

A HEALTHY
AND BALANCED
FATHER

WELLBEIN AND HAPPINESS FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY



Because you are a father, you must take care of yourself. Your wellbeing reflects directly on your family's wellbeing.

SOMETIMES
WHAT'S BEST FOR
YOUR FAMILY IS
TAKING SOME
TIME FOR
YOURSELF!

HOW ARE YOU DOING?

- Do you exercise regularly?
- Are you getting enough sleep?
- Do you have someone to talk to?
- Do you have energy to do fun things after work?
- What brings you joy?
- Are you comfortable with talking about your feelings with your spouse?
- Can you openly discuss the hopes and fears that you have regarding your relationship?
- Are your parenting skills sufficient?

And how does all this affect your fatherhood?

Having a child brings ups and downs, and it might sometimes challenge your wellbeing.

“Children sense how their parents are really doing.” (father, 34 yrs)

THE NEW ROLE OF BEING A FATHER
MAY FEEL RESTRICTING. IT MAY FEEL LIKE IT LIMITS
YOUR FREEDOM, IDENTITY AND BEHAVIOUR.

FATHERS COMMONLY FIND STRESSFUL

- a physically clingy child
- crying
- a child constantly asking for help
- a child's behavioural issues

It is also stressful for a father not to have sufficient information about a child's development and being unable to understand and interpret a child's feelings.

HOW DO YOU ENSURE HAVING TIME FOR YOUR FAMILY, YOUR RELATIONSHIP AND YOURSELF?

A well-functioning everyday life leaves time also for your own activities and friends. This is crucial for your wellbeing.

Relationship-wise it is smart to plan and share household work and chores together. This way there are fewer arguments, which improves the quality of the family time. Living the peaceful everyday life together strengthens the bond between a father and his child.

The best way to prepare yourself for becoming a father is to **think** about your expectations, hopes and fears of fatherhood. **Talk** about your feelings with your spouse and your friends!

“Having a child will change your life.” (father, 41 yrs)

Everything new in life involves some level of stress. Sometimes even pleasant events and changes feel stressful.

Stress can be a positive thing when it is short-term. But if it continues for a long time, it may cause anxiety, short-temperd-ness and low energy levels.

Stress-causing factors for fathers are often limited free time, increased household work and caring for the child. Additional **pressure** may be caused by the expectations of being a father and the inevitable changes in yourself, your spouse and your relationship.

WHAT IS TRULY
IMPORTANT
TO YOU?

“Spending time with your child is the best gift you can give.” (father, 27 yrs)



WORK AND FINANCES

If you are happy with your job, it helps with having more energy at home. The following factors often improve fathers' contentment with their jobs: continuity, possibility to affect the job content and possibility to progress in their careers.

Being a father, you may have concerns regarding family finances. Combining family and work might sometimes feel challenging.

It is important to remember that work is only one part of your life, so don't let it take up too much of your time and energy.

MORE INFO

www.ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi



Do not compare yourself to your neighbour Ville who also has a small child. People tolerate stress very differently. **Take a moment to stop and listen to how you truly feel inside.**

Recognizing pressure is not a sign of weakness. Do not belittle your own feelings.

PEACE OF MIND?

It is fine to take a break by changing scenery and hanging out with your friends.

Too often relaxation means drinking alcohol. Continuous drinking will lower your mood. The day after heavy drinking you are likely to be easily irritated and quarrelsome.

In what kind of circumstances, how often and how much do you use alcohol?

At the child health centre or occupational health centre you can discuss your alcohol consumption and request an AUDIT Test (Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test).

WHAT DO YOU LOSE IF YOU ARE INTOXICATED?

You might lose the **trust of your child**. When you are under the influence of alcohol, you may **act unpredictably and strangely in your child's eyes**. You might think that you are just being social, fun and spontaneous. After an "ordinary party night", your child might feel upset, angry and ashamed about how you behaved.

Your child worries for you and your entire family. Children have a built-in need to stay loyal to their parents, and this is why they often keep their negative feelings and experiences to themselves.

Your alcohol misuse affects the relationship between you and your child even when you are sober.

HOW DO YOU COPE WITH STRESS?

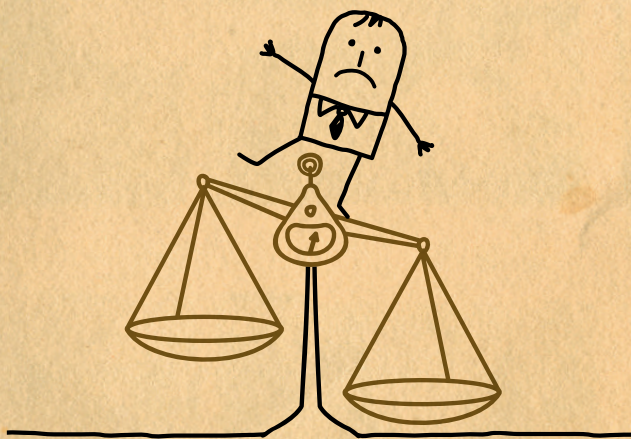
Do you have arguments more often? Do you constantly work overtime? Is your child acting up all of the time? Do you have a habit of taking a small shot or drink every day? Do you drink every weekend? Are you exhausted and bad-tempered? You don't get excited about anything? Do you feel like giving up and dropping everything?

Alcohol can make you do things that you wish never happened, or you might not even remember them happening in the first place. On a drunken night out you might lose your:

shoes, jacket, credit card, phone, wallet, car, driving license, self-worth, job, friends or family.

If this has ever happened to you, take a moment to seriously think about your drinking habits.

If you are not happy, you have every right and chance to get help. Talking really does help. Talk with a professional or with someone who has similar experiences. You can talk face-to-face, on the phone or online.



MORE FATHER CARDS BY THE FEDERATION OF MOTHER AND CHILD HOMES AND SHELTERS

In addition to the card "A healthy and balanced father", we have also published three other cards:

The greatest thing in the world!

🌟 Congratulations on becoming a father! Plenty of general information on fatherhood.

Talk and listen

🌟 Being the father in a family. A balanced relationship between a father and his child also brings warmth to the parents' relationship and keeps up a positive family spirit.

The safety factor

🌟 Father ensuring the safety of his family. As a father, how can you make sure that your children feel safe and secure?

www.ensijaturvakotienliitto.fi

Ask for more father cards and information at the child health centre!

 Osuuskunta Tradeka-yhtymä

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