## Mother’s Day – Studies & Statistics

**Only 10 percent of the estimated 135,000 adoptions in the U.S. each year involve an anonymous unwed mother surrendering her baby to institutions or strangers. Today, most birth mothers screen the adoptive parents, and ask for continuing, face-to-face contact with their child. *(The Philadelphia Inquirer, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 1, 2006)***

**Affected by your mom’s life: Every woman should live a rich life, says a new study, if not for herself, then for her children. Researchers at Tufts University have found that when a female moose is exposed to plenty of mental stimulation, she improves both her own memory and that of her offspring. Enriching experiences appear to stimulate body and brain chemicals that increase the capacity for memory. While in the womb, babies’ chemical pathways are probably activated by the chemicals in their mom’s blood. In other words, as study author Larry Feig tells Scientific American, “Experiences your mother had during adolescence could influence your memory.”*(The Week magazine)***

**More American women than ever are choosing not to have children, a new Census Bureau study found. Twenty percent of women ages 40 to 44 have no children, double the level of 30 years ago. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, September 5, 2008)***

**The average age of a U.S. mother at first birth has risen consistently, and in 2012 reached 25.8 years old, up from 25.6 years in 2011 and about 21 in 1970. At the same time, about 12.5 percent of women ages 25 to 44 have sought medical help to become pregnant. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 7, 2014)***

**80% of women surveyed think their moms are beautiful; only 25 percent tell them. *(Glamour magazine, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, May 6, 2004)***

**Have you ever accidentally called your boss “mom” or “dad”? If you have, you know how embarrassing that can be. But perhaps you can take comfort in the fact that you’re not alone. According to a recent poll conducted by BusinessWeek Magazine, 6 percent of Americans under the age of 30 have done the same thing. *(Samantha Weaver, in Tidbits)***

**Mothers are the sole or primary breadwinners in four out of 10 American households with children, according to a new survey. While 51 percent of Americans said they believe children are better off when a mom stays at home with her kids, 79 percent rejected the idea that women should return to “traditional roles.” *(CNN.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 7, 2013)***

**Love + Mom = Success: 79% of 208 Fortune 1000 CEOs said they were close to their mothers while growing up. *(Rocky Mountain News, March 15, 2004)***

**Scientists are learning that infant crying may help determine whether a baby will become an abused or a cherished child. “Ideally, crying should teach the child optimism about the environment, which he learns when his cries are answered,” says Michael Lewis, professor of pediatrics at Rutgers Medical School. “An infant of eight weeks is capable of appreciating the fact that he can cause things to happen.” If a baby’s cries are not answered, the infant feels confused and powerless. On the question of spoiling babies by responding to their every cry. Susan Crockenberg, associate professor of human development at the University of California at Davis, summarizes the work of several researchers by saying, “The more responsive a mother is to her baby, the less it cries, the more securely attached it gets to be and the more readily it develops trust.” *(Dava Sobel, in New York Times)***

**Statistics prove a woman’s driving improves markedly after the birth of her first baby. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Another chance at motherhood: Men can make sperm until they die, but women are born with a finite number of eggs in their ovaries – or so scientists have long believed. But a new study by Chinese scientists has found that with some hormonal stimulator, female mice can make new eggs late in life – opening the possibility that women can, too. Biologists at Shanghai Jiao Tong University were able to isolate germ-line cells (precursors to mature eggs) in the ovaries of adult mice, and develop them into real eggs. The eggs were then put back into the mice, leading to normal fertilization and the birth of healthy baby mice. If this process can be replicated in humans, it could allow formerly infertile women to give birth. “If you are looking to disprove that females cannot make new eggs, this paper proves it,” Harvard medical professor Jonathan Tilly tells The Washington Post. *(The Week magazine, May 1, 2009)***

**Nearly 23 percent of all people born in the U.S. in 2002 had a foreign-born mother, the largest such percentage in 90 years, according to a new study by the Center for Immigration Studies, *(Associated Press, as it appeared in (The Week magazine, July 22, 2005)***

**In 1986, a group of researchers published a study of Japanese mothers and mothers in Minneapolis. The mothers were asked to rank the most important things that a child needs to succeed academically. The answers tell a lot about the difference in our two cultures today. The mothers in Minneapolis chose “ability.” The mothers in Japan said “effort.” *(Richard H. Finan, in Reader’s Digest)***

**When kids have two mommies: One more is good, but might two be better? A 25-year study has found that children raised by lesbian couples had higher self-esteem and more confidence than kids in straight families; they also performed better academically and were less likely to break rules or act aggressively. The results were “something I hadn’t anticipated,” psychiatrist and study author Nanette Gartrell tells Time. The study, which began in 1986, followed lesbian couples who’d conceived using in vitro fertilization; the researchers conducted psychological interviews every few years and ended up following 78 kids through at least their 18th birthday. That the pregnancies all had to be sought and planned may be a factor, researchers said, since involved, dedicated parents make better parents in general. At the very least, says Gartrell, the results demonstrate that children of lesbian parents certainly aren’t worse off than their counterparts, and in fact “are psychologically happy and high-functioning.” *(The Week magazine, June 25, 2010)***

**Mothers today are less physically active than their 1965 counterparts. On average, today’s moms spend 7 more hours per week sitting down – largely driving, watching television, or using digital technology – than 1965 moms, who spent more time on their feet doing physical housework or child care. *(TheAtlantic.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 20, 2013)***

**Can a mother’s love for her infant be described as “love at first sight?” Not always. Studies suggest 25 percent of the mothers start to love the baby even before it is born. Another 25 percent develop the love within hours after their baby is born. And about 40 percent need a week or so to build the love. *(L. M. Boyd)*
Throughout the world, 164 out of 168 nations surveyed guarantee paid maternity leave to working mothers. The four who do not are Papua New Guinea, Swaziland, Lesotho, and the United States. *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 26, 2006)***

**Nursing a child can give the brain a bigger buzz than cocaine, says a new study in the Journal of Neuroscience. When researchers at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester compared brain scans of nursing mother rats with those of virgin rats who had been given cocaine, they found that the same areas of the brain lit up in both groups. But when given a choice, rats with young babies consistently chose suckling their pups over cocaine. The “lactation high,” researchers tell Science, was more pleasurable than the artificial kind. The results, say researchers, suggest that nature rewards mothers for nurturing their young. *(The Week magazine, January 28, 2005)***

**A recent survey finds that 39 percent of new or expectant mothers believe their employer is “extremely” supportive of breast-feeding and/or pumping while at work, but 66 percent pointed to a lack of time as the biggest barrier to nursing while on the job. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 2, 2014)***

**Bad week for: American men, after a study by Salary.com concluded that stay-at-home moms would earn $134,121 a year if they were paid for their 91.6 hours of work each week. Employed moms, the study found, put in 49.8 hours of work at home after they leave the office. *(The Week magazine, May 12, 2006)***

**Mother by numbers: 40% of households responding to a National Restaurant Association survey said they will dine out on Mother’s Day. That’s up from 30 percent in 1996. 44% of adults in households of three or more people ate a Mother’s Day meal at a restaurant last year, compared with 24 percent in one-person households. Respondents under age 25 and people 35 to 44 years old were more likely than older respondents to dine out on Mother’s Day: 47 percent and 42 percent, respectively. *(Rocky Mountain News, May 3, 2005)***

**Research indicates that 13 of 17 new mothers -- within two hours after first exposures to their infants -- can identify their babies' clothing by scent. Takes about six weeks for the majority of babies to identify their mothers' clothing that way. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**More than 155,000 American women have served in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Among their ranks, the Pentagon said, are more than 16,000 single mothers. *(The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 8, 2006)***

**Many new moms complain of feeling dull-witted from anxiety and lack of sleep. But a new study suggests that, in rats at least, motherhood may sharpen the mind. Researchers at the University of Richmond, say hormones produced by rats during pregnancy, combined with the stimulation gained from caring for offspring, apparently improve the animals' memory and learning skills. The researchers suspect the rodents' brains make new neural connections as a result of the sensory stimulation -- sights, sounds and cuddling -- that parenting provides. And the benefits are not necessarily limited to biological mothers. Rats that had never given birth but served as foster parents performed better when finding food hidden in an enclosure. Anything that makes a rat mother more efficient “translates into better survivability for her and her offspring,” said Craig Kinsley, a professor of neuroscience. *(Rick Callahan)***

**Employed mothers sleep an average of 3.6 fewer hours a week than those who are full-time homemakers. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, April 21, 2006)*

MOTHERLY LOVE: $11.4 billion is expected to be spent on flowers, cards and gifts to be showered upon American moms, wives, sisters, daughters and grandmothers on Mother's Day this year, May 8. That's a 10 percent jump from 2004, according to Ellen Tolley of the National Retail Federation. *(Rocky Mountain News, April 27, 2005)***

**According to a Pew Research Center report, the share of stay-at-home mothers is rising after decades of decline, reaching 29 percent in 2012 after hitting an all-time low of 23 percent in 1999. Almost half of these stay-at-home moms are minorities or have no more than a high school education, while more than a third live below the poverty line. *(CNN.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, April 18, 2014)***

**5.4 million mothers stayed home with their children last year, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. That's about 850,000 more than the number who did so 10 years earlier. And 88 percent of them said they made the choice primarily to care for children. *(Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, December 3, 2004)***

**When a woman takes leave from her job to care for her newborn baby, her working hours almost double, the experts say. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Why mothers talk more to baby girls than to baby boys I do not know, but such is the contention of the researchers. *(L. M. Boyd)***

Anthony DeCasper, professor of psychology at the University of North Carolina, at Greensboro, devised an ingenious experiment. He placed padded earphones over a newborn’s ears and gave him a bottle nipple attached to a closed rubber tube. Changes in pressure in the tube switched channels on a tape recorder. If the baby paused extra long between bursts of sucking, he heard one channel; if he paused shorter than average, he heard the other. The baby now had the ability, in effect, to change channels. DeCasper found that newborns choose the recording of their mother’s voice over that of another woman’s. The baby, however, has no innate interest in his father’s voice, which is heard in the womb only now and again, while the mother’s voice is ever-present. Within two weeks after birth, however, the baby can recognize Dad’s voice too. (Henci Goer, in Reader’s Digest, 1989)

**Children in deep sleep awoke to recordings of their mothers’ voices even if they slept through the beeping sound a smoke alarm makes, according to a study being released today by Columbus Children’s Hospital in Ohio. 23 of 24 children ages 6 to 12 in the study awoke to the recorded voice of their mother. Fourteen also awoke to the traditional tone alarm. 100 decibels: Loudness of both types of alarms. That’s about four times louder than levels used in standard home alarms. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, October 2, 2006)***

**Fifty-eight percent of mothers with children age 5 and under work outside of the home. That number rises to 74 percent for women with kids ages 6 to 17. Ninety percent of fathers are employed. *(Money magazine, as it appeared in The Week magazine, February 3, 2006)***

**Working Contagious for Mothers: 60% of working mothers surveyed by Harris Interactive for Working Mother magazine are daughters of working mothers. 41% of the mothers of women poled worked full time. 19% of previous-generation working mothers were on the “mommy track,” moving in and out of the workforce. *(Rocky Mountain News, April 11, 2005)***

**When moms juggle work and family roles, they stay healthier longer, says a large British study. Researchers at the University College, London compiled data from more than 2,500 middle-aged women, and found that those who had worked full time while raising their families reported fewer health problems as they grew older: Full-time homemakers fared worse – 38 percent of them were obese in middle age, as opposed to just 23 percent of working moms. Some critics of the study have suggested that healthier women choose to juggle more roles, but senior researcher Anne McMunn says that’s probably not the case. Instead, she says, multiple roles keep women psychologically limber and physically fit. “While it may be stressful for them at the time,” she tells the London Times, “their long-term health is better.” *(The Week magazine, June 2, 2006)***

**Working mothers on average spent 12 hours a week on child care in 2003, an hour more than stay-at-home mothers did in 1975. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 17, 2006)***

**One study shows young mothers worry less than any other category of person. Why? They don’t have time. How much you worry depends mostly on how much time you have to devote to that hobby. Or so say the experts. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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