

Press release

38 million people in Britain facing pressures on close family, as campaign launches to help families face their monsters

Three in four adults in Britain, almost 38 million people, say their close family is under pressure according to new research published today by national charity Family Action to mark its 150th anniversary and launch its [Family Monsters Project](#) to help families with everyday challenges.

The new research carried out for Family Action by ICM Unlimited shows that money, health and wellness, and quality time together are the main pressures on families in Britain today. Six in ten people (61%) with family pressures, an estimated 24 million people, say specific things are making tackling these pressures more difficult, such as thinking other families need help more or not being sure who to ask for help.

Family Action is starting a national conversation about the everyday pressures on families or 'family monsters'. The campaign aims to get these pressures out in the open and to stop family monsters from becoming overwhelming by helping families find ways to talk about and face their pressures together. Family Action has released a new short film bringing family monsters to life - go to www.familymonstersproject.com to watch and share it.

When asked about the common pressures in their close family the five most prevalent pressures people are willing to report are money (52%), health and wellness (50%), lack of time together (49%), pressure from work or education (40%) and family relationships (37%). Lack of communication (19%) and arguments, feuds or disputes (16%) are the most common relationship problems reported.

An estimated 24 million people say specific things make it harder for them to deal with their main pressure on their close family. These include not being sure who could help (14%), feeling their family should be able to overcome pressures without external support (13%), their family living far away (13%) or not having services near where they live (6%).

Worryingly, many people say there are psychological barriers that are preventing them from getting help with their family monsters, including feeling other people need more support than them (12%), lack of confidence (11%), embarrassment (9%), feeling scared of being judged (9%), not thinking their family pressures will be taken seriously (6%) or not being ready to talk (7%).

When asked what they do personally about tackling their family monsters, an estimated 16 million people (42%) say they don't do anything at all.

While most people want to do more about their family monsters in future, not everyone is sure what to do. The preferred option currently is to talk to someone (32%), but one in six (16%) people with family pressures say they would like to do something but don't know what to do.

Family Action Chief Executive, David Holmes, CBE said:

"Every family will have its pressures. These monsters are with us every day, usually small and easy to deal with but at the worst times growing and becoming overwhelming, making daily life a struggle. We want to help families get these hidden monsters out in the open, as simply acknowledging and talking about our family monsters can often keep them small and under control.



“For 150 years Family Action has been helping families become stronger. To mark our 150th Anniversary we want to start a national conversation about family pressures, how normal they are and how best to manage them. Every family has its monsters, if we all recognise this and talk about them more, together we can build stronger families.

“From joining in the national conversation and sharing stories on social media, to visiting our family garden at RHS Chelsea or one of the hundreds of Family Monster Project picnics this summer, we’re creating opportunities for all families to get involved”

To find out how the Family Monsters Project is helping every family face their pressures go to www.familymonstersproject.com or follow #MyFamilyMonsters on social media.

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For more information or to set up an interview, please contact Jane Elston at Family Action:
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NOTES TO EDITORS

Download the Family Monsters Project film for online or broadcast use at <https://vimeo.com/309838799> and a selection of stills for use by media are available to download via WeTransfer: <https://we.tl/t-QfF2aeRg12>

The new research from Family Action was conducted by ICM Unlimited about the everyday pressures their family faces. We asked them to think about all their family pressures and then to choose the main pressure from all of those they had selected. We then asked them what they do, if anything, to overcome those pressures or what gets in the way. The people who took part in the research are a representative sample of people living in Great Britain and some of the results have been converted to estimated population numbers that are indicative of the number of people in the whole British population. This has been calculated using percentage claims from the research sample and most recent UK population estimates from ONS (mid-2017). ICM Unlimited interviewed two representative samples of 2,050 and 2,044 adults aged 18+ between 11-13 May 2018 and 25-27 July 2018. Interviews were conducted across Great Britain and results have been weighted to the profile of all adults. ICM is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

The Family Monsters Project short film brings to life the everyday family monsters anyone could face at any time, such as money worries, work getting in the way of time together, or feeling overwhelmed by parental responsibilities. These pressures are represented by animated family monsters that linger around the families in the film. In the final clip, a young mum looks directly into the eyes of her family monster and it visibly shrinks, illustrating how our problems can get smaller when we face them together. The film was made in partnership with And Rising <http://andrising.co.uk> and directed by Duncan Christie. Production was by Great Guns <https://www.greatguns.com> and animation by BlindPig <http://www.blindpig.tv> at Absolute Post.

Family Action is a national charity marking its 150th anniversary in 2019. Around 45,000 families and hundreds of thousands of children are supported by Family Action every year, helping people overcome their family monsters such as mental health and wellbeing, behavioural issues and parenting challenges, family conflict and domestic abuse, social isolation, poverty, addiction and much more. It is committed to



building stronger families and brighter lives by delivering innovative and effective services and support. It seeks to empower people and communities to address their issues and challenges through practical, financial and emotional help. Its work is wide-ranging and includes help for parents-to-be, the provision of Children's Centres, intensive family support, emotional health and wellbeing services, counselling, mediation and therapies, support in schools - including the provision of breakfast clubs and holiday hunger support, and financial grants programmes. Family Action is also recognised as a leading provider of training and consultancy.

Registered charity number: 264 713

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