

Frequently asked questions

What is the content of the messages?

The messages cover three areas: Father-infant attachment, Fathers support for the partner and fathers self-care (mental health). Approximately every third message contains a URL link to a non-profit resource such as Raising Children Network. Also, about every three weeks a 'How's it going?' interactive text is sent timed for common challenges such as baby crying or getting intimacy back. Dads can reply with a click and be directed to online help or information.

Are mothers supportive?

They certainly are. As one mother put it: *"It helped my partner to feel part of the "baby process", and that his experiences were also important. This made for a more cohesive family unit. The messages gave us both confidence and helped to avoid fights when extreme fatigue set in"*.

What questions are asked when dads sign up?

Name, phone number and demographics, smoking (Y/N), alcohol (AUDIT-C) and Kessler K10 10 question depression and anxiety survey.

What about same-sex parents?

There is no screen to exclude anyone who wishes to sign up. Those enrolling put in their postcode (at the moment only NSW, QLD and TAS are allowed), and the EDD or DOB of infant must be from 16 weeks gestation to 24 weeks post birth. The age of the participant must be at least 18 years.

What about Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander dads?

SMS4dads has been piloted with young Aboriginal dads from Newcastle, Moree and Tamworth NSW. Applications for funding to develop an Indigenous version of SMS4dads are ongoing.

What about other language groups?

SMS4dads is being piloted in Swahili (in Kenya) and Spanish (in Colombia) but we have not yet received any funding to develop culturally appropriate multilingual versions.

How many messages?

There are about 3 per week. The messages are timed to match the development of the fetus or baby. If a dad signs up when his baby is 2 months old, the messages will start at this age. The total message set of 260 messages runs from 16 weeks into the pregnancy until the last one is sent at 48 weeks after the birth.

What if a dad doesn't want to keep getting the messages?

A dad can text back 'STOP' to any message and be taken out of the program. The only follow up text is: *Hi. SMS4dads has been stopped. Please tell us why? 1=not helpful, 2=I did not sign up for this, 3=situation has changed, 4=too busy, 5=other reasons. Text back 'yes' to agree to a brief interview. We offer \$30 Bunnings voucher for your time. Thank you*

What is the Mood Checker?

About every three weeks an interactive text is sent with a question about how the dad is going with one of the common challenges such as: getting ready for the birth, baby crying, regaining intimacy, or returning to work. The idea is to take a few moments to register how you are doing and maybe get some info or help. The Mood Checker has links to online resources.