

What does the research say about day care, pre-schools, all-day kindergarten, and the general impact on the lives of women and children? Take a few minutes and review a compilation of studies.

Compilation: Children and Their Mother's Employment



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United Families International

It is important to note that many women are placed in a position to provide for their family and thus additional child-care is mandatory. This information is gathered to study the impact of various situations related to women and children during their early years.

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Day Care and School

Before-school care for primary school children has a damaging impact on their performance, both academic and social. Researchers report that these children have "lower levels of co-operation, self-control and academic competence and higher levels of hyperactivity and externalising behaviours". Kay Margetts, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, 2012.

During kindergarten, whatever advantages daycare or preschool children may enjoy in math and reading become statistically insignificant in tests with and without background controls. During the first grade, the daycare/ preschool children have significantly lower math scores ($p < .05$). In both grades, these children scored significantly lower in the "approaches to learning" measure, which measured teacher perception of student attentiveness and persistence, a reversal of what was found in the cross-sectional test. Lisa N. Hickman, "Who Should Care for Our Children? The Effects of Home Versus Center Care on Child Cognition and Social Adjustment," *Journal of Family Issues* 27 (May 2006): 652-684.

While the full-day kindergartener is in the classroom nearly twice as long, he only receives about 30% more instruction in math and reading. This amounts to about 15 minutes per day per subject. V.E. Burkham, et al. "Full-Day versus Half-Day Kindergarten: In Which Program Do Children Learn More?" *American Journal of Education*, 112, 2 (2006): 163-208.

By third grade half-day and full-day kindergarten score at the same level. E. Votruba-Drzal, et al., "A Developmental Perspective on Full- versus Part-Day Kindergarten and Children's Academic Trajectories through Fifth Grade," *Child Development*, 79, 4 (2008): 957-978.

Students in full-day kindergartens score better at the end of the year on achievement tests than do half-day students. However, as soon as the beginning of the next school year, the advantage disappears. J.R. Wolgemuth, et al., "Comparing Longitudinal Academic Achievement of Full-Day and Half-Day Kindergarten Students," *Journal of Educational Research*, 99, 5 (2006): 260-269.

On average, the earlier children enter preschool, the slower their pace of social development, while cognitive skills are stronger when children are first enrolled between the ages of two and three. Moderate exposure to preschool helps youngsters develop their cognitive abilities in pre-reading and math. But extended absence from their parents (more than six hours a day) also appears to heighten behavioral problems, such as a lack of cooperation, sharing and engagement in classroom tasks, most notably among kids from more affluent families. Loeb, Susanna, Margaret Bridges, Daphna Bassok, Bruce Fuller and Russell W. Rumberger. "How much is too much? The influence of preschool centers on children's social and cognitive development." *Economics of Education Review* 26, 1 (February 2007): 52-66. <http://ideas.repec.org/p/nbr/nberwo/11812.html>

Pre-kindergarten programs do not produce long-term benefits to children and thus are not good uses of taxpayer funds. James Golsan and Jeff Judson, "Pre-Kindergarten Effectiveness and the San Antonio Initiative," Texas Public Policy Foundation, October 2012. <http://www.insideronline.org/summary.cfm?id=18610>



Daycare/preschool children exhibit poorer social skills throughout kindergarten. Such children have worse self-control, have worse interpersonal skills, and externalize problems more than their peers under parental care ($p < .001$ for each coefficient in tests with and without background controls). The only social measure (internalizing problem behaviors) where these children outperformed their parental-care peers in the first model is now insignificant. Lisa N. Hickman, "Who Should Care for Our Children? The Effects of Home Versus Center Care on Child Cognition and Social Adjustment," *Journal of Family Issues* 27 (May 2006): 652-684.

Children in a Canadian daycare program had "worse health, lower life satisfaction and higher crime rates later in life. "The negative impact of the Quebec program on the non-cognitive outcomes of young children appears to persist and grow as they reach school ages." Non-cognitive behaviors include such things as aggression, hyperactivity and anxiety. Michael Baker and Jonathan Gruber, "Non-Cognitive Deficits and Young Adult Outcomes: The Long-Run Impacts of a Universal Child Care Program," Kevin Milligan, University of British Columbia and NBE, September 2015. <http://faculty.arts.ubc.ca/kmilligan/research/papers/bqmr2%20v18.pdf>

Maternal employment in the first year impacts a child's socio-emotional development. Even when taking into account gender, ethnicity, social class, and mothers' current employment status, third- and fourth-graders whose mothers worked when they were less than one year old were more likely to "act out," to have lower tolerance of frustration, and to be more likely to hit or be aggressive toward peers. Lise M. Youngblade, "Peer and Teacher Ratings of Third- and Fourth-Grade Children's Social Behavior as a Function of Early Maternal Employment," *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 44, No. 4 (2003): 477-488.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care showed clearly that high levels of nonmaternal care—regardless of its observed quality—predicted the emergence of "insecure attachments" between children and their mothers and the development of various kinds of "problem behavior." The most severe manifestations of these problems occurred in children who had averaged 30 or more hours per week of nonmaternal care during their first four and a half years of life. Jay Belsky, "Quantity Counts: Amount of Child Care and Children's Socioemotional Development," *Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics* 23.3 (2002): 167-170.

"Compared with parental care, children who attended a center-based childcare or were cared for by a relative (although with greater uncertainty) had higher odds of being overweight/obese in childhood (4-10 years). Analyses of number of hours additionally suggested that each increment of 5 hours spent in either center-based or relative childcare increased the odds of overweight/obesity in the first decade of life by 9%. Associations were not explained by a wide range of confounding factors, including socioeconomic position, breastfeeding, maternal employment, and maternal body mass index." Marie-Claude Geoffroy, et al., "Childcare and Overweight or Obesity Over 10 Years of Follow Up" *Journal of Pediatrics* (2012) at [http://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476\(12\)01075-X/abstract](http://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476(12)01075-X/abstract)

"Children in two-earner homes will likely do worse in school than peers from traditional families... Secondly, the activities missing from the lives of children in employed mother homes appear to be the very ones which foster tractable and cooperative behavior." Sandra L. Hoffereth and John F. Sandberg, "How American Children Spend Their Time," *Journal of marriage and the Family*, 63 (2001): 295-308.

The NICHC study showed that children who had experienced 30 or more hours per week of nonmaternal care displayed all of the signs of “neediness (demands a lot of attention, demands must be met immediately, easily jealous), assertiveness (bragging/boasting, argues a lot), disobedience/defiance (talks out of turn, disobedient at school, defiant—talks back to staff, disrupts school discipline), and aggression (gets into many fights, cruelty-bullying-meanness, physically attacks others, destroys own things).” Jay Belsky, Quantity Counts: Amount of Child Care and Children’s Socioemotional Development,” *Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics* 23.3 (2002): 167-170.

Using multi-variable statistical models, researchers established that, compared to peers cared for by their mothers in their early years, “children with more experience in center settings continued to manifest somewhat more problem behaviors through sixth grade.” In other words, “this seemingly adverse consequence of center-based care did not dissipate” by the time the children had finished sixth grade. Jay Belsky et al., “Are There Long-Term Effects of Early Child Care?” *Child Development* 78 (2007): 681–701.]

Increased hours in day care is “predictive of more aggression and disobedience” and is predictive of “at-risk (though not clinical) levels of problem behavior.” Children grow more aggressive and disobedient even in high-quality day care. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development/Early Child Care Research Network, “Does Amount of Time Spent in Child Care Predict Socioemotional Adjustment During the Transition to Kindergarten?” *Child Development* 74 (2003): 976-1005. Nora S. Newcombe, “Some Controls Control too Much,” *Child Development* 72 (2003): 969-1226.

A 10-year study found that children (age four-and-a-half) who experienced an average of more than 30 hours per week in day care exhibited more behavior problems than did those who spent under 10 hours per week in day care, even after controlling for the quality of day care. Deborah L. Vandell “Early Child Care and Children’s Development Prior to School Entry.” NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, National Institutes of Health, Washington, D.C., 2001.

Day Care and Health

“Day care attendance not only increased the number of antibiotic treatments at each of the studied ages, but it also had a negative effect on the number of antibiotic treatments between birth and five years.” The researchers suggest that “the more-at-risk children could be protected by breast-feeding and by being taken care of in a familial setting, especially before 2.5 years of age.” Lisa Dubois and Manon Girard, “Breast-feeding, Day-care Attendance and the Frequency of Antibiotic Treatments for 1.5 to 5 years: A Population-based Longitudinal Study in Canada,” *Social Science & Medicine* 60 (2005): 2035:2044.

Children attending day care centers have a 1.5-3.0 times higher risk of gastrointestinal and respiratory tract infections than children cared for at home or in small family care groups. Katja Hatakka et al., “Effects of Long-Term Consumption of Probiotic Milk on Infections in Children Attending Day Care Centers: Double Blind, Randomized Trial,” *British Medical Journal* 322 (June 2001): 1327-32.

“Infants spending their days in daycare centers are more than two-and-a-half times more likely to have been colonized by NTHI [a germ doctors regard as “an important cause of respiratory illness”] than are children not in day care (30% vs. 11).” Sandra K. Shumacher et al., “Prevalence and

Genetic Diversity of Nontypeable Haemophilus influenzae in the Respiratory Tract of Infants and Primary Caregivers," Pediatric Infectious Disease Journal 31.2 [2012]: 145-149.

Children less than eighteen months old are nearly four times as likely to contract Mild Upper Respiratory Illness as home-care peers and are almost three times as likely to contract Severe Upper Respiratory Illness. "Despite persuasive evidence of higher risk of acquiring common infectious diseases in day care settings, the demand for child day care services is increasing." N. Lu et al., "Child day care risks of common infectious diseases revisited," Child: Care, Health & Development 30 (2004): 361-368.

Children in child-care have higher levels of the immune-suppressing hormone, Cortisol. Researchers cite animal studies and conclude that "early experience" (increased Cortisol in blood stream) helps create "the neural substrate of vulnerability of anxiety and depressive disorders." Sarah E. Watamura et al., "Morning to Afternoon Increases in Cortisol Concentrations for Infants and Toddlers at Child Care: Age Differences and Behavioral Correlates," Child Development 74 (2003): 1006-1020.

"...researchers, though unaware of one another's work, had unanimously found the same symptoms in children who'd been deprived of their mothers—the superficial relationships, the poverty of feeling for others, the inaccessibility, the lack of emotional response, the often pointless deceitfulness and theft, and the inability to concentrate in school." Robert Karen, "Investing in Children and Society: What We've Learned from Seven Decades of Attachment Research," Commission on Children at Risk, Working Paper 7 (New York: Institute for American Values, 2002): 8.

Children's positive attitude, compliance, social competence, and low-levels of problem behavior were all associated, moderately but consistently, with a secure mother-child attachment from 0-3 years of age. "Child-Care and Family Predictors of Preschool Attachment and Stability from Infancy," National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Early Child Care Research Network, Developmental Psychology 37, 6(2001): 847-862.

"Mothering involves more double activity, more physical labor, a more rigid timetable and more overall responsibility than fathering." This study revealed that motherhood involves far more than simple "care giving" and differs in nature from fatherhood. Lyn Craig, "Does Father Care Mean Fathers Share? A Comparison of How Mothers and Fathers in Intact Families spend Time with Children," Gender and Society 20 (2006): 259-281.

The divide between male and female characteristics is great. "We believe we made it clear that the true extent of sex differences in human personality has been consistently underestimated." Women scored higher in sensitivity, warmth and anxiety while men score higher in emotional stability, dominance, rule-consciousness and vigilance. There is also a significant difference in levels of aggressions and life interests. Marco Del Giudice Tom Booth and Paul Irwing, "[The Distance Between Mars and Venus: Measuring Global Sex Differences in Personality.](#)" (2012) PLoS ONE 7(1): e29265.doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0029265

Employment's General Impact on Children

Based on a study of 900 European-American children, researchers found that “even after [statistically] controlling for child care and home environment, a negative association was still found between full-time employment begun in the first 9 months of children’s lives and children’s [psychological development scores] at 36 months. Challenging the feminist doctrine of female employment, analysts state that encouraging mothers to stay home or work part-time during the first year would produce children with higher [psychological development] scores.

Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, Wen-Jui Han and Jane Waldfogel, “Maternal Employment and Child Cognitive Outcomes in the First Three Years of Life: The NICHD Study of Early Child Care,” *Child Development* 73 (2002): 1052-1072.

“[A]dults whose mothers worked for pay during all or most of their childhood reported a lower level of maternal support during childhood compared with those whose mothers stayed home.” These adults also “reported a lower level of support from their fathers, compared with those whose mothers stayed at home.” These adults also reported lower levels of discipline that was not replaced by the father. The researchers concluded, “the absence of a homemaker may also lead fathers to be less effective in parenting.”

Kei M. Nomaguchi and Melissa A. Milkie, “Maternal Employment in Childhood and Adults’ Retrospective Reports of Parenting Practices,” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 68 (2006): 573-594.

“[A] recollection of the mother as available and devoted predicted less loneliness, less depression, less anxiety, higher self esteem, and more resiliency in dealing with life’s events.”

Mohammedreza Hojat, “Satisfaction With Early Relationships with Parents and Psychological Attributes in Adulthood,” *The Journal of Genetic Psychology* 159 (1998): 203-220.

Full-time maternal employment and little or inconsistent supervision of children were found to be significant predictors, respectively of marijuana use and harder drug use among college students. Students whose mothers had worked full-time in childhood had 1.47 higher odds of smoking marijuana than students whose mothers worked part-time, sporadically, or not at all.

Elizabeth Ehrhardt Mustaine and Richard Tewksbury, “Profiling the Druggie Lifestyle: Characteristics Related to Southern College Students’ Use of Illicit Drugs,” *Sociological Spectrum* 24 (2004): 157-184.

Maternal employment during the child's adolescent years significantly reduces academic grades for both boys and girls. Charles L. Baum, “The Long-Term Effects of Early and Recent Maternal Employment on the Child's Academic Achievement,” *Journal of Family Issues* 25 (2004): 29-60.

Children living in a home with a married mother have significantly higher math achievement, while “higher maternal working hours are negatively associated with math achievement.”

Perhaps children’s academic performance may have more to do with keeping mothers at home than it does with strengthening the public schools. Toby L. Parcel and Miaela J. Dufur, “Capital at Home and at School: Effects on Student Achievement,” *Social Forces* 79 [2001]: 881-912.

Twelfth-graders whose mothers work outside of the home (full- or part-time) report that religion is less important to them, attend religious services less frequently and are more likely to be religiously unaffiliated than those whose mothers do not work. John M. Wallace, Jr. et al., “Religion and U.S. Secondary School Students: Current Patterns, Recent Trends, and Sociodemographic Correlates,” *Youth and Society* 35(2003): 98-125.

Unsupervised time allows teens opportunities to engage in high-risk behaviors including having sex. Sex is taking place inside homes during unsupervised time. The greater the amount of unsupervised time the greater the percentage of youths who have intercourse. Boys who were

left alone after school for more than 5 hours per week were twice as likely to have chlamydia or gonorrhea as those who were unsupervised for 5 or fewer hours. Increased rates of tobacco use, alcohol use and marijuana usage each are correlated with more hours left alone, especially among boys. Deborah A. Cohen, et al., When and Where Do Youth Have Sex? The Potential Role of Adult Supervision," Pediatrics, Vol. 110, No.6 (December 2002), <http://www.pediatrics.org/cgi/content/full/110/6/e66>

Men who were reared in an intact family in which the mother did not work outside the home had the lowest risk of premature death. Men reared in an intact family in which the mother did work outside the home ran 1.24 times higher over the entire study period. "Men who resided with their stepfathers and biological mothers who worked outside the home faced a mortality risk that was 1.46 times that of the reference category [defined by residence in an intact family in which the mother was not employed]." Mark D. Hayward and Bridget K. Gorman, "The Long Arm of Childhood: The Influence of Early-Life Social Conditions on Men's Mortality," Demography 41 (2004): 87-107

Mothers and Employment

Being a homemaker is the most reliable predictor of the happiness of married women - as compared to women who work full-time outside the home. Judith Treas & Tanja van der Lippe, "The Happy Homemaker? Married Women's Satisfaction in Cross-national Perspective," [Social Forces](#), 2012.

Stay-at-home moms score the highest in happiness with their personal relationships. Volunteers, most of whom were women over 55 who worked less than 20 hours a week, had the highest personal well-being score of all employment groups. People working more than 60 hours a week in caretaking roles (usually stay-at-home moms) were more satisfied with both their health and their work than people who worked for money between 40-60 hours per week. Synopsis: Caretakers who worked more than 60 hours per week were the second happiest of all employment groups; the people who worked for money between 40-60 hours per week were the least happy of all employment groups. Deakin University, the Australian National University, the University of Sydney, and Australian Unity, www.australianunity.com/au/au/info/wellbeingindex/default.asp

The claim that mothers who work full-time outside the home do so out of economic necessity finds little support from evidence showing that the percentage of mothers in the labor force is greatest among the wives of top-earning males. Paul England, Carmen Garcia-Beaulieu, and Mary Ross, "Women's Employment Among Blacks, Whites, and Three Groups of Latinas: Do More Privileged Women Have Higher Employment?" Gender & Society 18 (2004): 494-509.

The more a wife worked outside the home, the less the husband earned. This effect was manifest for a wife working full-time, whereas part-work actually increased the husband's earnings. Carla Shirley and Michael Wallace, "Domestic Work, Family Characteristics and Earnings: Reexamining Gender and Class Differences," The Sociological Quarterly 45 (2004): 663-690.

A wife's income was found to have a large effect on whether or not a husband will quit his job. "The average husband's quit rate increases by about 45 percent when the wife's income rises

from zero to two-thirds that of the husband's." Kathryn L. Shaw, "The Quit Propensity of Married Men," *Journal of Labor Economics* 5 (1987): 533-560.

Seventy-five percent of women 25 to 54 years old are either working or actively seeking a job, up from around 40 percent in the late 1950's. Eduardo Porter, "Stretched to Limit, Women Stall March to Work," *The New York Times*, March 2, 2006; <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/02/business/02work.html>.

Research into the attitudes of 1,500 women with an average age of 29 found that 61 per cent believe "domestic goddess" role models who juggle top jobs with motherhood and jet-set social lives are "unhelpful" and "irritating". More than two-thirds agree that the man should be the main provider in a family, while 70 per cent do not want to work as hard as their mother's generation. On average, the women questioned want to "settle down" with their partner by 30 and have their first child a year later. (2005)

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/desperate-to-be-housewives-young-women-yearn-for-1950s-role-as-stayathome-mums-527857.html>

Men who have been stay-at-home dads most of their adult lives have an 82 percent higher risk of death from heart disease than men who work outside the home. Mothers who labor in high-authority jobs are almost 300% more likely to have heart disease compared to women in low-authority jobs. Elaine D. Eaker, Framingham Massachusetts, for National Institute of Health, (2002)

Children, and especially boys, whose mothers worked full-time (at least 30 hours per week) when they were 11 to 15 were less likely to attain five or more General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) passes at age 16 than children with stay-at-home mothers. However, full-time maternal employment yielded a positive effect upon girls--but not boys--at the A-level, although this effect lost its statistical significance in multivariate analysis that controlled for factors such as family income, parental education, and home ownership. Jacqueline Scott, "Family, Gender, and Educational Attainment in Britain: A Longitudinal Study," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 35 (2004): 565-589.

“Children in two-earner homes will likely do worse in school than peers from traditional families... Secondly, the activities missing from the lives of children in employed mother homes appear to be the very ones which foster tractable and cooperative behavior.” Sandra L. Hoffereth and John F. Sandberg, "How American Children Spend Their Time," *Journal of marriage and the Family*, 63 (2001): 295-308.

Children whose parents did Norway's Cash for Care program — moms staying at home and raising their children — got better test scores and better GPA averages than those who didn't.

Xiaole Chen, "Cash for Care Reform in Norway: A Natural Experiment for the Effectiveness of Pro Natalist Policies," Amherst College, Massachusetts, 2008.

<https://www.amherst.edu/media/view/190171/original/XChen08CashforCareReform.pdf>

Maternal employment during the child's adolescent years significantly reduces academic grades for both boys and girls. Charles L. Baum, "The Long-Term Effects of Early and Recent Maternal Employment on the Child's Academic Achievement," *Journal of Family Issues* 25 (2004): 29-60.

Family Mealtime

Adolescent girls who reported having more frequent family meals and a positive atmosphere during those meals were less likely to have eating disorders. Dianne Neumark-Sztainer, Marla E. Eisenberg, Jayne A. Fulkerson, Mary Story, and Nicole I. Larson, "Family Meals and Disordered Eating in Adolescents," Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 162 (1) (2008): 17-22 <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/162/1/17>

Consistent family meals were associated with a lower risk of smoking, drinking and using marijuana; with a lower incidence of depressive symptoms and suicidal thoughts; and with better grades. Marla E. Eisenberg, Rachel E. Olson, Dianne Neumark-Sztainer, Mary Story and Linda H. Bearinger, "Correlations between Family Meals and Psychosocial Well-being Among Adolescents," Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 158 (2004): 792-796. <http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/158/8/792>

Children who regularly dine with their families eat better. They consume more fruits and vegetables, less fat, fewer fried foods, more vitamins and fewer sodas. "Mathew W. Gillman, et al., "Family Dinner and Diet Quality Among Older Children and Adolescents," Archives of Family Medicine, 9 (2000): 235-240.

Teens that have less than three family meals per week are 1.5 times more likely to have friends who smoke marijuana and drink. They are about 1.5 times more likely to have friends who abuse prescription drugs, and 1.25 times more likely to have friends abusing cocaine, meth, heroin, and ecstasy. Seventy-two percent of teens think that eating dinner or other meals with their parents regularly is important. "The Importance of Family Dinners VI," The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA), Columbia University, 2010. <http://www.casacolumbia.org/templates/PressReleases.aspx?articleid=606&zoneid=79>