, Natalie Pierssene, Catherine Rawlinson, Helen Skouteris, Jennifer StGeorge, Anne Sved Williams, and Karen Wynter.

Contact: richard.fletcher@newcastle.edu.au

Poster Abstracts

1

Challenging Parenting Behaviour and Rough-and-Tumble Play Quality as mediators of Parent and Child Anxiety

Mirjana Majdandžić¹, Jennifer St George², & Danielle van der Giessen¹

[1] Research Institute of Child Development and Education, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands; [2] Family Action Centre, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia

Fathers' physical play is an important predictor of child development, and multiple measures have been developed based on theories of fathers' physical role in child development. Fathers' challenging parenting behaviour (CPB), active physical and verbal behaviors that encourage children to push their limits, has been shown to predict less child anxiety in early childhood, whereas findings for mothers' CPB are mixed. Fathers' rough-and-tumble play quality (RTPQ), is negatively related to multiple aspects of children's adjustment problems. Mothers' RTPQ, how parents' own anxiety predicts their physical play, and RTPQ and CPB beyond early childhood have not yet been studied. The aim of this study was to explore whether fathers' and mothers' CPB and RTPQ mediate the relation between parent and child anxiety in late childhood. Participants were 48 8-12 years-old children with their mother, and 42 with their father in three separate rough-and-tumble games. Results showed that fathers and mothers did not differ in level of CPB or RTPQ. Girls were rated higher than boys on anxiety. Four mediation models, controlling for child sex, were tested. More anxious mothers showed less CPB, which in turn predicted more child anxiety. For fathers, no significant relations between fathers' own anxiety and CPB or RTPQ, and between CPB or RTPQ and child anxiety were found. CPB, but not RTPQ, appears to play a role in the transmission of anxiety.

2

Fathers' experience of engaging with their children and participating in a school Dads group: A qualitative study

Dr Fatch Kalembo & Dr Garth Kendall, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, Curtin University

Background and aim: The Fathering Project has established primary school Dads' Groups in order to support fathers' active involvement with their children. The aim of this study is to understand fathers' perceptions and experiences of parenting their children and their participation in a School Dads' Group. **Methods:** Fathers and group leaders enrolled in Dads' Groups in Perth and Sydney were recruited in a qualitative study. Data were collected through in-depth interviews using the WebEx video conferencing service and analysed using thematic analysis. **Results:** Three main themes emerged: 1. Being a good dad; 2. Being the best dad I can be; and 3. Participating in a Dads Group. Factors associated with being a good dad included: parenting behaviours, fathering interactions and activities, relationships with partners, family functioning, and work-life balance. Many participants emphasized their desire to engage with their child in an optimal way: to prioritise children over work, to give children all the attention they need and help them to develop self-worth. There was overwhelming agreement among participants that membership of a Dads Group played an important role in their lives. They discussed the benefits of participation in the group, challenges for Dads Groups, and suggestions for moving forward. **Conclusion and implications:** Key recommendations included more multicultural activities, training for leaders, and encouraging groups in disadvantaged communities.

3

The Acoustic Profile of Australian English Infant Directed Speech

Elise Tobin & Titia Benders, Macquarie University

During interactions with infants, adults adopt a speech register that differs significantly from the speech register utilised when speaking to other adults. These two registers are referred to as Infant Directed Speech (IDS) and Adult Directed Speech (ADS), respectively. While there is an abundance of research on mothers' IDS, there is a limited understanding of fathers' IDS, including in the Australian-English context. The current study will analyse the acoustic profile of Australian-English speaking fathers' and mothers' IDS, during book reading and free play with their infants aged 6-12 months. Fluctuations in caregivers' Fundamental Frequency (F0) from one utterance to the next is a key measure of interest in this acoustic profile investigation; this is motivated by the typically exuberant and variable interaction style that fathers adopt when playing with their infants. IDS is frequently characterised by expanded F0 excursions; however, there is limited research regarding how speakers' F0 fluctuates from one utterance to the next. The current study will investigate the linguistic and interactional properties of utterances produced with the largest and smallest F0 excursions, in order to understand how F0 fluctuations manifests across an interaction. Addressing these gaps in the literature will not only improve understanding of fathers' IDS acoustic profile but may also illuminate the role of fathers in infants' overall social and language development.

4

Engagement in routine infant care amongst fathers who work very long hours

Laetitia Coles¹, Belinda Hewitt², Wojtek Tomaszewski¹, Lynda Cheshire¹

[1] The University of Queensland; [2] The University of Melbourne

Background & Aims: Fathers' work hours, and expectations of engaging with children's care, have increased in recent decades. Consequently, many spend more time in play-based care than previously. Research also suggests a significant minority of fathers engage in relatively large amounts of routine care despite long work hours, yet we know little about how they manage breadwinning and caregiving. This paper aims to understand associations between attitudes, work, family context, and time in routine infant care amongst fathers who work long hours (WLH). **Method:** Fathers working >44 hours/week were selected (n=1,285) from a cross-sectional study of fathers of infants. Logistic regression examined the extent fathers' work context, attitudes, and family context were associated with engaging in routine infant care activities at least once each day. **Results:** 36% of fathers who WLH participated in routine care daily. Those who held gender egalitarian views towards parenting, whose partner had returned to work, who took longer leave, and who used work flexibility provisions, were more likely to engage in routine infant care activities than other fathers. **Conclusion & Implications:** Family, work-related, and attitudinal factors explain engagement in routine infant care for fathers who WLH. Results suggests highly engaged fathers may enact both traditional breadwinner and caregiver fathering roles, and highlight the importance of workplace policy for ongoing father engagement in infant care.

5

The Birth of a Father: Understanding the Fatherhood Constellation in Australian Men

Levita D'Souza & Dr Bronwyn Leigh, Centre for Perinatal Psychology

Background & Aims This research aims to reconceptualise Stern's (1995) 'Motherhood Constellation' by examining the psychological experience of Australian men as they transition to fatherhood. Stern carried out extensive research and clinical observations on women's transition to motherhood, elucidating the complex reorganisation of one's internal world. In line with the Motherhood Constellation, this project aims to explore the psychological gestation in transitioning from man to father, and the psychological gestation of baby in the mind of the father. **Method:** Both self-report questionnaire and semi-structured interviews will be used to gather data from first time fathers at three different time points in their journey of fatherhood: pregnancy phase; first 12-months postpartum; 1-5 years postpartum. Both a targeted approach and a snowball approach will be used for data collection. **Results:** To be reported. **Conclusion and Implications:** Results will be conceptualised into a cohesive narrative understanding of men's inner, private experiences in their transition to fatherhood. An Australian Fatherhood Constellation may be developed, highlighting ways in which men reorganise their inner landscape to create a fatherhood mindset, which guides them during this new life phase. This Fatherhood Constellation holds potential for normalising experiences for new fathers, and orienting health professionals to both normal and abnormal psychological processes.

6

International Fathers' Mental Health Day

Dr Bronwyn Leigh, Centre for Perinatal Psychology

Aims: International Fathers' Mental Health Day (IFMHD) is an annual global event promoting men's mental health in the transition to fatherhood. Centre for Perinatal Psychology (CPP) joined the campaign in 2018 as the Australian representative. **Description:** Founded in 2016 by Mark Williams and Dr Daniel Singley, IFMHD raises awareness globally about the need to get better support for dads as they transition to fatherhood. The day is acknowledged immediately following Fathers Day in the UK and USA, the third Monday of June. Internationally, the campaign focuses on blogs, stories, press releases, interviews and resources shared by charities, support groups, health professionals, and families who have experienced the impact of poor mental health in fathers. In Australia in 2018, CPP focused the campaign two-fold: 1. Infographics CPP joined with COPE, Town Hall Dads, and the Parent-Infant Research Institute (PIRI) to create four infographics, which were shared widely on social media. 2. Radio CPP engaged in multiple radio interviews and podcasts across Australia to promote IFMHD and encourage dads who may be struggling to come forward and seek help. **Impact:** Internationally, a 1-hr live show on Twitter produced 15 million Twitter impressions, with just under 3000 tweets from about 900 participants. A Facebook Live session in the UK had over 1500 views. In Australia, CPP radio interviews reached almost 15 million people via 148 syndicated radio items.

Assessing engagement in a text based intervention for fathers of children on the Autism Spectrum

Dr Chris May & Dr Jennifer St George, Family Action Centre University of Newcastle

Background & Aims Fathers parenting children on the Autism Spectrum are likely to be as stressed as their often highly stressed partners but much less engaged with services that interact with their family system. This project explored the use of text messaging as a means for engaging fathers of children on the Autism Spectrum in intervention. **Method** Fathers (N=184) from urban and regional locations across Australia were recruited through Positive Partnerships (ASPECT) to participate in 16 weeks of messaging intervention. Messages addressed factors such as coping, child interaction, co-parenting, support, and understanding autism. Messages were allocated to cohorts reflecting child's age and parents relationship status (co-parenting or not). Fathers received approximately 54 information messages, many with links (N=18) along with messages (N=14) asking for their rating on the last message sent and (N=3) asking for their thoughts on messages that could be sent. **Results** Some fathers (11%) opted out before completing 11 weeks of messages but received, on average, 35 messages before stopping. Messages were rated 599 times by 128 (69%) of fathers. Most ratings (87.4%) were 1=great and 1.9% 3=poor. Thirty-eight dads (21%) provided unsolicited feedback while 25 (14%) provided message suggestions. Links were clicked between 37 to 114 times. **Discussion & Implications** Metrics of recruitment and retention are often used to demonstrate engagement in intervention however these cannot be re

Effects of Infant and Father Sleep Problems on Paternal Psychological Distress: A Mixed Methods Investigation

Ms Lauren Francis & Dr Jacqui Macdonald, Deakin University

Background & Aims: Fathers commonly experience disrupted sleep and increases in psychological distress in the postpartum period. The mechanism for this increase in risk may be child sleep problems, however this has not yet been established. This study aimed to examine the effects of infant sleep and father sleep in combination and in isolation on fathers' symptoms of psychological distress. **Method:** 190 Australian fathers of infants 36-months-of-age or younger were sampled from the Men and Parenting Pathways study. Four groups based on fathers' responses to their own and their child's sleep quality were regressed onto fathers' levels of depression, anxiety, stress, and state-anger. Qualitative data were sourced from a text-mining study and thematically analysed to identify fathers' perception of their sleep. **Results:** Fathers who reported poor own sleep had significantly greater symptoms of distress on all outcomes than those who reported good sleep, regardless of their infants sleep quality. Fathers reported that their experience of distress, struggles, comfort, and sleep were impacted by their child's sleep. Some reported waking with worry about their sleeping children, feeling guilty for sleeping, or sacrificing sleep. **Conclusion & Implications:** The postpartum period is an at-risk time for fathers' symptoms of psychological distress, especially when experiencing poor sleep. The role of child sleep quality as the mechanism for increased risk was not supported.

Children's sleep and father's lives in the early years: A systematic review

Laetitia Coles¹, Alicia Allen¹, Emily Westwood¹, Sally Staton¹, Candice Oakes¹,
Belinda Hewitt², Karen Thorpe¹, & Leah Ruppanner¹

[1] The University of Queensland; [2] The University of Melbourne

Background & Aims: Postpartum sleep disturbance is often associated with a range of health issues for mothers of infants. Fathers increasingly contribute more time to active caregiving than in previous generations, including sleep-related care. Yet we know little about the impacts of children's sleep and sleep issues on fathers' health and well-being. This review will provide the first systematic literature review of the impacts of children's sleep on fathers. **Method:** We include studies of fathers in intact, heterosexual partnerships, who have at least one child aged birth to 12 years, that use observational, parent/carer or self-report, or physiological measurement of fathers' or children's sleep. Literature examining physical and mental health and social outcomes or other indicators of wellbeing are included, and studies that identify protective factors for better physical and mental health outcomes. **Results:** Results will identify the extent children's sleep patterns are associated with fathers' overall health and wellbeing. **Conclusion & Implications:** This review examines associations between children's sleep patterns and fathers' health and wellbeing. Many systematic reviews examine the impact of children's sleep on mothers. None have been conducted on the extant evidence for impacts on fathers, despite fathers taking greater childcare responsibilities in recent decades. This review therefore provides a focus for future research and intervention within this area.

Nation-wide study of Aussie Dads: Work, Care and Health

Dr Liana Leach¹, Dr Amanda Cooklin², & Ms Emma Walsh³

[1] National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Research School of Population Health, The Australian National University; [2] Transition to Contemporary Parenthood Program, Judith Lumley Centre, La Trobe University; [3] Parents at Work

Aims: Australian fathers want to take more parental leave to support their partners and care for their children; but the available data show a consistent inability to do so. This has implications for fathers, their families, and organisations striving for an engaged and productive workforce. The focus of workplace policy has typically been on mothers; we propose that focussing on fathers use of family-friendly work (starting with parental leave) can improve gender equity in work and care-giving, and benefit wellbeing. **Description:** Little Australian research has identified the key barriers to fathers using parental leave. We propose new a new nation-wide research study to address the following critical questions: a) To what extent do workplaces have father-specific leave provisions, and if they do, why aren't fathers using them? and b) How can we improve access to parental leave and flexible arrangements to improve fathers' health and wellbeing? We will develop a robust national survey and gather data from 5000 fathers of young children (0-2 years) from across Australia, identifying differences and priorities across industries/occupations. **Impact:** The research will be applicable to organisations seeking to improve their parental leave policy design and uptake, as well as employment and social policy more broadly. It will be conducted in partnership with the Advancing Parental Leave Equality Network (APLEN) to ensure the findings are widely distributed to stakeholders.

11

Engagement Of Fathers: A Strategic Imperative

Lisiane Latouche & Dr Megan Anderson, Tresillian Infant Mental Health

Fathers are typically underrepresented in child wellbeing interventions. This finding is consistent with reports of current practice at Tresillian. Given there is compelling evidence (Fletcher et al., 2018) suggesting that fathers' involvement may be critical in overall outcomes for families, this is an area worthy of attention and exploration. Recent anecdotal reports from Tresillian suggest an increase in fathers' attendance across services. However, data regarding fathers has not routinely been collected except through research initiatives. Data from these initiatives regarding fathers' perceptions of program usefulness, and information about desired services will be presented and discussed as part of this poster. Strategic plans for further engagement with fathers will also be presented. Tresillian plans to adopt a model called C.A.P.E (Piotrowska et al., 2017) to examine fathers' level of engagement across different stages of service engagement- 'Connecting' (enrolment) to 'Attending' (presence) to 'Participating' (active participation) and finally 'Enacting' (implementing strategies).

12

Generative Fathering Engaging fathers in family based programs

Andrew King, Relationships Australia

This presentation will inform participants about a new book called Generative Fathering: Engaging fathers in family based programs. The presentation will overview core concepts that improve practitioner's engagement and work with fathers in community services, social work, psychology, counselling, domestic violence and health contexts. Using a strengths-based (non-deficit) approach, this presentation explores the pivotal role of fathers within their families' life, and how this can be harnessed to enhance family wellbeing. Generativity, referring to the sacrificial caring or support provided to a significant relationship or the next generation, is explored and presented as a framework that can best guide strengths-based practice in working with fathers. Generative Fathering provides practitioners with a framework to deepen father-child engagement and work collaboratively with men while addressing the challenges that can threaten these relationships.

Parenting support for the whole family: Karitane's innovative approach to improving accessibility of early parenting services for dads

Sharlene Vlahos¹, Jane Kohlhoff^{1,2}, Grainne O'Loughlin¹
[1] Karitane; [2] University of New South Wales

Aims: As a leading provider of parenting services in NSW, Karitane continues to tailor services to increase accessibility for dads. **Description:** New approaches to better reach and meet the needs of dads include: 1) Early parenting concept store: In Feb 2018, Karitane launched the award winning Early Parenting Concept Store in the heart of one of Sydney's busiest shopping districts, Bondi Junction, Westfield. Since its opening, 7400 parents have accessed the store, including 1250 dads. The store allows dads to seek support with parenting issues in an easy access, low stigma, walk-in point of contact. 2) Corporate Business Support outreach: The Karitane corporate outreach program, established in 2016, makes parenting education and support accessible to working parents, including dads. Offering a mix of Corporate Webinars, "lunch and learn" seminars in major corporate offices nationally and a webinar series, the program has been accessed by over 1600 dads and has received positive consumer feedback. 3) Virtual Home Visiting: In Oct 2018, Karitane established a new Digital Health Hub including a Child and Family Health Virtual Home Visiting (VHV) service, allowing families to receive early parenting support, in their own homes, via video-conferencing technology. Over 80 families have benefited from the Karitane VHV service, including many dads. **Impact:** By adopting a multi-layered, innovative approach, Karitane has successfully increased accessibility for dads.

Midwives' experiences of father participation in maternity care at a large metropolitan hospital in Melbourne

Karen Wynter¹, Laura Deegan², Vanessa Watkins³, Bodil Rasmussen¹,
& Jacqui Macdonald²

[1] School of Nursing & Midwifery, Deakin University - Western Health Partnership; [2] School of Psychology, Deakin University; [3] Women's and Children's Services, Western Health

Background & Aims: Father participation in maternity care has benefits for mothers, fathers and infants. Sunshine Hospital (SH) provides maternity care to more than 5,500 women of diverse cultural and language backgrounds every year; it is not known to what extent fathers participate. The aim was to examine midwives' experiences of father participation at SH. **Methods** Midwives were invited to complete online or paper-based surveys, including fixed-response and open-ended questions. **Results:** Surveys were completed by 40 midwives. They reported benefits to having fathers present, including support and advocacy for mothers, education for fathers and bonding with infants. However, they highlighted difficulties with asking women about sensitive issues (eg domestic violence) if fathers are present. Perceived barriers to father participation, included cultural factors (pregnancy and birth is "women's work"), hospital factors (no antenatal education classes) and individual factors (fathers sometimes being disengaged and distracted by mobile phones). **Conclusions & Implications:** While midwives perceived advantages to having fathers present, they identified several barriers. They suggested addressing service barriers by offering antenatal appointments outside business hours and free antenatal, hospital-based education classes, and actively engaging fathers in conversation and educating mothers and fathers about the importance of father involvement.

Day 1 Attendees

Name	Contact
Dom Alford	dalford@rav.org.au
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This Symposium is under the auspices of:



Family Action Centre – The University of Newcastle

The Family Action Centre (FAC) is a research, teaching and practice centre focused on families and their communities. The Centre produces innovative, dynamic and enduring work that aims to strengthen family and community well-being. The FAC is committed to addressing factors that affect health and wellbeing, and the social and educational paths of families, particularly for those challenged by increasingly complex vulnerabilities.

The FAC offers degrees in Family Studies at undergraduate and postgraduate coursework and research levels through the **Graduate Certificate in Family Studies** and the **Master of Family Studies** and the **PhD in Family Studies**. Professional development education is also offered to enhance workforce capacity in a range of critical practice areas.

The FAC is a national leader in **fatherhood and family wellbeing research**, with a focus on fathers of young children and babies and supporting these fathers in their relationship with their families. An emerging area of research strength is **Strong Families-Capable Communities** with its focus on harnessing the collective capabilities of communities to address complex problems confronting families. The Centre's research in these fields provides evidence for policy and service system innovations that better mobilise capabilities to improve individual, family and community outcomes.

The Centre delivers family support and **outreach services**, such as parenting programs, family inclusive practice programs and health evaluation initiatives. The wealth of outreach expertise and experience, supports and grounds the teaching and research. The Centre hosts a range of students from various disciplines in an inter-professional placement unit, and also provides opportunities to student volunteers to participate in our family support programs, where they liaise with human service workers in education, health, and family and community services.

Contact FAC at: family@newcastle.edu.au



Centre for Social and Early Emotional Development – Deakin University

The Centre for Social and Early Emotional Development (SEED) aims to promote emotional health from conception to young adulthood and into the next generation. SEED recognises the seminal role that experiences in early emotional life have on social development, that every age and stage matters in building wellbeing, and that confidence in holding positive and painful emotion is essential to felt security across the life course.

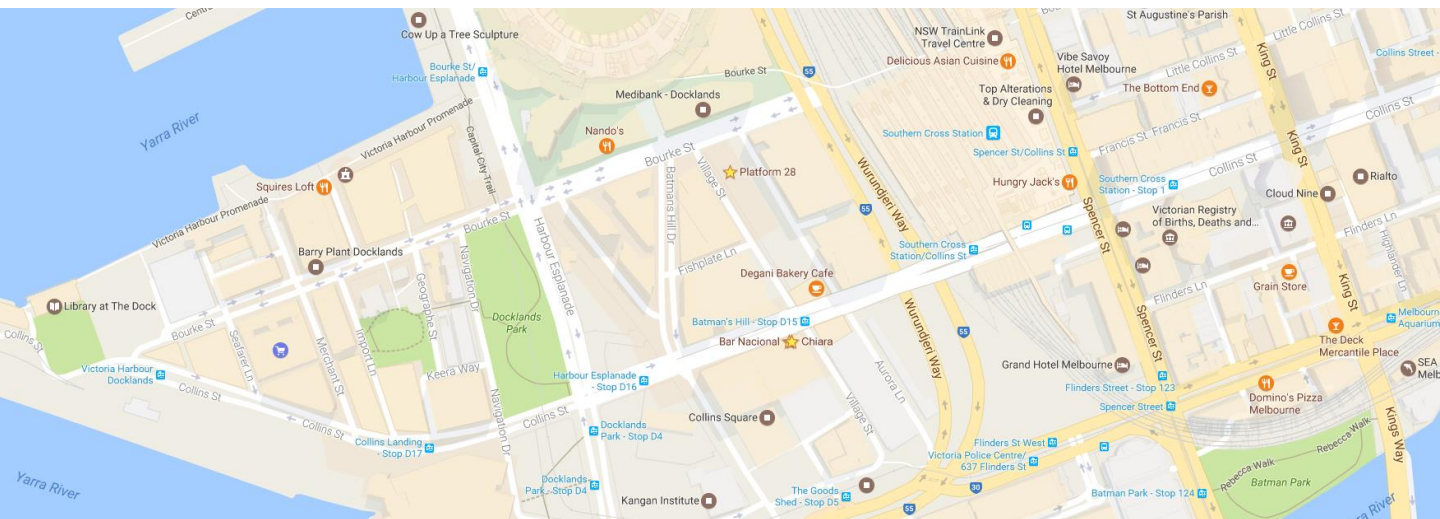
SEED advises on the most effective approaches to promoting wellness and intervening at the earliest opportunities in troubled pathways. SEED brings together life-course, clinical and public health research and practice to describe the major milestones in emotional life. SEED then engages systems for translating our research knowledge broadly to the community, organisations and government.

SEED's Lifecourse and Surveillance Theme aims to improve our understanding of the developmental origins of mental health and disorder. This area of work is guided by SEED's population based longitudinal studies of social-emotional development, including the Men and Parenting Pathways (MAPP) Study. It supports research into the developmental origins of mental health and disorder, within and across generations

Contact SEED at:

seed-admin@deakin.edu.au

Nearby Bars & Restaurants



Bar Nacional

727 Collins St, Docklands. Ph: (03) 9252 7999

Bar Nacional draws its inspiration from the lively Spanish food culture, particularly that of San Sebastian in the Basque region. Choose between smaller tapas such as Boquerones and leek and mahon croquettes, to our raciones which include Jospser roasted lamb chops and paella.

Chiara

705a Collins St, Docklands. Ph: (03) 9252 7909

Located on iconic Collins Street, Chiara serves up the warm and inviting hospitality of Italy on Melbourne's fringe. Filtering traditional Italian through contemporary techniques, Chiara's menu offers a modern take on Italian classics. Inspiration comes in equal parts from the wholesome, nurturing ethos of the Italian food philosophy and the impeccable, locally grown produce available.

Platform 28

82 Village Street (Corner of Village & Bourke Street), Docklands. Ph: (03) 9670 9933

Platform 28 is a charming restaurant bar offering Modern Australian cuisine in the heart of vibrant Docklands. Formerly a railway goods shed, this venue stays true to the history of the site and brings a rustic historical charm that's bound to win the hearts of the locals.