

## Your friends and family

When you have children many new people come into your life. Your circle of friends, and bonds with your family, may change.

**It's amazing how many new people you meet when you take your baby for a walk.**

**Peter** child aged 10 weeks

Your social life may be affected by issues like:

- less freedom to do things on the spur of the moment
- less money
- more demands on your time
- less energy for social activities
- friends who don't understand your new responsibilities.

Many new dads say they get a new understanding of the importance of family and friends.

## Your baby

You are starting a life long relationship with your child. You will be this child's greatest male influence – you will be their hero! It is important to share experiences, memories, understanding and love, for both you and your child.

**My children grew up so fast! I missed a lot of their childhood, and can never get that back.**

**Robert** children aged 24, 26 & 29

Research has shown that good relationships formed in the early years of life have life long benefits to a child. Your role as dad can give your baby a strong, constant relationship they can rely upon. You will help your child feel safe, secure, confident and loved.

## Tips from other dads

Becoming a dad is a great chance to develop new relationships, strengthen old ones and learn more about yourself.

- Try to have time alone with your partner, your baby and yourself
- Be open to offers of help from friends and family
- Talk to other dads about their experiences
- Get involved in the daily needs of your child like changing nappies, giving baths, going for walks, playing with and cuddling your baby
- Talk to your partner about what you can do to help.

## Help

If you need more information or support about changes in your relationships with your partner, friends or family you can contact:

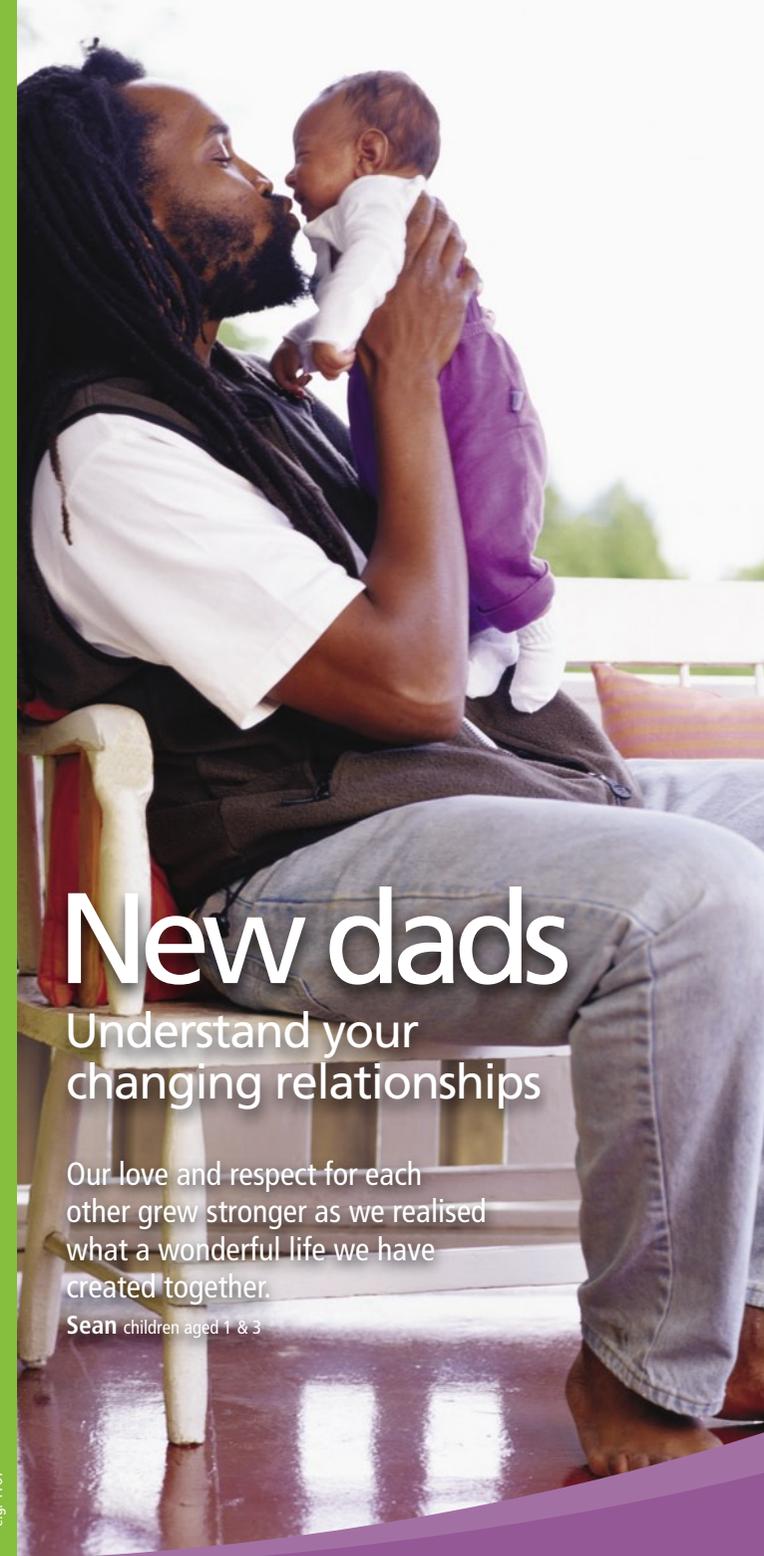
- Your General Practitioner
- A Relationship Counsellor
- Mensline Australia – Ph: 1300 798 978
- Relationships Australia – Ph: 1300 364 277



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[www.goodbeginnings.net.au](http://www.goodbeginnings.net.au) | [www.calvarytas.com.au](http://www.calvarytas.com.au)



# New dads

## Understand your changing relationships

Our love and respect for each other grew stronger as we realised what a wonderful life we have created together.

**Sean** children aged 1 & 3



You and your partner are the world for a baby that is totally dependant on you. This is a wonderful feeling, but can also be overwhelming.

**The enormity of the responsibility I'd taken on hit me the moment my first child was born.**

**Alec** children aged 6 months & 2

### Life changes when you become a dad

For some dads these changes may be easy, for others it is harder. You will probably experience strong feelings, including:

- joy and pride
- frustration and helplessness
- incredible love and protectiveness
- uncertainty and fear
- awe and amazement
- jealousy and resentment.

Being a dad can be difficult and challenging. Most dads say the enjoyment, satisfaction, and fulfilment they get from seeing their baby grow and develop makes the difficult times worthwhile.

**I felt an overwhelming feeling of joy, I was walking in the clouds for a week.**

**Randall** child aged 18 months

## Your partner

Having a baby brings a special closeness to your relationship with your partner. Many couples say their relationship was made stronger by becoming parents and dealing with difficult issues such as:

- Uncertainty about how to care for a new baby
- Lack of sleep and tiredness
- Disagreement over parenting roles and responsibilities
- Lack of time together as a couple
- Changed financial circumstances
- Less intimacy and sexual desire
- Your baby taking up a lot of your partner's time and attention.

**I was no longer the individual focus of my partners love, affection and attention.**

**Gerry** children aged 8 & 11

### Sex

Men and women can have less desire for sex following the birth of a baby. Recovering from childbirth, adjusting to new demands on her body and caring for the baby can leave your partner physically and emotionally tired.

This can be frustrating, but patience, understanding and talking honestly with each other about your feelings can help.

Being parents has made our relationship stronger. We have had to work together, share more responsibilities, and compromise with each other more.

**Tony** child aged 12 months

