Nippers get first taste of fishing from fathers

Hot on the heels of Father’s Day comes news the highest percentage of recreational fishers are introduced to the sport by their dads.

Curtin University’s Centre of Excellence for Science, Seafood and Health has been conducting a study quantifying the health and wellbeing benefits of recreational fishing in WA.

Part of the study was an online survey and it received more than 600 respondents from Kununurra to Esperance, revealing some interesting facts on our fishing lives.

About 25 per cent of those who took the survey had their first fishing experience with their fathers.

For 94 per cent of the respondents, it was a family member who first showed them how to wet a line.

Most fishers start young too, with 85 per cent enjoying their first fishing outing by the age of 14.

CESSH project manager and deputy director of Dr Wendy Hunt said the study revealed recreational fishing was widely regarded as a great family bonding experience.

Taking a child fishing can have a significant positive impact.

In fact, taking a child fishing can have a significant positive impact on the rest of their life, as children are much more likely to continue an activity like fishing into adulthood if it becomes customary for them at a young age.

Dr Hunt said the study, along with others, showed the biggest benefits from fishing included relaxation and stress relief. She said other positives of fishing were being outdoors in the fresh air, getting a form of exercise and a good mental health boost.

This project is funded through the Recreational Fishing Initiatives Fund and is supported by Recfishwest and the Department of Fisheries.

It again emphasises that recreational fishing is an enjoyable and rewarding activity with far-reaching social, cultural and health benefits, which is of great social and economic importance to WA.

This research helps us understand the true social value of recreational fishing.

Andrew Rowland is the chief executive of Recfishwest.

Matthew Lilly takes son James on a fishing trip.