



# MANIFESTO FOR SUPPORTING PATERNAL CAREGIVING

TEN POLICY IDEAS FOR THE UK  
GENERAL ELECTION 2024

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# Introduction

Over the last half-century, UK women's participation in paid work has increased dramatically, from 52.8% to 72.4%.<sup>1</sup> But the gender revolution remains stubbornly incomplete.

Our country's gender pay gap was 14.9% in December 2022<sup>2</sup>- more than two percentage points above the EU average<sup>3</sup>. Evidence suggests the 'motherhood penalty' accounts for most of the gap<sup>4</sup>, with mothers' median hourly earnings just 72% of fathers'<sup>5</sup>. Most UK families depend more on fathers' earnings, than on mothers'.<sup>6</sup>

Today's fathers already devote much more time to looking after their children than their own fathers did. Official data found working fathers in 2022 spending two-thirds of the time working mothers were spending on unpaid childcare.<sup>7</sup>

But this shift in time-use has derived mostly from fathers reducing the time they spend on sleep and leisure: the gender gap in the amount of time parents spend on paid work remains<sup>8</sup>. Fathers in couple households with dependent children are still much more likely than mothers to work full-time, especially when the children are young<sup>9</sup>; and to work long hours.<sup>10</sup>

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1 Office for National Statistics, 2023. Female employment rate aged 16 to 64 (seasonally adjusted). Figures are for Jan-Mar 1971 to May-July 2023. [Link](#)

2 Office for National Statistics, 2022 [Link](#)

3 The EU average was 12.7% in 2021. Source: EU Monitor, 12 April 2023. [Link](#)

4 Brearley, J. (2022). Mothers are overdue a revolution of their own in *Essays on Equality: The Politics of Childcare*. Global Institute for Women's Leadership. King's College London. [Link](#)

5 [Link](#)

6 Among UK families with at least one working parent, only one mother in five (22%) earns even half the family income; even in families where both parents are in paid work, only a third of mothers contribute half or more. Cory, G. and Stirling, A. (2015). *Who's breadwinning in Europe? A comparative analysis of maternal breadwinning in Great Britain and Germany*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

7 Time-use data suggests that the time spent by fathers on unpaid childcare as a percentage of time spent by mothers was 12-15% in 1961 (source: Henz, U. (2019). *Fathers' involvement with their children in the United Kingdom: Recent trends and class differences*. *Demographic Research*, Vol. 40, Article 30: 865-896 [Link](#) In 2022, the percentage was 65% for working fathers (source: Fatherhood Institute (2022), *Closing the Gap*).

8 For every 60 minutes spent by working fathers on paid work, working mothers spent 45 minutes in 2022. Data from ONS (2022), collated and analysed by Fatherhood Institute in '*Closing the Gap*', December 2022.

9 84.6% of fathers, and 34.2% of mothers, with a youngest dependent child aged 0-2 were in full-time paid employment. Source: Office for National Statistics *Working and Workless Households in the UK (Oct-Dec 2022)*.

10 In couple families 75.4% of fathers (53.1% of mothers) with a youngest dependent child aged 0-2 work 30-44 hours per week and 18.1% of fathers (4% of mothers) work more than 45 hours a week. Source: Office for National Statistics *Labour Force Survey (Apr-Jun 2021)*.

The Covid19 pandemic lockdowns enabled fathers to undertake more domestic responsibilities than ever,<sup>11</sup> and some of this accelerated progress towards gender equality persisted into 2022, thanks to continuing home-based and flexible working by some fathers.<sup>12</sup>

But to support greater sharing of earning and caregiving long term – not to mention addressing the cost to fathers and children of missing out on time with each other<sup>13</sup>- we need work-family reconciliation policies that allow fathers greater access to time at home, and away from paid work.

Employment policy should not, as is currently the case, frame fathers' caregiving time as an economic inconvenience. Rather it should welcome, celebrate and leverage it, as an investment in gender equality, better child outcomes, transferable skills and economic growth. It has been estimated that more extensive paid leave for new fathers could help cut the gender employment gap, increasing economic output across all UK local authorities by £23bn (around 1% of GDP)<sup>14</sup>

There's work to be done, too, to 'father-proof' the support systems that surround and help shape UK families' decisions and behaviours as parents. Even though 95% of fathers jointly register their baby's birth with the mother – and 94% of five-year-olds either live with both birth parents or are in touch with their father if he is living elsewhere<sup>15</sup> – our health, social care, and education services remain stubbornly maternalist.

The UK is missing vital opportunities to acknowledge, and support growth in paternal caregiving in all aspects of its public policy. In this document we present ten changes that parliamentarians from all sides of the political spectrum could introduce, to set us on a better course.

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11 Working fathers spent 88% of the time working mothers spent on unpaid childcare in 2020 (lockdown year). Data from ONS (2022), collated and analysed by Fatherhood Institute in 'Closing the Gap', December 2022.

12 For every 60 minutes spent by working mothers on childcare, working fathers spent 32 minutes in 2014/15 and 39 minutes in 2022 – an increase of 18%. Working fathers' time spent working from home, as a proportion of overall time spent on paid work (excluding commuting), rose from 6% in 2014/15 to 37% in 2022. Data from ONS (2022), collated and analysed by Fatherhood Institute in 'Closing the Gap', December 2022.

13 Among a representative sample of fathers of children aged under 12 surveyed during the spring 2020 Covid19 lockdown, 65% of all fathers and 73% of fathers who were full-time at home, reported a better father-child relationship after the spring 2020 lockdown. Burgess, A. & Goldman, R. (2021) Lockdown Fathers: the untold story (executive summary). Contemporary Fathers in the UK series. London: Fatherhood Institute.

14 [Link](#)

15 [Link](#)

# Summary infographic

Continued on the following page

## IMPROVING GENDER EQUITY BY SUPPORTING FATHERS

Ten changes to support UK men's positive involvement as fathers

### 1 HEALTH CHECKS FOR FATHERS

The NHS should invite fathers to at least two health appointments - one before and one after the birth - and the Government should support, financially, fathers' time off from work to attend

### 2 TARGETED INFORMATION FOR FATHERS

The Government should commission and regularly update a Guide for New Fathers, and require its distribution to all families attending NHS maternity services

#### HEALTH



### 3 FATHER-INCLUSIVE DATA SYSTEMS

The Government should reform the collection and use of data about fathers, across its own departments, the NHS, and other public authorities

### 4 SIX WEEKS' WELL-PAID LEAVE FOR FATHERS

All employed fathers should receive a minimum of two weeks' statutory paternity leave and four weeks' statutory parental leave as an individual right, paid at 90% of salary (with a cap)

#### PAID EMPLOYMENT

### 5 PATERNITY ALLOWANCE FOR OTHER FATHERS

Self-employed fathers, and employed fathers not eligible to #4, should receive a paternity allowance



### 6 EASY ACCESS TO FLEXIBLE WORKING

Employed fathers should have the right to work flexibly, as a Day 1 right

Making flexible working a Day 1 right for all employees, unless the employer can justify otherwise, would take the pressure off fathers to risk their career by making a request

## 7 EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION FOR FATHERS OF INFANTS

Paternity should be a protected characteristic in the Equality Act, offering fathers legal protection in the workplace

## PAID EMPLOYMENT *[continued]*

## 8 STRONGER GENDER EQUALITY RULES FOR LARGE EMPLOYERS

Large employers (with 250+ employees) should have to publish 'care gap' as well as 'pay gap' information. This should include data about take-up of maternity, paternity and parental leave, and flexible working requests and approvals, broken down by gender



## 9 BETTER FATHER ENGAGEMENT BY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Early years providers and schools should systematically engage with children's fathers, including 'own household' fathers.

Ofsted should refer to this explicitly in its inspection framework for parental engagement and make a metric for assessing it

## EDUCATION



## 10 MORE SUPPORT FOR MALE EDUCATORS

The Government should set gender diversity targets for the education workforce, and fund a national recruitment campaign to get more men into early years education and primary school teaching

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# Health policy

We start with health policy because our tax-funded health services for families, including maternity and health visiting services, offer the first ‘window’ through which the state can see and support men as fathers.

Almost all fathers (95%) are present when their baby is born – and a similar proportion jointly register their baby’s birth with the mother. The earlier and more systematically these services engage with fathers, the more likely they are to support the close attachments that will give those fathers’ children the best start in life – and the best chance of positive outcomes throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.

Yet there is currently no requirement for key healthcare professionals like midwives and health visitors to address fathers directly, acknowledge and support their involvement in caregiving, and where necessary help them change their behaviours. Information provided to parents is mother-focused, and data systems don’t support father-inclusion.

Perinatal services will always be centred on birth mothers, but they could do much more to engage with fathers.<sup>16</sup>

There is clear evidence that fathers’ own characteristics, physical and mental health and behaviours impact significantly on babies’ future health and wellbeing – both positively and negatively.<sup>17</sup>

We know, for example, that if fathers smoke around the child this raises the risk of respiratory problems; and that if they smoke, it’s more likely that a

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16 And, in a very small percentage of families, other parents. 95% of babies in England & Wales are registered to two parents; in almost all cases a mother and father. Around 1 in 1,000 babies are registered to two mothers.

17 Babies with supportive, warm, and positively involved fathers tend to grow up better-adjusted, with greater cognitive ability and social behaviour. At the same time, negative infant outcomes known to be associated with fathers’ characteristics and behaviours include heightened risk of obesity, respiratory problems and impaired cognitive development. For more on this, see Burgess, A. and Goldman, R. (2022). Bringing Baby Home: UK fathers in the first year after the birth. Contemporary Fathers in the UK series. London: Fatherhood Institute.

a mother who smokes will continue to do so – but there’s no mandated engagement with dads on this key issue.

Mothers want and could benefit from better father-engagement by maternity services, through improved birth outcomes and experiences; better-supported birth recovery and initiation and continuation of breastfeeding; and enhanced support for co-parenting.

Men are already overwhelmingly present in health settings at this time<sup>18</sup>: we just need to engage with them – both to help them look after their own mental and physical health, bond with their babies and become confident caregivers, and to identify and address any risks they may pose to children and mothers.<sup>19</sup>

By developing a strong ‘father offer’, policy makers could transform how the NHS and other family services approach their work, making them systematic in their data collection and management, as well as their engagement with the father. Our systems need to address the father as who he truly is – a parent whose unique relationship with his child is hugely important in its own right – rather than at best, a ‘mother’s partner’.

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18 Surveys suggest that 90% or more fathers attend antenatal scans and the birth. For more on this see Burgess, A. and Goldman, R. (2018). Who’s the Bloke in the Room? Fathers during pregnancy and at the birth. Contemporary Fathers in the UK series. Marlborough: Fatherhood Institute.

19 Our evidence reviews for the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel found a lack of systematic engagement with fathers and other father-figures by all universal services. An average of eight infants a year are killed by fathers or other male caregivers as the main perpetrator, and infants are roughly twice as likely to be killed by a father as by a mother. For more on this, see Davies, J. and Goldman, R. (2021). Non-accidental injury of infants by fathers, father-figures and other informal male caregivers: a rapid review of evidence. London: Fatherhood Institute.



# Health policy ideas



## HEALTH CHECKS FOR FATHERS

The NHS should invite fathers to at least two health appointments - one before and one after the birth – to provide them with key information (including a new Guide for New Fathers – see below), ask how they are, and check on key issues like their smoking, substance use and mental health<sup>20</sup>. The Government should fund maternity and health visiting services to provide this amendment to existing provision; and should support, financially, fathers’ time off work to attend the appointments.

## TARGETED INFORMATION FOR FATHERS

The Government should commission and regularly update a Guide for New Fathers and require its distribution to all families attending NHS maternity services. This should provide information about key topics including birth registration, Parental Responsibility, paternity and parental leave, early bonding and caregiving, and shaken baby syndrome.



<sup>20</sup> For the long-term impact of fathers’ poor mental health and substance misuse, See Burgess A, and Goldman, R. (2022). Bringing Baby Home: fathers in the first year after the birth. London: Fatherhood Institute; and Burgess A, and Goldman, R. (2023). The Kids are All Right: fathers and adolescents in the UK – a scoping review. London: Fatherhood Institute.

# Health policy ideas



## FATHER-INCLUSIVE DATA SYSTEMS<sup>21</sup>

The Government should reform the collection and use of data about fathers, across its own departments, the NHS and other public authorities – to support the development of father-inclusive policy, services and research:

- Digital and data systems, including electronic patient records in the NHS and birth notifications, as well as digital records for all child, adolescent and adult services including in education, social care and the criminal justice system, should provide for information about fathers and father-figures to be routinely collected and recorded. The father's name, contact details and NHS number should be entered onto NHS birth notifications, to support routine engagement with fathers.
- The Office for National Statistics (ONS) should agree a standard set of definitions of fathers and father-figures for all public services and government departments to use (with a migration path from current to new definitions). In producing official statistics, ONS should collect and report data about fathers cohabiting for all or most of the time with their children and fathers living full-time or part-time in another household, differentiating between these categories of fathers where appropriate.

<sup>21</sup> We present this policy idea, which requires action across various Government departments, under the health category because NHS birth notifications offer a key opportunity for routine collection of fathers' data, to support appropriate engagement and information sharing.

# Employment policy

Despite decades of progress towards greater sharing of caregiving<sup>22</sup>, the ‘mother as primary caregiver, father as main breadwinner’ model remains the norm in many UK families.

Our current employment policies effectively enforce this at the point in parents’ careers when their ongoing earner/caregiver roles tend to be decided: the baby’s first year.

When children are born, employed mothers are entitled to 52 weeks’ leave – six paid at 90% of salary and 33 at the statutory rate of £172.48, with a Maternity Allowance of up to the statutory rate for 39 weeks, for those who are not employed.

Employed fathers get just two weeks, paid at the statutory rate. Those not classified as ‘employees’, including dads who are self-employed or work in the gig economy – who make up 20% of fathers in total – have no entitlement.

So, gender-imbalance is baked into our system. And while paid leave for mothers is far from generous internationally speaking, the UK’s statutory leave and pay offer for fathers is the least generous in Europe, with only three countries in the OECD Family Database rankings offering men a worse deal when they become fathers.<sup>23</sup>

Some enlightened employers in the UK offer fathers enhanced paternity and parental leave packages. But most (around three-quarters) provide no more than the statutory minimum.<sup>24</sup>

This leaves an average-earning man with a choice, when he becomes a father: whether or not to effectively take a pay cut of more than £1,000 by taking his full paternity leave entitlement at the statutory rate, compared to

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22 See footnote 6, on page 2

23 The USA, Israel and New Zealand give fathers no time off at all.

24 Koru Kids, 2022. [It starts with paternity leave](#)

what he'd earn if he kept working.<sup>25</sup> Since in most families the father is the higher earner,<sup>26</sup> and the mother is likely to take a substantial period out of paid work, neither option is palatable.

In a recent survey, a fifth of fathers (and a third of lower-income fathers) eligible for paternity leave said they didn't take it; half of families said they struggled financially when fathers did take leave; and half said he wasn't able to take enough time off. More than two-thirds of self-employed fathers took no time off when their baby arrived.<sup>27</sup>

Aside from the paternity leave and pay offer, the only way for UK fathers to take additional leave is for the mother – if both she and the father are eligible – to share some of her maternity leave with him, via the current shared parental leave system (SPL).

It's clear from the Government's own evaluation of SPL<sup>28</sup> that this policy is simply not addressing the problem: namely of enabling families to exercise choice over the sharing of caregiving and earning. Only two-fifths of families qualify; and most of those who do can't afford for the father to take the leave, or don't want to shorten the mother's leave. The scheme is used by only 1% of eligible mothers and 5% of eligible fathers.<sup>29</sup>

International evidence suggests that giving fathers their own, well-paid parental leave, rather than simply improving the paternity leave offer, is likely to have the biggest impact on gender equality.<sup>30</sup> Well-paid parental leave gives fathers the opportunity to become confident, competent caregivers for their infants – ideally solo, and later in the baby's first year, when the mother is better able and more likely to return to paid work.

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25 Our calculations show that if an average-earning, full-time working man took the two weeks' statutory paternity pay, he would be £1,021.04 worse off, compared to what he'd usually bring home in that time. Qualifying employee fathers in the UK are eligible to two weeks' paternity leave. The statutory rate for paternity pay is £172.48 per week (from April 2023). Two weeks' statutory paternity pay is £344.96 (2 x £172.48). Two weeks' pay at the UK average for a full-time working man (£683 per week: Office for National Statistics, April 2022: median weekly full-time pay for full-time men) is £1,366 (2 x £683). The difference is £1021.04.

26 Among UK families with at least one working parent, only one mother in five (22%) earns even half the family income; even in families where both parents are in paid work, only a third of mothers contribute half or more. Cory, G. and Stirling, A. (2015). *Who's breadwinning in Europe? A comparative analysis of maternal breadwinning in Great Britain and Germany*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

27 Trades Union Congress, 2023. [Link](#)

28 Department for Business & Trade, 2023b. Shared Parental Leave: Evaluation report. BEIS/DBT Research Paper Series Number 2023/010.

29 Maternity Action estimates the actual figure for take-up by fathers to be closer to 2%.

30 Countries commonly cited as having made the greatest strides towards gender equality offer substantial periods of reserved parental leave for fathers – and pay it well. For example, Norway offers 15 weeks' worth of fully paid reserved parental leave for fathers; Iceland, 14.3 weeks and Sweden, 10 weeks. Two of these three countries do not offer paternity leave.

Affordability is key. Most fathers already earn more than their partner when they become parents. If the mother takes substantial leave in the baby's first year and/or drops out of paid work or reduces her working hours – as many do – the effect is not just damage to her career and earnings, but also an even greater reliance on the income he brings in.

So, to stand any chance of levelling the playing field, and of equipping fathers to take an equal or even substantial role as caregiver, we need families to be able to afford for fathers to take substantial parental leave. All but one of the 12 countries found to have reduced their gender pay and workforce participation gaps by giving dads six or more weeks' leave, offer fathers their own, paid parental leave.<sup>31</sup>

Fathers' lack of access to well-paid leave in their babies' first year is a huge obstacle to gender equality in the UK, and we need politicians to tackle it. For now, we are proposing improved pay for the existing two weeks of paternity leave, and the introduction of a well-paid 'daddy month' of statutory parental leave. Longer term, the politicians should also be taking a long, hard look at maternity leave and pay, and the overall balance between 'health and safety' (maternity and paternity) and 'caregiving' (parental) leaves.<sup>32</sup>

As well as reforms to paternity and parental leave for fathers, we've suggested other policy changes – described below - that could further transform UK workplaces into settings that support rather than restrict fathers' participation in caregiving, thus promoting gender equality, economic growth and supporting improved outcomes throughout childhood and adolescence.

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31 Fatherhood Institute analysis (2023) drawing on data from *Pregnant Then Screwed*, Centre for Progressive Policy & Women in Data: [Leave in the lurch: Paternity leave, gender equality and the UK economy](#) and December 2022 data from the OECD Family Database [Link](#)

32 We suggest a new model whereby mothers would receive eight weeks' maternity leave and a 'mummy month' of parental leave paid at 90% of salary (with a cap); fathers two weeks' paternity leave and a 'daddy month' paid at the same rate. There would also be 40 weeks' parental leave, paid at a statutory rate, which could be taken by either parent.

# Employment policy ideas



## SIX WEEKS' WELL-PAID LEAVE FOR FATHERS

All employed fathers should receive a minimum of two weeks' statutory paternity leave and four weeks' statutory parental leave as an individual right, all paid at 90% of salary (with a cap). Fathers already have a right to accompany their partners to two antenatal appointments; these should be funded by Government, along with the two 'health check' sessions proposed above (see Policy idea 1).

## PATERNITY ALLOWANCE FOR OTHER FATHERS

Self-employed fathers, and employed fathers not eligible to the above, should receive a Paternity Allowance.



# Employment policy ideas



## EASY ACCESS TO FLEXIBLE WORKING

Employed fathers should have the right to work flexibly, as a Day 1 right. Under the 'right to request' system (due to become a Day 1 right in 2024<sup>33</sup>), fathers are less likely than mothers to ask for flexible working<sup>34</sup> and most who do, have their requests rejected.<sup>35</sup> Making flexible working a Day 1 right for all employees, unless the employer can justify otherwise, would take the pressure off fathers to risk their career by making a request.

## EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION FOR FATHERS OF INFANTS

Paternity should be a protected characteristic in the Equality Act, offering fathers protection in the workplace when they take paternity and parental leave, and time off to attend perinatal appointments and health checks.



## STRONGER GENDER EQUALITY RULES FOR LARGE EMPLOYERS

To accelerate progress towards gender equal workplaces, large employers (with 250+ employees) should have to publish 'care gap' as well as 'pay gap' information. This should include data about take-up of maternity, paternity and shared parental leave, and flexible working requests and approvals, broken down by gender.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Type or print in blue or black ink. Answer all questions which are applicable. Please do not state "See Resume".

PERSONAL INFORMATION		
Last Name	First Name	Middle
Address	City	State
Phone	Day Phone (if Different)	Social Se
Fax	Mail Address	

Please complete the information below

1. Present Salary: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Work in the U.S.? Yes \_\_\_\_\_

3. In any position? Yes \_\_\_\_\_

4. Manner which resulted in Yes \_\_\_\_\_

5. Does not necessarily disqualify an \_\_\_\_\_

If yes to \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCAT \_\_\_\_\_

Please \_\_\_\_\_ and any other pertinent information about \_\_\_\_\_

33 [Link](#)

34 [Link](#)

35 [Link](#)

# Education policy

Fathers' impact on their children's learning and development, like mothers', is significant. But our schools and early years settings aren't required to do anything specific to encourage dads to support their children's learning and development - so most schools and settings don't.

The PIECE study, whose findings we published in September 2023<sup>36</sup>, found that while mothers tend to spend more time looking after children and supporting their learning, fathers' involvement in their children's infancy and early years has a direct impact on how well they do at school.

We now know that father-involvement at age 3 helps boost the child's performance at age 5; and that father-involvement at age 5 has a similar effect at age 7. So, the earlier dads get involved in interactions that support learning with their children – reading, playing, sharing stories, going to the park and so on – the better.

Evidence also shows that fathers' early and ongoing involvement, and close relationships with their children, are associated with better outcomes in adolescence.<sup>37</sup>

This is part of our rationale for supporting fathers' early involvement, alongside mothers', at home – through well-paid paternity and parental leave for dads in the baby's first year, for example.

But there's a clear role for education and other family support services (including Family Hubs) to play, too. Opportunities to engage with fathers shouldn't be missed or left to chance - especially in disadvantaged families,

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36 Norman, H. and Davies, J. (2023). What a difference a dad makes: Paternal Involvement and its Effects on Children's Education. University of Leeds. [Link](#)

37 For more on this, see Burgess A. and Goldman R. (2023) The Kids are Alright: Fathers and Adolescents in the UK - the sixth in our 'Contemporary Fathers in the UK' series of evidence reviews, available on our website.



where their positive input can bring great benefit.<sup>38</sup>

Early years services and schools that actively and systematically reached out and communicated with fathers, providing them with targeted information at key transition stages, could support fathers to play a more equal role in looking after and supporting their children; to build close, supportive relationships with them; and to get involved in school life.<sup>39</sup>

It would help, too, if more was done to recruit and retain men in our education workforces. England's early years workforce is 98% female, as it was a quarter-century ago<sup>40</sup>; evidence suggests that fewer than one in five early years settings actively pursue strategies to change this.<sup>41</sup>

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38 For example Hango (2007) explored whether parental interest in education (as assessed by teachers) acts as a mediator between childhood financial disadvantage (at age 7 and 11) and educational attainment at age 11 and age 16 using the UK's 1958 National Child Development Study (NCDS). She found that father interest in education reduces the impact of economic hardship on education attainment more than mother's interest, especially at age 11. Source: Hango, D. (2007), Parental investment in childhood and educational qualifications: Can greater parental involvement mediate the effects of socioeconomic disadvantage? *Social Science Research*, Vol.36(4), pp.1371-1390.

39 The Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) – a nationally representative survey of households that surveys children in the middle of primary school at age 7 – found just under a third (32%) of fathers saying they participated in their child's school in some way, compared to more than three-fifths (61%) of mothers. See [link](#)

40 Davies, J. (2023). Men in Early Years: Encouraging more men to work in the early years sector. *Early Years Educator*, 13 June 2023. [Link](#)

41 In the GenderEYE study, only 14% of early years managers surveyed said they had actively pursued strategies to improve male recruitment and retention. See Warin, J., Wilkinson, J., Davies, J., Greaves, H. and Hibbin, R. (2020). *Gender Diversification of the Early Years Workforce: Recruiting and Supporting Male Practitioners*. Lancaster University. [Link](#)

# Education policy ideas

## BETTER FATHER- ENGAGEMENT BY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

To better support children's educational outcomes and emotional wellbeing, early years providers and schools should systematically engage with children's fathers, including Own Household Fathers<sup>42</sup>, at key transition points, including registration with the school/setting and at the start of each Key Stage. Ofsted should refer to this explicitly in its inspection frameworks for parental engagement and create a metric for assessing it.



## MORE SUPPORT FOR MALE EDUCATORS

To help shift the next generation's attitudes and career choices, the Government should set gender diversity targets for the education workforce and fund a national recruitment campaign to get more men into early years education and primary school teaching.

42 A birth father living elsewhere for all or part of the time.