

## Older mothers may raise happier children

31st March, 2017



New research suggests that the children of older mothers grow up to be happier. The study says children will also experience fewer behavioural problems and have fewer social and emotional difficulties.

Researchers from Aarhus University in Denmark looked at data from a random sample of 4,741 mothers. Lead researcher Professor Dion Sommer said we become, "more mentally flexible with age, more tolerant of other people". He said this could be the reason why older mothers do not scold and physically discipline their children as much as younger mothers. He added that, "this style of parenting can contribute to a positive psycho-social environment" as the child grows up.

The findings of the research showed that the average age of the women while pregnant was about 31. Studies show that older mothers worry less during pregnancy and are happier and more positive about becoming parents and towards their children in general. This may mean they are more caring and supportive of their children. Older mothers also tend to be in more stable relationships, they are better off financially and they have had a better education. Researchers also found that children born to older mothers have a better language ability than those born to younger mothers. This may be because older mothers spend more time with their children and talk to them more often.

Sources: [webmd.com](http://webmd.com) / [tandfonline.com](http://tandfonline.com) / [news-medical.net](http://news-medical.net)

## Writing

Older mothers are better mothers. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

research / happier / experience / emotional / difficulties / flexible / discipline / positive / average / pregnant / in general / supportive / relationships / financially / language

## True / False

- A study says children of older mothers have fewer behavioral problems. T / F
- The study is from a university in Denmark. T / F
- Researchers looked at data from 4,741 mothers. T / F
- The study said older mums scold children more than younger mums. T / F
- The average age of the mothers in the study was 41. T / F
- The study found that older mothers worried more about their pregnancy. T / F
- Older mothers are usually in more stable relationships. T / F
- Younger mothers were found to talk to their children more. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>experience</b>  | a. control      |
| 2. <b>data</b>        | b. demonstrate  |
| 3. <b>tolerant</b>    | c. secure       |
| 4. <b>discipline</b>  | d. surroundings |
| 5. <b>environment</b> | e. speak        |
| 6. <b>show</b>        | f. open-minded  |
| 7. <b>in general</b>  | g. talent       |
| 8. <b>stable</b>      | h. come across  |
| 9. <b>ability</b>     | i. usually      |
| 10. <b>talk</b>       | j. information  |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why might older women be better mothers?
- What is the best age for someone to become a parent?
- Is there a time when someone becomes too old to become a parent?
- How can society give more help to mothers (and fathers)?
- How difficult is the job of being a mother?
- Should mothers get paid for being a mother?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Phrase Match

- |                                              |                              |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. the children of older mothers             | a. random sample             |
| 2. fewer social and                          | b. more stable relationships |
| 3. looked at data from a                     | c. discipline their children |
| 4. more tolerant                             | d. emotional difficulties    |
| 5. older mothers do not scold and physically | e. pregnancy                 |
| 6. the average age of the women              | f. general                   |
| 7. mothers worry less during                 | g. grow up to be happier     |
| 8. children in                               | h. ability                   |
| 9. Older mothers also tend to be in          | i. of other people           |
| 10. a better language                        | j. while pregnant            |

## Discussion – Student B

- How much do you agree with what you read?
- Why might younger women be better mothers?
- What is a good mother?
- Have you become a more tolerant person?
- How should parents discipline their children?
- How useful is scolding young children?
- What are the best three adjectives to describe a mother?
- Should high schools give weekly parenting classes to children?

## Spelling

- fewer social and emotional ieftfdlisuci
- a random psmlea of 4,741 mothers
- more nlarotte of other people
- this could be the rasneo why
- yclasyplih discipline their children
- a esvotiip psycho-social environment
- the varegea age of the women
- older mothers worry less udrgni pregnancy
- more caring and rieupvspto
- they are better off iniclalfyna
- a better inctuoad
- a better language tibaiyl

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. j	3. f	4. a	5. d
6. b	7. i	8. c	9. g	10. e

## Role Play

### Role A – 18

You think 18 is the best age to become a first-time parent. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ages. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): 25, 32 or 40.

### Role B – 25

You think 25 is the best age to become a first-time parent. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ages. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): 18, 32 or 40.

### Role C – 32

You think 32 is the best age to become a first-time parent. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ages. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): 25, 18 or 40.

### Role D – 40

You think 40 is the best age to become a first-time parent. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their ages. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): 25, 32 or 18.

## Speaking – Happy parents

Rank these with your partner. Put the things that make parents happiest at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                    |                                |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| • big hugs         | • children at play             |
| • bath time        | • child graduates university   |
| • reading together | • child gets married           |
| • a child's birth  | • a child's first "I love you" |

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.