



# Communicating Men's Health, Well-being and Masculinity

SUMMARY VERSION

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MOVEMBER® INSTITUTE  
OF MEN'S HEALTH



More in  
Common

## ABOUT MOVEMBER

Movember has raised over USD \$1.4 billion for men's health, thanks to a passionate network of Mo's.

Since 2003, Movember has challenged the status quo, shaken up men's health research, and transformed the way health services reach and support men – taking on prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health, and suicide prevention with unwavering determination.

These critical funds have delivered more than 1,300 men's health projects around the world. In 2023, the Movember Institute of Men's Health was formed to raise the profile of men's health by championing new research, cutting-edge treatments, and policy aimed at improving the health of men. To learn more, please visit [Movember.com](https://Movember.com)

## ABOUT MORE IN COMMON

More in Common is a leading public opinion research agency and thinktank.

As public opinion specialists, we use our unique segmentation lens and quantitative and qualitative research to understand what the public think of the big challenges facing societies today – and crucially why they think it.

Our approach helps both to amplify the voices of groups often left out of political and media debates, and helps leaders in institutions across government, media and civil society to better navigate tricky and divisive issues.

Our insights are regularly used by senior leaders across politics, media and civil society to shape their thinking and strategy on the major issues facing the country. More in Common was founded in 2017 and has teams in the US, UK, Germany, France, Poland, Spain and Brazil.

# Methodology and Approach

## QUANTITATIVE FIELDWORK:

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More in Common surveyed 6,500 adults in the US and UK in nationally representative surveys with 3,500 American adults (2,000 men, 1,500 women), and 3,000 British adults (2,000 men, 1,000 women). The fieldwork for both the UK and US was conducted between 6th - 13th February 2025. Data in both countries was weighted to reflect national population demographics by gender and age interlocked, education level, ethnicity, region, and 2024 voting history in presidential (US) and general (UK) elections.

## QUALITATIVE FIELDWORK:

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More in Common conducted 12 focus groups as part of this project - six in the United States and six in the United Kingdom. Three focus groups were conducted in each country before the quantitative fieldwork (in late January), and three focus groups were conducted after the fieldwork (in mid-late March). This iterative approach meant the qualitative research both informed the design of the quantitative research, and helped shape the analysis.





# Headline Findings

## THE PUBLIC IS READY TO ENGAGE

Half of Britons and Americans (and young men in particular) are ready for a conversation about what it means to be a man today.

In both Britain and America, young men and young women are more likely than older men and women to want to engage in this conversation. Trump voters are more likely than Harris voters to say they would be likely to have a conversation about what it means to be a man.

Very few people are also unreachable when it comes to conversations about men's health and what it means to be a man. Just over one in ten Americans and Britons (13-16%) are unlikely to support men's health campaigns; significant majorities in both countries are open to engagement.

More encouraging still, the public already cares deeply about men's health issues. Three in five people in both countries believe society should talk more about men's mental health challenges. The challenge isn't about creating concern about men's issues from scratch—but channeling existing worry into meaningful action.

## “MEN’S HEALTH” IS NOT A TRADITIONAL CAUSE AREA

The public don't see men's health and wellbeing as a traditional activism issue.

It's both too broad an issue - it cannot be reduced to a single policy, piece of legislation or campaign ask - and for others it's too personal an issue to think through in a highly political lens. This should shape how Movember and others approach their strategic communications on men's health and wellbeing.

## AUTHENTIC STORIES HAVE THE MOST POWER

The research reveals a clear winner in messaging approaches: personal stories from relatable figures consistently outperform abstract discussions about masculinity.

When UFC fighter Paddy Pimblett gave an emotional post-fight interview about men's mental health, it moved focus group participants across the political spectrum in the UK. Similarly, Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson's personal reflections on his own struggles resonated powerfully with American audiences. In contrast, more academic or theoretical discussions about masculinity failed to connect, regardless of how well-credentialed the speakers were. *People engage with real people and authentic stories, not intellectual frameworks about masculinity.*

## CERTAIN LANGUAGE CHOICES CLOSE THE DOOR TO ENGAGEMENT

One of the key findings from the research is that the term “masculinity” itself creates barriers to engagement, especially among conservative audiences.

People are 10-13 percentage points more likely to engage in conversations about “what it means to be a man” than conversations about “masculinity.”

Why? Many people now hear “toxic masculinity” whenever the word masculinity appears, making them tune out immediately and changing toxic for healthy or positive doesn’t shift the dial with the public in the other direction either. As a term ‘masculinity’ has become loaded and appears to shut down rather than open up conversation on the substantive issue about what it means to be a man.

## MORE EFFECTIVE MESSAGE STRATEGIES EXIST, HOWEVER

Alternative approaches work better and can open doors to engagement.

First, focusing on “male strength” in its broadest sense – including emotional strength and the strength to be vulnerable – is likely to reach audiences across the US and UK. Second, talking about what it means to be a man using the language of “providers, partners, and protectors” and making the case that these concepts must incorporate core men’s health behaviours, like opening up, can help men’s health advocates reach across the political divide. Third, concrete practical language and tangible examples will open up engagement in ways that abstract concepts will shut it down.

The research also identified significant differences in what broader stories and frames work for different audiences in the UK and US. For American audiences, messages about “growth” and personal development worked best across political divides. Americans respond to narratives about men constantly evolving and becoming better versions of themselves. For British audiences, simpler approaches prove more effective. Direct health messaging performs better than complex discussions about masculinity, followed by appeals to loyalty and supporting fellow men.

Effective communications on men’s wellbeing issues should also acknowledge the triple burden the public see men facing (financial pressure from rising cost of living, emotional barriers stopping them asking for help and provider expectations to support their families). Skipping the step of acknowledging these pressures risks being seen as out of touch with men’s lived experiences.



## THE MESSENGER MATTERS AS MUCH AS THE MESSAGE

Building diverse coalitions of storytellers is crucial for reaching different audiences on these issues.

The research revealed some surprising insights about effective messengers:

- Mothers of teenage boys are among the most powerful messengers for reaching men, though less effective with women
- Public figures from sports, politics, and trade unions perform well across demographics
- Mental health professionals were actually less likely to be clicked on, suggesting people prefer peer-to-peer rather than expert-to-audience communication

Importantly, different political groups prefer different types of messengers. Conservative men strongly prefer male voices discussing men's issues, while progressive audiences are more open to female messengers.

## RESPONDENTS NAME BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

The research identified three main reasons why conversations about men's health don't happen more often.

Men feel awkward about having these discussions, people fear saying the wrong thing in today's cultural and political climate, and many don't know where to start these conversations. Effective campaigns must directly address these barriers by acknowledging awkwardness, providing permission to engage with judgement, and offering practical conversation starters.

## THE RIPPLE EFFECT NEEDS NUANCE TO BE DONE RIGHT

The idea that "men's health benefits everyone" aka "the ripple effect" can work, but requires careful execution.

Messaging that emphasizes how men's health benefits women and families didn't strongly resonate with women in survey testing. Many women already carry emotional labor for men's wellbeing, and few want men's health reframed as their responsibility or gain. Men often find motivation in taking care of others, however, especially family. But when the ripple effect is framed as the main point, it risks reinforcing the pressure to prioritize others and ignore their own health. The ripple works best when it starts with self-care, not self-sacrifice.

## THE RESEARCH REVEALS AN UNTAPPED OPPORTUNITY

The research reveals significant untapped potential for men's health advocacy.

Most people are already concerned and reachable—the challenge lies in meeting them where they are with authentic stories, practical solutions, and language that opens rather than closes doors. The path forward isn't about perfecting complex theoretical frameworks, but about empowering real people to share real experiences in ways that make other men feel less alone and more willing to take care of themselves and each other.

*This summary is drawn from a full report conducted by  
More in Common in partnership with Movember.  
Readers interested in accessing the full report are  
encouraged to contact either organization.*



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