

11 December 2019

Official launch of website supporting dads across Australia

Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV) has officially launched a website and resources dedicated to supporting fathers across Australia.

The Support for Fathers website provides free information, advice and resources designed specifically for dads on topics such as different types of dad, healthy family relationships, bonding with kids, connecting with other dads, and dads at work. It also includes a toolkit for professionals who work with fathers and families.

It has been developed as part of a national Support for Fathers project that aims to support young men and fathers in their role as parents and partners, with the outcome being an increase in men's involvement in achieving gender equality and reduced violence. The project is funded by the Department of Social Services as part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022. RAV is delivering Support for Fathers collaboratively, with input from Relationships Australia's federation of state and territory organisations.

The launch on Tuesday 10 December was attended by Mr Peter Khalil MP, Member for Wills; professionals and services working with fathers and families; local dads and families, and their children; and staff and students from Belle Vue Park Primary School in Glenroy, where the event was held. The event included a morning tea, show bags, and arts and crafts activities for families.

While officially launching the website, RAV CEO, Dr Andrew Bickerdike, talked about the importance of supporting fathers, and RAV's history of developing resources and programs specifically for men and fathers.

"We recognise that fathers are crucially important in the roles of parenting and that they make unique contributions to children's growth and wellbeing," Dr Bickerdike said.

"Since our organisation was established in 1948 at the end of the Second World War, we've been focused on ensuring that our services and resources are accessible to, and relevant for, men. Today, I'm proud to be officially launching a new resource for men - our Support for Fathers website."

Other guest speakers included Mr Khalil MP and Belle Vue Park Primary School Principal, Mr Paul Kenna. RAV's Support for Fathers Project Coordinator, Mr Dom Alford, also highlighted some of the website's resources and feedback from a national survey and national roadshow conducted as part of the project.

Support for Fathers is now undertaking a second national roadshow to provide free community information sessions and workplace training on the website's resources.

Mr Alford said that the Support for Fathers project had been embraced by men, partners and service providers, and had reinforced the need for increased support for dads in our communities. It has also highlighted the need for support of the professionals who work with fathers, to reduce the barriers dads face in accessing services.

“It’s clear that service providers across Australia are committed to helping fathers and families, but they need more information, strategies and ideas for engaging and supporting dads. This is what Support for Fathers is focused on - filling that gap,” Mr Alford said.

“The workplace training has already proved to be a valuable initiative in supporting professionals and services. They’re thinking more about dads, putting in more time to provide dad-friendly activities and collaborating with other professionals to make the most of their dad focused programs.”

The website’s resources for fathers, and in particular the ‘Seven Types of Dad’ resource, have also been well-received by those attending community information sessions.

“Dads are realising that they are not limited to being one single ‘type’ of dad, such as the breadwinner, and they’re excited to talk and think about the sorts of fathers they want to be with their children in the future,” Mr Alford said.

The website and resources can be accessed at www.supportforfathers.com.au.

END OF RELEASE

Media Contact: Anna Clarke, Senior Manager Communications and Marketing. Ph: (03) 8573 2222