

THE EFFECTS OF PARENTAL CAREERS ON CHILDREN

Frances P. Glascoe, Ph.D.
Professor of Pediatrics
Vanderbilt University
www.forepath.org

It is important for parents to keep a good balance between work and family. Your job can help your child learn and grow in new ways. Sometimes, however, your job can get in the way of raising your child carefully. Here are some of the good points and not so good points of parents working and pursuing careers.

PROS OF BOTH PARENTS WORKING

- Less parental stress related to finances
- Improves children's coping skills through opportunities to care for themselves, help with household chores, care for others, structure their time, etc.
- Less stereotyping of women and their social roles
- Improves children's knowledge of various careers

CONS EXIST WHEN

- Parents do not spend much time at home
- Parents bring negative attitudes, frustrations, etc., from work to home and fail to set aside work-related anger and frustration
- Parents talk too much about work at home
- Parents go out on weekends and evenings without their child

HOW TO COPE

Spending lots of time with your child improves his self-esteem and helps him do better in school. Therefore, parents should:

- Show interest in their child and his activities
- Act in a loving manner
- Show enjoyment in parenting
- Accept their child's strengths and weaknesses
- Treat their child respectfully
- Select daycare centers and babysitters carefully and cherish the bond their child has with other caretakers
- For children over ten who care for themselves after school or young children with babysitters, plan chores, snacks, and fun activities they can do independently and safely. Call home often. This shows your love even when you are not there.