



## Resources for Dads & Partners



### Welcome to Acacia Family Support!

Chances are you are reading this because you have recently become (or are about to become) a parent and find that you are struggling a little bit.

Congratulations on becoming a new parent. However, whilst this can be one of the most rewarding times in a person's life, at certain points it can also be very challenging and have an effect on parents' mental health. However, if you're struggling you've come to the right place. This is often normal and you're not on your own.

Gathered in this resource pack we have provided links to support networks for dads and partners, with handy tips and useful perinatal information (both practical and emotional), packed with lived experience of parenthood and mental health. This is an opportunity for sharpening up your dad/partner skills, getting clued up on coping strategies and hopefully normalising the experiences of dads and partners experiencing perinatal mental health struggles. We strongly suggest that you visit our partners web portal where you will find access to all of the information, links, videos, self-help information listed below and more. **Just point your camera at the QR code above or visit [www.acacia.org.uk/dads-partners](http://www.acacia.org.uk/dads-partners)**

Whether you are experiencing perinatal mental health difficulties yourself, or are supporting someone else who is, it takes guts to take the first step ... and here you are! Together, we've got this.

**Please note: Although Acacia provides a befriending support service for dads and partners in Birmingham, we are not a crisis service. If you feel you need immediate mental health support, please contact your GP or call 999 in an emergency.**

In Birmingham and Solihull you can also **ring 0121 262 3555** to access **the new 24/7 NHS urgent mental health helpline for all ages**. You can use this helpline to get expert advice and assessment for children and adults and you can call for yourself or on behalf of someone else.

You can also call **Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust (BSMHFT - 25yrs and over)** on **0121 301 5500**.



For **Forward Thinking Birmingham (24 yrs and younger)** call **0300 300 0099**.

#### Also:



**Shout 85258** is a free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope. Just **text SHOUT to 85258**. The text is free and anonymous on all major UK networks.

**The Samaritans** provide confidential and free support by phone **116 123** or email **(jo@samaritans.org)**. See **Samaritans.org** for more info.



## What are perinatal mental health problems? Who do they effect?

[The full version of this information is available on our portal]

Maternal/paternal mental health problems, or perinatal mental health problems as they're often called, are more common than you think. In fact, one in 5 new mums experience them and up to one in 10 new dads or partners. These mental health problems can range from anxiety, low mood and depression to more severe obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and psychosis. Some will have suffered mental health problems before but for others symptoms are new and frightening for the whole family.



Depression and anxiety are the most common mental health problems during pregnancy and new parenthood, with around 12% of women and 6% of men experiencing depression and 13% of women and 6.5% of men experiencing anxiety at some point - many will experience both.

Anybody can experience mental health problems when having a baby, at any time of life, irrespective of gender, age, culture or social background. It happens to men as well as women and is really common. It's important to keep in mind that this is not a sign of a 'weak character' or other inadequacy. Many gifted, successful and powerful people have experienced mental health problems in their lives. Additional risk factors include: if a close relative has experienced mental health problems, psychological make up and personality, major life events, physical illnesses, isolation, relationship breakdown, money worries.



The good news is that perinatal mental health problems can be treated. Most mums and dads make a full recovery and, as with all health conditions, the sooner they are recognised, and appropriate help is sought, the better.



### Dad/partner specific mental health support:

**Acacia Dads' Online Portal** is a great place to start. It has been created to be one-stop shop so you have access to everything in one place. It contains information, real-life testimonies from dads who have been through it, plus a wealth of resources including FAQs, Ted Talks and links to other helpful organisations including those listed below on this page. If you haven't already, you can also refer yourself to into our service using the secure online referral form.

<https://www.acacia.org.uk/dads-partners/acacia-dads/>



The following list is provided for information purposes only. It is not to be assumed that Acacia Family Support endorses any of the providers and/or services in this list. To ensure that information below is still current you may wish to check websites.

**Dads Matter UK** provide support for dads worried about or suffering from depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

<https://www.dadsmatteruk.org/>



**From Dads to Dads** - Real life experiences and real life useful facts. Information dads want, laid out simply by experts in that field. With articles *by* dads *for* dads, sharing their experiences to provide information about pregnancy, birth and becoming a dad.

<http://www.fromdadstodads.org.uk/>

**PMH Support** - offering guidance and advice and practical tips. Educating parents on parental mental health through pregnancy, birth and beyond. Run by a consultant in paternal mental health and parent education, peer support trainer, dad, husband, army veteran.

[https://www.instagram.com/p\\_m\\_h\\_support/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/p_m_h_support/?hl=en)

<https://www.facebook.com/pmhsupportforparents/>

<https://www.aims.org.uk/journal/item/fathers-birth-trauma-support>



**PND Daddies** - The PND Daddy runs a Twitter chat for dads who suffer with PND and need support. Join in on Tuesdays 8-9 pm using #PNDDaddies.

**The Dad Pad** – Essential guide for new dads, developed with the NHS.

<https://thedadpad.co.uk/>



**National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse** – National resource for fathers (and others) that looks to encourage and strengthen fathers and families. <https://www.fatherhood.gov/>

**This Dad Can** – lots of advice and support for dads including postnatal depression. [www.thisdadcan.co.uk/](http://www.thisdadcan.co.uk/)



**It Takes Balls to Talk** - information, self-help and links. 'It Takes Balls to Talk' is a campaign which uses sporting themes to encourage people, particularly men, to talk about how they feel.

[www.ittakesballstotalk.com/](http://www.ittakesballstotalk.com/)

**Mind** - One dad tells his story, accompanied with links to more information and advice.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/depression-as-a-new-dad/>



**Mind - Better Mental Health for Fathers** - A really great resource for better mental health for new dads, partners and non-birthing parents - please download by clicking link. This booklet and accompanying Wellbeing Skills aims to help you navigate the early years as a new dad or co-parent, maintain good mental wellbeing for yourself and support your new family.

<http://blgmind.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Better-Mental-Health-for-New-Parents.pdf>

**Mind - Wellbeing Skills for New Parents** - This booklet and accompanying 'Better Mental Health For Fathers' aim to help you navigate the early years as a new dad or co-parent, maintain good mental wellbeing for yourself and support your new family.

<http://blgmind.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Wellbeing-Skills-for-New-Parents.pdf>



**National Childbirth Trust (NCT)** – Good information and articles on their website covering topics such as pregnancy, labour and birth, and life as a parent for dads and partners. Helpline: 0300 330 0700. <https://www.nct.org.uk/>

**PANDAS** is a community offering peer-to-peer perinatal mental health support for both parents, using telephone, social media and email. <https://pandasfoundation.org.uk/> and

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/pandasdads/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/pandasdads/about/?ref=page_internal)



**The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)** offer support to any man who is down or in crisis. Support is [online](https://www.thecalmzone.net/), over the phone on 0800 58 58 58, or on webchat. <https://www.thecalmzone.net/>

**OCD Action** provide support and information to anybody affected by obsessive compulsive disorder and work to raise awareness of the disorder amongst the public and front-line healthcare workers. <https://ocdaction.org.uk/>

ocdaction



**NHS Self Help Leaflets** covering a full range of mental health problems produced by Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. <http://www.selfhelpguides.ntw.nhs.uk/bsmhft/SelfHelp/>



### Support for LGBTQ+ partners:

**Acacia LGBTQ+ Partners Portal** - a one stop shop for LGBTQ+ partners, providing a broad range of information, self-help, videos and links. Includes a same-sex partners 'survival guide'. Use the QR code or go to <https://www.acacia.org.uk/dads-partners/lgbtq/>



**Birmingham LGBT** – helping the LGBTQ+ community in Birmingham “realise their full potential and have equal access to what the city has to offer”. Includes community groups and help to access counselling. <https://blgbt.org/>



**Gays With Kids** – resources for gay, bi and trans dads and dads-to-be. <https://www.gayswithkids.com/>

**Gingerbread** - information on LGBTQ+ parental responsibilities and rights, with more general support and advice on a wide range of topics including bereavement and finances. <https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/information/lgbt-single-parents/>

**Gingerbread**

---

### Videos:

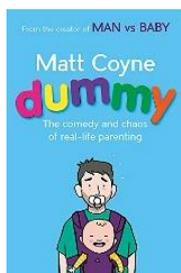
**TED** Mark Williams: **The importance of new fathers' mental health** (TED Talk) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIUWWPIVyTM>

Anna Machin: **We need to change the conversation about fathers** (Ted Talk) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cu4L441x9o>

**BBC** BBC Stories: **Postnatal depression in men** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uihF7\\_oLgo4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uihF7_oLgo4)

---

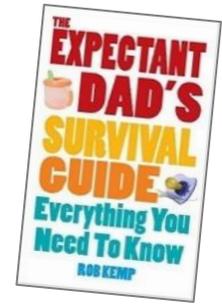
### Books:



**'Dummy'** by Matt Coyne (*Man vs Baby*): humorous observations for new fathers. Great if you're ready for a bit of light-hearted but truthful comedy about dad life. It doesn't shy away from the nitty-gritty and – warning – there is some colourful language, but it may help you realise that being a dad isn't all about being perfect: we're all learning as we go and sometimes parenthood can be a challenge, yet a fun one.

Acacia Family Support - [www.acacia.org.uk](http://www.acacia.org.uk) - 0121 301 5990 (Mon-Fri 9.30-15.00)  
FQ067, Resources for Dads and Partners, Feb 2020

*'The Expectant Dad's Survival Guide. Everything You Need to Know'* by Rob Kemp: a step-by-step guide from first finding out about becoming a dad, all the way to birth. It covers everything from packing your hospital bag to how to help your baby sleep.



---

## Apps:

As we live in the digital age, there are a number of apps to help new and expectant fathers:



**DaddyUP** – “Whether you're a new dad or adding another cub to the family, Daddy Up is the man's field guide to pregnancy - weekly information about your pregnant Lady Lumberjill; rugged weekly baby-size comparisons; customizable daddy checklist.”

**Baby Buddy** – “Free multi-award-winning, interactive pregnancy and parenting app Baby Buddy has been created to support parents, co-parents and caregivers... Baby Buddy provides trusted, evidence-based information and self-care tools, based on the latest research and is NHS-approved.”



**Pregnancy+** - “The Pregnancy+ app features expert advice, daily articles, healthcare tips and interactive 3D models so you can track your baby's development.”  
“Supportive tools. Personalised content. Health tracking.”

**Babysparks** – “Help your child thrive through meaningful play. Our app helps you support and monitor your child's development with daily play activities, milestones, tracking tools, articles, tips, and much more - all created by experts and personalized for your child's unique needs.



**DadPad App** – “The essential guide for new dads. Developed with the NHS.”