

## Relationships Australia Reveals Significant Cost of Living Impact on Relationships

12 December 2024

Relationships Australia today released its 2024 Relationship Indicators research report, a comprehensive study providing crucial insights into the state of relationships in Australia. Building on the groundbreaking 2022 survey, the research offers a detailed examination of how relationships have evolved during these challenging times.

The findings paint a complex picture of contemporary Australian relationships. While relationships remain fundamental to wellbeing and social cohesion, the research reveals concerning trends that demand urgent attention. Notably, 79% of Australians have faced relationship pressures in the past six months – an increase of almost 8% since 2022 – with certain communities experiencing disproportionately significant challenges.

At the heart of these relationship pressures lies the cost-of-living crisis, which emerges as the most significant challenge facing Australian relationships. National Executive Officer Nick Tebbey said the research underscores the critical connection between economic pressures and relationship wellbeing. "Our findings show that cost of living is more than just a financial issue – it's fundamentally reshaping how Australians experience and maintain their relationships," Mr. Tebbey said.

The report highlights that cost of living has become the most reported relationship pressure in the past six months, affecting approximately 5.6 million Australians. This pressure disproportionately impacts specific groups, including:

- 44% of families with children under 15 years
- 37% of people living with a disability
- 34% of people with a long-term mental health condition

"These statistics reveal a deeply concerning trend," Mr. Tebbey explained. "When cost of living pressures intensify, they don't just impact bank accounts – they erode life satisfaction, increase loneliness, and contribute to overall distress."

The research found that relationships impacted by cost-of-living pressure also faced significant additional challenges:

- 64% reported money problems
- 54% experienced challenges with childcare task division
- 49% reported increased social media use
- 46% indicated gambling concerns

Also noteworthy are the increases in loneliness since the 2022 survey (up from 20% to 23%), and in the number of people reporting that different values or beliefs placed pressure on their relationship (23%). "We also noted an increase in the number of people reporting that they feel unsafe in their most important relationship, which is now 12%, up from 8% in 2022" noted Mr

Tebbey. “These changes signal a broader shift in our social fabric that requires a coordinated and comprehensive response.” The 2024 Relationship Indicators report highlights that relationship satisfaction has direct implications for mental health, domestic violence prevention, and community wellbeing – areas that are often viewed separately but are intrinsically connected through the lens of relationship health.

Relationships Australia is calling for targeted support strategies that address the multifaceted challenges revealed in the 2024 Relationship Indicators report, which presents a roadmap for strengthening relationship supports across Australia, from increasing funding for relationship services to addressing the growing challenge of social loneliness.

The full report and a range of fact sheets outlining key findings can be found at [relationships.org.au/relationship-indicators](https://relationships.org.au/relationship-indicators).

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*Relationships Australia is a leading provider of relationship support services for individuals, families and communities. We aim to support all people in Australia to achieve positive and respectful relationships. We are a community-based, not-for-profit Australian organisation with no religious affiliations.*