

# Reimagining parenthood and celebrating progressive families

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Nearly 60% of South African children have absent fathers, says a five-year study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the South African Race Relations Institute (SARRI).

This study further asserts that “children growing up without fathers are more likely to experience emotional disturbances and depression.”

It is with this mind that OMO looks to the old African adage, “It takes a village to raise a child,” as inspiration for the brand’s digital campaign.

“At OMO, we do not look at modern parenting through a binary lens of only a mother and a father. We also recognise the fluid make-up of modern families, the progressive choices each makes and the dynamics each one faces. That is why we understand that the individuals who support parents in the raising of children are the unsung heroes of our everyday life,” says Henry Muchauraya, Marketing Manager for Laundry, Unilever South Africa.

In an endearing piece of intuitive marketing, OMO launches a digital film that celebrates all parental figures who take an active role at parenting duties by acknowledging their contribution and thanking them for a job well done, despite the current challenges.

The brand takes this opportunity to celebrate the people who help raise children. OMO believes it is important to honour the *gogos*, the uncles, same-sex families, the aunts and other important members of the family unit who act as parental figures.

“We really strive to make a difference and let families know that we understand who they are. We truly believe in the values of ubuntu, community and depicting progressive norms of all families. This campaign serves this belief as it tells the story of how OMO further celebrates parental figures of all forms and all walks of life,” adds Muchauraya.

PsycheCentral.com cites a study by Swedish researchers, which “highlights the benefits of an active father figure for reducing behavioural problems in boys and psychological problems in young women.

“Swedish researchers found that regular positive contact reduces criminal behaviour among children in low-income families and enhances cognitive skills like intelligence, reasoning and language development.”

As a brand firmly rooted in the belief that families grow healthier and stronger through time spent together, this study supports what OMO hopes to inspire in South African families through these various shared experiences, the magic of collective child-led activities and the celebration of parental figures who play an active role in the progressive parenting of a child.

To see the OMO South Africa digital series, please visit: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATcAE7PTPTU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATcAE7PTPTU).

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