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**Parents happier after their children leave home – 23rd August, 2019**

## Level 4

Having children may be the key to happiness and a perfect family life. This image is true for some, but researchers say that children make parents happiest when they fly the nest - after they leave home. Researchers looked at data on the emotional wellbeing of 55,000 over 50-year-olds in Europe. They found that most parents were happier with life after their children left home. This could be because raising children is expensive and stressful.

A researcher said a reason for parents being happiest when their children leave home is the tables are turned - children support their parents. The researcher said parents suffer from less depression and are more positive about life. He said: "Children's roles as caregivers, providers of financial support or simply as a means of social contact might outweigh the negative aspects of parenthood." Healthy family relationships stop parents feeling lonely.

## Level 5

People believe that having children is the key to happiness and a perfect family life. This image is true for some, but researchers say that in reality, children make parents happiest when they fly the nest - when they leave home. Researchers looked at data from a survey of 55,000 over 50-year-olds in Europe. The respondents were quizzed about their emotional wellbeing. They discovered that most parents were happier with life after their offspring had left home. Researchers say this could be because raising children creates financial worries, stress, tiredness and anxiety.

The lead researcher, Christoph Becker, concluded that a big reason for parents being happiest when their children leave home is the tables are turned and children provide more support to their parents. The parents suffer from less depression and are more positive about life. Regarding the role reversal in providing support, Mr Becker said: "Children's roles as caregivers, providers of financial support or simply as a means of social contact might outweigh the negative aspects of parenthood." He added that healthy family relationships stave off loneliness in ageing parents.

## Level 6

Many of us believe that having children is the key to happiness and a perfect family life. Naturally, this idealistic image is true for some, but researchers say that in reality, children make us happiest when they fly the nest - when they have grown up and left home. Researchers in Germany looked at data from a survey of 55,000 over 50-year-olds living in Europe. The survey respondents were quizzed about their emotional wellbeing. The researchers discovered that most parents were happier with life after their offspring had left home and started making their own way in life. Researchers say this could be because raising children creates financial worry, stress, fatigue and anxiety.

The research was led by Christoph Becker at Heidelberg University. He concluded that a big reason for parents being happiest when their children leave home is that the tables are turned and the children provide more support to their parents. He said parents whose children no longer live with them suffer from fewer symptoms of depression and have a more positive outlook on life. Regarding the role reversal in providing support, Mr Becker said: "Children's roles as caregivers, providers of financial support or simply as a means of social contact might outweigh the negative aspects of parenthood." He added that maintaining family relationships may stave off loneliness in ageing parents.