



FOUR IN TEN NEW FATHERS DAD SHAMED FOR BEING INVOLVED IN THEIR BABIES' LIVES, ACCORDING TO NEW RESEARCH



Nearly four in ten new fathers claim they have been “dad shamed” because they take an active role in their child’s life, according to a new study.

A nationwide study of British men who have started a family within the last two years, revealed 38 percent of men said they have been made to feel less “manly” by others for being a “hands on dad”.

According to the study some of the dads polled have been ridiculed for carrying a baby in a carrier, pushing a pram or taking shared parental leave.

Perhaps as a consequence, 72 percent of British dads feel there just isn’t enough support for new fathers, with 84 percent believing the impact of childbirth on dads goes widely unrecognised.

In a recent, high-profile example of “dad shaming”, 007-star Daniel Craig was called out last year by GMB host Piers Morgan, who questioned his masculinity for carrying his newborn baby in a carrier. His comments about the actor prompted a storm of outrage amongst parents and non-parents alike, with many people criticising Morgan’s views on “manhood”.

And “manhood” is an issue for new dads, according to the research, with as many as a quarter (24 percent) claiming to have felt crippled by the pressure to provide for their family, and 15 percent confessing they had at times felt they were failing their family.

The research, commissioned by Ergobaby, also revealed that half (49 percent) of new dads claimed they were judged by others for struggling to cope with their new baby.

When asked where this pressure came from, 40 percent felt judged by family members, 32 percent by friends, and more than a third felt pressure from society as a whole, with one in ten told to simply “get a grip” when they spoke about how hard they were finding parenthood.

Little wonder then, perhaps, that more than half (55 percent) of UK dads admitted they didn't talk to anyone about their new baby struggles, suffering instead in silence.

The study also revealed more than a third (34 percent) believe they experienced a form of postnatal depression, following the birth of their baby, with a third admitting they had found it hard to bond with their baby.

Amanda Loveday, Marketing Manager at Ergobaby UK said of the findings: “This research shows that dads are under a supreme amount of pressure once their baby is born that unfortunately they don't seem to be given the tools or time to adjust to parenthood.

“By championing simple actions such as babywearing – which can reduce stress and increase bonding – or talking openly, and without shame, about any fears and concerns, we can better equip new dads to enjoy the positives of parenthood.”

The research found that - despite being made to feel ashamed of engaging with their newborns - 71 percent of British fathers felt playing with baby helped with bonding, 66 percent said talking to them brought them closer, and 62 percent said babywearing as much as possible helped.

In fact, 60 percent said that overseeing bedtime helped them bond with their child, 57 percent favoured overseeing bath time, and 52 percent said dads should feed the baby as often as possible.

Almost 90 percent (88 percent) said they would have found it useful if there was more information available to new dads about bonding with their child.

The study also found that 22 percent of new dads found the lack of sleep totally debilitating, while a fifth (21 percent) said they had felt utterly overwhelmed by their new responsibilities after they first became a dad.

Despite their struggles, the survey of 1,000 new dads found that 92 percent said they wouldn't change being a dad for anything in the world, and 96 percent claiming that being a dad was the best experience ever.

Dr Rosie Knowles, GP and founder of Carrying Matters commented on the findings, “these figures make such disturbing reading: babies and children thrive when their fathers are engaged

and loving parents, responsive and nurturing. Dads play a particularly special part in creating secure attachment relationships for their children and it's very clear that dads long to be more involved with their babies but feel ill-equipped to do so and fear being judged for being hands-on fathers. This needs addressing; for the sake of the whole family and the wider society.

“One way dads can encourage the feeling of bonding with their baby is to spend more time just holding them: the loving close contact releases the hormone oxytocin that helps reduce stress and anxiety in both baby and parent. Dads feel this too, not just mums. The more they have the opportunity to hold and cuddle their child the more likely they are to feel these essential bonds forming, the more their baby will trust them, and the more their confidence in themselves as fathers will rise. Using a simple, comfy and safe baby carrier is a fantastic way to keep babies close to their parents, dads included, while giving parents their hands back and allowing them to explore the world together. “

For more information, images and samples please contact Wild Card PR
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Notes to Editors

About Ergobaby

Founded in 2003, Ergobaby is dedicated to building a global community of confident parents with smart, ergonomic solutions that enable and encourage bonding between parents and babies.

Ergobaby offers a broad range of award-winning baby carriers, swaddlers, nursing pillows, strollers, and related products that fit into families' daily lives seamlessly, comfortably and safely.

The Ergobaby brand was launched by mother and clothing designer Karin Frost. Living in Maui she was searching for a baby carrier that would allow her to enjoy her active outdoor lifestyle and daily routine without having to sacrifice precious bonding time.

After trying seven different carriers with varying degrees of success, Karin developed her own soft structured carrier. With that early design, she went on to influence the safety standards by which all carriers are now made and to revolutionise the way babies are carried.

For more information about Carrying Matters please visit www.carryingmatters.co.uk

*The research of 1,000 men who have had a baby in the past two years was commissioned by polling firm Ginger Research on behalf of Ergobaby in April 2019