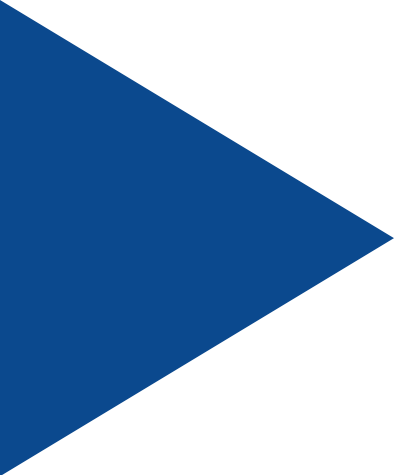


National Fatherhood Survey

2017





In 2017, Dad Central Canada invited fathers from across the country to share their views about fatherhood.

Here is some of what we found out . . .

Purpose of the Survey

- To hear from fathers across Canada about:
 - Their experiences as fathers
 - How they bond with their children
 - What their view is of how fatherhood is perceived in Canada
 - Some ideas for how to engage and support fathers better

General Findings

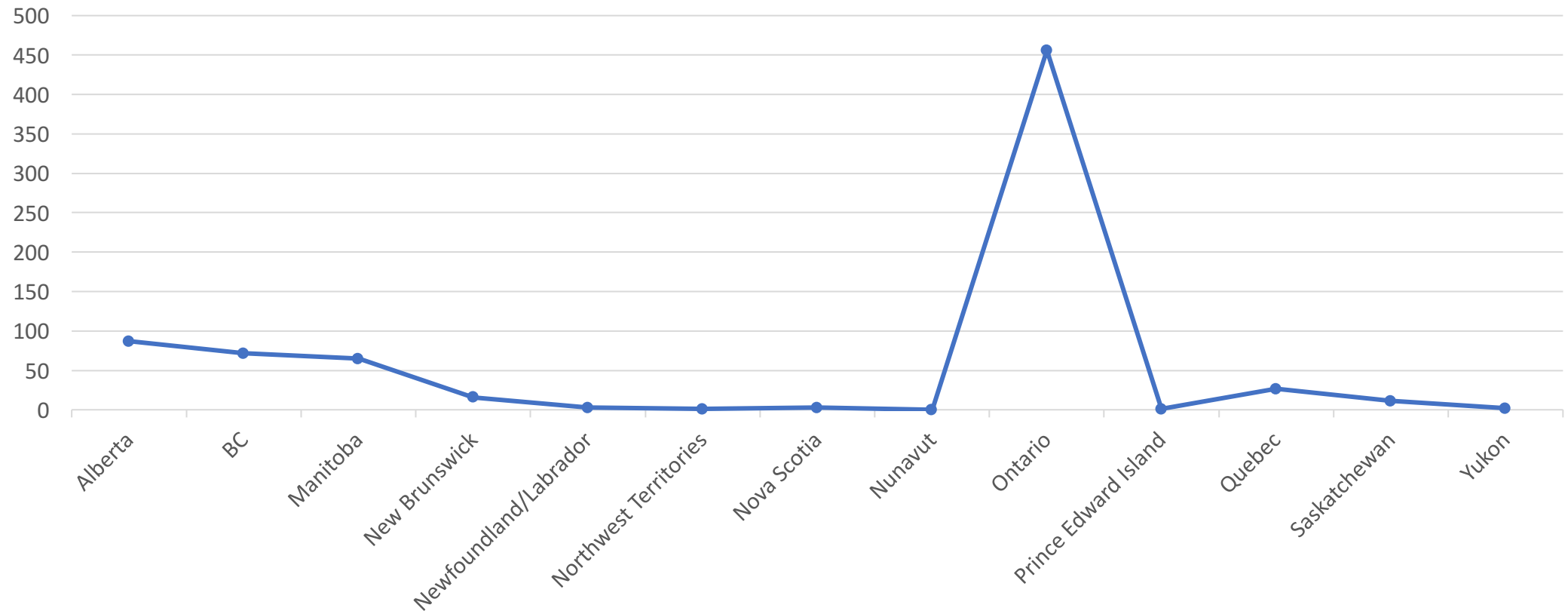
- Fathers are passionate about their role and how it is perceived.
- Fathers are very diverse and creative in the ways they interact with and show love to their children.
- When it comes to supporting the fatherhood role, Canada is doing OK, but there is room for improvement.
- Fathers are not necessarily looking to experts or support for themselves.

Demographics

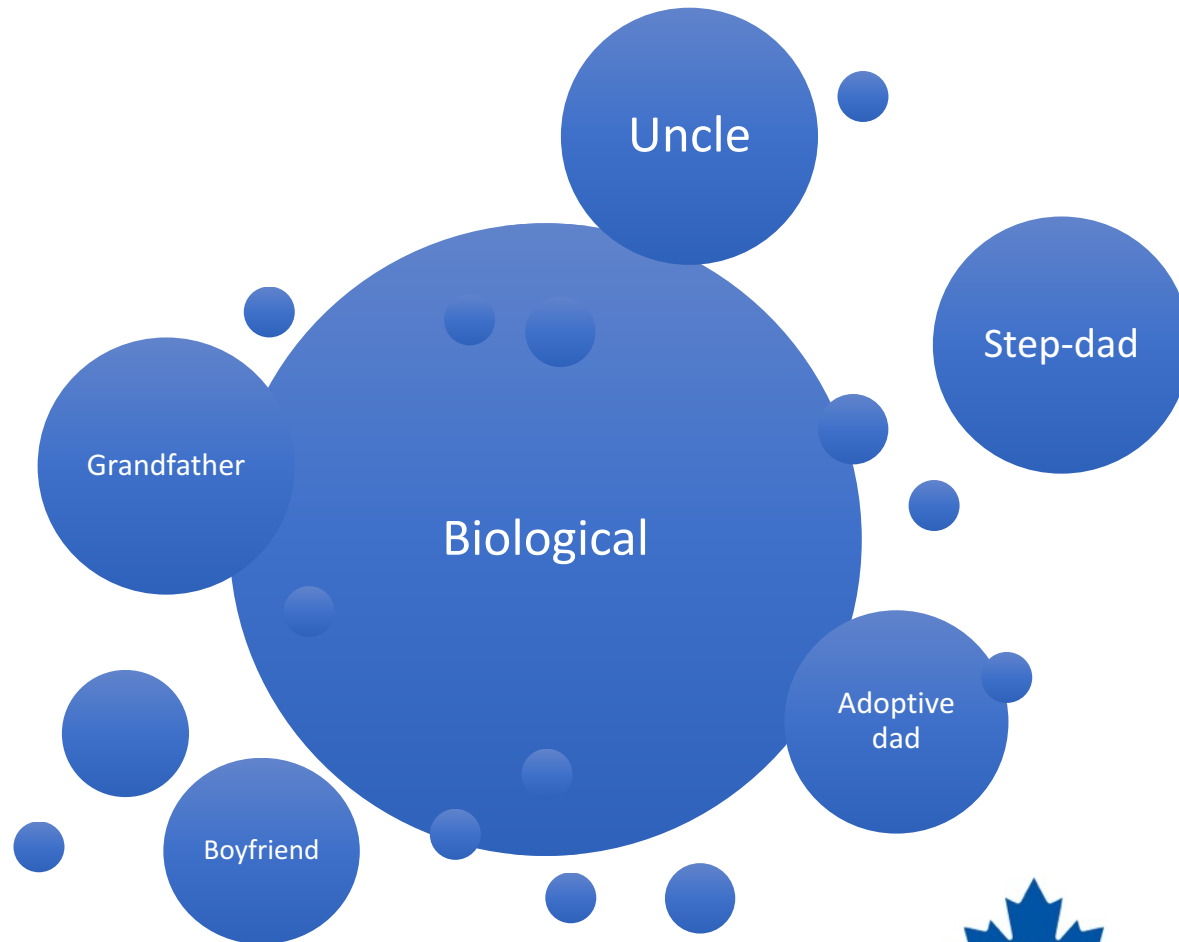
- 914 men participated
- 87% were born in Canada
- 80% were Caucasian
- 45% found the survey through Facebook
- 80% were between the ages of 25-44

Clearly this was not a representative sample. More work needs to be done to reflect the diversity of Canadian experience (race, age, gender, etc.)

Demographics: by region



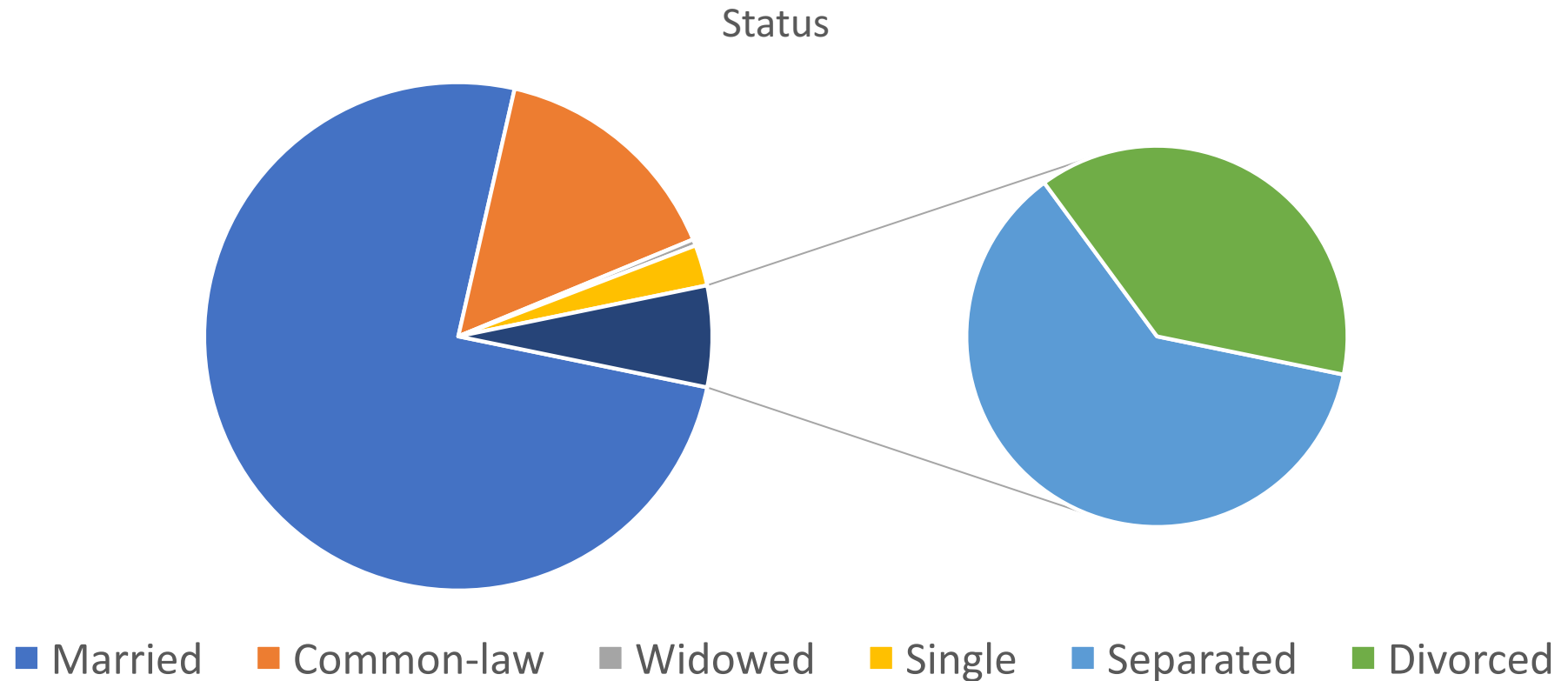
Demographics: by dad type



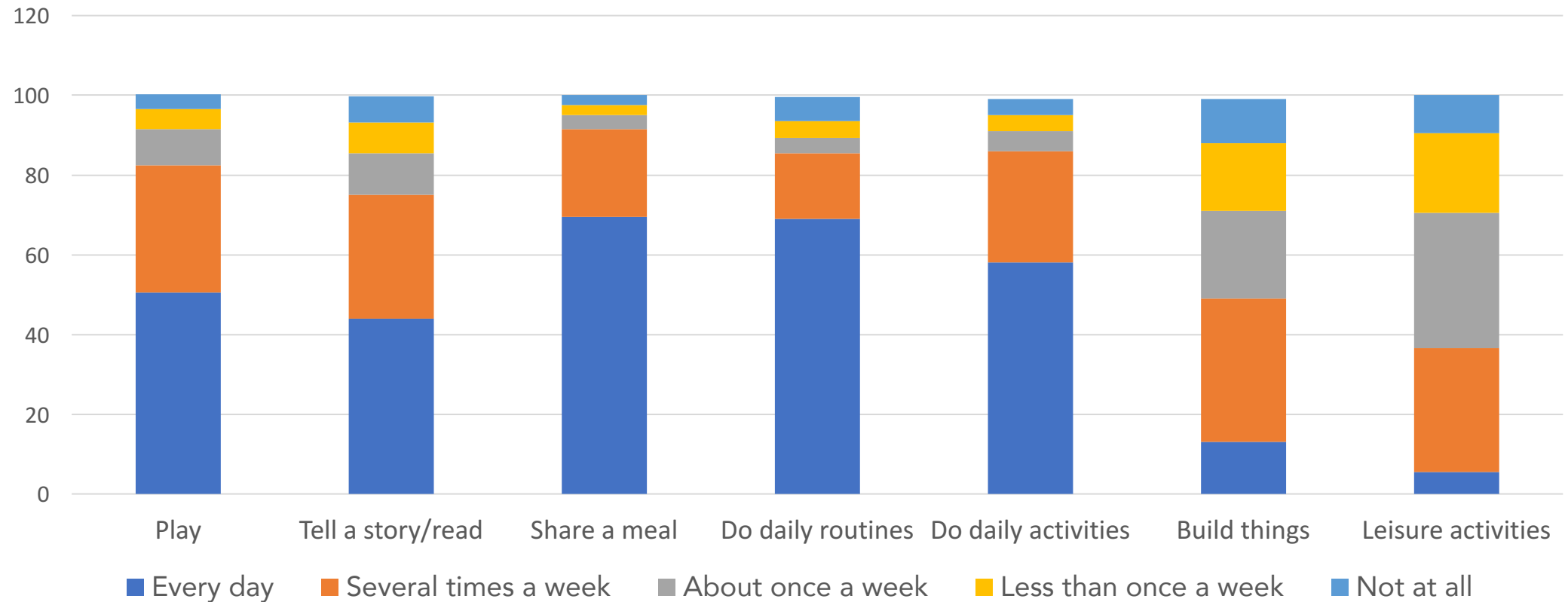
We also heard from men who considered themselves:

- Foster dads
- Caregivers
- More than one "type" – step and grand and bio, etc.

Demographics: by relationship



Things Dads Do



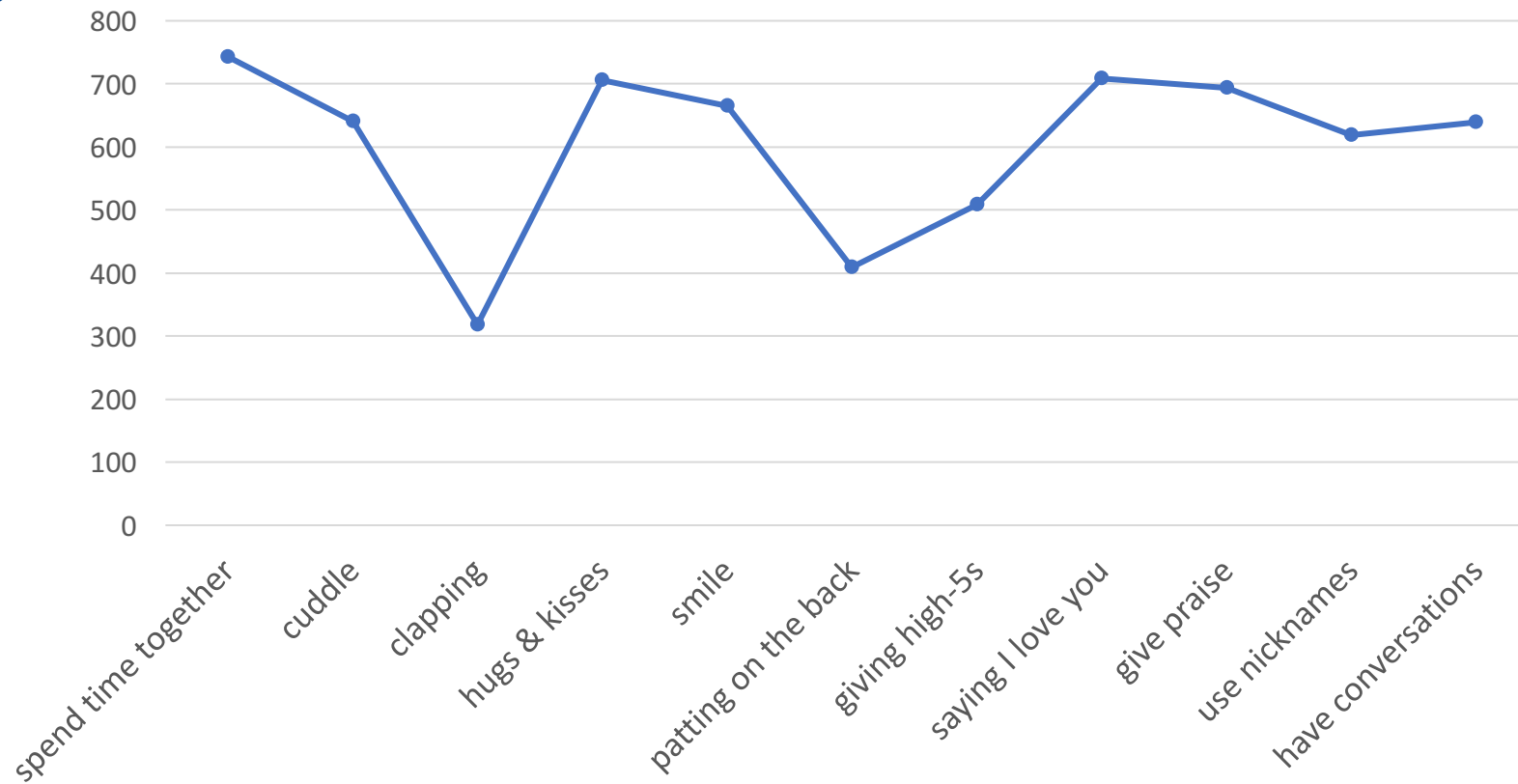
Q7 Please list other things you do with your children not mentioned above.

Teach Kids Issues House School Care
Listen to Music Cook Family Bike Camping
Grocery Shopping Walks Chores Play Child
Sing Hockey Fishing Science Hiking Cuddle
Church Infant Activities Board Games Drive

Word Cloud:

highlighting the most common responses.
The larger the word, the more often it was used.

How Canadian Dads Show Love



Other things Dads do:

- sing
- fist-bumps
- text
- dance
- attend events
- wrestle and horse around
- encouragement
- cook
- laugh
- secret handshakes
- work
- rewards
- tickles
- and much, much more

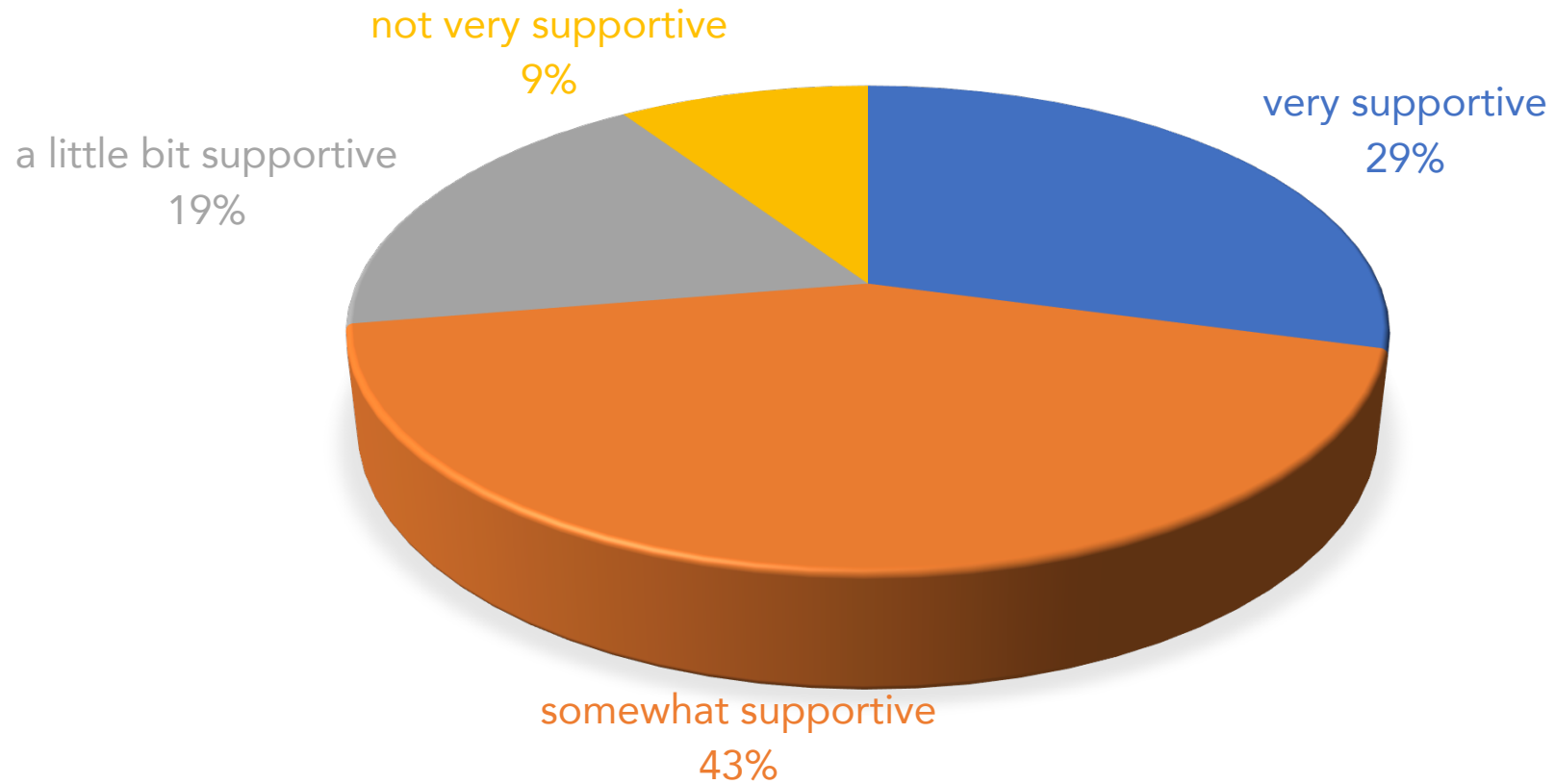
Q9 Tell about a special time you had with your child(ren).

Teaching Joy Learning Water Park Enjoy Ride Game
Morning Trip Dad Daughter Months Old Play
Stories Special Gave Love Big Camping Ice
Family Smile Took Event Swimming Nature Walk Fishing
Vacation

Word Cloud:

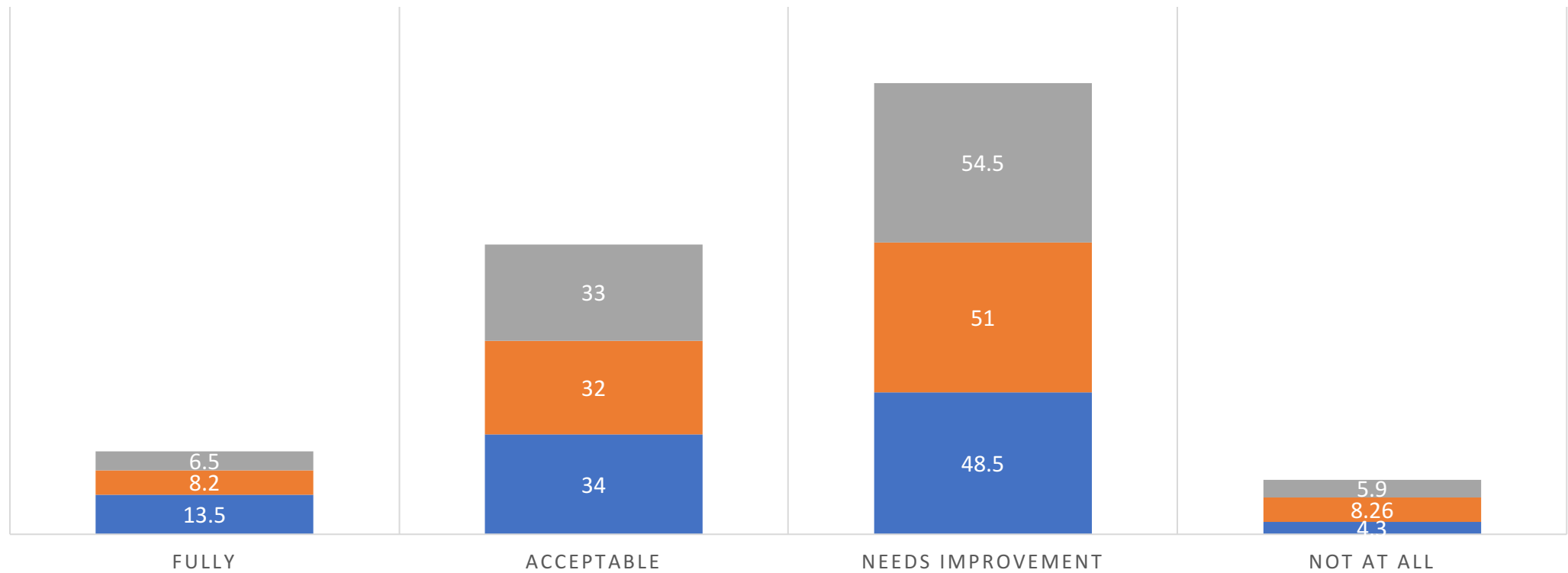
highlighting the most common responses.
The larger the word, the more often it was used.


How Supportive is Your Community



Is the Role of Father . . .

■ valued ■ understood ■ utilized





"Our society is still very maternal."

"When I take care of my child some people refer to it as babysitting. Nothing burns me more."

"The stereotypes are either deadbeat absentee fathers, or blundering idiots. Many men are just as capable of raising children as women."

"I am encouraged by the number of dads I see reworking their lives to get involved with their kids' activities."

"It is annoying when a dad is out with a baby or toddler and there is no change table in the men's bathroom in public places."

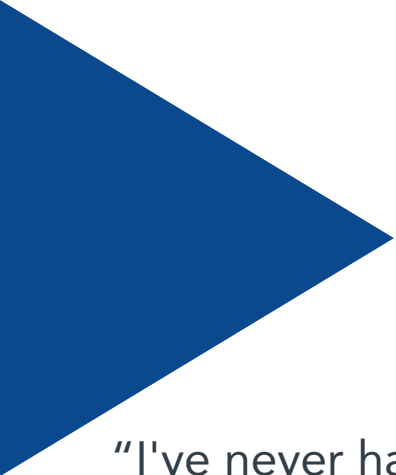
In the men's words . . .

"In custody cases, fathers are generally treated as second class citizens. I'm not divorced, but have seen it happen time and time again to fathers I know. It does a disservice both to those fathers and to the children."

"People assume moms do most of the parenting but it's 50:50 in our house. They say things like 'can I get your wife's email to set up a play date?' I say I can set it up with you now."

"Many women (and men) find it odd that a Dad does SO much with their kids sometimes. Or just expects you to be useless or to 'babysit' your kids, not raise them."

"I feel the natural assumption is that the father is a distant second in terms of importance and competence against the mother."



"Workplace culture still has a long way to go in accepting the practice of taking paternal leave."

"As a father who took parental leave with both my kids, I felt very isolated as most activities are geared towards mothers."

"I believe there is still a sense that dad's role in raising kids is less important than mom's role; it's more acceptable for dad to be away from the kids or more hands off than it is for moms."

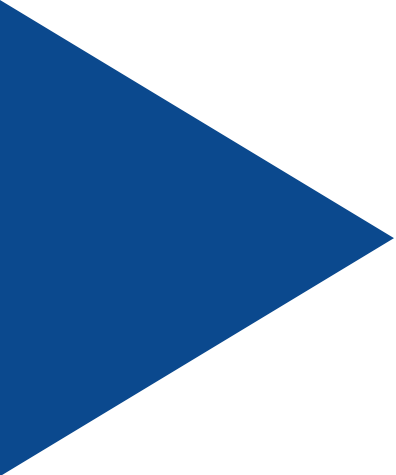
"I've never had much cause to think about this. My role as a father is driven by my personal desire to have that role and I've never paid much attention to outside factors impacting me."

In the men's words . . .

"It could use some improvement overall, but does seem to be getting better."

"More dads need to be more involved and give credit to all the moms out there."

"It's nauseating being praised for doing something small (like taking them to the store) when my wife does this 100x more and no one notices."



"I took paternity leave to spend time with family. The community of men generally thought I was taking a "free ride" being home, not realizing the value of fatherhood/parenthood. I see the difference it has made in my attachment to my family and my relationship with my wife and children has grown because of it. However I constantly got comments about "sounds like fun", "I guess you just get to watch TV all day"."

"Mothers play such a predominant role in our society. As part of a two-dad household, we fear this valuing of moms will make our child fear he's lacking something."

"The whole "celebrating dads simply for being a parent" thing needs to stop."

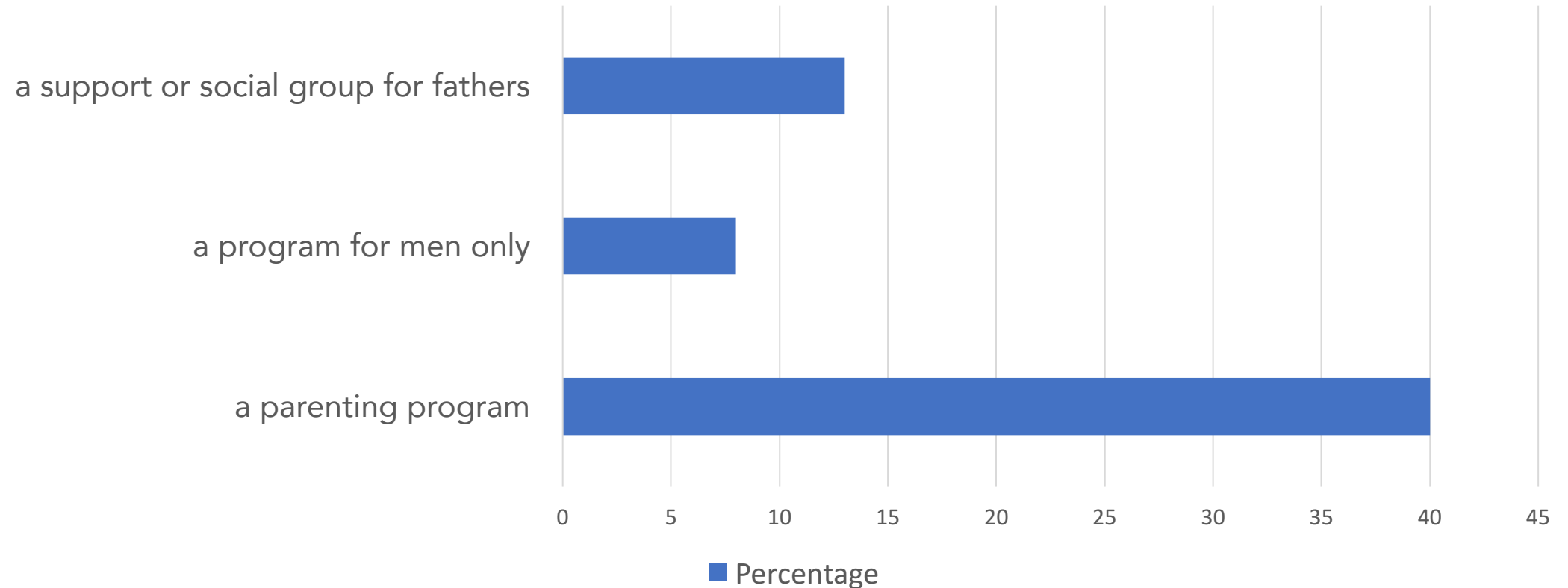
In the men's words . . .

"We are not seen as care givers, rather resource providers."

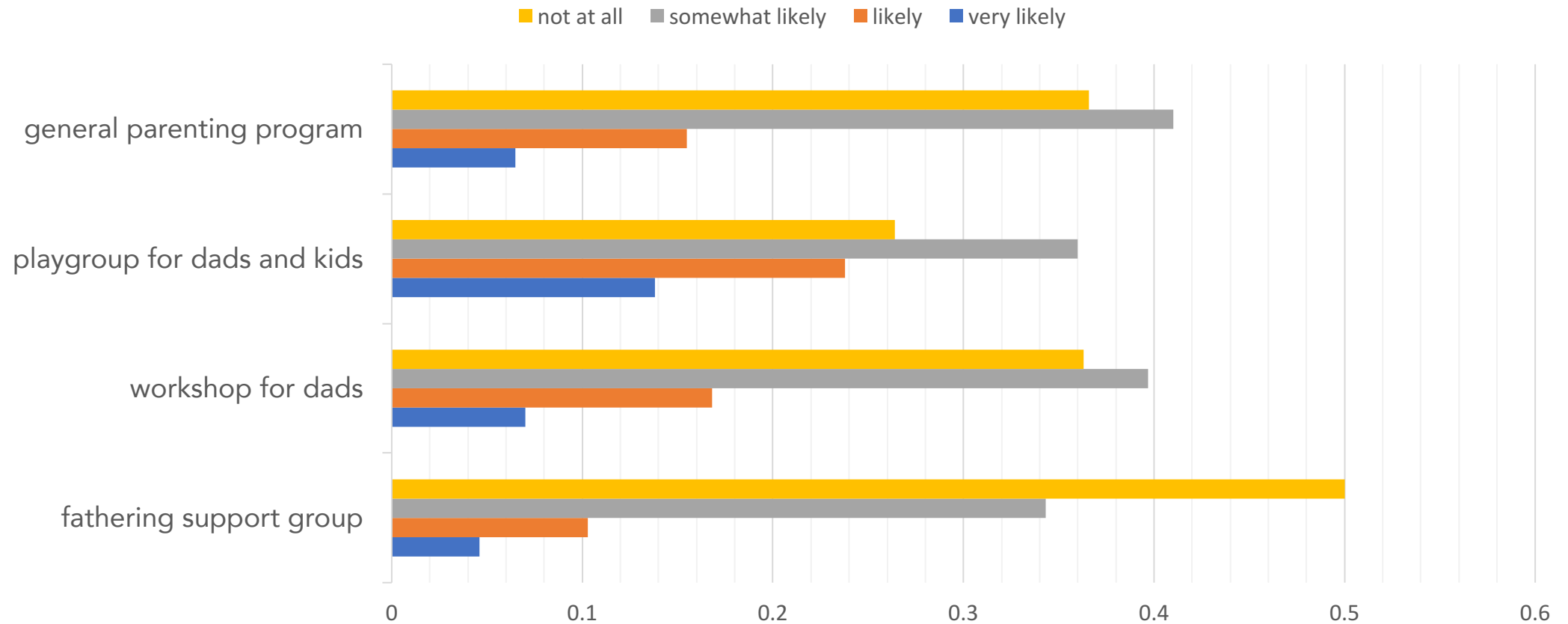
"Would love to see more paternal leave offered, instead of using up my wife's maternity leave."

"I feel like my involvement is over-praised but under-trusted. My participation in care, decisions, and knowledge about my child is not always trusted by people other than my wife (our child's mother)."

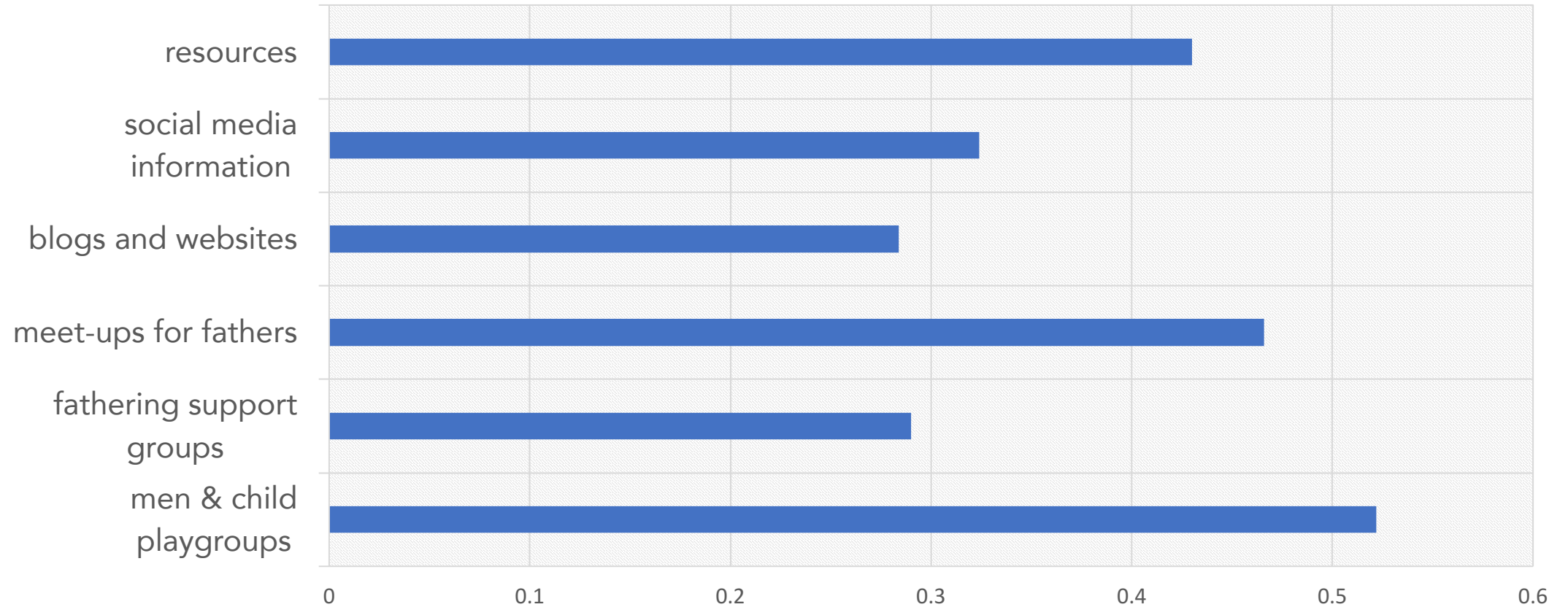
Fathers have attended . . .



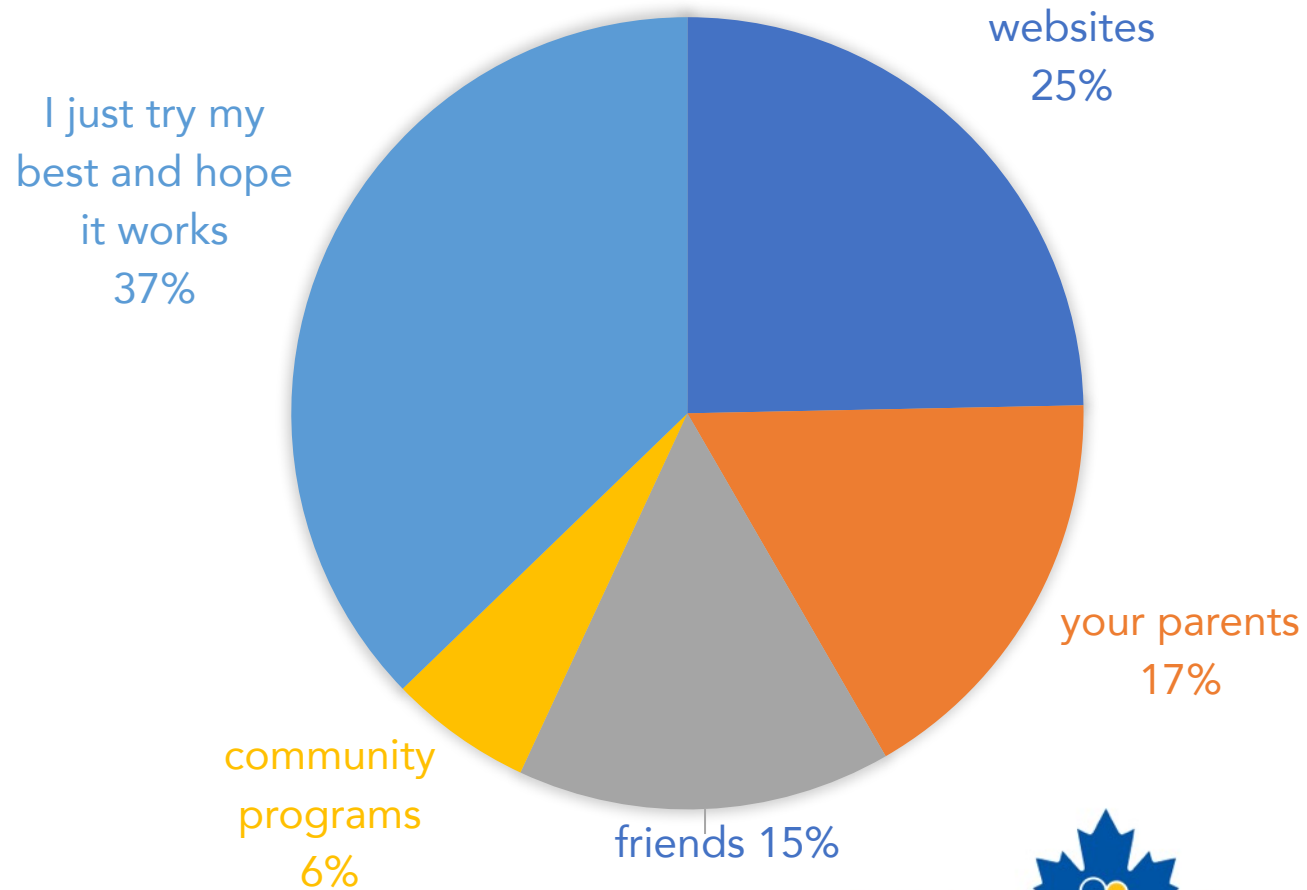
How Likely are You to Join . . .



Men are Asking for More . . .



Where Do You Go?



Other:

- Wife/partner
- Books and magazines
- Other dads
- Personal experience
- My dad

Q19 Where do you go to get information on fathering/parenting?

Partner Programs Experience Library Family Worker
Friends Teacher Parents Church Wife Wing
Books Articles Spouse Look Father Research
Children Community

Word Cloud:

highlighting the most common responses.
The larger the word, the more often it was used.

Some Ideas for Further Research

- How do fathers of different types view how their role is perceived? (same-sex, newcomer, Indigenous, etc.)
- What can be done to understand the gendered perceptions of parenting?
- What does “support” for fathers look like?

Dad Central Canada: Mission

Committed to strong, healthy children by affirming and valuing the bond between fathers and their children, Dad Central Canada works to provide relevant and well-crafted information for fathers and for individuals, agencies, and programs working with fathers.

Dad Central Canada: Resources

Online certification training for engaging fathers

Booklets and posters

Dad's Reading Toolkit Literacy Bookmarks

24 HR Cribside Assistance for New Dads

It's A Dad's Life – community engagement training

Dad Central Canada

Web: dadcentral.ca newdadmanual.ca mydad.ca

Blog: thingsdadsdo.wordpress.com

Store: store.dadcentral.ca

Tw: [@dadcentral_can](https://twitter.com/dadcentral_can)

Questions or Comments

info@dadcentral.ca