

emale

improving male health & wellbeing
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25 Ways to Redefine “Man Up”
Welcome to The Father Hood
Male and Female health side by side
Fathers Domestic Violence Crisis Centre to be set up
The effect of isolation on Australian men
The old school image of Aussie males is now not fashionable
Training, Workshop and Events

25 Ways to Redefine the Phrase ‘Man Up’

Carlos Andrés Gómez is on a mission to reclaim the phrase “man up” to reflect all the best things about masculinity today.



The phrase “man up” haunted my childhood. It was used to demean everything I was and constantly remind me that I was falling short of some masculine ideal. Today the phrase is ubiquitous as ever, appearing in magazines and television shows and referenced ad nauseam in advertising campaigns. Almost uniformly, the phrase’s meaning has remained the same—a guy isn’t “acting like a man” or “man enough” so he is belittled and shamed.

When I was growing up, “man up” was used to enforce my behavior, especially when I expressed emotion, appeared weak or needed help. As an adult, I continue to watch men around me use the phrase to promote senseless violence, homophobia, sexual conquest, and the most destructive of male behaviors—excessive drinking, drug use, and high stakes risk-taking.

I am on a mission to reclaim and redefine what the phrase “man up” means, so that boys and young men coming of age now can be spared from its wrath. There is a critical mass of men already helping to challenge the outdated model of masculinity but it’s time for all of us to finally come together and embrace this urgent movement to redefine what it means to be a man. By doing so, we are not only advocating for our own well-being, but also promoting a better, healthier, safer, happier world for all.

Here are 24 ways (by no means comprehensive) to reclaim what it means to “man up”:

Be a Peacemaker: Whether it’s out at the club on a Saturday night, an afternoon on the block, or at your family reunion, diffuse conflict and be an advocate for the bigger picture.

Leave the Tears on your Face: Have the courage to express your emotions publicly and unapologetically; it lets younger guys know it’s okay to have emotions and be sensitive.

Communicate: Openly, humbly, vulnerably, and constructively. Even when you’re scared. Even when it’s really hard. It’s always better than the alternative.

Get an Environmentally-Friendly Car (or Bike!): Break a heavy-handed male stereotype, respect planet Earth, and save money on gas.

Be a Great Parent: Try your best, actively listen, teach them all you know, read to them, hug them, tell your kids how much they mean to you.

Forgive: Whether it’s the jerk on the train or your father, make peace and let go.

Seek Help: Same rule applies to directions, carrying a massive oak table, and emotional baggage - it’s okay to not do it alone. In fact, we’re all better off when we don’t.

Cook: Embrace the joy and fulfillment of watching a plate of food you made light up a person’s face.

Embrace Fear: Many of the most profound breakthroughs can happen when we face fear head-on and stop running.

25 Ways to Redefine the Phrase ‘Man Up’

Spend Quality Time with your Family: Put down the paper, turn off the smart phone and go play in the backyard.

Change a Diaper: Embrace the gift of being able to change a diaper for your child or baby sibling. It’s a memory you will always have.

Be Flexible: Men are endlessly stereotyped as not being able to adapt—channel your inner Lao Tzu and accept what you can’t control, while joyously swimming in whatever current has swept you up.

Be Responsible: Whether it’s volunteering to be the designated driver, babysitting your little cousin or managing your money, recognize that your precious gift of a life comes with necessary responsibility.

Lead with Your Heart: Have the courage to show how much you care—about your family and friends but also whatever you’re passionate about.

Advocate for Women: Standing up for your mama, sister, and niece, that’s the easy part. But what about that stranger your friend is ogling right now?

Support the LGBT Community: We’re so much better than belittling others for who they love or how they identify their gender.

Be Gentle: Sometimes the greatest power exists in a warm hug or soft whisper... other times, simply in a smile.

Mentor a Child: Organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters are always looking for more male mentors, especially men of color. Giving up a couple afternoons a month could literally change a kid’s a life for the better.

Be Humble: Be brave enough to follow someone else’s lead. Recognize that you’re part of a much bigger purpose than just you.

Hold Yourself Accountable: Don’t be too proud to say when you’re wrong or take responsibility when you make a mistake.

Value your Partner’s Sexual Needs: Make it a priority to respect and honor your partner’s sexual boundaries and celebrate satisfying his or her sexual needs.

Play, Everyday: I’m not talking about Playstation or X Box here, I mean play. Indulge your imagination and your curious heart. Playing keeps us alive, creative, present, and youthful.

Say “I Love You”: Say it to your male friends, female buddies, family, or whoever is most special to you in your life. Let them know how much they mean to you. You never know when it might be your last chance to do so.

Recognize that You Are Enough: This world tries to fool us into believing that we were all born inadequate. Love what you got. Celebrate and cherish it. Know that you are beautiful, important, irreplaceable, and powerful.

[Carlos Andrés Gómez](#) Published by Good Men Project.

Welcome to the Fatherhood

The Father Hood is a new place dedicated to dads who find themselves, in this moment in time, in a role with no rulebook. And, worse still, with no inspirational dads in the media to look up to. That’s why we’re here: to navigate dads to their best lives as men. We get behind men who practice the art of fatherhood and who are doing it their way. Parenting for men at any stage doesn’t have to mean becoming mum’s assistant. We celebrate and stand for the dads leaning into Dad life and taking it all to the next level, with kids on their shoulders, their backs, their Baby Björns.

Not a dad? We are here for the men with kids in your life. Tag or share TFH and help us grow the tribe with them in it. Happy men make happy husbands make happy dads make happy kids and so it goes. We’re in this together.

Soon to be a dad? Welcome fella, it’s about to get very real, and we’re ready for all the things you don’t see coming with stories, videos and a sounding board. Reach out if there’s anything you need help with. We joke, but to be clear, we genuinely resent the modern portrayal of dads. We stand against it. Your time is up, Daddy Pig. We believe in better.

We KNOW from experience (seven kids and one stepdaughter experience) that becoming a father is the greatest opportunity a man can get. To be better than he’s ever been before; stronger, wiser, more driven and more compassionate. If TFH has triggered any thoughts, feelings, emotions, we want to hear about it. We are at ground zero with this future classic, your feedback, your contact will make a difference.

Contact andrew@the-father-hood.com or jeremy@the-father-hood.com

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Male and female health side by side

New reports detail overall health data for Australian men and women, revealing some informative differences and similarities between genders.

Parallel Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) reports divide data into distinct categories, covering demographics, lifestyle, self-reported levels of health and methods of access to healthcare. They offer a comprehensive snapshot of [men's](#) and [women's](#) health throughout the nation, while explaining how it can be mediated by additional factors such as socioeconomic status and ethnicity. Here are summaries of some of the reports' key points, and how the genders compare.

Overall, Australia's population contains slightly more females, at a ratio of 101.6 females for every 100 males. Women's median age is 38.1 years, compared to men's 36.4 years. By the time they reach the age bracket of 65 years and over, women outnumber men at a rate of 116 to every 100. The numbers of people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are the same for both men and women, with genders also equally distributed across major cities and regional areas. However, this changes in remote and very remote areas, where males outnumber females by 113 to every 100. While women are more likely than men to experience poverty, at 15% compared to 13%, men are almost 30% more likely to experience homelessness and more than 10 times likely to be in prison.

One in two Australians aged 18–64, male and female, is getting enough exercise, with exercise rates highest for both genders between the ages of 25–34 and declining thereafter. Six out of 10 women are overweight or obese, and seven out of 10 men. These numbers are mediated by other factors for both genders, with people in lower socioeconomic or remote areas more likely to be overweight or obese. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people also have higher rates of obesity and overweight. Tobacco smoking, identified as the leading preventable cause of poor health and death in Australia, has declined to low percentages in younger age groups for both men and women, but men are slightly more likely to be smokers than their female counterparts. Also, like obesity, this is mediated by other factors such as socioeconomic status and identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Men are definitely far more likely than women to engage in excessive alcohol consumption. More than half of men aged 18 and over exceed the single-occasion risk threshold for alcohol, and one in four exceed the lifetime risk guideline, compared to 32% and 9.3% among women. Rates of illicit substance use were significantly lower in both men and women, although some may be surprised at the rates recorded in the age group of 20–29, which sit at 25% for women and 32% for men. Both genders experience violence at largely equal rates – women at almost two in five, men at slightly more than two in five – although the nature of the violence is distributed differently, with 41% of men experiencing physical violence and 4.7% sexual violence, compared to 31% physical violence and 18% sexual violence for women. Women were also more likely to experience sexual harassment, at 53%, although men reported a rate of 25%. Men and women reported similar levels of health, with three in five women ranking their health as excellent or very good, compared to nearly three in five men. They also had the same rates of chronic disease, at one person in two. However, these rates were experienced differently by gender, with men's most common being cardiovascular disease (CVD) while women's were mental and behavioural problems. While cancer itself came last on the list of chronic diseases for both men and women, the top cancers experienced differed by gender, with prostate cancer leading for men and breast cancer leading for women. Mental health is a significant concern for both genders, with nearly half of all Australians reporting experience of this problem. Cancer topped the burden of disease list for both genders, but there were interesting differences in other illnesses; for example, respiratory disease was higher on the list for women while injuries were a bigger problem for men.

Men can now look forward to a life expectancy of 80.5 years, and women, 84.6 years. However, there remains a significant gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with women expecting 75.6 years and men 71.6 years. Males have a higher rate of premature deaths, at 62%. People who live very remotely, whether male or female, have a higher percentage of potentially avoidable deaths. Causes of death were similar between men and women, although there were some significant differences; for example, women are more likely to die from dementia and Alzheimer's disease and men of CVD. Suicide is present in men's cause of death list, but absent from the women's list.

Data in this area showed that women claim services on Medicare more often, at an average of 19 services per year compared to 14 for men. Numbers of Medicare claims rise with age for both genders, although they fall slightly for women once they reach 85 years or older. Both men and women who have some form of private health insurance sit at a rate of 57%. GP visit rates are high for both genders, with nine in 10 women and eight in 10 men reporting a visit in the past 12 months. However, nearly one in 10 men reported being unable to access healthcare when they needed it in the last 12 months.

Fathers Domestic Violence Crisis Centre to be set up

A group of Bundaberg Residents have launched a new charity to help men and their children who are escaping domestic violence. Jeremiah House will be the first of its kind in Australia, aimed at providing support and refuge to fathers and their children who are fleeing emergency family domestic violence crisis situations.

Co-founder of Jeremiah House, Peter Symes said Jeremiah House only exists on paper at this stage as they are looking for major sponsors so they can open their doors to provide refuge. Jeremiah house is also looking for fellow volunteers who are interested in giving their time and energy to this cause.

Other co-founder Robert Stoker said Jeremiah House would provide short term emergency accommodation, supply nightly meals, clothing, counselling, financial budgeting advice and more. *"We will help clients with their day to day life skills, preparing and cooking meals, house cleaning, parenting skills accessing local community group's specialists,"* he said. Jeremiah House officially launched as a charity in 2018 and they're now after the support of the community. *"Our head office will be in Bundaberg Queensland, but our vision is to be Australian-wide within the next ten years,"* Mr. Symes said.

The main objective for Jeremiah House is to provide an emergency men's refuge centre with support for fathers experiencing family domestic violence. The same as a women's refuge in Australia. *"Jeremiah House is most needed in our communities of Australia,"* Mr. Stoker said. *"Sponsors and donations are the key to unlocking the doors for Jeremiah House to becoming a reality for the Australian Community,"* he said. The goals of Jeremiah House are:

- We believe all people are equal, that human potential is worth nurturing and that people's current situations can be exchanged for a better quality of life. These beliefs shape the goals of our giving and inspire us to make it possible.
- Through engagement and collaboration, we will be working with local Government social welfare agencies and local charities to identify and support causes that need extra assistance.
- Our values bind us together as an organisation and are reflected in all we do, encouraging ethical and moral behaviours. We will with compassion endeavour to alleviate suffering and misfortune with Fathers and their children.

All donations & sponsorships are welcomed: jeremiahhouse2018.org.au or via our pay pal account.

For further information please contact pr@jeremiahhouse2018.org.au

Event 1

Atherton

MEN'S HEALTH Week LAUNCH EVENT

FREE EVENT



* Official Men's Health Week opening by Major Joe Paronella
* Short Information sessions presented by Atherton Men's Shed and Atherton Community Health
* Site Tour
* Light morning tea provided by the Men's Shed members

For catering purposes please RSVP to Atherton Community Health by COB Friday 7th June 07 4091 0263

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Monday 10th June, 2019	Atherton Men's Shed	10:00 to 11:00am

Event 2

REACHING MEN IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Presented by:
Australia's leading Men's Health & Wellbeing Consultant

FREE EVENT

An interactive session looking at the current health challenges faced by rural men. There's something for all ages.



Topics include;

- * Man Facts
- * Male Suicide
- * Men as victims of DV
- * Mental Wellbeing
- * Issues for younger men
- * Supporting young dads
- * Social isolation for older men
- * Accidents and risk-taking behaviour
- * Limited access to rural health services
- * Making health services male friendly

Tea, coffee and finger food provided
Open bar available for purchase

For catering purposes please RSVP to Atherton Community Health by COB Friday 7th June 07 4091 0263

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Wednesday 12th June, 2019	Atherton International Club	6:30pm for 7pm start 9pm finish

Event 3

CALLING ALL BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS
Is it time to support your staff's health and wellbeing? Healthy workers contribute to a more productive workplace in a number of ways including increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and loyalty!

HEALTHY MEN AT WORK

Train the Trainer Program

FULLY CATERED EVENT
LIMITED PLACES
Limit of 2 staff from any one workplace
\$20.00
registration fee required to secure your booking



Men's health SERVICES
are the leading men's health consultancy in Australia.

This **train the trainer program** teaches employers and managers how to present programs for males, encourage health promotion activities to have a specific focus on males, raise awareness on chronic diseases among males and deliver evidence-based health promotional messages to males.

Registrations essential to Atherton Community Health by COB Friday 7th June 07 4091 0263
Registration forms available at Community Health

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Thursday 13th June, 2019	TRC, Mabel St Meeting Room	8:30am to 4:00pm

CLICK ON THE IMAGE ABOVE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE EVENTS

The effect of isolation on Australian men

What we know about men's loneliness

- Almost ¼ of men aged 30-65 (~ 1 million) are at risk of isolation
- 25% of men have no one outside of their immediate family to rely on
- 37% report they're not satisfied with the quality of their relationships
- 61% have lost contact with more friends than they would have liked to
- 50% of men rarely talk about deep personal issues with friends
- 31% don't spend much time talking to their friends in general

Source [BeyondBlue](#)

Are men lonelier than women?

Surprisingly, there's a lot of research on how loneliness impacts men and women differently. There are studies that suggest that, at the very least, university/young adult aged males feel lonelier than their female counterparts. Two of these studies, '[The lonely college male](#)' and '[Gender differences in loneliness and depression of university students seeking counselling](#)', showed that men were 10% more likely to feel an 'intense sense of loneliness'.

The latter study says the significantly different data between the sexes comes down to:

- Fewer males being in an emotional relationship
- Being unable to find a romantic partner
- Inability or difficulty making friends
- Self-reported lower esteem (thinking that they are 'losers')
- Higher levels of alcohol consumption

It doesn't seem to get better with age either – one study shows that [unmarried men and widowers are lonelier](#), while another shows older men are more socially isolated, have less contact with loved ones and are beginning to outlive their partners.

Why are men lonelier?

There are several possible factors, the foremost of which is that [men are less likely to admit they're lonely in the first place](#). This same study found that subjects participating were more likely to be 'rejecting' of lonely males in comparison to females, which begs the question of which comes first: the rejection or the unwillingness to admit feelings of loneliness? It's been hypothesised that this difference may be caused by [societal expectations of men to be 'tougher' or to show more resilience and independence](#).

Men need more friends, more activities, and more often

Another barrier is a combination of time, energy and organisation. A study (commissioned by Guinness, no less) showed there were [health benefits to guys meeting up with three or four of their close friends twice a week](#), another study showing men tend to [seek clubs as opposed to intense one-on-one relationships](#).

It follows that the chance to form this kind of bond is harder due to restrictions on time and energy.

Men rely on their partners for social interactions

Further, males follow the cues of their female partners' social interactions. From Janet Morrison, Chief Executive of Independent Age: "In general, men rely more heavily on their partner to remain socially connected. When their partner dies, often a man's social life shrinks." The previously mentioned [Beyond Blue study](#) similarly states that:

"Men living with a partner (regardless of whether this was with or without children) are significantly less likely to rate lack of social support/isolation as an issue (mean 3.8) than other groups (men living on their own - 4.3, living with friends - 4.5, and living with parents/family - 4.4)."



The old school image of Aussie males is not fashionable



The great Aussie male stereotype, the strong, stoic, square-jawed package of muscles and manliness we know so well, may not be dead, but he's extremely unwell.

The data is in. Both in Australia, and internationally, there is a perceptible shift in what we understand masculinity to be, and what we want it to be. The insight didn't come from government census information or a funded-up think tank.

Our own image

With more than a billion searches last year, the data from Getty Images and iStock shine an extraordinary light on our changing attitudes, revealing what we're really looking for, in a deeper way. In the last year, there has been a 53 per cent increase in searches for "gay dads", a 126 per cent increase in images of "man meditation" and a 60 per cent increase in "single father" searches.

"We've also seen an increase in searches for 'men crying', which shows people are using words to try to get to the more emotional side of imagery. There's also been an increase in searches for quieter moments, men contemplating, thinking, meditating, not necessarily 'doing'," says Rebecca Swift, Global Director of Creative Insights at Getty Images.

That's part of the bigger shift, a fascinating trend away from traditional masculinity and a desire for more images showing men being soft, caring, loving and emotional.

Insightful choices

Swift has been part of building the "insights" service provided by Getty for more than 20 years.

"Our role is to look at the content and meaning of the imagery choices over time, beyond simply filling space on a page," she says. "The data gives you a rationale and an argument in a commercial environment. I can't talk about the things I'm seeing in a 'fluffy, fashion-y' way. The data we have gives me a foundation to build these strategies and ideas," she says. It was a collaboration with Australia's national mental health charity, SANE Australia, in 2016, that focused thinking around men and how they are visually represented.

The collaboration revealed how powerfully imagery influences our perceptions.

Busting stereotypes

"While community attitudes towards the way we speak about mental illness, along with the Australian media's reporting of this complex issue, are among the most responsible in the world, the way mental illness is visually portrayed remains a concern for many Australians, especially associations with violence," says Jack Heath, CEO of SANE Australia.

"Male mental health is a global issue. Male suicide and domestic violence data shows something is terribly wrong," says Swift. (In Australia, on average, six men commit suicide every day, compared to two women.)

"We came to the point of view that masculinity needs to be less stereotypical, through looking at men's mental health. Men need to be able to show their emotions and discuss their feelings. So, understanding that, global brands are taking on male mental health and gender stereotypes as their mission."

The old school image of Aussie males is now out fashion

She says companies like Unilever and Procter and Gamble, some of the biggest advertisers in the world, with brands like Lynx and Gillette, understand that by showing men as diverse, emotional and vulnerable, they create a deeper connection with hard to reach male consumers.

Social becomes visual

Advising clients on the changing face of masculinity – and other social trends – is a core element of Swift's job. "We look at social trends and how they become visual trends. How you photograph your breakfast for Instagram right now might have an impact on food photography, many years down the line, for example," she says. It is brands that "stand for something", rather than the ones trying to "sell us something" that will be successful in the future, she says. She sees a strong element of social responsibility in her work. "We are encouraging communities, and individuals, to reflect themselves, to give representation to the unrepresented," she says.

See it, be it

"We have a saying internally, which is 'If you can't see it, you can't be it'," she says. "It's our responsibility to make sure people can "see it." She would love to see people in media and advertising who select pictures for their day to day work, use the same intuitive, emotional mindset they would in choosing an image for their personal Instagram. "We try to encourage that same mentality in image choice in branding, or storytelling," she says. "I'd love to be some kind of evangelist, just travelling around, telling people to be kinder to human kind in their image choices." It's the same for women, cultural diversity and even depictions of age.

Picture of the future

In 2007, Getty's top-selling image of a woman showed a "model", naked in a bed covered by a sheet. Just five years later, she's instead leading business meeting, working in engineering and science or an athlete. But we've got a long way to go before the world's websites, media, marketing and advertising start depicting masculinity as something other than a one-dimensional stereotype. "I think we're seeing the start of challenging stereotypes," she says. "Then comes questioning, then come answers and, then, a big step forward." It's the brands that understand this, and offer a more broad visual depiction of what a man is in the future, that will be speaking to their consumers with authenticity, and, ultimately, success.

Source: Phil Barker has edited *NW* and *Woman's Day* magazines, and published such titles as *Vogue*, *GQ*, *Delicious*, *InsideOut* and *Donna Hay*. He is a consultant creative director and communications specialist, currently writing a book on "man stuff" for publisher Allen & Unwin. He is a regular commentator on the lives and style of Australian men. [Follow Phil Barker on Twitter](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Men's Health Week 2019



This resource is supported by funding provided by the Australian Government Department of Health



This resource is supported by funding provided by the Australian Government Department of Health



Register your event for this years Men's Health Week at <http://www.menshealthweek.org.au/events/submit-event>

MEANING FOR MEN A Humanistic Buddhism Approach

Sunday June 23 - 9.30 am - 4.30 pm

Rigpa National Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Centre

158 Australia St, Newtown Sydney



The program will cover:

- Brief overview of Humanistic Buddhism
- Finding our sense of purpose and the role of compassion for self and others
- An introduction to meditation and mindfulness and spiritual awareness
- Better ways of living and coping with difficulties and illness should they arise
- How we can fine tune our goals and find more support for any changes we make

MEANING FOR MEN is facilitated by Men's Health Consultant Greg Millan [Bio here](#)

COST Early \$60 You receive resources and refreshments.

To register click on [Registration Form](#) Contact Greg on M 0417 772 390 or e greg@menshealthservices.com.au

engaging men



Australia's Only Male Health Promotion Training Course

SPECIAL MEN'S HEALTH WEEK EVENT

CAIRNS Friday June 14 2019

Holiday Inn, 209 - 217 The Esplanade, Cairns

REGISTRATIONS OPEN NOW – Early Bird Extended to June 5

Click for [ENGAGING MEN Program Content](#)

Cost per program for two days of training, refreshments, lunch, all resources and ongoing support.

Early Bird \$225 if paid by June 5 Full price \$275 from June 6 Includes training, refreshments, lunch, all resources and ongoing support. A comprehensive bank of men's health articles and resources including a copy of my book *"Men's health and wellbeing: an a – z guide"* are supplied on completion of the course and you are invited to join the Engaging Men Network. To register click on [Registration Form](#)

For more information contact Greg on M 0417 772 390 or e greg@menshealthservices.com.au

Men's
Health
Week