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## People living in the South report better relationships with mums than dads

*Relate Cambridge's tips for better communication with dads this Father's Day*

Research by Relate, the leading relationships charity, has found that people living in the South of England are less likely to report a very good relationship with their dads than with their mums. In the poll of over 5,000 people across the UK aged 16+, only 42% of people in the South of England\* reported a very good relationship with their dads, compared to 53% with their mums.\*\*

In addition, 6% of respondents described their relationship with their dads as fairly bad and 3% described it as very bad. This compares to 5% who described their relationship with their mums as fairly bad and 2% who described it as very bad.\*\*\*

In response to these findings, and with Father's Day just around the corner, Elaine Taylor, Relationship Counsellor at Relate Cambridge says there are things both fathers and children can do to enhance their relationships with one another. She said: "Every dad's different, but some can find it tricky to express their emotions, which can affect the way their children perceive the relationship. Sometimes, fathers may try to show they care by offering help with practical things like finances or driving lessons, but shy away from providing emotional support.

"This means people may *feel* closer to their mum than their dad, when in fact their relationship with their dad is just as strong. I'd advise fathers who're struggling to communicate with their kids to take a few more risks – tell your teenage son that you're there to talk if he ever needs to, or give your grown-up daughter a hug. It may feel uncomfortable to start with if you haven't always been this open, but it's never too late to start and it'll show your kids how much you really care. The same goes for children – even as adults, tell your dad how much you care this Father's Day and other days of the year as well."

### **Elaine's tips for better communication with dads**

**Notice actions as well as words:** some dads do things rather than say them. Maybe your dad doesn't tell you he loves you but he shows he cares by reminding you to wear your bike helmet or helping you to move house.

**Take more risks:** share how you're really feeling with one another, even if it seems unnatural at first.

**Make use of technology:** Skype, WhatsApp, Facebook, texting and other social media give you more ways to keep in touch with each other and express emotion even when you don't live together. It may be easier to write something rather than say what you feel.

**Have a regular meet-up:** it sounds obvious but spending quality time together enhances bonds between dads and their children. Make it a regular event, whether it's Sunday lunch or watching the football together.

**Don't stop trying:** remember that we all have the ability to learn new skills and improve the way we communicate with one another, no matter what our age or gender.

Relate Cambridge offers information, advice and counselling for all stages of your relationships, including counselling for couples and sex therapy. For further information about our work at the heart of the Cambridge community, call us on 01223 357424 or visit [www.relatecambridge.org.uk](http://www.relatecambridge.org.uk).

Follow this link for more information about our 70<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations and details of our spectacular fundraising event: [www.relatecambridge.org.uk/ely](http://www.relatecambridge.org.uk/ely).

For all media enquiries - please contact Elaine Taylor on **01302 347712**

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### **Relate Cambridge – supporting relationships at every stage of your life**

\*Figures exclude London

\*\*The survey of 5,778 people nationwide was carried out by YouGov. The sample size of people from across the UK who answered the question on their relationship with their mothers was 3,477. Responses were gathered between 25 February and 18 March 2014. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc.

\*\*\***The UK-wide averages were as follows:**

- 44% of people reported a very good relationship with their dads, compared to 55% with their mums.
- 6% of respondents described their relationship with their dads as fairly bad and 4% described it as very bad.
- This compares to 5% who described their relationship with their mums as fairly bad and 2% who described it as very bad.
- People were slightly more likely to report a 'fairly good' relationship with their dads (26%) than with their mums (23%).

#### **Notes to editors:**

- Relate champions the importance of strong and healthy relationships as the basis of a thriving society.
- Personal and social relationships are important in our everyday lives and are central to our wellbeing.
- Relationships are under increasing pressure - breakdown costs the UK economy £46 billion each year according to the Relationships Foundation.
- Over a million people every year access information, support and counselling from Relate but its clear many more would benefit from Relate services.
- Relate's services extend beyond relationship counselling to family counselling, counselling for young people, sex therapy and informal courses and workshops and are offered through a network of 1,700 counsellors across the country.
- Relate Cambridge is celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> birthday this year.
- For more information and advice visit: [www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk).