

## Children whose parents both go out to work develop faster than those with stay-at-home mothers

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3940360/Children-parents-work-develop-faster-stay-home-mothers.html>

- **Children with stay-at-home mothers are less advanced than their peers**
- **Nurseries deliver a 10 per cent positive impact on everyday skills**
- **Children are often exposed to more stimulating activities at nursery**



Children of working mothers develop faster than those who stay at home, a study has found.

Going to nursery or spending time with grandparents improved everyday skills such as talking, social interaction and tasks such as getting dressed.

In contrast, those with mothers who stayed at home were less advanced, scientists at Oxford University and the London School of Economics suggest.

The study tested children against four measures of development and found that children whose mothers were not working had lower capabilities.

In fact, researchers found it had a five per cent negative impact on both their everyday and social skills.

Meanwhile, attending nursery delivered a 10 per cent positive impact on everyday skills while more time with grandparents led to a five per cent boost in talking and 10 per cent better social skills.

Laurence Roope, of Oxford University, who co-wrote the paper, said it was clear time spent in day care had a 'strongly positive effect' on children.

'It should give parents some reassurance that nurseries are not going to harm their children, and are likely to be beneficial,' he said.

'It seems that what is important is engaging in interactive activities. It could be there is a trade-off. Going out to work brings in more money for the family, which leads to more financial security and the ability to partake in more activities.

'But it might mean that the bond between parent and child is not as great, particularly if the parent is tired or stressed.'

The researchers said children were often exposed to more stimulating activities at nurseries and interacted with both new children and adults.

The report, based on a survey of more than 800 mothers by the German Socio-Economic Panel, found the benefits of nursery seemed to increase as children spent more time there.

Reading and visiting other families was found to improve speech capabilities while singing songs and arts and crafts seen to have a positive impact on dexterity.

It asked about their socio-economic status and their children's progress at age two and three, using questions such as 'Can your child cut pieces of paper with scissors?'

'It's very important for policymakers to support working mothers through flexible working and providing good quality nurseries,' Roope added.

Higher-education among mothers also played a role but having older parents was disadvantageous to children, when assessed against all four criteria.

Professor Paul Anand, the report's lead author, said it showed that different activities promote different skills.

Laura Perrins, co-editor of The Conservative Woman website and an advocate for stay-at-home-mothers, said the report made it seem mothers cannot be trusted with their children.

'One wonders how so much human progress has been made so far without children being in nursery,' she told The Telegraph. 'Although, I note, little is said about emotional development,' she added.