

# Working Moms



And The Rise of A  
Lost Generation

Dr. Sahadeva dasa

# **Working Moms**

## **And The**

# **Rise of A Lost Generation**

By  
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Soul Science University Press

[www.womenliberation.org](http://www.womenliberation.org)

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*Dedicated to....*

His Divine Grace A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



*Just like mother gives service to the child without any return. She gives from the very beginning of our life within the womb, the mother feeds the child. The process is given by nature, but mother feeds. Therefore, when pregnant, the mother should not eat any pungent things because it will give to the tender skin and heart of the child. She should eat only very simple things. But they have no conscious. They are now killing, what to speak of maintaining the child very nicely that "There is a child, my son or my daughter. She must be provided with all comforts in the womb." There is no motherly affection even in this Kali-yuga. In the material world, motherly affection is considered to be the highest form of love. But the Kali-yuga is so polluted that mother is also giving up her love for the children. Just imagine what is the position. Mandah sumanda-matayo manda-bhagya hy upadrutah [SB 1.1.10]*

*~ Srila Prabhupada (Lecture, Bhagavad-gita 2.17 -- London, August 23, 1973)*

By The Same Author

*Oil-Final Countdown To A Global Crisis And Its Solutions*  
*End of Modern Civilization And Alternative Future*  
*To Kill Cow Means To End Human Civilization*  
*Cow And Humanity - Made For Each Other*  
*Cows Are Cool - Love 'Em!*  
*Let's Be Friends - A Curious, Calm Cow*  
*Wondrous Glories of Vraja*  
*We Feel Just Like You Do*  
*Tsunami Of Diseases Headed Our Way - Know Your Food Before Time*  
*Runs Out*  
*Cow Killing And Beef Export - The Master Plan To Turn India Into A*  
*Desert*  
*Capitalism Communism And Cowism - A New Economics For The 21st`*  
*Century*  
*Noble Cow - Munching Grass, Looking Curious And Just Hanging Around*  
*World - Through The Eyes Of Scriptures*  
*To Save Time Is To Lengthen Life*  
*Life Is Nothing But Time - Time Is Life, Life Is Time*  
*Lost Time Is Never Found Again*  
*Spare Us Some Carcasses - An Appeal From The Vultures*  
*An Inch of Time Can Not Be Bought With A Mile of Gold*  
*Cow Dung For Food Security And Survival of Human Race*  
*Cow Dung - A Down To Earth Solution To Global Warming And*  
*Climate Change*  
*Corporatocracy - You Are A Corporate Citizen, A Slave of Invisible And*  
*Ruthless Masters*  
*Career Women - The Violence of Modern Jobs And The Lost Art of Home*  
*Making*  
*Glories of Thy Wondrous Name*  
*India A World Leader in Cow Killing And Beef Export - An Italian Did*  
*It In 10 Years*  
*As Long As There Are Slaughterhouses, There Will Be Wars*  
*Peak Soil - Industrial Civilization, On The Verge of Eating Itself*  
*If Violence Has To Stop, Slaughterhouses Must Close Down*  
*(More information on availability on DrDasa.com )*

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A Generation of Violent, Illiterate Young Men
- The Author*

## *Preface*

**A**n article in *The Economist*, *Female Power: Women in the Workforce*, states, “The economic empowerment of women across the rich world is one of the most remarkable revolutions of the past 50 years.” Women all over the world have entered the workforce in record numbers.

Despite women’s greater participation in the workforce, most men have yet to increase their share of domestic duties. This means that the majority of working mothers are also responsible for housework and looking after their children.

Being a ‘devoted mother’ is not easy. It is more than a full-time job. A full-time job lasts only for 8 or 9 hours whereas a mother’s job lasts 24 hours, 7 days a week. There are no holidays or leaves. But of late, this most important job is becoming the least valued job.

In a new book, *The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued*, author Ann Crittenden looks at how a lack of social supports for modern moms forces them to make bitter choices

Crittenden’s research shows that despite the overall advancement of women, mothers’ work remains unappreciated in an economic sense, even though moms are cultivating “human capital.” Raising



productive citizens directly contributes to the overall health of the economy and wealth of the society.

But in our modern culture, “mothering” is substantially, but not uniquely, a woman’s role.

According to Prof Kerry Phelp, the traditional notion of the family has been expanded beyond the restricted definition of a nuclear biological family to include step-families, blended families, single parents, gay parents, international adoption and surrogacy.

It is not a rocket science. What children need in order to flourish is a safe, loving home environment. And central to that is the mother of all roles: mothering.

When this role is neglected, even to the slightest degree, you end up with a ‘feral generation’, a generation of violent, illiterate young men who live outside the boundaries of civilised society and who pose a threat to the established social order. Even the government has no idea how to deal with them. The world’s cities are overrun by this class, jails are bursting at the seams and nobody has any clue on how to fix this problem.

A good place to start would be home.



Dr. Sahadeva dasa  
1st September 2015  
Secunderabad, India

1.

## **Mother's Employment**

### **The Quiet Revolution**

At the present time, most mothers, at least in the developed countries, are employed. This is not only true for mothers of school-aged children, as it has been for two decades, but it is also true for mothers of infants less than one-year-old. The pace with which maternal employment rates have increased to this point, however, is so rapid that many people fail to realize its prevalence. Furthermore, attempts to understand its effects often ignore the fact that this change is part of a whole complex of social changes. Both employed mothers and homemakers today live in a very different environment than their counterparts forty or even twenty years ago.

We need to place today's maternal employment in its social context. To understand its present effects on families and children, we need to understand how patterns of maternal employment have changed over the years, and how these changes have been accompanied by other social changes that interact with it.

### Changing Employment Patterns

Labor Force Participation Rates of Mothers with children under 18, 1940-1996 (US)

1940	8.6%
1946	18.2%
1956	27.5%
1966	35.8%
1976	48.8%
1986	62.5%
1996	70.0%

There are few social changes that are so easy to document as the increased employment of mothers in the developed countries. The steady rise in maternal employment rates over the years is clearly illustrated in this table. The pattern, rare in 1940, had become modal by 1977. By 1996, seventy percent of the married mothers with children under eighteen were in the labor force.

Maternal employment rates still differ by age of the youngest child, but this difference has diminished over the years as the greatest

*In UK, Research for the Department for Education last year found more than a third of working mothers would like to give up their jobs and stay at home with their children.*

*More than two out of three women are now in employment – 68.5 per cent in the last three months of last year, according to the ONS. At the beginning of the 1980s the level of working among women was barely over half.*

*The percentages mean there are now more than 14million women in work, but only two million are full-time mothers or homemakers.*

*Only one woman in ten now stays at home to raise a family.*

*Official figures show the proportion of women who are stay-at-home mothers has dropped by more than a third in the past two decades to a historic low.*

*But there has been no compensating movement towards staying at home among men. Just over one man in 100 brings up his children full-time.*

recent increases have occurred among married mothers of infants and preschoolers. The rate of employment for married mothers of infants one or under almost doubled between 1975 and 1995, from 30.8% to 59.0%. In 1960 less than 19% of all married mothers of preschoolers were employed, but by 1996, that rate had jumped to 62.7%.

There is another important change over the years. Whereas in 1960, employed mothers were more likely to be from single-parent families, this difference has now vanished. For single mothers who have been married, the present employment rates are slightly higher than those of currently married mothers, but for never-married mothers, employment rates are notably lower than for either of the others.

These statistics document a major social change in the developed world. But changes of this magnitude do not occur in a vacuum; the change in maternal employment rates have been accompanied by many other changes in family life. Family size is smaller, modern technology has considerably diminished the amount of necessary housework and food preparation, women are more educated, marriages are less stable, expectations for personal fulfillment have expanded, and traditional gender-role attitudes have been modified and are less widely held. In addition, women's roles have been reconceptualized, childrearing orientations are different, and the adult roles for which children are being socialized are not the same as previously.

In considering the research on the effects of maternal employment, it is important to keep these interrelated social changes in mind.

## Working Moms And The Rise of A Lost Generation

### Source

Lois Wladis Hoffman, PhD

Professor Emerita, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

Mothers at Work: Effects on Children's Well-being by Lois Hoffman and Lise Youngblade, with Rebekah Coley, Allison Fuligni, and Donna Kovacs. Cambridge Press.

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2.

## **Day Care And Its Impact On Young Children**

All over the world, children typically live with and are cared for primarily by their parents but also receive care from extended family members, neighbours, friends, and paid care providers. In industrialized countries, increased reliance on paid child care, often provided by publicly subsidized child care centers, has fostered intense research over the past 40 years on the effects (both positive and negative) on children's health, cognitive capacity, adjustment, and social relationships.<sup>1</sup> Although there is consensus that parents remain the most important influences on children's well-being and development, it is equally clear that non-parental care can also have a substantial impact. Consequently, researchers have focused on the nature of non-parental care and the ways children from different family backgrounds, with different educational, developmental, and individual needs are affected.<sup>2</sup>

The time children spend in day care is associated with negative effects in social development. More hours in day care during a child's early years is associated with less social competence and cooperation, more problem behaviors, negative mood, aggression, and conflict. Negative effects of day care on social-emotional development persist throughout early childhood and adolescence. Day care is linked with poorer average outcomes when children spend more time in

center care, enter day care at an earlier age, or are in lower-quality care. Maternal sensitivity is strongly linked to the effects of day care on children's social development and is the most crucial predictor of children's development, even when children spend long hours in day care.

Time spent in non-maternal child care (day care) is strongly linked to children's social-behavioral development. Entry into child care before the age of one and continued and extensive child care throughout early childhood years are associated with less social competence and cooperation, more problem behaviors, negative moods, aggression, and conflict. In teachers' reports of kindergarteners' social behavior, the effect of hours spent in day care is greater than the effect of the quality of parenting and comparable to the impact of poverty. Moreover, the negative effects of hours spent in non-maternal care remain throughout childhood and adolescence. Maternal sensitivity is the strongest and most consistent predictor of children's social-behavioral adjustment throughout development. When a low level of maternal sensitivity is coupled with more time spent in day care and/or a lower quality of day care, children tend to experience insecurity in their attachment to their mothers. A secure mother-child attachment is associated with positive peer interactions, social behaviors, emotions, and exploratory behaviors. Children are most likely to experience healthy social-emotional development when they are secure in their attachment to their mothers and when their mothers exhibit sensitivity throughout their childhood.<sup>3</sup>

Children who spend more hours per week in non-maternal child care are more likely to exhibit problematic social-behavioral adjustment, including less social competence and cooperation and more problem behaviors, negative moods, aggression, and conflict. In teachers' reports of kindergarteners' social adjustment, the effect of hours spent in non-maternal care prior to kindergarten is comparable to the effect of poverty in predicting behavioral problems.

Negative effects associated with quantity of child care persist throughout development. Children who experienced more hours of child care had significantly fewer social skills and poorer work habits in the third grade. In the sixth grade, children who had experienced more center care continued to show more problem behaviors. At age 15, children who had experienced more non-relative (non-family) child care reported more risk-taking behaviors and impulsivity, including using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs; behaving in ways that threatened safety; and not being able to control impulses appropriately.

Better child care quality is associated with some positive social behavioral effects, including fewer problem behaviors in measures at age 15 years. But child care quality is significantly less important in either positive or negative social and emotional outcomes than quantity of child care.

Mothers whose children spend more time in non-maternal care are likely to exhibit lower levels of sensitivity and less positive mother-child interactions, regardless of the quality and stability of the child care.

Children whose mothers exhibit low levels of sensitivity and who are in child care more than 10 hours a week or in lower-quality child care are more likely to experience attachment insecurity.

Attachment insecurity is associated with negative social-behavioral outcomes across development. Children who do not establish secure attachments in their relationship with their mothers are more likely to experience social withdrawal, depression, and anxiety. Boys with an insecure maternal attachment are more likely to exhibit conflict, aggression, and acting out.



Source

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Lieselotte Ahnert, PhD, Michael E. Lamb, PhD

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3.

## **Children Of Working Mothers Lag Behind**

The children of women who return to work shortly after giving birth are more likely to be slower developers, research has found.

Three-year-olds whose mothers went back to their full-time jobs in the first nine months have poorer verbal skills and are less able than those whose mothers stayed home.

They performed 10 per cent worse in tests.

The U.S. study was backed by British research, which looked at mothers working in the first five years of a child's life.

It found the negative effects on the child varied depending on how educated its mother was.

Parents' groups urged working mothers not to feel guilty as couples often have no choice but to work. Careful childcare choices, such as the involvement of grandparents, can compensate, they said.

Researchers at Columbia University in New York measured more than 50 skills in children of three including recognising colours, letters, numbers and shapes as well as talking and counting.

Those whose mothers worked full-time more than 30 hours a week in the first nine months scored worst.

There were particularly low scores among children whose mothers went back to work between six and nine months, according to the study, which is published in the journal *Child Development*.

But there were not the same kind of negative effects among children whose mothers worked fewer than 30 hours a week in the first year or began work one year after birth.

Dr Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, who carried out the research based on a study of 1,500 families over 36 months, said: 'We're saying working a lot of hours in the first year of a child's life is associated with poorer cognitive and verbal development.'

But she warned working mothers not to panic. 'There are effects but they are not huge. Your child's life will not be ruined.' British research also found negative effects in the children of working mothers.

When a mother of a pre-school child worked full-time for at least two-and-a-half years, the likelihood of that child gaining A-levels fell by 12 per cent.

But higher education levels among mothers helped reduce the negative impact.

The research, by Dr Marco Francesconi and Dr John Ermisch of the Institute for Social and Economic Research at Essex University, is based on a study of around 1,500 boys and girls.

Dr Francesconi said: 'What we have found is that the negative impact on children's educational achievement is stronger for mothers who are less educated.'

'One possibility is that more educated mums are more productive.'

'Higher productivity in both the labour market and parenting may temper the negative effects.'

Source

By Sarah Harris, The Daily Mail, Oct 13th 2014

4.

## **The Impact of Working Mothers on Child Development**

In recent years, full time employment of mothers has become the norm all over the world. Recent statistics indicate that 75% of mothers in US work full time in the first year of their child's life. <sup>[1]</sup> Since most jobs in the United States only offer maternity leave for the first four to six weeks of a child's life, the reality is that mothers are generally back to work when their child is still an infant.

### **Research on the Long-term Impact of Maternal Employment**

The research on the long-term impact of maternal employment seems to tell a consistent story.

In 1991, the National Institute of Child Health and Development initiated a comprehensive longitudinal study in ten centers across the United States to address questions about the relationships between maternal employment, child-care experiences and various outcomes in children. The leaders of this study were among the most respected researchers in the field of developmental psychology, making the conclusions of this research particularly worthy of attention. In a recent review of their findings, they drew the following conclusions:<sup>[2]</sup>

In terms of the behavioral adjustment of children of middle class or upper middle class mothers who worked when they were infants:

- Full-time maternal employment begun before the child was three months old was associated with significantly more behavior problems reported by caregivers at age 4½ years and by teachers at first grade;

- Children whose mothers worked part-time before their child was one year old had fewer disruptive behavioral problems than the children of mothers who worked full-time before their child's first birthday. This increased risk for behavioral difficulties was apparent at age three, and during first grade;

- The pathway through which those protective effects of part-time work operated was through increases in the quality of the home environment and in the mother's sensitivity.

With regard to cognitive difference in the middle and upper middle class sample, the study found that:

- Children of mothers who worked full-time in the first year of that child's life received modestly lower child cognitive scores relative to children of mothers who do not work on all eight cognitive outcomes examined. Associations at 4½ years and first grade were roughly similar in size to those at age three;

- Mothers who worked full-time were more likely to have symptoms of depression;

While these findings point to the need to consider the impact of full-time maternal employment on children, particularly before

*Children need the fundamentals: healthy food, a warm bed, clothes, cuddles, security, routines and ... time with their parents and other trusted adults.*

*Someone to listen to their concerns and talk them through their troubles.*

*A good education*

*A sense of security*

*Strong constructive role models.*

*And time to play...to just be children.*

*~ Prof Kerry Phelp*

they are three months old, some benefits of full-time work were found in the area of the mother's ability to be sensitive to her child.

Mothers who worked full-time tended to use higher-quality substitute childcare and to show higher levels of sensitivity to her child. The researchers speculate that the higher levels of maternal sensitivity seen in employed mothers might have stemmed from their having greater financial security.

A recent meta-analysis of 69 research studies spanning five decades,<sup>[3]</sup> evaluating the impact of maternal employment, came to similar conclusions as those summarized above.

The finding that full-time mothers are at times at greater risk for depression should not be taken lightly. Researchers have found that infants are clearly impacted by their mother's depression. Infants of parents with depression have been found to have difficulties with self-quieting, lower activity levels and decreased ability to attend. Relative to the children of non-depressed parents, their affect tends to be more negative, as typified by increased likelihood of expressing sadness and anger.

Equally important are the studies on the role of chronic stress in parenting.<sup>[4]</sup> Powerless parents are more likely to:

- be hyper-vigilant with their child;
- focus on the negative, while ignoring improved behavior;
- engage in coercive and punitive parenting;
- misread neutral child cues as malevolent, and
- derogate child in efforts at power repair.

This style of parenting frequently engenders high levels of resistance and at-risk behavior in the adolescent.

The implications of this body of research are that high stress levels, and particularly depression in stressed-out parents, can have long term implications on child development. The community needs to take this into account when prioritizing the need to provide young parents with support.

Source:

By David Pelcovitz, Ph. D. January 3, 2013

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5.

## **Why A Mother's Love Really Is Priceless**

### **Brain Of Neglected Child Is Much Smaller Than That Of A Normal Child**

**Y**ou comfort them over a skinned knee in the playground, and coax them to sleep with a soothing lullaby.

But being a nurturing mother is not just about emotional care - it pays dividends by determining the size of your child's brain, scientists say.

Both of these images are brain scans of a two three-year-old children, but the brain on the left is considerably larger, has fewer spots and less dark areas, compared to the one on the right.

According to neurologists this sizeable difference has one primary cause - the way each child was treated by their mothers.

The child with the larger and more fully developed brain was looked after by its mother - she was constantly responsive to her baby, reports *The Sunday Telegraph*.

But the child with the shrunken brain was the victim of neglect.

According to research reported by the newspaper, the brain on the right worryingly lacks some of the most fundamental areas present in the image on the left.



The consequences of these deficits are pronounced - the child on the left with the larger brain will be more intelligent and more likely to develop the social ability to empathise with others.

But in contrast, the child with the shrunken brain will be more likely to become addicted to drugs and involved in violent crimes, much more likely to be unemployed and to be dependent on state benefits.

The child is also more likely to develop mental and other serious health problems.

Professor Allan Schore, of UCLA, told *The Sunday Telegraph* that if a baby is not treated properly in the first two years of life, it can have a fundamental impact on development.

He pointed out that the genes for several aspects of brain function, including intelligence, cannot function.

And sadly there is a chance they may never develop and come into existence.

These has concerning implications for neglected children that are taken into care past the age of two.

It also seems that the more severe the mother's neglect, the more pronounced the damage can be.

The images also have worrying consequences for the childhood neglect cycle - often parents who, because their parents neglected them, do not have fully developed brains, neglect their own children in a similar way.

But research in the U.S. has shown the cycle can be successfully broken if early intervention is staged and families are supported.

The study correlates with research released earlier this year that found that children who are given love and affection from their mothers early in life are smarter with a better ability to learn.

The study by child psychiatrists and neuroscientists at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, found school-aged children whose mothers nurtured them early in life have brains with a larger hippocampus, a key structure important to learning, memory and response to stress.

The research was the first to show that changes in this critical region of children's brain anatomy are linked to a mother's nurturing, Neurosciencenews.com reports.

The research is published online in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Early Edition.

Lead author Joan L. Luby, MD, professor of child psychiatry, says the study reinforces how important nurturing parents are to a child's development.

Source

By Jill Reilly, The Daily Mail

28 October 2012

Datta-Gupta N, Simonsen M. Non-cognitive child outcomes and universal high quality child care. Journal of Public Economics 2010.

Bernal R. The effect of maternal employment and child care on children's cognitive development. International Economic Review 2008.

*Some of the specific long-term effects of abuse and neglect on the developing brain can include:*

*Diminished growth in the left hemisphere, which may increase the risk for depression*

*Irritability in the limbic system, setting the stage for the emergence of panic disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder*

*Smaller growth in the hippocampus and limbic abnormalities, which can increase the risk for dissociative disorders and memory impairments*

*Impairment in the connection between the two brain hemispheres, which has been linked to symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder*

*~ Joan L. Luby, MD*

6.

## **Modern Youth**

### **A Lost Generation**

By Trina Laverne

**W**e are all a product of our environment, and today's youth is a perfect example of that. Today's kids find themselves enveloped by a world of fast food and state-of-the art technology. Basically the path their lives will take is being determined by high tech toys like computers, iPods, cell-phones, and mind-numbing video games.

Every corner they walk by has a McDonald's, KFC, or Dairy Queen. Super-markets have 60 foot aisles of soft drinks and potato chips. Their schools have machines on every floor spewing out the same fat and sugar-laden treats.

At one time a youth was considered lost if he was in the local street gang. That was then and this is now. Today's kids are lost because for the most part they have no concept of how to look after themselves. Eating healthy and staying fit are foreign concepts to most young adults of today's world. They have been so inundated with poor food choices that obesity in schools across North America has reached epidemic proportions. Kids as young as 12 or 14 are being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

A lost generation? They sure are.

Instead of being outside biking, running, or playing ball, many kids stay in their rooms huddled over their computers. Poor fitness and diet often compute to being over-weight. Along with that problem comes low self-esteem. That in turn results in a myriad of social problems. The problem is further compounded by lack of social skills and often kids become loners and do poorly scholastically.

The biggest danger of all is that today's youth depends so much on technology to supply all the answers, that when they suddenly find themselves out in the real world, they are lacking many of the necessary skills to do even the simplest of tasks.

You see them everywhere. Teens who can't count out change. Teens who can't spell. They can't write properly. Every time I go into a retail outlet at the mall and give the part-time sales people real money for my purchase, I can see they actually tense up. I've unwittingly put him on the spot. Now he has to think. Especially if his register does not tell him the exact amount of change to give me. Sometimes that doesn't even help. Once, a young guy in a electronics shop tried 3 times to give me the proper change and never did get it right. I finally just gave up and left with \$1.85 too

*Research says young people today are more narcissistic than ever According to new research, young people today are significantly more narcissistic than during the 1980s and 1990s. We are in the middle of a narcissism epidemic.*

*The term narcissism comes from the Greek myth of Narcissus, the handsome young man who falls in love with his own reflection in a pool of water.*

*Professor Jean Twenge from San Diego State University points out that narcissism is distinct from the concept of self-esteem.*

*'Somebody high in self-esteem values individual achievement, but they also value their relationships and caring for others,' she says. 'Narcissists are missing that piece about valuing, caring and their relationships, so they tend to lack empathy, they have poor relationship skills. That's one of the biggest differences, those communal and caring traits tend to be high in most people with self-esteem but not among those who are high in narcissism.'*

*~ Lynne Malcolm*

much of the store's money. I tried everything I could to give it back. He just didn't get it.

This is supposed to be the generation of wonder kids. Look at the incredible technology they have at their finger-tips. A personal computer! There was no such invention for the previous generation. They were enthralled with a Smith-Corona typewriter that ran on electricity.

Instead of helping them, this technology is a weight around their necks. It is stifling their education and practical learning skills. It keeps them inside when they should be outside. Ultimately, their over-all health is suffering.

We really, truly need to worry about the generation that is going to inherit the Earth. Their parents as adults have let them down. They have let them down because they have done a poor job in many important areas of preparing them for what their future has in store.

*Working Mom vs Stay-At-Home Mom*

*Negative Impact on kids*

*Poor-quality day care services can hamper a child's emotional and social development. Under-qualified and over-burdened staff and poor facilities at the daycare can affect your child's physical and psychological health.*

*Moms might feel over-burdened and weary of trying to balance work and family. If moms bring their frustration home, children could develop a negative attitude. They could perceive her work as a source of distress for their family.*

*Mothers, in spite of having their kid's best interests at heart, might fail to provide their kids a safe emotional outlet. They might not be enthusiastic to hear their kids' issues after a hectic day at work. Kids in such cases could resort to finding an outlet elsewhere or simply feel that their parents are not interested in their lives.*

*Problems can arise between parents over the mother's employment. Such parental conflict can adversely affect children. It could damage their self-esteem and make them insecure.*

7.

## **Stricken Children**

### **Stricken Families**

By Robert Shaw

**W**e are in crisis. Large numbers of children, even including those who could be considered privileged, are no longer developing the empathy, moral commitment and ability to love that is necessary to maintain our society at the level that has always been our dream. The emotional, psychological and moral well-being of the current generation of children has reached a frightening low point, and it's going to require a powerful shift in thinking to save them. A few short years ago, we were in serious denial that there was such a problem, but recent catastrophic events in our society are forcing us to face the inevitable: Our culture no longer offers what children need to truly thrive. While happy families were once the norm, more and more we see parents and children rushing frenetically from one task to another; children whining, bickering, tantruming, pouting; parents nagging, complaining and trying to ignore their unruly, surly offspring. Can you go to stores, restaurants or libraries without seeing these joyless children screaming, throwing food or pulling packages or books off shelves? Are you comfortable seeing such scenarios—or tempted to look the other way?

We can no longer turn a blind eye: There is a mountain of evidence now telling us what's truly good - and really bad - for kids.

When you hold a baby in your arms and see her sweet face looking up at you, you hope and expect that she will naturally grow up to be a well-developed, compassionate person. However, it doesn't happen naturally - children can be trained to a variety of outcomes. As a culture, we need to start noticing that the path to severe dysfunction is often subtle. Like termites, the epidemic of problem behavior silently burrows into your life and does great damage before it's discovered. If we as parents don't "train" our children in constructive, safe and expressive ways of operating in our society, their natural drive to connect with someone or some idea may well lead them toward some of the most destructive behavioral manifestations. They'll be "trained" all right, but perhaps by wayward peers, gangs, media or radical religious cults.

Teachers and grandparents have been complaining for years that today's children are out of control. The day of reckoning has arrived: We simply can't afford to raise our children this way.

### **We Determine Our Children's Future**

Children are extremely malleable and plastic, and how we rear them is the major determinant of their outcome. I believe the parenting trends that have evolved over the last 30 years promote the development of unattached, non-communicative, learning impaired and uncontrollable children. We are experiencing an epidemic of school problems, both learning and behavioral. Teachers everywhere report that children are arriving ill-equipped to engage in school because they lack focus, purpose, connection, an ability to fit into a rules system and a desire to learn. At the extreme, our current culture may well be breeding a generation of unattached, predatory children who may be cognitively smart but who lack the capacity to appreciate the feelings and positions of other people.

This epidemic seeps like a fog into all of our culture. Parents find themselves enslaved by a materialistic, overachieving society that leads them to spend so many hours and so much money that they can't make the time to do the things necessary to bond with their children. They are worried that they might crush their

children, stifle their self-esteem or kill their creativity, to the extent that all sense of proportion is lost about the role of a young child in a family. Their children are rarely given limits or permitted to experience frustration, and their moral and spiritual development are overlooked. As a result, essential values like empathy, effort, duty and honor do not develop. And on top of that, children are abandoned to the influence of the media - so much time is wasted on mind-numbing electronic entertainment such as television and video games that literacy, social development and creativity are all inhibited. These unbonded, untrained children agitate in ever-widening circles of problem behavior until they finally bump up against real limits - which all too often have to be supplied by institutions such as schools or, eventually, the law.

What are the chances that this will happen to your child? The answer lies within the lifestyle choices you make. Each decision that moves your family away from what we know is good for children - secure attachment to a primary caregiver; a safe, structured and ordered environment; lots of free time to exercise creativity and imagination - increases the level of risk to the child's development. The choices are tough ones, and with each decision, you set the odds, one way or the other.

### **The Roots of the Epidemic**

Where does it all begin? The epidemic of which I'm writing cannot be imagined as a function of poverty, of the inner city or of a minority race. It is occurring in the homes of comfortable, educated parents. Its symptoms can be observed in every classroom, every playground, every supermarket and restaurant-in more and more households across America. The evidence begins early, and can be observed anywhere, in both parental and childhood behavior:

- The parents of an 18-month-old leave her with a baby-sitter while they work all day. The sitter, in turn, plops her in a high chair to watch an endless parade of Barney videos. The child's response: She enters meltdown mode the minute Mommy arrives to take her



home. Naturally Mommy can't wait to escape back to the office the next morning.

- The two-career parents of a 3-year-old, too tired to cook, drag him out to yet another restaurant at the end of his own long day. The child tosses his food on the floor, whines incessantly that he wants to leave and then climbs off his seat, under the tables, and around the chairs of other patrons, ruining their meals as well. The parents pretend not to notice so they can finish their conversation.

- A father goes to pick up a 4-year-old from a play date. The child spits in the face of his father, then screams all the way out the door. The father, clearly not used to being in control of his son, begs and cajoles ("we'll stop for ice cream on the way home") in a desperate effort to end the embarrassing scene.

- Parents on the way to a friend's child's birthday party make a stop at the toy store with their own 5-year-old in tow. They explain that they are here for a present for Suzy, not her. The child throws a fit in the toy store until her parents give in and leave with two purchases. One can only imagine the scene at the party when the other child opens her presents.

As parents, our lives are filled with these critical moments. They may seem insignificant at the time, when you just need to get through that restaurant dinner or trip to the toy store, but how they're handled sends a vitally important message to your children about the nature of their relationship with you. From that sleep-deprived decision in the wee hours that it's easier to let a toddler come into bed with you than not, to that evening when you're too tired or lazy or even afraid to stand up to a rebellious teen, by not acting you are acting - and potentially in a harmful way. The parents of the younger children in the previous examples who tolerate public meltdowns now will likely be the same ones who have underachieving, disrespectful, vandalizing teens later.

Today's parents seem to have absorbed the notion that a child's life should be totally serene, totally self-expressive and totally free

from frustration. But creating an atmosphere that feels satisfactory to the child all the time does her a disservice.

When you look at it this way, it's easy to see how the breeding ground of the epidemic goes all the way back to infancy. Of course, a newborn still adapting to her overwhelming new world needs and deserves immediate and constant attention. But by six months of age or so, a baby should have developed the capacity to doze off on her own and sleep through the night, or entertain herself with a toy for brief periods while a parent goes about the everyday tasks of life, such as cooking or making a phone call. Yet more and more often we see high-demand older babies who react intensely the minute they are put down and who continue to awaken their now zombie-like parents hour after hour throughout the night demanding complicated soothing routines. These infants grow into temperamental toddlers who refuse to accept routines and resist toilet training well past the age when they are capable (the manufacturing of a totally new product - large-size disposable diapers for preschoolers - is but one example of this trend). As 4- and 5-year-olds who should be evolving into happy, eager-to-please little people, they continue to react with tantrums when limits are set and suffer emotional collapse in the face of frustration.

It is totally human and expected that children are going to test out their parents and other authority figures - not to do so would also be abnormal. Rather than seeing all limit-testing as a bad thing, we must recognize its merits in helping the child safely determine what it expected of him in the world. The trouble is, indulging and distancing parents have allowed it to go beyond an acceptable level. When parents don't teach their children acceptable behavior, defiance becomes the norm. Of course a 1-year-old tries to pull hair or bite; he needs to be taught not to or he will continue to do it. Of course a 2-year-old will throw a tantrum; he must learn that such behavior is not permitted and will not get him his way, or he will continue to do it. Of course a 2- or 3-year-old will feel reluctant to share her toys; she must be taught that it's a nice thing to do,

or she will continue to refuse to. Of course a 3- or 4-year-old may try to run into a dangerous street; he must learn that he can't. Not enforcing appropriate limits is neglecting the teachable moments that will ultimately civilize and protect your child.

Many of today's children have gotten the message that their frightened, guilt-ridden parents will give in if they put up enough of a fight. So rather than trying to please them, they oppose, resist and irritate; their parents, in turn, cringe and cower and cave in. Control has come to replace attachment and love, skewing development in an abnormal direction that has become accepted. Palatable labels ranging from "high-energy" to "hyperactive" to "temperamental" to "oppositional" are bandied about like personality traits that must be tolerated. Parents are lulled into believing these behaviors are the norm by the parenting gurus who preach child-centric theories: never let your baby cry; he'll use the potty when he's ready; discipline is disrespectful; the child's feelings should come first (well before yours, of course).

The media are part of this problem. In one recent issue of a popular child-rearing magazine I saw the following query from a reader: "My 3-year old is a delight in most ways, but if I ask her to do something, she'll say no, throw herself on the floor, and tell me I'm not her mommy anymore. I've raised her to express her feelings, but have I gone too far?" The answer from a noted pediatrician: "Her behavior is perfectly normal for a 3-year-old."

It is extremely sad to me to think of the children whose parents are being influenced by statements like this. If this were normal, why would anyone want to have a child? Children like this are being injured in their emotional development every day by being allowed to behave in totally inappropriate ways.

That a pediatrician is alleged to have accepted this as normal indicates to me how far this epidemic has penetrated into the fabric of child-rearing. Yes, a child might do something like this on a rare occasion, with provocation and stressful circumstances. But one time should be enough. It is possible to make clear that you will not

bargain under duress. Children are very bright and learn the rules rapidly. The problem is that we are teaching them the wrong rules.

Those children who progress down this distorted developmental track are much more likely to become angry and alienated and assume a cold or contemptuous attitude toward others, especially authority figures. At home, they are secretive, sullen, broody presences. In school, behaviors such as distractibility, indifference, overdiagnosed attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

(ADHD), disdain for adults, whining and nagging detract from their ability to learn. Well-intentioned parents then take them to psychiatrists, who prescribe the latest medications to calm them down, help them focus in school and become more manageable.

To the parents of these out-of-control children, the daily indignities are frustrating but easy to rationalize: "She'll grow out of it," "I'm too tired to deal," "He's a high-spirited kid," "It's probably just puberty." But the saddest fact is undeniable: family life for many has become too much work, too little fun. Sheer lack of time and performance pressure on both adults and children have diminished the importance of seemingly less productive pursuits like playing peek-a-boo with a gurgling baby, sitting down to a family board game or chasing twinkling lightning bugs under the summer stars. Instead we find ourselves slaving after children who laugh in the face of our weak attempts at discipline, demand to be amused all day, and stay up late because we're too exhausted to put up the struggle it takes to get them to bed. These kids are fully in charge. No wonder they have piles of untouched toys - the real live playthings that are their parents are far more entertaining.

Meanwhile, modern moms and dads are encouraged by a culture in overdrive to push and prod and force their children onto an endless track of achievement, desperately squeezing one more enriching activity into their already too-tight schedules. The not-so-subliminal message: If Johnny doesn't do it all, he'll never keep up with the multitalented majority, he'll go the state university route instead of Ivy League, he may never discover his true calling and

reach his potential. Driven by such superficial goals and constant consumerism, parents abdicate their children's day-to-day routines to others so they can work longer, while the beautiful home sits forlornly, the dining room table goes unused, the long family weekend away gets postponed when work calls. They feel regret, but they can't mobilize themselves to stop and relax and enjoy this family life that they so carefully cultivated.

Never before has the degree of dysfunction I have described afflicted privileged families in the numbers we're seeing today, nor has it begun so early. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry estimates that about 5 percent of children and adolescents suffer from depression, and suicide has risen to the third leading cause of death among teens.

These stricken children are proving ill-equipped to cope in the more demanding world beyond their homes. A recent study of more than 13,000 college students seeking psychological counseling revealed that their emotional difficulties are far more complex and more severe than in the past. Researchers at the counseling center at Kansas State University found that the percentage of students treated for depression or suicidal tendencies doubled in the 12 years from 1989 to 2001. More than twice the number of students was taking some type of psychiatric medication. Problems related to stress, anxiety, learning disabilities such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, family issues, grief and sexual assault also rose.

I find it painful but no surprise that these constantly placated children are growing into adults who are unable to take the rough-and-tumble of life. They have not been given the inner resources to deal with the stresses of responsibility and accountability. Then they land in the college counseling office, leaving the school responsible for their mental health.

### **The Biggest Modern Parenting Mistakes**

- Failing to establish a strong emotional bond with your child by not spending the necessary time and attention.

- Not reading to, talking to or playing with young children to provide the experiences we know help them acquire literacy.
- Accepting the idea that excessive non-parental care will be an adequate substitute for your relationship with your child.
- Not having firm rules and routines that you administer calmly, fairly, assertively and without guilt or hesitation.
- Not conveying to your child - through both actions and words - the moral, ethical, and spiritual values you believe in (or not having moral, ethical, and spiritual values in the first place).
- Allowing your child inappropriate control over his life. A certain amount of control, doled out as a child is ready to handle it, is wonderful; too much control when your child is ill-prepared for it is disastrous.
- Yelling at and threatening your children. You can be firm and reliable in reinforcing rules without resorting to these tactics. When you lose your temper, it says that you have delayed handling an issue until your frustration and impotence have become overwhelming. You can act firmly right away; you don't have to wait until you get angry.
- Over-identifying with your child, to the extent that you assume he wants what you want, will fulfill your own aspirations, or will perform in a way that will enhance your self-image. In short, expecting your child to build your ego and solve your doubts.
- Expecting too much while demanding too little. For instance, letting him loll around playing video games all day, then expecting him to win honors at school.
- Not allowing your child to experience the rewards of earning and achieving on his own.
- Overexposure to media.
- Not giving your child the type of activities and experiences that promote his ability to sit quietly, concentrate and listen, then expecting schools to "fix" him. Not even the very best private schools or stellar public education systems can accomplish the same goals

with underdeveloped children as they do with those who are well-adjusted and ready to learn.

- Failing to talk things through. Direct, honest, complete communication should be the constant characteristic of your relationship with your child.

When parents commit these all-too-common mistakes in an effort to suit their own needs and concerns or through their own ignorance or lack of energy, they thwart their child's natural course of development. When you put off toilet training because you're too busy to deal with it, or dole out money on demand instead of insisting on an allowance, or let curfews slide, you will cripple your child in the long run. These developmental tasks can feel endless at times, but it's naive to think that children will turn out fine if you just leave them alone. Values are not instinctual; they are passed on to your children day after day, in your every interaction with them. That is why, with effort, even very deviant children can be helped to gain the values they need.

Source

Robert Shaw

The Epidemic

The Rot of American Culture, Absentee and Permissive Parenting, and the Resultant Plague of Joyless, Selfish Children

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8.

## **Working Mothers**

### **Cognitive and Behavioral Effects on Children**

By Amanda DeJong

Children face several cognitive and behavioral effects that are the result of maternal employment during their early developmental years. In this study, a questionnaire was distributed to thirty-two participants (twenty-eight female, four male) ranging in age from twenty-six to fifty-nine years. All participants had at least one child. Participants provided information about themselves, their spouse (when applicable), and their children, as well as their and their spouse's work. Several cognitive and behavioral differences were noted between children of working and nonworking mothers. Differences were found in school performance, participation in extracurricular activities, and abnormal behavioral issues.

Throughout history, women's traditional roles tended to center around the home and raising children. Over time women have gradually entered the workforce and with more women currently in the workforce than ever before, fewer children are being raised by stay-at-home mothers and more are spending prolonged hours at childcare facilities. This exploratory study analyzed the cognitive and behavioral effects on children, in small Midwestern communities,



that result from having mothers in the workforce during children's early developmental years.

Seventy-one percent of American mothers with children under the age of eighteen are in the labor force, meaning that they are either employed or are seeking employment (Health Resources and Services Administration, 2007). Not only are more mothers entering the workforce than ever before, but *mothers are working longer hours*. More hours spent on the job means fewer hours spent with children. This may lead to several cognitive and behavioral implications for children.

Children with working mothers are usually placed in group childcare, which results in them receiving less one-on-one attention and instruction. This may have significant cognitive effects later in childhood. Behavioral effects may also arise.

A longitudinal study completed in 2001 found significant cognitive differences between children who had working mothers and children who had stay-at-home mothers. The study examined the effect of maternal employment early in a child's life on the child's behavioral and cognitive outcomes during elementary school. The researchers found that maternal employment in the first year of a child's life had a negative effect on cognitive outcomes for the child by age three or four. These cognitive effects could still be seen by age seven or eight. Interestingly, the amount of time that mothers worked did not appear to affect cognitive outcomes, as no differences were found in children of mothers working part-time compared with mothers working full-time. The researchers also found a correlation between mothers working during a child's first year of life and behavioral problems by the child later in childhood (Han, Waldfogel, and Brooks-Gunn).

Single mothers from lower income groups, entering the workforce might have a positive effect on children when compared to an unemployed mother. Also dual-earning families are able to provide much more for their children. With increased financial

opportunities come increases in healthcare, nutrition, and educational opportunities.

Working mothers in the study felt that they were helping to meet the needs of their families by providing financially, but that on occasion their family relationships did suffer as a result of their employment. Mothers informed the researchers that at times working had a negative impact on their children because after work mothers were sometimes too tired to interact as much with children as the children would have liked. Also, working sometimes got in the way of completing activities with children that mothers and children would have liked to do (Reynolds, Callender, and Edwards, 2003).

#### Career As The First Priority

The decision to become a working mother or a stay-at-home mother is an important one. Giele (2008) surveyed and then interviewed female college graduates in the United States in an attempt to learn if certain characteristics made career women more likely to remain in the home after they became mothers. Giele found that homemakers felt that being a mother was their most important life role. In contrast, working mothers felt that careers were their main role and that family was an additional part of their lives that helped make life more meaningful.

Although profiling mothers is helpful in researching effects on children, examining both children's and mothers' perceptions of the mothers' employment is also important. A study by Nomaguchi and Milkie (2006) examined whether or not people's perceptions of their parents was affected by their mother's employment (or lack thereof) during their childhood. Regardless of hours worked, children of mothers who worked reported less discipline from their mothers than those whose mothers did not work outside the home.

Those with working mothers also reported less support and more verbal assaults than those whose mothers did not work (Nomaguchi and Milkie, 2006).

In addition to differences in discipline and support that children receive, maternal employment may also affect school performance.

A study by Gennetian, Lopoo, and London (2008) used statistics gathered in a survey of urban mothers to assess how mothers' working affected adolescents' school performance and participation in school-related activities. They found that children of stay-at-home mothers were more likely to have above average school performance. Children of working mothers were not more likely to perform poorly in school, but they were less likely to perform above average. Children of employed mothers were also found to be more likely to skip school than children of non-working mothers (Gennetian, Lopoo, and London, 2008).

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9.

## **Mother's Milk And Touch**

### **Best For Infant's Health**

**B**ecoming a mother can be both exhilarating and daunting. Not just first time mothers but even those who have experienced the joy of motherhood earlier can go through a period of self-doubt wondering whether she is doing the right thing to keep her newborn safe.

Doctors say two simple interventions - exclusive breastfeeding and maximum skin-to-skin contact, have been found to pass dramatic health benefits from a mother to her newborn child.

Breast milk is packed with nutrients, vitamins and minerals and carries antibodies from the mother to help the baby combat life-threatening disease. Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and arachi-donic acid (AA) are key fatty acids needed for the growth of the human brain. Human milk contains 30 times more DHA than cow's milk.

Dr Anupam Sibal, paediatrician, Apollo Hospital, says human milk is rich in choline, taurine and zinc, which are highly beneficial for brain growth. Human milk contains almost double the quantity of lactose compared with milk of other mammals.

India's health ministry recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life. It says breastfeeding should begin within an hour of birth and should be on demand, as often as the

child wants day and night. However less than 50% of mothers in India follow this rule.

Dr Anjali Saxena, pediatrician, Max Hospital, says breast milk is tailor-made for the human baby.

Besides protection from infections and better brain nutrition, exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months also protects from development of certain allergies.

"Even in the upper socio-economic class, we often see the failure to establish early breastfeeding. The mother-to-be has to be prepared to initiate breastfeeding during pregnancy. In fact, the baby can be put to breast as soon as the placenta comes out, right in the labour room itself, in case of a normal delivery. This helps the mother as well, as suckling stimulates uterine contractions.

"In case of caesareans, breastfeeding should be initiated as soon as possible, and good pain management and motivational counselling can contribute towards it a great deal," Dr Saxena says.

A recent Lancet study said annually, two million Indian children die before their fifth birthday.

The Lancet Child Survival analysis estimated that optimal breastfeeding can prevent almost 20% of infant deaths in India. Unfortunately, of the 26 million Indian women who give birth every year, about 20 million do not follow optimal breastfeeding practices till the time the infant is six months old.

Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC)

Meanwhile, skin-to-skin contact and kangaroo mother care (KMC) also works like magic for all new borns.

Babies receiving KMC have more regular breathing and less predisposition to apnea. KMC also protects against nosocomial infections.

Dr Vinod Paul, HOD paediatrics at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, says early and exclusive breastfeeding is the single most important intervention to protect a new born child.

He said, "Skin-to-skin contact soon after birth in is now a standard of care. It should be done in all cases, irrespective of

whether the baby is small or big, immediately after birth. This promotes early initiation and successful breastfeeding, provides warmth to the baby and also helps in psychosocial bonding with the mother.

"KMC on the other hand is a sustained skin-to-skin contact of the baby and the mother for prolonged periods of time, if possible for 24 hours. This is a simple life saving intervention that does not require technology or costs money."

Experts say KMC helps maintain the baby's normal body temperature better than in an incubator. It also helps maintain his heart rate, respiratory rate and a normal blood pressure. Babies experiencing prolonged skin-to-skin contact with mother or father are also less likely to cry. They are more likely to breastfeed exclusively and longer and will indicate to their mother when they are ready to feed.

Interestingly, KMC does not just help infants but also the mothers. Mothers are less stressed during kangaroo care as compared with a baby kept in incubator.

Doctors say most mothers prefer skin-to-skin contact to conventional care as it leads to stronger bonding with the baby, increased confidence and a deep satisfaction of doing something special.

Paediatricians say when a baby comes out of the womb which has been its natural habitat, it is under significant stress. There are now a multitude of studies that show that mothers and babies should be together, skin-to-skin (baby naked, not wrapped in a blanket) immediately after birth, as well as later. The baby is happier this way.

### **Long Term Impact**

The benefits from mother's skin-to-skin contact with a premature infant are visible even 10 years after birth.

At 10 years of age, children who received maternal contact as infants showed more organised sleep, better response to stress, more mature functioning of the autonomic nervous system and

better cognitive control, said a new study published in the journal *Biological Psychiatry*.

Ruth Feldman, professor at Bar-Ilan University in Tel Aviv, Israel, studied the impact of different levels of physical contact on prematurely-born infants.

“We found that providing maternal-newborn skin-to-skin contact to premature infants in the neo-natal period improves children’s functioning 10 years later in systems shown to be sensitive to early maternal deprivation in animal research,” says Feldman.

The researchers compared standard incubator care to a novel intervention called ‘Kangaroo Mother Care’ (KMC) - which was originally developed to manage the risk for hypothermia in prematurely-born babies in Columbia where the mother’s body heat kept their babies warm, said the study.

They asked 73 mothers to provide skin-to-skin contact (KC) to their premature infants in the neonatal unit for one hour daily for 14 consecutive days.

For comparison, the researchers also assessed 73 premature infants who received standard incubator care. Children were then followed seven times across the first 10 years of life.

“We found that children in the KC group showed better cognitive skills and executive abilities in repeated testing from six months to 10 years,” said the researchers.

“The enhanced level of stimulation provided by this contact appears to positively influence the development of the brain and to deepen the relationship between mother and child,” added John Krystal, editor of *Biological Psychiatry*.

Working mothers can not provide as much skin-to-skin contact to their babies as stay at home mothers can.

Source

Kounteya Sinha, TNN, Times of India, May 13, 2012

Mother's touch critical for premature infants

Jan 7, 2014, New York, IANS

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10.

## **'Breastfeeding Is Not Just For Newborns'**

### **WHO Recommends It Up To Two Years And Beyond**

A survey published in September 2014 revealed that women who breastfeed their children beyond the age of 12 months are often made to feel 'uncomfortable' about their decision.

The research, published in *Maternal & Child Nutrition*, revealed extended breastfeeding wasn't seen as 'normal' and less than one per cent of mothers in the developed countries are still exclusively breastfeeding a six-month-old.

However, in other countries around the world, breastfeeding is commonplace well into a child's time as a toddler.

In Canada, the government have run campaigns actively encouraging women to carry on breastfeeding with the slogan 'breastfeeding is not just for newborns'.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organisation recommend mothers carry on breastfeeding until a child is two and beyond (alongside introducing them to other foods).

They state: 'Breast milk is an important source of energy and nutrients in children aged six to 23 months. It can provide half or more of a child's energy needs between the ages of six and 12 months, and one third of energy needs between 12 and 24 months.'

The health benefits of breastfeeding include protecting a child from serious illness and setting them up for a bright future - research has shown that children and adolescents that have been breastfed perform better in intelligence tests.

British mother, Jessica Daniels, has found extended breastfeeding extremely beneficial for both her and her two daughters.

The 24-year-old from Wigan breastfed her first daughter until she was aged three-and-a-half and is still breastfeeding her second daughter at 14 months.

She says, 'I feel my children have benefited greatly from breastfeeding and from extended breastfeeding.

'My first daughter is strongly attached to me and we have a great bond. It also helped with bonding with her sister as they used to feed together. She didn't feel pushed out either because of this.'

She adds that she takes comfort from the fact women who breastfeed are less likely to get breast and ovarian cancer, while it's often more convenient than bottle feeding.

She says: 'People are a little surprised (that I carried on breastfeeding) but mostly because I "must be exhausted". Quite the opposite, I find breastfeeding to be the lazy person's choice.'

Jane Hodges, 46, of Darlington, Co Durham, also breastfed her children until they were two.

She says: 'Both were picky eaters and refused to drink water or cows milk so they were at least getting some nutrition from my breast milk. Also it was wonderful for the bonding side of things. I don't regret it at all.'

Another advocate is Hannah Perkins, 30, who is still breastfeeding her son, Dexter, 23 months.

She says: 'I chose to continue breastfeeding for the many health benefits that it afforded both my son and myself. For example, reduced risks of diabetes, asthma, cancers, the list goes on. That was very important to me.

'But also breastfeeding has taught me to be a considerate and attached mother, it has taught me to listen to what my son wants

and to be sensitive to his needs. As such I believe he is not ready to wean and won't force that upon him.'

In the Maternal & Child Nutrition study, many women revealed that, at certain times, they had been made to feel ashamed for breastfeeding.

Jessica says she was lucky to never experience any animosity when she was breastfeeding her toddlers in public.

Jane agreed but she said her actions still attracted "unsolicited advice".

She explains: 'People would say I was being indulgent and it was more about my needs than the kids.

'One friend even wagged her finger at my toddler while I was nursing her and said: "you're a big girl now. You're too old for that" which I found beyond irritating.

'After that, I got a little self-conscious breastfeeding in public once the kids got beyond about 18 months but refused to get pushed into stopping before my children were ready.'

Hannah adds: 'I can understand why it makes people a bit uncomfortable. It's not an every day sight in the UK and despite being very pro "natural term breastfeeding" I have often found it awkward and difficult to talk about with my peers.

'But the benefits my son and I both receive really do outweigh any negativity I've received. It's my personal choice and our personal journey and one that I would try to repeat if I have any other children.'

Celebrities including Gwen Stefani and Salma Hayek are among those in the public eye who have continued to breastfeed their children beyond 12 months.

But despite such high profile support and the multiple health benefits, some women feel unable to carry on breastfeeding.

Dr Ruowei Li an epidemiologist at the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, U.S. said women who want to breastfeed should be given more support.

She led a study, published this month, which found those who were breastfed as babies were far less likely to have ear, sinus or throat infections later in childhood.

She says the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for an infant's first six months, followed by continued breastfeeding until at least 12 months.

But she adds: 'Mothers need to be supported by health care professionals, their workplaces and communities to follow APP recommendations on breastfeeding.'

### **Most Working Moms Don't Reach Their Breast-Feeding Goals**

A new study in the journal *Pediatrics* finds that most mothers want to breast-feed their babies exclusively — offering just breast milk, not infant formula — for at least three months, but just under a third of those women reached their goal.

“We’re not supporting women to meet their own intentions, which is just sad,” says lead author Cria Perrine, an epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) who focuses on infant feeding.

In a negative commentary on how likely women were to reach their breast-feeding goals, Perrine noted that those women who intended to breast-feed for the least amount of time were the most likely to succeed.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that mothers feed their babies only breast milk for the first six months of life and continue to breast-feed, along with introducing table foods, until baby’s first birthday or beyond because breast-feeding offers myriad health benefits for baby and mom.

Previous research has documented that few U.S. mothers meet the guidelines; only about 15% of moms are still exclusively breast-feeding at six months. But experts didn’t know if the low breast-feeding rates resulted from mothers’ lack of interest in breast-feeding or because other factors were making it difficult to persevere.

Now Perrine has showed that it's the latter. She and colleagues looked at data from an infant feeding study launched in 2005 that followed 3,000 women in their third trimester of pregnancy. The women were asked about their intentions regarding exclusive breast-feeding; those intentions were then tracked monthly over the course of a year. They found that 60% of moms said they wanted to breast-feed exclusively; 85% of that group wanted to do so for three months or more and 58% said they planned to continue for at least five months, but just 32.4% actually met their goals.

Of the 85% who said they wanted to breast-feed exclusively for at least three months, just 45% succeeded; of the 58% who said they planned to nurse for at least five months, only 25% did. "One of the biggest shockers is this entire group we looked at wanted to exclusively breast-feed," says Perrine. Just 1% of them said they intended to breast-feed exclusively for less than a month, but 42% stopped within that first month.

In other findings, married mothers and those with other children were more likely to achieve their goals.

The national governments are trying to improve their breastfeeding statistics. In US, The Affordable Care Act (ACA), 2010 law, requires employers to allow women to pump breast milk while they are at work. Many workplaces now provide lactation rooms and staggered breaks for breastfeeding mothers, they're often doing so voluntarily as a good business practice to help retain female employees and not as a matter of law because like many federal regulations covering corporate workers, it's shot through with loopholes.

These provisions are assuming importance because for the first time, women constitute more than half of the workforce and the fastest growing segment is women with children under the age of three.

## Working Moms And The Rise of A Lost Generation

Source:

Lucy Waterlow, 22 September 2014

Bonnie Rochman, June 04, 2012, TIME Magazine

The Huffington Post, Mandy Velez, 18/10/2013

Mizin Kawasaki, M.D., The Natural Child Project

Eleanor Bimla Schwarz, MD, Professor of Medicine, University of California, Davis.

Dr. Schwarz, Academy of Women's Health, June 23, 2015

11.

## **Fatherless Childhood**

### **May Injure Brain Development**

A Study

Recent animal research backs previous sociological research by indicating that children raised by single mothers may experience reduced brain development, leading to an increase in aggressive behavior, according to an article in the Wall Street Journal.

The findings come from research on degus, which are small rodents related to guinea pigs. Degu parents usually raise their pups together. When deprived of their father, however, degu pups exhibited developmental changes in the amygdala, the part of the brain related to emotional responses and to fear, and in the orbitofrontal cortex, or OFC, the brain's decision-making center.

According to Anna Katharina Braun, director of the Institute of Biology at the Otto von Guericke University in Magdeburg, the balance between these two parts of the brain is critical to normal emotional and cognitive functioning: if the OFC isn't active, the amygdala "goes crazy, like a horse without a rider."

Thus, an analysis of the degus' behavior indicated that the fatherless animals showed more impulsive behavior, and engaged in more play-fighting or aggressive behavior with their siblings than did the pups raised by both parents.

In the study, published in the journal *Neuroscience*, half the degus were raised by two parents while the other half were raised by a single mother after the father was removed from the cage one day after the birth of his offspring.

In two-parent families, Dr. Braun and her colleagues found that degu mothers and fathers cared for their pups in similar ways, including sleeping next to or crouching over them, licking and grooming them, and playing with them.

In single-parent families, on the other hand, the frequency of the mother's interaction with her pups did not change greatly, which meant that those pups experienced significantly less touching and interaction than those with two parents.

Researchers then looked at the neurons - the cells in the body that process and transmit information - of pups at day 21, when they were weaned from their mothers, and at day 90, which is considered adulthood for the species.

Neuron functioning is related to the number and length of neurons' dendrites - branch-like protrusions from neurons related the handling of information. Dendritic spines (twig-like protrusions from a neuron's dendrites) also help the neuron receive messages from other neurons.

The researchers found that at 21 days, fatherless animals had less dense dendritic spines than did animals raised by both parents. Although the density of the spines was the same by day 90, the length of some types of dendrites was significantly shorter in some parts of the brain, even in adulthood, in fatherless animals.

"It just shows that parents are leaving footprints on the brain of their kids," says Dr. Braun.

The wiring between certain brain regions in the degu is very similar to that in humans. "So on that level," says Dr. Braun, "we can assume that what happens in the animal's brain when it's raised in an impoverished environment ... should be very similar to what happens in our children's brain."



Other researchers have found similar results in different animals. Xia Zhang of the University of Ottawa and his colleagues in China have found that voles separated from their fathers exhibited more anxious behavior and were less social than those who were not separated. Their study was published in July in the journal *Behavioral Processes*.

Such neurological research backs a host of sociological studies that have tracked the negative developmental effects of single-parent households.

For instance, a 2004 study in the *Journal of Research on Adolescence* indicated that growing up without a father was associated with higher odds of incarceration later in life, even after controlling for other factors. Those who grew up in households without ever experiencing the presence of a father tended to have the highest odds of incarceration.

Similarly, a 2006 study in the *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* indicated that adolescents living in single-parent families were more likely to report depressive tendencies and use of illegal drugs when compared to those living in families with two biological parents.

Approximately 25% of the children living in the US live with only one parent, according to a 2008 press release by the United States Census Bureau.

### **Demise Of The Nuclear Family**

In the developed countries, marriage rates have more than halved in the past 40 years, while the number of lone-parent households, in a country like UK, increased by an average of 26,000 a year from the early 1980s to 2010. There, just two thirds children are still living in the same household as their natural mother and father by the age of 14.

Citing the figures demonstrating the declining importance of marriage, the critics are calling on the ministers to implement tax breaks for married couples.

When families are strong and stable, so are children – showing higher levels of wellbeing and more positive outcomes. But when

things go wrong – either through family breakdown or a damaged parental relationship – the impact on a child’s later life can be devastating.

Children tend to enjoy better life outcomes when both the parents are able to give them support and protection throughout their childhood

Figures show that 28 per cent of children in lone-parent families live in relative poverty, compared with 17 per cent for couple families.

Children born to cohabiting parents are much more likely to see their parents separate than those born to married parents, and with almost half of births now taking place outside marriage, rates of family breakdown look set to remain high.

‘With family breakdown costing the taxpayer an estimated £44billion per year in UK alone, the Government is being urged to ‘unashamedly promote’ the benefits of marriage and create a climate which encourages couples to get married and stay married.

The Governments need to start overhauling a benefits system that incentivises lone parenthood. For too long, government policies have pretended that all types of family structure are of equal value to society.

The figures are contained in a ‘family database’ published by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), which represents the world’s industrialised countries. They refer to 2007 – the latest year in which a comparison is possible.

Our forgotten families need all the help we can offer.

### **Two Single Mums (One Pregnant), Their Children And Not A Dad In Sight.**

Birmingham’s £100K Vision Of An ‘Ordinary’ Family!

Six years ago Gillian Wearing, an artist, created a statue of a ‘typical family’ showing a mother, father and two children. That was in Italy.

Asked to do something similar in Britain, however, Gillian Wearing has come up with a sculpture which is her vision of a typical modern family.

Her £100,000 work representing what it means to be an 'ordinary' family in 2014 is of two single mothers and their children.

Sisters Roma and Emma Jones and their sons Kyan and Shaye were chosen from 372 nominations to be the subjects of A Real Birmingham Family.

Today's typical family need not be made up of a more conventional mother, father and two kids. The bronze sculpture by the Turner Prize winner shows the four of them hand-in-hand and Emma heavily pregnant with her second child.

Birmingham Yardley MP John Hemming says: 'There's absolutely nothing wrong with single parent families but I always find it sad when fathers are not involved in the lives of their children.'

Craig Pickering, of the charity Families Need Fathers, said: 'Everybody knows that families can come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Children do better when they have both their mother and their father playing an active role in their lives.'

Dr Patricia Morgan, a leading researcher on family policy, says 'We should know whether or not there's a man involved here. Is he taking responsibility, living with them, or not? These are things the viewer needs to know.'

'They are putting this up as some kind of ideal which people have to be like or have to evolve in this direction.'

The sculpture is designed to celebrate 'the unsung and everyday' elements of Birmingham city life according to the organisers.

Speaking of the suggestions, one organiser said while a nuclear family was the most traditional, it is no longer the norm in Birmingham

The sisters and their brothers, Robin, 25, and Jay, 23, were raised by their mother, Karen Jones, a single parent, in a council house

The artist says, 'A nuclear family is one reality but it is one of many and this work celebrates the idea that what constitutes a family should not be fixed.'

Source

James Tillman, October 28, 2009

Lucy Osborne And Andy Dolan, The Daily Mail

30 October 2014

William L. Gensert, June 21, 2015, Fatherless Child, American Thinker

U.S. Census Bureau, Children's Living Arrangements and Characteristics: March 2011, Table C8. Washington D.C.: 2011.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; ASEP Issue Brief: Information on Poverty and Income Statistics. September 12, 2012

12.

## **Half Of Career Women Would Consider Not Having Children**

### **Because Of Risk To Their Career**

And 50% Of Working Mothers Miss Their Child's First Word Or Steps

Half of women believe that having a baby poses such a risk to their career that they would consider remaining childless, new research has revealed.

The survey also found that two-thirds of women (67 per cent) are concerned about the impact that having children might have on their career.

Half of women who don't currently have children feel their current job doesn't offer them the flexibility they would need to care for a family.

The survey of 2,000 women, half with children and half without, also found that half of mothers have missed at least one milestone in their child's life due to work.

The findings revealed that 16 per cent of mothers missed their child's first word, 15 per cent missed their first steps, and one in five (20 per cent) have had to miss a sports day or school play because of their job.

Over half of mothers (55 per cent) admitted that balancing childcare and work has been a barrier to staying in work, with one in

five (20 per cent) stating that a lack of support from their employer has made life as a working mother more difficult.

The pressures on working mothers have also taken their toll on maternity leave; of the mothers questioned, almost four in 10 mothers took six months or less as maternity leave.

Overall, financial reasons were cited as the biggest concern and main cause for returning (62 per cent). The survey indicates fear of losing their job is the biggest driver for almost a third of mothers returning to work (30 per cent).

The research found that many women are considering re-training as a way to give them greater flexibility once they are parents.

Almost a quarter of women (24 per cent) have changed their career after having children, with a further two-thirds (65 per cent) saying re-training is something they would consider. The most frequent reason cited was the option to work flexible hours (64 per cent), followed by wanting or needing better pay (48 per cent).

More than a third (38 per cent) of women who have had children said that they would be interested in exploring a career in professional services, accountancy and bookkeeping, or finance, which can offer flexible working patterns with strong earning potential.

A spokesperson for Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT), who commissioned the research, said: "The findings, whilst sad, are unfortunately not surprising. In my work I have come across a lot of women who worry about balancing their care and career commitments or who have decided to retrain as their current role provides little flexibility.

### **Baby Blues - Too Busy To Reproduce**

While some countries around the world are trying to address overpopulation and overcrowding, some nations are struggling with the opposite problem: low birthrates. For example, Japan's government is so worried about its birthrate that it cheered news about a slight increase in fertility—a June report stated that married couples had an average of 1.37 kids in 2008, up from 1.34 in 2007.

This slight increase didn't help Japan much; it still has the second-lowest birthrate in the world, after Hong Kong. They aren't the only places worrying about low birthrates. Austria, Germany, Greece, and Italy all face this problem, and their governments are taking different steps to deal with it. This pressing challenge is having enormous effects economically and culturally. These birthrates are too low to fully replace their populations.

But according to more recent reports, Germany has dropped below Japan to have not just the lowest birth rate across Europe but also globally.

A report by Germany-based analysts warns of the effects of a shrinking working-age population.

In Germany, an average of 8.2 children were born per 1,000 inhabitants over the past five years, according to the study by German auditing firm BDO with the Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI).

It said Japan saw 8.4 children born per 1,000 inhabitants over the same time period.

In Europe, Portugal and Italy came in second and third with an average of 9.0 and 9.3 children, respectively. France and the UK both had an average of 12.7 births per 1,000 inhabitants.

Meanwhile, the highest birth rates were in Africa, with Niger at the top of the list with 50 births per 1,000 people.

Germany has one of the highest migration rates in the world and recently accepted almost a million Syrian migrants.

A German cardinal, Joachim Meisner has stoked up a controversy by advising women to stay at home and have three or four children.

Cardinal Meisner said there was an urgent need to 'create a climate' in Germany that encourages women to have more children.

The cardinal said greater value should be placed on role of mother and father in German society

He said under Communist rule, women who chose not to work in order to bring up children were classed as 'demented'.

The German government spends millions of euros a year trying to encourage women to have more children.

Berlin has increased monthly subsidies to families in recent years but it has had little effect on the birth rate.

Cardinal Meisner's comments have drawn criticism from the local women groups, 'The Church can't drag women back into the kitchen. We don't live in the 1940s.'

Source

By Bianca London, The Daily Mail, 21 October 2014

By Becky Evans, The Dailymail, 23 May 2013

Dan Mangan, 28 Apr 2015, CNBC Health Care

Neil Howe, Jan 28, 2015, Forbes

Eshre Capri Workshop, G. (2010). "Europe the continent with the lowest fertility". Human Reproduction Update 16 (6): 590–602.



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## **Nannies And Babysitters**

### **Perils of Paid Care**

A baby can never receive too much love.

When Rowena and Jack Churchland sat down to watch footage from the video camera they had installed in their son's nursery they expected to find nothing of particular concern.

They had, after all, only put it there as a precaution, hoping it would give Rowena peace of mind after she had, reluctantly, appointed a nanny to look after their precious son one day a week while she returned to work in the family business.

Instead, what they saw on that chilly January Saturday night horrified them. There, captured with dreadful clarity, was their 18-month-old son being assaulted by the woman they had trusted to care for him.

For nearly an hour, restless in his cot over what was meant to be his lunchtime nap, Olly received no loving words or reassurance.

Instead, he was manhandled several times by his stonily silent nanny before being picked up, flung roughly against the mobile hanging above his cot so that he banged his head, and smacked hard on the bottom three times, making his body shake.

The horrified Churchlands could barely believe what they were seeing: here was a woman who had been looking after their son for 15 months, losing her temper on the first time she had been filmed.

Shocked and upset, they took the footage to the police, who arrested the nanny. The Crown Prosecution Service then charged her with cruelty to a person under 16 years.

The case was heard at Southwark Crown Court last October — yet although Rowena’s nanny accepted she had assaulted Oliver, the jury returned a not guilty verdict on the cruelty charge, and she walked free.

Now, the couple are waiting to hear if their request for a review of the case will be granted. In the meantime, Rowena must constantly cross paths with the woman who assaulted her son, as they both have children at the same school.

She says quietly: ‘Seeing her every day brings it all back. Both Jack and I feel powerless. Our baby boy was assaulted, but it seems all we can do is accept it and try to move on.’

It is the stuff of parental nightmares: in an age where it is increasingly common for mother and father to go out to work, it highlights the often fragile trust we place in those who look after our children.

Rowena, 39, and 30-year-old Jack, from Clapham, South-West London, were just such a couple. Together for ten years and married for eight, they have two children — Bella, eight, and two-year-old Olly.

At first, Rowena was a stay-at-home mum. But by the time Olly came along in May 2011, the couple had set up their own heating installation business and she was needed back at work.

‘Although we were doing well we couldn’t afford to employ someone in the office,’ she says. ‘Going back to work when Olly was three months was the hardest thing I had done, but the business was our livelihood.’

Initially, Olly was cared for by his two grandmothers, but as the weeks went on the couple realised they needed an extra pair of hands — and after asking for help at her daughter’s school, it seemed Rowena had found them.

‘We heard that one of the school mums was looking for work,’ she says. ‘It seemed ideal — she had qualifications in Early Years Training, she had a child at Bella’s school and was an active member of the local church. When we finally met she seemed nice — outgoing, capable and trustworthy. Jack and I were happy for her to help.’

The nanny — whom we will call Agatha — started work in autumn 2011, when Olly was five months old, looking after him on occasional days from 8.45am to 3.15pm.

At first, Rowena and Jack had little reason to be unhappy. As time passed, however, Rowena admits the odd incident made her uneasy. ‘Agatha occasionally told small lies about where she had been — I once spotted her in the supermarket doing her shopping while she was with Olly, but she later denied being there.’

Then, around Easter 2012, Rowena received a call from a neighbour while at work. ‘She said she had seen a baby left outside our house for quite a long time — she was worried Olly could have been taken.’

Understandably concerned, Rowena nonetheless felt she needed to allow Agatha a chance to give her side of the story.

‘When I talked to her she said they were exaggerating, that she had only left Oliver for a few moments to pop back into the house. She was incredibly persuasive. I said we would leave it there, but she must never leave Oliver on his own outside again.’

Three uneventful months passed, until in June 2012 Rowena’s mum came to stay from her native Colombia. ‘My mum was uneasy about the nanny,’ says Rowena.

‘She told me she felt she had two faces — one when people were watching, and another when she thought she was alone. She said when I wasn’t there Agatha was much less interactive with Olly. Ultimately, she said she didn’t trust her.’

So concerned was her mother, she suggested installing a video camera — which Rowena initially dismissed as ridiculous.

‘I remember telling her not to be silly — we had friends in common and I didn’t think she would do anything to cross the line. My mum was so in love with her grandson that I thought she was perhaps being over-protective. It didn’t seem fair on Agatha to let my mum’s scrutiny tarnish things.’

But as the year rolled to an end, Rowena acquiesced. ‘My mum would bring it up when we spoke on the phone. Eventually, I thought it wouldn’t do any harm. It seemed a bit extreme, but I thought we would watch a bit of footage, find out there was nothing to see and reassure mum.’

And so, as 2013 dawned, the Churchlands bought a sophisticated camera, disguised as a plug, which they installed in their son’s nursery. They started recording on January 16, 2013, Agatha’s first day back at work that year.

‘I thought it was the place I would be most likely to see her interacting with Olly,’ Rowena says. ‘Although I didn’t expect to see anything in particular.’

Indeed, when the couple sat down to watch the footage, three days later, it was a relatively casual decision.

‘Olly had been struggling with his lunchtime naps, but in her notes Agatha had written that he had slept very well for her on the day she had taken care of him. She said he had gone to sleep at ten past one. I thought I would see what she was doing right and I was doing wrong,’ Rowena recalls.

Nothing could have prepared her for what came next: over the course of nearly an hour she could only watch in horror at the footage of what was meant to be Olly’s lunchtime snooze.

After flinging him into his cot, leaving the curtains wide open, Agatha returns repeatedly to an unsleeping and wriggling Olly, picking him up and throwing him down roughly. At no point does she speak or attempt to console him.

By the fifth occasion, she picks him up and flings him down on his front so roughly he bangs his head on the mobile, forcing him to snap his neck backwards. She then smacks him hard on the bottom

three times, causing his little body to jump. ‘All I could think of was that it was my baby in that cot, in his home, where he should feel safest,’ Rowena says quietly, stifling tears.

‘The worst part was seeing his body language. When he was on his own he was active, but the moment she came in his body stiffened as if he was preparing himself for her. Was he frightened? I couldn’t bear the thought.’

After watching the footage again, the couple called the police, while sending Agatha a text telling her not to come for her shift the following week. ‘I just said “don’t worry about Tuesday” — I didn’t go into details,’ Rowena says. ‘I couldn’t deal with her at that point. All I could think was that I didn’t want her to come to my house.’

Six days later, the police arrested Agatha for assault, later changed by the CPS to neglect and cruelty to a person under 16 years — which carries a longer sentence but requires a heavier burden of proof. ‘We were relieved that it was being taken so seriously, although we would have given anything to not be in this situation,’ says Rowena.

The case was scheduled for last October at Southwark Crown Court — and with no contact from the Crown Prosecution Service in the interim the Churchlands could only tick off the days.

In the meantime, Rowena still had to see her former employee each day at the school gates as they have daughters in the same class.

‘It was incredibly difficult,’ she says. ‘She wouldn’t catch my eye although her husband stared at me. But my daughter was incredibly happy at the school and it wasn’t fair to make her suffer.’

At home, Rowena was haunted by what had happened. ‘There were nights when everyone was asleep when I would just come downstairs to cry,’ she says. ‘I felt helpless.’ Finally, the trial date arrived — yet as the one-day case unfolded Rowena says she was left dismayed by proceedings.

‘The only witness called by the Crown was the police officer who took our initial statement. Neither Jack nor I were invited to give

evidence, even though we were willing to. But Agatha was able to give evidence in her defence.’

Rowena admits that arranging childcare for him has proved emotionally fraught. ‘Olly now attends a local nursery and seems very happy there, but of course I worry about him and still feel guilty’ says Rowena.

‘I feel that one day when he is old enough to understand I need to apologise to Olly for what happened. As a parent all you want to do is keep your children safe — and if you feel you have failed at that it is the worse feeling in the world.’

It is a sentiment with which every parent in the land will feel profound agreement.

### **Nanny Cam Records Babysitter Intentionally Burning Child**

In Danbury, USA, a nanny intentionally burned and injured a child she was babysitting.

According to police, 31-year-old Lidia Quilligana was arrested after an investigation revealed the 3-year-old child she was caring for had suffered bruising and second-degree burns.

Quilligana was watching three children at a home on Sienna Way. She was a full-time nanny at the residence. She was caught on a nanny cam putting the child’s hands and legs on a burner. Police said she had purposely inflicted the injuries to the child.

A Danbury Police Officer wrote in an arrest report. “At one point, I observed Quilligana pick (the child) up by the throat with two hands and toss her to the ground.

“I observed Quilligana repeatedly take her by the wrist and put her hands on what appeared to be hot stove burners,” the officer said. “I observed Quilligana at one point jump on (the child) while she was lying on the ground and it appeared Quilligana applied all of her weight onto her and then pulled her pants and underwear down and spanked her ...”

The report included a statement from the girls mother saying, “The nanny told me that they had made pancakes and when she wasn’t watching, my daughter had pushed her little chair up to the

stove and burned herself, and that she got the black eye by hitting herself on the stove knob cover when she fell.” After viewing their nanny cam, the girl’s mother called police.

Quilligana was charged with first-degree assault, risk of injury to a minor and criminal mischief.

### **Babysitter Beats Toddler To Death**

A 15-year-old boy in England has been convicted of murdering a two-year-old girl who was left in his care for 90 minutes.

Demi Leigh Mahon was beaten, bitten and had her hair sheared off during the attack which left her with 68 injuries.

She was left with killer Karl McCluney while her mother went to claim a child benefit cheque.

The babysitter took her to a park before attacking her. The attack on Demi Leigh was so ferocious that she was left brain-damaged after being punched repeatedly in the face.

Pathologist Dr Naomi Carter said part of her scalp was also sheared off, most likely as a result of it coming into contact with a hard surface. He told the jury it was neither “reasonable or credible” the vast majority of the injuries were sustained accidentally.

When her mother, Ann Marie McDonald, returned she saw the injuries he had inflicted.

She says: “I screamed ‘Why haven’t you rung an ambulance?’.

“He said ‘I never done nothing, I’ve not done nothing’.”

Psychiatrist Dr Cesar Lengua said the killer had made an admission of guilt: “I’m not proud of what I’ve done and everyone will think I’m a monster but nobody can ever punish me as much as I’ll punish myself.”

### **Wary Parents Are Spying On Their Nannies**

Nanny agencies and privacy groups are concerned that parents are using hidden surveillance and private investigators to spy on nannies.

Parents suspicious of nannies stealing, drinking on the job and neglecting or mistreating their children are increasingly using

“nanny cams” - spy cameras concealed in ordinary household items such as tissue boxes, smoke detectors and clocks.

A wall clock implanted with a colour camera sells in surveillance-equipment shops for \$600, while a teddy bear camera can be bought over the internet for \$395.

With the demand for formal child-care places growing, nanny agencies said they faced greater demand for their services.

Source

Kathryn Knight, 14 May 2014 The Daily Mail

Fox43 Newsroom, April 16, 2015

Louise Hall, March 27, 2005, The Sun-Herald



14.

## **Men Want To Be Stay-At-Home Dads**

Over half of Britain's working fathers want to cut their hours and play a bigger role in raising their kids, according to a new survey.

Despite a growing number of dads taking on more childcare responsibilities, the research by the Independent revealed that many still encounter prejudice.

Seven out of 10 fathers working part time said there was a stigma attached to it and 54% believe they are seen as weaker partner. The study says most of those who work part time are motivated by a desire to help raise a family, rather than having the decision foisted on them by a lack of work.

Source

ANI

London, January 06, 2013

15.

## **Half Of Women Are Still Working At The Age of 60**

### **And Men Are Squeezed Out By Rise Of The Working Mum**

Experts predict number of working women will overtake men in 15 years

**M**ore than half of women in Britain are still working when they reach the age of 60, new figures have revealed.

According to official statistics, the number of women forced to carry on working into their sixties has risen sharply over the past decade.

In 1993 only 35.1 per cent of women had a job when they reached the age of 60, but just twenty years later this has jumped to 51.5 per cent.

The figures, from the Office for National Statistics, highlight the crippling impact of the rising pension age on a generation of women who are having to wait longer than ever before they can retire.

Women used to be able to get their state pension from the age of 60. At the moment they can claim the money at the age of 61 and nine months. However this is set to rise to 65 in 2018, 66 in 2020 and 67 by 2028.

With no state pension to replace their income, many simply have 'no choice' but to keep on working, experts claim.

They said the problem has been exacerbated by rock-bottom savings rates and poor company pensions as well as the additional

burden of grown-up offspring who can struggle to get by without financial support.

While some women are keen to work, enjoying the social interaction and the intellectual stimulation as well as the money, experts insist that many would choose to retire if they felt that was a viable option.

Meanwhile the number of people aged 65 and over who are working has rocketed over the last five years. Between April and June 2008, 695,000 so-called 'grey workers' had a job. Today there are more than one million workers in this age group.

This is partly down to the Government's decision to scrap the default retirement age, which has meant bosses can no longer kick out a worker simply because they have reached the age of 65.

As a result, more and more people are deciding to work into their late sixties and seventies – with many saying they simply cannot afford to retire due to a lack of money.

### **The Number Of Working Women Will Overtake Working Men Within 15 Years**

- While the majority used to stay at home, many mothers now want to work
- Three-quarters of mothers who are married or live with a partner have a job
- At present there are 15.3million men working and 13.5million women

Jill Kirby, author of *The Price of Parenthood* said the pressure on working mothers is increasing

The percentage of British men who work has collapsed over the last 40 years, while the number of working women has rocketed. The figures highlight an extraordinary social change which has been fuelled by the ballooning number of working mothers. While the majority used to stay at home with their children, many now choose to work – or are forced to for financial reasons.

In 1971, 92 per cent of men between the age of 16 and 64 had a job. Today just 76 per cent of men in this age group are working.

But the percentage of women in work has jumped from 53 to 67 per cent over the last 42 years.

In fact nearly three-quarters of mothers who are married or living with a partner have a job, compared to only two-thirds in 1996 – a sign of rapid social change, according to the ONS.

At present, there are 15.3million working men and 13.5million working women, but experts predict the number of working women will overtake working men within 15 years.

Family expert Jill Kirby, author of *The Price of Parenthood*, said: ‘The pressure continues to increase for mothers to work. Yet we know from studies and surveys that mothers would like to have more time for their families.’

Lynne Burnham, from campaign group Mothers at Home Matter, said: ‘For mothers to be at home, to forego the second income, is a choice fewer families can afford to make. It is coming to be seen as the privilege of a rich elite.’

Source

Becky Barrow

25 September 2013, *The Daily Mail*

Richard Eisenberg, *Next Avenue*, July 20, 2012

*The Sage Handbook of Aging, Work and Society*, John Field, Ronald J Burke, Cary L Cooper

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## **Working Mothers Suffer Double Guilt**

### **They Worry About Being A Poor Parent And Poor Employee**

**W**orking mothers suffer a double guilt burden - that they are bad mothers because they work - but also that they are bad employees.

Researchers have found that mothers agonised more about their job outside work hours than fathers.

They also worried more about family life while at work.

Both parents think about their families, but only for mothers is this type of thought associated with increased stress and negative emotions.

Shira Offer, an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Bar-Ilan University in Israel, studied mental labour in working parents in pressurised jobs.

She defines the term as thoughts and concerns that can impair performance, make it difficult to focus on tasks, and even hurt our sleep.

The study, presented to the American Sociological Association, relies on data from the 500 Family Study, which investigates how middle-class families balance family and work experiences.

The study looked at 402 American mothers and 291 fathers in dual-earner families who completed a survey and a time and emotions diary.

Asst Professor Offer found that working mothers engaged in mental labour in about one fourth of their waking time.

Working fathers spent one fifth of their working time engaged in it.

This amounts to approximately 29 and 24 hours per week of mental labour for mothers and fathers, respectively.

However, mothers and fathers both spent about 30 percent of the time they were engaged in mental labour thinking about family matters.

Last year, Victoria Beckham spoke of her guilt of going out to work. Mrs Beckham - mother to Brooklyn, 14, Romeo, 11, Cruz, eight, and Harper, two, - admitted balancing her parenting duties with managing her clothing empire leaves her feeling 'constantly guilty'.

Speaking at London's Vogue Festival, the 39-year-old, said: 'I think you feel so torn, don't you? But I've got great people who handle my schedule and everything does revolve around the children.'

Commenting on her research, Asst Professor Offer said: 'What my research actually shows is that gender differences in mental labour are more a matter of quality than quantity.'

'I assume that because mothers bear the major responsibility for childcare and family life, when they think about family matters, they tend to think about the less pleasant aspects of it and are more likely to be worried.'

Asst Prof Offer added: 'We know that mothers are the ones who usually adjust their work schedule to meet family demands, such as staying home with a sick child.'

'Therefore, mothers may feel that they do not devote enough time to their job and have to 'catch up,' and, as a result, they are easily preoccupied with job-related matters outside the workplace.'

'This illustrates the double burden, the pressure to be "good" mothers and "good" workers, that working mums experience.

'I thought that highly educated fathers holding professional and managerial positions would often be preoccupied with job matters when doing things such as housework or during their free time.

'It appears, however, that fathers are quite adept at leaving their work concerns behind and are better able to draw boundaries between work and home.

'I believe that fathers can afford to do that because someone else, namely their spouse, assumes the major responsibility for the household and childcare.'

She added: 'It is true that fathers today are more involved in childrearing and do more housework than in previous generations, but the major responsibility for the domestic realm continues to fall on mothers' shoulders.'

Source

By Anna Hodgekiss

19 February 2014, The Daily Mail

Antonia Hoyle, 29 Jun 2014, The Telegraph

NZ Herald, Feb 20, 2014

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## **Antidepressants**

### **Preschoolers Remain a Fast Growing Market**

Preschoolers and children up to the age of 18, remain to be a fast growing market in the world of antidepressants. Research has shown that over 4 percent are clinically depressed and taking medication (which equates to over one million children on antidepressants in England alone). This rate has been reported to be increasing.

Statistics have shown that depression will be the second largest killer, behind heart disease, by 2020. However, depression is also a contributing factor towards coronary disease and it results in more absenteeism than the majority of physical disorders .

Doctors have suggested that antidepressants should be taken alongside cognitive behavioral therapy, in order to combat depression effectively. This is because recent figures have indicated that antidepressants only work for 30 percent of the depressed population.

Many antidepressants have significant risks. Prozac, Aropax and Zoloft have all been connected to suicide, violence, psychosis, abnormal bleeding and brain tumors. Governmental concerns have been raised over the use of antidepressants to treat children, as preschoolers remain a fast growing market.



Studies and research, has highlighted five primary reasons this type of medication is not good for the health of children. Firstly, weight issues are a common attribute to antidepressants. Depending upon the type of drug, patients can perceive weight loss or gain. Sexual health later in life, is another issue. This is mainly with selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). Thirdly, studies have found problems with sperm in patients who take antidepressants. 40 percent of 35 healthy patients in a 2009 study, who all received doses of Paxil for four weeks, had sperm with fragmented DNA, which can affect fertility. Some studies have also found SSRIs produce lower bone density and more hip fractures in older people. Lastly, there is a critical potential link between antidepressants and suicide. Some studies have associated antidepressants with increased risks of suicide, especially in children.

Approximately one in 11 children experience some form of depression by the time they are 14 years old, one in every 33 children are effected by depression, and also one in eight adolescents suffer from depression. Reports have stated that unless childhood depression is stopped or caught early and properly treated, the risk for relapse is very high, with each successive episode growing more severe.

As preschoolers remain a fast growing market in the world of antidepressants, researchers have stated that treatment needs to be further investigated in order to find the right treatment to prevent children suffering with depression. However, as some drugs have been proven effective, a vast amount of children are still being prescribed varying antidepressant medication.

## Working Moms And The Rise of A Lost Generation

### Source

Melissa McDonald, December 16, 2013.

Olfson M, Marcus SC, Shaffer D. Antidepressant Drug Therapy and Suicide in Severely Depressed Children and Adults . Archives of General Psychiatry. 2006 Aug.

Gibbons RD, Hur K, Bhaumik DK, Mann JJ. The relationships between antidepressant prescription rates and rate of early adolescent suicide . American Journal of Psychiatry 2006.

The use of antidepressants in school-age children., Brock K1, Nguyen B, Liu N, Watkins M, Reutzler T. Dec;21, 2005

18.

## **Government Policies**

### **Pesky Stay-At-Home Mothers Need To Go Out And Do Some 'Real Work'**

No Woman Should Remain 'Economically Inactive'

**G**overnment policy in most of the countries is that women have to look for work when many want to look after their children instead.

US government is proposing a new policy that discriminates against married stay-at-home mothers and provides an incentive for mothers not to take care of their own children.

The president's tax proposal would "streamline child care tax benefits and triple the maximum child care credit for middle class families with young children, increasing it to \$3,000 per child," says a White House statement on a new proposal to adjust the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. "The president's child care tax proposals would benefit 5.1 million families, helping them cover child care costs for 6.7 million children (including 3.5 million children under 5)."

"The president's proposal would make the maximum credit — for young children, older children, and elderly or disabled dependents — available to families with incomes up to \$120,000, meaning that most middle-class families could easily determine how much help they can get," says the White House statement.

Most of these tax proposals are structured to be sold with class-war rhetoric -- i.e., they are increasing taxes on the “rich” to help the poor. But that cannot be said of this proposal, which is designed to provide its maximum credit to families making \$120,000 a year.

Who would this tax scheme help and who would it hurt?

For starters, an IRS webpage on the Child and Dependent Care Credit stresses: “The care provider cannot be your spouse.” So, one beneficiary is daycare centers.

Compare two families, each with two children under three. In the first family, both the mother and father work full-time and each earns \$55,000 per year. Their combined income of \$110,000 is under the \$120,000 threshold, so the government gives them his full child-care tax credit. They are happy to take it, dropping off their 1-year-old and 2-and-a-half-year-old at a for-profit daycare center where a relative stranger deals with them during the majority of their waking hours.

In the second family, the mother — who has a college degree and a solid work history prior to the arrival of her children — has decided she should nurture her own children rather than pay a daycare center to hold them. She has given up a \$60,000 per year

*British campaign group Mothers at Home Matter describe the policy as a ‘slap in the face for two million stay-at-home mothers’.*

*Its secretary, Lynne Burnham, says many full-time mothers were angry about the suggestion that they not hard-working.*

*‘It is completely incongruous for the Government to be paying £1,200 per child to families on joint incomes of £300,000 yet taking away child benefit from single-earner couples on £50,000,’ she says.*

*‘Mothers who stay at home are hard-working – the difference is that we don’t get paid. The Government doesn’t seem to understand that the Big Society David Cameron wanted is falling by the wayside as mothers are forced back to work.’*

*Anastasia de Waal, of the centre-Right think-tank Civitas, says: ‘The main problem with the Government’s support is that it gives a tax break to couples so long as they pay someone else to look after their children.’*

job, and she and her husband now sacrifice and get by on his \$58,000 per year salary.

What this mother gives her children for free is far more valuable than what the daycare center gives the children of the first family for a hefty fee.

The first family has an income \$52,000 greater than the second. But the government gives the first family, not the second, their tax credit.

The mother in the second family gave up income and material comfort to raise her own children. For this, the government punishes her with the tax code.

In UK, Prime Minister David Cameron is under attack from stay-at-home mothers after refusing to include them in a £1,200 a year childcare tax break

Mothers who stay at home to look after their children do not need as much financial help as those who work, according to the Treasury.

The insulting claim was inadvertently published yesterday as part of a briefing on the Government's new childcare plans.

It fuelled accusations that the scheme will deliberately discriminate against traditional single-earner families in an attempt to force more mothers back to work.

*Let's take a look at the numbers to see how single-income families are disproportionately taxed under the current system. This is not about "paying people to look after their own children". This is about taking more money from families – more of their own money – that sacrifice a salary to look after their children themselves.*

*A single-income family on an average income of £36,000 per annum will pay almost £9,000 in tax and national insurance, whereas a double-income family (i.e. a mother and a father earning) on exactly the same amount pays about £6,500. Why? There is absolutely no justification for this other than the belief that women should leave their children and get out to work.*  
*~ Laura Perrins, a former barrister turned stay-at-home mother*

Critics described the new policy as a ‘slap in the face for two million stay-at-home mothers’.

The prime minister was accused of a ‘slur’ on stay-at-home mothers after the Downing Street suggestion that they do not want to ‘work hard and get on’.

### **Mothers Forced Back To Work: 75% Take Jobs As Anti-Family Policies Bite**

Three-quarters of mothers who are married or living with a partner are now working, official figures revealed yesterday.

It is the highest proportion since records began.

The figures, from the Office for National Statistics, highlight an extraordinary social change in this country, in particular the effect of crippling financial pressures on families.

#### *I Just Can't Afford Not To: Elaine Birch Explains Why She Returned To Work*

*Elaine Birch, 31 was happy to get back to the office after she had her first daughter Alice two years ago.*

*But the 31-year-old married mother said she now has less of a choice after the birth of her seven-week-old baby Zoe.*

*‘The pressure on mothers to make decisions about getting back to work or staying at home has become so intense.*

*‘Every question that runs through your mind ends with “Can I afford it?” Living costs mean your partner has to earn a really good salary to allow you to stay at home.’*

*Mrs Birch, of Carshalton, South London, works in public relations while her husband Matt, 39, works full-time at an international language school.*

*She said money would be tight if she did not return to work, but the cost of childcare will take up most of her salary.*

*‘We’re living in a time when everything is so expensive – from childcare to food shopping. We are completely dependent on childcare vouchers for Alice. I’m fortunate my parents have helped us financially and help to look after the girls.’*

Over the last two years, around 200,000 women who have young children have joined the workforce. This is larger than the total increase in working mothers which took place during the previous 15 years, according to the ONS figures.

Experts have blamed Government policies which, they said, have made it harder for a generation of parents to raise their children. One of the most controversial decisions was to axe child benefit in January for families with one earner on more than £60,000 – while a couple who both earn £50,000 can keep it.

ONS figures show 4.2million mothers who are married or living with a partner, work – which means many are leaving babies or toddlers at home.

This is equal to an employment rate of 72.2 per cent, compared to 66.7 per cent in 1996 when 3.8million mothers were working.

Lynne Burnham, of campaign group Mothers at Home Matter, said: 'It is a well-known fact that separating a small child from its primary carer (most often the mother) for long periods of time, causes a rise in the stress hormone cortisol in the child.

'Formal day care substitutes care by a parent who loves the child with care by someone who doesn't. By ignoring love, we diminish motherhood and fatherhood and discount one of their most precious strengths.'

The number of fathers who work has also increased. Nearly 91 per cent who are married or living with a girlfriend have a job, compared to 87.5 per cent in 1996.

Source

Jason Groves And Becky Barrow

19 March 2013, The Daily Mail

Becky Barrow, 27 September 2013

Rose Powell / Jan 22, 2013, Women's Agenda

UK News Blog, The Guardian, 8 February 2012

19.

## **They Wear Nappies, Drink Cola And Don't Know How To Open A Book.**

### **One Teacher's Terrifying Insight Into 5-Year-Olds Failed By Their Parents**

A UK Case Study

**W**e are failing our young children 'on a grand scale' when it comes to achieving basic levels of social and emotional development, experts have warned. Sir Michael Marmot, director of the University College London Institute of Health Equity, said social inequality is leaving two in every five children unable to perform simple life skills by the age of five.

He said markers of early child development were closely linked with deprivation – with the UK ranking 'badly' compared with other nations. These indicators include being able to dress and undress independently.

They also measure children's ability to maintain concentration, the level of interest shown in classroom activities. Other areas children might be scored on include understanding the difference between right and wrong, ability to use language, recognising familiar words and developing an interest in books.

Here, one teacher (wishes to remain anonymous) describes a day in the life of an affluent primary school. What she says will shock you...



Glancing at the clock, I realise it's time for me to change Lily's nappy. Past experience tells me she will make a fuss, so I doubt it will be a smooth operation. Of course, most babies dislike having their nappies changed, but that's the problem: Lily isn't a baby, she is five years old.

What's more, I'm not her mother, I am her primary school teacher. And Lily isn't the only child in my class who still wears nappies

It's not as if I am a teacher in a sink school, either. I work in an affluent town in the South of England, yet every day at my school we are dealing with the fallout of what can, at best, be described as parental irresponsibility, at worst, downright negligence. I teach children aged four and five, and, of course, accidents do happen when it comes to young children using the loo. But almost every day I have to clear up after a child who has soiled himself.

These children don't have a medical condition. What they have are parents who think children will learn to use the lavatory by themselves, or that it is a school's responsibility to teach them.

So the news last week that most teachers have witnessed an increase in the number of children soiling themselves came as no surprise to me.

A survey carried out by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, along with the charity Education and Resources for Improving Childhood Continence, also found that teachers believe primary schoolchildren are less independent than they were a decade ago. That, too, strikes a chord with me.

There is a child in my class who has serious dental problems because of her consumption of fizzy, sugary drinks. That's bad in itself, but the most worrying thing is that, at age five, she isn't independent enough to drink from a cup. She drinks these fizzy drinks from a baby's bottle.

These parents seem to believe that giving their children fundamental life skills isn't their responsibility. They think that it's the job of teachers

Lucy doesn't bring the bottle into school, but she told me without a hint of self-consciousness that she still drinks 'fizzy' from her 'baby bottle'. And her terrible tooth decay is testament to that. Her front teeth are like little black pegs.

The poor child also has real problems with speech. She can't pronounce many of the sounds because one needs a full set of teeth to do so.

I rang her home umpteen times to ask her mother to make a dental appointment. Eventually, under tremendous pressure from the school and the welfare department, whom I alerted, she did — and I assume the matter is being dealt with.

I have been a primary school teacher for eight years, and over the past few years I've witnessed a shocking decline in children's basic skills.

### **A 'Big Impact' On Adulthood**

Research has found that the proportion of youngsters achieving a good level of development at age five stands at 59 per cent in England, up slightly on the year before but still not good enough, Sir Michael Marmot said.

'Only 59% of children were ranked at age five as having a good level of child development. Only 59%,' he said.

'You think to yourself, how can it possibly be the case that 41% of children across the country are thought not to have a good level of child development?

'Surely there must be something wrong with the figures, you think to yourself, that's what I thought. How can that possibly be right?

'The fact is it could be right. We do really, really badly on international comparisons, really badly.'

He said a chart on international comparisons of child wellbeing puts Finland in front and the UK lagging behind.

He said the UK is also 'bumping along' and ranking about 25th on maths and science.

'This is a really brainy country, why shouldn't we be number one?', he said.

Sir Michael said the best universities in the country are also the best in Europe, but there are huge inequalities.

‘We’ve got these huge inequalities which means that we’re failing our children on a grand scale and it matters to their health, it matters to their wellbeing and the productivity of the country, it matters to the sort of society we want. And it matters all the way through.’

He said poor development in early childhood had a ‘big impact’ on the numbers in the UK who end up not in education, employment or training.

The school makes it clear that we expect children to be able to use a lavatory, button their coats and eat with a knife and fork by the time they begin full-time education, but far too many of them just can’t. They’ve never been taught how.

These parents seem to believe that giving their children fundamental life skills isn’t their responsibility. They think that it’s the job of teachers.

Some parents see no problem at all with sending their little ones to school incontinent and unable to grasp even the most basic concepts of learning, with no ability to sit still even for a couple of minutes and a propensity to thump other children.

Every summer, I visit the homes of the 30 children who will join my class in the new school year. In about two-thirds of those homes, I see all the latest gadgets on display, including plasma television sets, games consoles and state-of-the-art computer equipment. What I don’t see are any toys or books.

I make these visits both to introduce myself and to allay any fears that the children or their parents may have about the big step of starting school.

Sadly, in many cases, I really needn’t bother. The parents don’t even show me the courtesy of turning off the television during my visit. Asking what they hope for from school and what their worries are, I’m met with blank stares.

When youngsters have absolutely no concept of numbers, it’s simply impossible for teachers to focus on teaching what’s called

the Early Years Foundation Curriculum, which sets out very basic attainment targets — for example, being able to count from one to ten.

It might seem hard to believe, but many parents barely speak to their children, far less bother to educate them. A colleague told me that children in her class of five-year-olds are unable to speak in proper sentences. ‘Give pencil,’ a child will say.

I put it down to parents dumping their children in front of the TV rather than interacting with them. I’ve even had to give up on activities such as painting because many of the children in my classroom can’t hold a paintbrush.

They’ve never done it at home, and they have such short concentration spans that after the first hesitant stroke of brush on paper, they are off, running up and down the classroom.

We are trained to teach the four and five-year-olds through play, but the sad truth is that many of our children just don’t know how to play. They have never been exposed to imaginary games or make-believe at home.

They have never had to concentrate on building a tower out of Lego, never set up a toy railway track and pushed trains around it.

Tommy, a five-year-old in my class, was a whizz on the computer. He could manipulate a mouse with ease and was adept at opening programmes, but he had no idea how to even open a book.

When I sat down with this little boy and tried to read with him, he tried to pull it open from its spine. He had no idea how to hold a pencil, and when I asked him what letter the word ‘red’ started with, it became apparent that he wasn’t even sure what the colour red looked like. He didn’t know his colours.

Sadly, Tommy isn’t alone. Many of the little ones I teach have trouble grasping the most basic of concepts. I tried to do a project on the seasons, but most of the class couldn’t name them. When I mentioned that a daffodil was growing, several children looked puzzled and asked me what the word ‘growing’ meant.

Of course, many parents do a wonderful job and try hard to expose their children to books, toys and time outdoors — but some parents don't.

As for bedtime, many of the children I teach simply don't have one. Some of my pupils arrive at school so exhausted from playing on their computers until the early hours of the morning that I regularly have to put them down for a nap in the afternoon.

They fall asleep instantly and miss out on whatever activity the rest of the class is engaged in. *I think the school I work in is probably a microcosm of Britain as a whole.*

Some pupils' parents are stockbrokers and bankers who commute to work in the City of London, but our catchment area also includes a deprived council estate where mainly white working-class families live. Some of the children I teach are immigrants.

What happens in my classroom is in no way extraordinary. Speaking to colleagues in other schools, my experience is representative of classrooms across the country.

It just seems to me that many mums and dads have no understanding of their own responsibilities. And, working in this school, I sometimes feel that my heart will break because these children are so defenceless against the incompetence of their parents.

I love the little ones in my class, and it makes me sad and angry that some of them come to school in the winter without socks on. And let me be clear here: this is not down to poverty. Parents are

*'I work with my secondary heads and they say that the raw material they are sent at age 11 is not good enough, therefore I go on to my primary heads and they say children arrive at school unable to read or recognise the difference between a letter or a number, they arrive sometimes in nappies, unable to speak in a sentence.'*

*Evidence demonstrates that there is a need to intervene 'much earlier' in life, so that the 'raw material is better'.*

*~ North Graham Allen, MP Labour for Nottingham*

simply failing to attend to such details. Instead, I keep a few pairs in my handbag, together with clean underwear.

No child should have cold feet, and no child should sit in soiled underclothes, but their parents don't seem to agree with those basic requirements.

It is very difficult to work with children when their parents seem to work against you. Teachers who try to instill boundaries and a sense of right and wrong often end up castigated by enraged parents — and, sadly, the senior management can't always be relied upon to stand up for their staff.

*There was one boy, Jamie, in my class, who was quite a handful and was constantly spitting at other children. He seemed to especially dislike another little boy, Darren, calling him horrible names, hitting him and spitting at him.*

*Taking Jamie's mum aside one afternoon when she came to pick him up, I asked if we could have a quiet word. 'Would you mind backing me up on what I've told Jamie, that he can't spit at other children?' I asked her, smiling.*

*Her response left me flabbergasted. 'You're picking on my son. How dare you tell me how to bring him up!' she fumed.*

*She then made a formal complaint against me to the headmaster, and to my amazement, he advised that I apologise.*

*I did so because it didn't seem worth the hassle or aggravation of refusing. I didn't want her son, difficult as he was, to think he wasn't welcome in my classroom.*

I love my job, and I love seeing children grow, learn and flourish. What is so distressing is witnessing the way so many parents have simply abdicated responsibility over the past decade.

Some mums and dads seem to think that their job is to give their children whatever they want, and the dreary stuff — manners, discipline and boundaries — should be left to teachers like me.

But the joy of childhood isn't about having free rein to do whatever they want as long as it doesn't inconvenience their parents.

Surely, the joy of childhood is about the incredible journeys of discovery that children make. Surely, the wonder of being a child lies in the abundance of learning — from the colours in the rainbow to how to eat like a grown-up.

Tragically, many of the youngsters in my classroom are experiencing a horribly stunted childhood. They are painfully aware of adult concepts like binge-drinking, yet can't recite a single nursery rhyme.

I shudder to think what the future holds for them.

Source

Alex Evans, The Daily Mail, 16th February 2012

Glenys Roberts, The Daily Mail, 15 February 2012

Jane Fields, 18 February 2012, The Daily Mail

*Chaotic Homes Creating Children Incapable Of Learning*

*Children are being harmed through not being brought up in nurturing families where their brains can develop and where they become socialised. Teachers report five-year-olds still in nappies who cannot speak in sentences.*

*There are significant numbers of children who, because of their home environment, arrive at school simply incapable of learning. State must launch 'early intervention' when youngsters are at risk of being badly damaged by appalling childhoods.*

*~ Michael Gove, Education secretary, UK*

20.

## **Babies Left To 'Cry It Out'**

### **Because The Mother Has To Report For Work**

Mothers Letting Unsettled Babies Sob Themselves To Sleep.

**W**hat does it mean to let a baby cry it out? This method of sleep training involves leaving babies alone to cry for as long it takes before they fall asleep

The theory goes that without a rewarding response to his cries, a baby learns that it's not worth the trouble to cry so hard. Richard Ferber, author of *Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems*, is the best-known advocate of this tactic.

The approach says that if a baby gets used to being rocked to sleep or always falling asleep while breastfeeding, he won't learn to fall

*A baby who is left crying for long enough will eventually stop, but not because he has learnt to go to sleep happily alone, but because he's exhausted and has despaired of getting help.*

*Crying is a baby's sole way of signalling when he or she is uncomfortable or distressed, being left crying hard is stressful, and continued acute stress sets up a hormonal chain reaction that ultimately stimulates the adrenal glands into releasing the "stress hormone" cortisol. Long continued or oft-repeated crying can produce so much cortisol that it can damage a baby's brain.*

*That doesn't mean that a baby should never cry or that parents should worry when she does. All babies cry, some more than others. It's not crying that is bad for babies but crying that gets no response.*

*~ Nick Clegg, Liberal Democrat leader*



asleep on her own. So the goal is to train the baby to “self-soothe” himself to sleep at bedtime, and then use the same skill when he wakes up at night or during a nap. Childcare guru Gina Ford, say that if babies cry during designated sleeping hours they should not be picked up.

While many parents are intrigued by the idea, research has shown various short- and long-term negative effects of the method. Here, some reasons “crying it out” can hurt little ones.

**1. Babies left to cry have been shown to be stressed even after they do appear to be “sleep trained.”** It is a blissful moment for any parent, when a once fractious baby finally learns to fall asleep without a murmur.

But mothers and fathers should not be lulled into a false sense of security, because their child may actually still be upset.

A study found that levels of the stress hormone cortisol remain high in ‘cry babies’ even in the days after they have apparently learnt to settle themselves.

In other words, the child is still unhappy but just keeping quiet about it. Research conducted at the University of North Texas published in the *Early Human Development* journal in 2012 looked at 25 infants aged 4 to 10 months in a five-day inpatient sleep training program. Even though by the third night of being left to cry, they were crying less and falling asleep faster, the cortisol levels measured in their saliva remained high, indicating that they were just as physically “stressed” as if they had remained crying.

*‘I don’t think anybody would ever say that you shouldn’t use controlled crying – it is about getting the balance right.*

*‘If you are on maternity leave with your first child and can have a nice lie-in and breastfeed the baby in bed, that is very different to being a single mum who needs to go out to work or no one will eat.*

*‘I have been advised many times to try controlled crying, but it caused me much more stress than picking up the baby and doing what comes naturally.*

*~ Siobhan Freegard, Netmums, parenting advice website*

Overall, outward displays of internal stress were extinguished by sleep training.

**2. Even once a baby does fall asleep, sleeping alone has long-term negative effects.** “Isolated sleeping is bad for babies,” says Darcia Navarez, Ph.D., professor of psychology at the University of Notre Dame, who has done extensive research on responsive parenting, characterized by breastfeeding, frequent touch, soothing babies in distress, outdoor play, and a wider community of caregivers. She notes that animal studies show how even brief isolation can affect stress reactivity. “All sorts of systems can become disorganized when a baby is not ‘in arms’ with long-term effects on intelligence, social capacities, and health.”

**3. The distress associated with crying it out can affect brain development.** “Extensive distress in babyhood kills synapses, which are rapidly growing in the first years of life. This means that networks of connections between brain systems don’t get established properly,” says Narvaez. A key set of connections are from the prefrontal cortex to the older parts of the brain. When these are established well, they control primitive survival systems (anger, fear). If they are not, a child may develop anxiety and depression.

**4. It may also may lead to a higher probability of behavioral problems.** Narvaez notes that studies out of Harvard, Yale, Baylor, and other prestigious institutions show that the practice can kill off baby brain cells and lead to a higher risk of ADHD, poor academic performance, and anti-social tendencies.

**5. Prolonged crying can ultimately lower IQ.** Dr. Rao and colleagues at the National Institutes of Health showed that infants with prolonged crying (not due to colic) in the first three months of life had an average IQ 9 points lower at 5. They also showed poor fine motor development.

**6. Babies left to cry it out also have a higher chance of becoming more dependent later on.** Although the hope is that allowing a child to “self-soothe” will foster independence, Narvaez notes that it actually accomplishes the opposite: “It is more likely to foster a

whiny, unhappy, aggressive, and/or demanding child, one who has learned that one must scream to get needs met.”

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21.

## **Kids Who Sleep With Parents**

### **Tend To Be 'Slimmer'**

Children who get up at night and sneak into bed with their parents may be healthier as they are less likely to become overweight, a new study has revealed.

Disturbed sleep is associated with obesity because it interferes with hunger hormones but research conducted in Denmark suggested the opposite may be true for children.

A study of 497 children between the ages of two and six found children who always stayed in their own beds were three times more likely to be overweight than children who got into bed with their parents every night.

Dr Nanna Olsen, at the Research Unit for Dietary Studies, Institute of Preventive Medicine, at Copenhagen University Hospitals said it might be because these children have a greater sense of security by cuddling up to their parents.

The findings were presented at the European Congress on Obesity in Lyon, France.

"The results may suggest that elements of parental social support or other types of positive psychosocial responses if being allowed to enter parents' bed during night may protect against overweight, whereas types of negative psychosocial responses such as feelings

of rejection when not being allowed to enter parents' bed may lead to overweight," Dr Olsen said.

## **Working Mothers : Away During The Day Not Allowed To Sleep With Children At Night**

Co-Sleeping Is Almost Illegal And Highly Controversial In The Developed Countries

Co-sleeping is a practice in which babies and young children sleep close to one or both parents, as opposed to in a separate room.

It is standard practice in many parts of the world, and is practiced by a significant minority in countries where cribs are also used. Bed-sharing, a practice in which babies and young children sleep in the same bed with one or both parents, is a subset of co-sleeping.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends against bed-sharing with infants because of risk of suffocation or strangulation.

Recent legal rulings suggest that bed-sharing has been attributed as a factor of accidental infant suffocation. For instance, parents under the influence of drugs or alcohol and whose children died while bed-sharing have been charged and, at times, prosecuted with manslaughter in several US states.

Bed-sharing is standard practice in many parts of the world outside of North America, Europe and Australia. One 2006 study of children age 3–10 in India reported 93% of children bed-sharing. Not a single infant death attributed to bed-sharing has been reported from these countries.

Bed-sharing was widely practiced in all areas up to the 19th century, until the advent of giving the child his or her own room and the crib. In many parts of the world, bed-sharing simply has the practical benefit of keeping the child warm at night, promotes

*"I love that the first thing I see in the morning is my son's big, toothless grin." ~ Hillary Rust*

bonding, enables the parents to get more sleep and facilitates breastfeeding. In the animal kingdom, babies always cuddle up to the mother while sleeping.

Obesity and intoxication are responsible for bed-sharing deaths and it's a new world phenomena.

One study reported mothers getting more sleep and breastfeeding by co-sleeping than other arrangements. Parents also experience less exhaustion with such ease in feeding and comforting their child by simply reaching over to the child. As a result, co-sleeping also increases the responsiveness of parents' to their child's needs.

In 2007, the New York Times reported on a British study that suggests many parents keep bed-sharing a secret.

Stress hormones are lower in mothers and babies who co-sleep, specifically the balance of the stress hormone cortisol, the control of which is essential for a baby's healthy growth. In studies with animals, infants who stayed close to their mothers had higher levels of growth hormones and enzymes necessary for brain and heart growth. Also, the physiology of co-sleeping babies is more stable, including more stable temperatures, more regular heart rhythms, and fewer long pauses in breathing than babies who sleep alone.

Besides physical developmental advantages, co-sleeping may also promote long-term emotional health. In long-term follow-up studies of infants who slept with their parents and those who slept alone, the children who co-slept were happier, less anxious, had higher self-esteem, were less likely to be afraid of sleep, had fewer behavioral problems, tended to be more comfortable with

*One of the first people Sara Jones Rust remembers after giving birth to her son, Beckett, is the nurse who saw her sleeping soundly with the baby. "Do not let him sleep in your bed!"*

*Most of the parents hide it. Some say they keep doing it out of convenience. Many find it's the only way to get more sleep, and others discover it's real and special family bonding time.*

intimacy, and were generally more independent as adults. Co-sleeping from birth or soon afterwards is the norm except in some Western cultures.

### **Cultural Factors**

Several studies show that the prevalence of co-sleeping is a result of cultural preference. In a study of 19 nations, a trend emerged, depicting a widely accepted practice of co-sleeping in Asian, African, and Latin American countries, while European and North American countries rarely practiced it. This trend resulted mostly from the respective fears of parents: Asian, African, and Latin American parents worried about the separation between the parents and the child, while European and North American parents feared a lack of privacy for both the parents and the child.

#### *Coming Out*

*Cindy Cox, 32, confessed on her blog that she and her husband David, 45, bed-share.*

*"I'm sleeping with another man," she wrote. "Two men actually. Two men and a dog. But the dog sleeps on the floor."*

*Before that, they kept their sleep status private.*

*Cox thinks co-sleeping has added advantages for working moms who spend the day away from their children.*

*"If I didn't sleep with [my son], I might just see him for one or two hours in a day."*

*Morgan, a web designer from Utah, and his wife, Mindy, 31, have been edged to opposite sides of their king size bed by their splayed out, sleeping children for the past six years, and they feel embarrassed telling friends and family what goes on at night.*

Source

May 09, 2012, The Telegraph, ANI

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*Dr. William Sears is perhaps the most well known advocate for co-sleeping. In 1993, he wrote a chapter promoting it in The Baby Book in 1993, and that instigated vehement debate.*

*Now 81, the California pediatrician co-slept with five of his eight children, rationalizing that he and his wife were too young to know better for their first three children.*

*"Put yourself behind the eyes of your baby," Sears said. "Ask, 'If I were baby Johnny or baby Suzy, where would I rather sleep?' In a dark lonely room behind bars, or nestled next to my favorite person in the world, inches away from my favorite cuisine?"*

*But Sears has experienced the backlash that keeps many so-sleepers closeted. The harshest reaction came after he appeared on "20/20" in the early 1990s and discussed bed sharing with his eighth child, who was adopted.*

*"We got a knock on the door and two uniformed men from child protective services said they were there to investigate me based on possible sexual abuse," Sears said. "They said that I had admitted on national television that my baby slept with me."*



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22.

## **'No-One Believes Me And Nobody Cares'**

### **Minor Girls From Broken Homes Abused On An 'Industrial Scale'**

Lacking parental protection and supervision, a Police-commissioned study in UK finds widespread trafficking and abuse of vulnerable schoolgirls.

In the 148-page report – Real Voices, Child Sexual Exploitation In Greater Manchester – was commissioned by the local Police. It said that in some districts young girls are regularly approached by men at the school gates or urged to get into cars while walking home from school.

These much older men ply them with alcohol, drugs and gifts as a way of grooming them for sex. Figures in the report suggested almost 650 children reported missing in towns across Greater

*Young girls - and they are young girls - being abused over and over again on an industrial scale, being raped, being passed from one bunch of perpetrators to another bunch of perpetrators.*

*'And all the while this has happened with too many organisations and too many people walking on by.*

*'And we have got to really resolve that this stops here, it doesn't happen again and we recognise abuse for what it is.*

*~David Cameron, The Prime Minister, UK*

Manchester in 2014 were at risk of child sexual exploitation or serious harm.

But despite almost 13,000 reports of child sex abuse in the past six years, only 1,078 people were convicted.

Most of the time, the police blamed the victims for the abuse, with descriptions of child prostitutes or 'slags' recorded by officers – even about children as young as 11.

In one case, officers did not consider a girl of 13 to be a victim as she was wearing 'sexualised' clothes.

Miss Coffey, chairman of the Commons' all-party group for runaway and missing children and adults, said the child sex abuse cases were a 'deafening wake-up call'. Another MP added: 'I have been concerned about the number of people who have told me that in some neighbourhoods child sexual exploitation had become the new social norm.'

Home Secretary says the report showed the way police were dealing with the problem was 'not good enough'

*The report contains testimony from some of the hundreds of girls who were abused by the paedophiles. These are excerpts from their evidence:*

*- I turned up at the police station at 3am, blood all over me, soaked through my trousers to the crotch. They dismissed it as me being naughty, a nuisance. I was bruised and bloody.*

*- The Police never asked me why – they just took me home*

*- Why would a 13-year-old make it up? They didn't stop to think 'why?'*

*- I made a complaint about a man who trafficked me from a children's home. He was arrested, released and trafficked me again.*

*- They said it was my fault I was abused.*

*- Social services washed their hands – 'it's your choice' I was told*

*- No one believes me, no one cares. They knew where I was, they didn't care when I came back.*

*Some were abused for up to eight years despite asking for help from the authorities, who instead refused to believe them or blamed them.*

*Their abusers fed them drink and drugs before taking them to graveyards, a B&B and flats rented just for the rape and torture of children.*

Here are some of the victims' harrowing experiences revealed in the report:

Prosecutors spell out how a young abuse victim dressing in provocative clothes was enough for them not to take the case to court.

'While her age at the time and the date of the decision are not given, it gives two similarly disturbing examples for prosecutors not proceeding with abuse allegations. One said how a girl's "unsettled background" made her "far from an ideal victim", while another pointed out, "I note she has been referred to a social worker as being a slag, saying she is responsible for what has happened".'

Another troubled young girl who was groomed by a 44-year-old man said her family was told by social workers to 'move house' when they tried to report him.

Javed Khan, chief executive of children's charity Barnardo's, said: 'The grim reality of child sexual exploitation is being revealed town by town across the UK.'

'Everywhere, vulnerable children are being failed by the systems and people who are supposed to protect them. Children are being trafficked, abused and raped. They have been abandoned and left to fend for themselves.'

'It's hard to believe how these innocent girls were dismissed, disbelieved and derided by so many and for so long.'

Source

Laura Bates, The Guardian, 21 November 2014

Martin Robinson And Matt Chorley, Political Editor And Keiligh Baker, 3 March 2015, The Daily Mail

23.

## **Mothers**

### **Too Exhausted To Care For Babies Properly**

**I**n Australia, a baby and a toddler were found dead after their mother put them both in the shower and fell asleep.

Miranda Hebble, who was 22 at the time of the tragedy, left her sons Lochlan and Malachi Stevens in the steam-filled bathroom at their house in Perth, Australia, for ten hours after she fell asleep.

When she woke up she discovered ten-month-old Malachi floating in the shower on his side with bruises on his cheek while Lochlan, two, was lying on the floor with blood coming from his mouth.

Ms Hebble had been caring for the boys at home alone while their father, Christopher Stevens, was working on a fly-in fly-out basis, the Australian Associated Press reported.

Lochlan had smeared faeces from his nappy on floors, walls and the baby's cot, spurring her to put the boys in the shower to clean them up.

She left to fetch something, closing the bathroom door behind her, but fell asleep before she could return.

When she returned to the bathroom, some ten hours later, both children were dead.

Ms Hebble told an emergency services operator: 'I passed out and the plug in the shower got plugged up ... and the shower filled up ... and they're not breathing. They're dead.'

Ms Hebble had no history of mental illness or drug and alcohol abuse.

The court also heard of a previous incident when Ms Hebble had left Malachi in a car while visiting a shop and the baby had to be pulled hot, crying and red in the face from the vehicle by police.

Ms Hebble told officers she had left him there because she was so exhausted she feared she might drop him if she tried to carry him.

There are hundreds of cases every year where parents forget their babies in locked cars, exposing them to severe heat or freezing cold. Most of these slips prove fatal.

Source

Damien Gayle, 29 April 2013, The Daily Mail

24.

## **Family Problems, Lack of Affection or Communication Impair Kids' Brain Development**

Children who faced 'mild to moderate' family problems before the age of 11 found to have smaller cerebellum - a trait linked with psychiatric illnesses

The odd argument in front of your children may not seem like a big deal, but research suggests it could have an effect in later life.

Brain scans have revealed children who experience 'mild to moderate' family problems up to the age of 11 suffer impaired brain development and could be at risk of psychiatric illness.

These problems include arguments or tension between parents, physical or emotional abuse, lack of affection or communication between family members.

Previous studies have focused on the impact of severe neglect, abuse and maltreatment on young children, yet these new findings show even relatively normal difficulties were enough to have a noticeable effect.

Scientists at the University of East Anglia used imaging technology to scan the brains of 58 teenagers aged 17 to 19.

They were part of a larger group of 1,200 young people whose parents were additionally asked to recall any negative life events their children had experienced between birth and 11 years of age.

In total, 27 teenagers were found to have had a history of childhood adversity.

Those who encountered 'mild to moderate' family problems when they were younger than 11 had a smaller cerebellum - a part of the brain linked to skill learning, stress regulation and sensory motor control.

A small cerebellum may indicate an increased risk of psychiatric problems later in life, said the researchers.

Lead scientist Dr Nicholas Walsh, from the UEA's School of Psychology, said: 'These findings are important because exposure to adversities in childhood and adolescence is the biggest risk factor for later psychiatric disease.

'We show that exposure in childhood and early adolescence to even mild to moderate family difficulties - not just severe forms of abuse, neglect and maltreatment - may affect the developing adolescent brain.'

Teenagers who had experienced family problems were more likely to have a diagnosed psychiatric illness, or a parent with a mental health disorder, or to have a negative view of how their family functioned.

'It not only advances our understanding of how the general psychosocial environment affects brain development, but also suggests links between specific regions of the brain and individual psychosocial factors,' continued Dr Walsh.

'We know that psychiatric risk factors do not occur in isolation but rather cluster together, and using a new technique we show how the general clustering of adversities affects brain development.'

The research was conducted in collaboration with scientists from Cambridge University and the Medical Research Council's Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit in Cambridge.

The study was published in the journal *NeuroImage: Clinical*.



## Working Moms And The Rise of A Lost Generation

Source

Victoria Woollaston

19 February 2014, The Daily Mail

25.

## **Feral Generation**

### **A Generation of Violent, Illiterate Young Men**

Living Outside The Boundaries of Civilised Society

The first time I saw Tuggy Tug, he was standing on a street corner in Brixton with half-a-dozen other 15-year-old boys. They were scowling at anyone who walked past.

Every now and then, they shrugged up their hoodies to make themselves look more threatening. 'Everyone who bumps into us says sorry,' boasted Tuggy Tug.

His tracksuit was so big that he seemed lost inside it. Under his black hoodie, he wore a red one - in case he needed a quick change of identity.

He was, he admitted, on the lookout for someone to mug. 'I want no one recognising me after I done my business,' he explained.

At 15, Tuggy Tug is still officially a child - but he is already dangerously disconnected from society and its values. What forces have put boys like him in charge of our streets? And how are we to deal with them?

Despite being barely literate, Tuggy Tug was eloquent about the reasons he'd turned to crime. Indeed, his words provided a harrowing

insight into why increasing numbers of boys are more likely to do a mugging than a piece of homework.

None of the teachers at his own school in South London paid any attention to him, Tuggy Tug told me, so he hardly ever turned up for lessons.

And his young single mother never disciplined him because he was 'bringing home the bacon' - up to £200 a day from running errands for older drug dealers.

Nor could he see any alternative to crime. 'If you do it the government way,' he said, 'you will wait until you're 80 by the time you can buy a nice, decent tracksuit.' He paused for a moment, 'I probably be dead by then.'

His heroes were rap stars and the older drug-dealers in his area - 'I know a man of 21 who owns five houses and he never went to school.'

And he judged himself by his lack of fear, willingness to use violence and the number of all-important 'links' he has in order to pull off the next drug deal.

After five years, though, he planned to go 'legit', buy a house in the suburbs and play golf all day.

Whatever our opinion of Tuggy Tug, his ambition stands as a rebuke.

The middleclass dream is as distant a prospect for him as becoming an astronaut might be for the rest of us.

He is already set on the path of social deprivation: prison, an early death or, at best, a lifetime on benefits. His life is already wasted.

Today, Britain is facing a crisis with its youth. In every town and city, boys like Tuggy Tug are failing to make the transition to manhood and a successful adult life.

This has terrifying implications for us all. 'Serious youth violence,' says the head of Scotland Yard's Violent Crime directorate, Barry Norman, 'is the biggest problem we have today - with the possible exception of terrorism.'

'Nothing frightens people more - and when that violence takes place in a group setting, it is all the more shocking.'

Nine months ago, I started investigating why so many boys are turning into feared gang members and criminals.

During my travels across the country, I talked to more than 50 teenage boys from low-income families, as well as dozens of men in their 20s and 30s from the same background.

I sat in on lessons in school, talked to teachers and encouraged youth-club leaders, school inspectors and charities to reveal the real reasons why so many young men are going to waste.

Tuggy Tug's chances of having a decent childhood, it became clear, had been weighted against him from the start. As a black boy from a low-income Caribbean background, he belongs to one of the two categories most likely to fail at school and least likely to break out of poverty.

White boys from low-income families perform worst: 63 per cent are unable to read and write properly at 14 (compared with 43 per cent of white girls from a similar background).

Black working- class boys do not do much better: at age 14, 54 per cent cannot read or write properly.

The scale of the crisis in our education system is going unrecognised - but we ignore it at our peril.

Between 2000 and 2007, almost four million pupils left school without gaining the basic qualifications of five good GCSEs, including English and maths. Nearly a million pupils left with less than five GCSEs of any grade.

Unlike previous generations, the boys who spill out onto our streets don't quickly grow out of delinquent behaviour.

What happens in school smashes their lives, leaving them antisocial-semi- criminal and dependant on welfare.

Which means we, the taxpayers, have to pay astronomical sums to keep fit young men idle. Youth unemployment, which has just hit 726,000 - its highest level in 16 years - is now costing us well over £90million a week.

And that's not all, of course. Illiterate young men with no other way of proving themselves or of making a living are likely to turn to crime. In 2004, the annual cost of youth crime in Britain was calculated at more than £1 billion - and it will be far higher now.

Worst of all, the number of violent crimes carried out by children and teenagers has increased by a third in just three years.

The number of boys under 18 who were convicted or cautioned over violent offences jumped by 37 per cent over the same period - compared with a rise among adults of less than one per cent.

And most of those who were caught went straight back to crime: 82 per cent of these boys aged 15-18 were reconvicted within two years.

It's not just crime that can have long-term repercussions. Youth disorder on this scale represents a kick in the teeth to accepted conventions of respect and responsibility to others - and it's likely to carry on for generations to come.

Certainly, adults are now less ready to intervene and monitor young people than in the past - and they are right to be afraid.

A white 22-year-old youth called Darren, who lives in a small Lincolnshire town, told me that his gang waited months to take revenge on a middleaged neighbour who'd objected to one of them sitting on his garden wall. When the boy refused to move, the man shoved him off.

After that, Darren and his mates stood outside the man's house for two weeks, 'terrorising him and throwing rocks at his car'.

The police moved them along - but six months later, half-a-dozen of the boys surrounded the man outside a supermarket - 'and we kicked the s\*\*\* out of him'. It was only 'luck' they didn't kill him, Darren admitted.

Such incidents were far less frequent in the recent past. This is partly because the institutions that previously socialised and directed young men - the family, the church and school - have either lost or given up their authority.

And these changes have hit boys from poor backgrounds the hardest.

So, too, has the lack of adult males in their lives who can serve as role models.

The number of children living in loneparent households - almost all headed by a single mother - has more than doubled in 25 years.

And what happens when these boys go to school? Despite the billions thrown at education by the Government since 1997, nearly every one of the teenagers I interviewed, as well as quite a few of the men I met in their 20s and 30s, was unable to read or write properly - or had only learned in prison.

A black car mechanic in his 50s, from Brixton, told me: 'Back in the Caribbean, we were taught the three Rs, but that's gone out of the window. After that, everything breaks down.'

'I'm out of jail, but there is no way out for me'

This was certainly true of the dozens of teenagers I met.

Their school days had followed a similar pattern: unable to understand what was going on in lessons but desperate to prove themselves at something, they began to misbehave in the last two years of primary school.

At secondary school, their behaviour deteriorated further. Most either played truant or were excluded.

By 14, the majority of them were involved in crime and drugs - turning up to school only to sell drugs or stolen goods. For them, illiteracy had already turned into a life sentence on the edges of society.

Bigs, the former leader of a notorious Brixton gang who received his first prison sentence at 15, told me: 'Other people go from school to university. We go from school to prison. I thought I'd be dead by 30.'

Everywhere I went, I met men whose lives had been blighted by their failure at school. A former burglar told me he'd dropped out at 14 and received his first prison sentence at 18.

Now in his 30s, he lives in a hostel and supplements benefits with a little drug-dealing. He said sadly: 'I may be out of prison, but there is no way out for me.'

A young man in his 20s, living on benefits in Kent said: 'There are things you don't know at 14.'

You need someone to tell you: "If you do this at 14, your life will be better." I'm really trying now, but it's so f\*\*\*\*\* hard because it is just too late.'

What kind of job can you get when you're illiterate? Forty years ago, a boy could get work in a factory at 16 and be supporting a wife and child by the age of 19.

When the middleaged Brixton mechanic left school, for example, he and his mates could pick from a range of factory jobs and apprenticeships. All gone now, he said sadly.

The loss of our manufacturing industry, combined with the growth of immigration, has particularly affected white and black Caribbean boys from poor backgrounds.

Call centres, and other service sector jobs, demand personal and social skills that are alien to most of the boys I met.

Unlike their middle-class counterparts, they have never been taught the basics, such as shaking hands, speaking clearly or looking a grown-up in the eye.

Sometimes, it took me two or three attempts to understand what they were trying to say.

One teacher in a London inner-city school told me he considered this 'a massively serious issue'.

He went on: 'I have really gifted black boys who can't communicate. You see them struggling. It's quite often the reason they get really upset and frustrated.'

Yet he thought it 'patronising' to try to correct them.

Meanwhile, the arrival of large numbers of skilled immigrants willing to work for low pay has left disadvantaged working-class boys sidelined and unable to land a low-paid job that might lead to something better.

According to the Statistics Commission, of the 1.7 million new jobs created since 1997, a whopping 81 per cent have gone to foreign workers.

The Department For Work And Pensions is jawdroppingly candid about the reasons for this.

UK citizens are on the dole because of 'issues around basic employability skills, incentives and motivation' it says.

What a pity it has not passed this insight on to the Department Of Education And Skills.

In a seaside town, I spoke to a 22-year-old man called Dave about how these issues have affected his life.

Like so many others, he had failed to learn to read at primary school, dropped out at 14 and joined a gang.

Now, however, he yearns for 'a decent job' and a home for his girlfriend and baby daughter.

Unsurprisingly, his lack of education has left him qualified only for menial jobs, which are hard to come by.

'When the council advertised two dustmen jobs,' he said, 'there were 100 applications.'

The local job agencies warned him he had no chance because he was English. 'Poles do all the jobs around here,' he told me.

When Dave did finally manage to secure a job for the minimum wage, he encountered the other major problem facing young men - benefits.

In fact, the financial adviser at the Job Centre - whose wages are paid by the taxpayer - gave him a staggering piece of advice. He told him to turn down the job.

'I'd have had to pay my rent, council tax and utility bills and lost my benefits,' Dave explains.

'At the end of the day, I would have been £30 worse off.'

Far from being 'work-shy', most of the young men I met were still eager to find jobs - but all were well aware that the welfare system hands out more than they can legitimately earn.



Meanwhile, the recession has increased competition for low-paid jobs.

Dave could clearly foresee his future.

'I know men of 40 doing nothing but drink and drugs all day. I don't blame them - but it's too early for me,' he said, shaking his head angrily. 'I don't want to be like that.'

All over Britain, men like Dave are disengaging from society for a reason: they see nothing in it for them. And they are quite right.

Sir Terry Leahy, Tesco's chief executive and a member of Gordon Brown's Business Council For Britain, put it bluntly: 'Too many children have been leaving school after 11 or 13 years of compulsory education without the basic skills to get on in life and hold down a job.'

On-the-job training could not act as a 'bandage or a sticking plaster' for the failures of our education system, he said.

So what is the Government doing to break this vicious circle?

A new report - by an all-party panel chaired by former minister Alan Milburn - spelled out: 'The problem is not a shortage of parental aspiration. It is a shortage of good schools.'

It contained a raft of proposals for helping disadvantaged-children, including a payment-by-results scheme for schools.

Whether these proposals will ever be taken further is doubtful. Labour has a track record of talking about reforms - and then doing nothing.

In January, Gordon Brown called for a 'national crusade' to break down class barriers; he was even contemplating making it illegal to discriminate on the grounds of class.

This is to miss the point. Class inequalities are not going to be fixed by a national crusade or legislation.

The problem lies in our schools, over which Labour has had complete control for the past 12 years.

In any case, most boys from disadvantaged backgrounds don't aspire to move to a different class; they rarely aspire to go beyond a few streets.

One young man I met in South London, for example, had never crossed the Thames because he couldn't read the bus timetables.

The head of careers at a school in Dagenham described his pupils as 'very estate-centric and reluctant to travel far'.

He added: 'Trying to get them onto a bus to travel a couple of miles for work experience is difficult enough.'

When boys are isolated, confined and ignorant, is a lack of aspiration really so surprising?

That opportunity exists in this country is clear from the experience of many recent Eastern European immigrants.

Four years ago, I met a young Pole who was then sharing a room in Ealing, West London.

He could barely speak English and was working for the minimum wage. He has now opened a beauty salon in St John's Wood, a smart area of North London.

But then, as Dave pointed out bitterly, 'the Poles have not been through our education system'.

When their children do, they will no doubt face similar problems to those of the indigenous workingclass.

'Working-class', of course, is an optimistic description. The point is that these young men - black and white - are not working, and probably never will.

The Government cannot do much about the loss of manufacturing jobs or the breakdown of families.

It can, however, tackle the problems in our schools and the perverse influence of our benefit system.

In a world recession and with unparalleled levels of debt, we simply cannot continue to waste so many lives, or to pay the escalating bill for these young men's benefits and crimes.

Instead, we should be concentrating on making them as skilled and motivated as the immigrants who are now taking their place.

Even Tuggy Tug longs for a better life - though his methods are more likely to land him in a cell than on a golf course.

After saying goodbye to him, I learned that I'd almost become his latest victim. He'd taken my escort aside to suggest they 'bang' me together and steal my watch.

'Well,' shrugged my escort, himself a former armed robber, 'he wants £1,000 to buy a Smart car. He sees stealing your watch as a career move.'

Source

By Harriet Sergeant

For The Daily Mail

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## THE AUTHOR

Dr. Sahadeva dasa (Sanjay Shah) is a monk in vaisnava tradition. His areas of work include research in Vedic and contemporary thought, Corporate and educational training, social work and counselling, travelling, writing books and of course, practicing spiritual life and spreading awareness about the same.

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An article in *The Economist*, *Female Power: Women in the Workforce*, states, “The economic empowerment of women across the rich world is one of the most remarkable revolutions of the past 50 years.” Women all over the world have entered the workforce in record numbers.

Despite women’s greater participation in the workforce, most men have yet to increase their share of domestic duties. This means that the majority of working mothers are also responsible for housework and looking after their children.

Being a ‘devoted mother’ is not easy. It is more than a full-time job. A full-time job lasts only for 8 or 9 hours whereas a mother’s job lasts 24 hours, 7 days a week. There are no holidays or leaves. But of late, this most important job is becoming the least valued job.

In a new book, *The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued*, author Ann Crittenden looks at how a lack of social supports for modern moms forces them to make bitter choices

Crittenden’s research shows that despite the overall advancement of women, mothers’ work remains unappreciated in an economic sense, even though moms are cultivating “human capital.” Raising productive citizens directly contributes to the overall health of the economy and wealth of the society.

But in our modern culture, “mothering” is substantially, but not uniquely, a woman’s role.

According to Prof Kerry Phelps, the traditional notion of the family has been expanded beyond the restricted definition of a nuclear biological family to include step-families, blended families, single parents, gay parents, international adoption and surrogacy.

It is not a rocket science. What children need in order to flourish is a safe, loving home environment. And central to that is the mother of all roles: mothering.

When this role is neglected, even to the slightest degree, you end up with a ‘feral generation’, a generation of violent, illiterate young men who live outside the boundaries of civilised society and who pose a threat to the established social order. Even the government has no idea how to deal with them. The world’s cities are overrun by this class, jails are bursting at the seams and nobody has any clue on how to fix this problem.

A good place to start would be home.

[www.womenliberation.org](http://www.womenliberation.org)

Soul Science University Press