

A quarter of adults don't want children

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It seems views on having children are changing in the USA. New research shows that 25 per cent of adults do not want to have children. A study from Michigan State University (MSU) reveals that a quarter of American adults are

happy to be "child-free". It says these people do not want children and are happier without them. MSU psychologists Jennifer Watling Neal and Zachary Neal did research on why people who do not want children might be different. They wanted to find out what the differences were between these child-free people and "non-parents". They said non-parents include "not-yet-parents" (those planning to have kids) and people who cannot have kids due to medical problems.

The researchers looked at data from 1,000 adults who took part in an MSU survey. Ms Neal said: "We were most surprised by how many child-free people there are. We found that more than one in four people...identified as child-free, which is much higher than...in previous studies." She said child-free people were more liberal than those with children, who were more conservative. She found that unsurprisingly, parents were more likely to be in a relationship. Around half of the child-free adults were single. Ms Neal also said child-free adults were a little younger and less well-educated than parents or non-parents. She added that more research is needed to find out why people make the decision to be child-free.

Sources: eurekaalert.org / futuraity.org / msu.edu

Writing

There will be a big problem if more adults choose to be child-free. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

views / children / a quarter / happy / psychologists / differences / parents / medical / data / survey / surprised / liberal / conservative / relationship / single / educated

True / False

- 1) Views on having children are changing worldwide. T / F
- 2) A study shows that a quarter of parents do not want more children. T / F
- 3) Researchers looked into why "child-free" people are different. T / F
- 4) The researchers wrote about "not-yet-parents". T / F
- 5) The researchers examined information on 10,000 couples. T / F
- 6) The researchers said child-free people were more conservative. T / F
- 7) Around three-quarters of the parents were married. T / F
- 8) Child-free people were less well-educated than parents. T / F

Synonym Match

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

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. views | a. information |
| 2. reveals | b. discover |
| 3. happy | c. opinions |
| 4. find out | d. probable |
| 5. problems | e. choice |
| 6. data | f. difficulties |
| 7. previous | g. predictable |
| 8. unsurprisingly | h. shows |
| 9. likely | i. earlier |
| 10. decision | j. content |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of children?
- b) Why might views on having children be changing?
- c) Do you worry this is not a good world to bring children up in?
- d) How many children is it best to have?
- e) What are the challenges of having children?
- f) What are the joys of having children?
- g) Is it better to have children?
- h) What advice do you have for today's parents?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. views | a. to be child-free |
| 2. happier | b. to medical problems |
| 3. people who do not want children | c. part in an MSU survey |
| 4. They wanted to find out what | d. without them |
| 5. cannot have kids due | e. find out why |
| 6. 1,000 adults who took | f. on having children |
| 7. much higher than | g. in a relationship |
| 8. likely to be | h. the differences were |
| 9. more research is needed to | i. in previous studies |
| 10. make the decision | j. might be different |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Is it easier or more difficult to be a parent nowadays?
- Is it a good thing that more people are not having children?
- How liberal are you?
- Is it better to be liberal or conservative?
- Would you be a good parent?
- What benefits are there of being child-free?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- sweiv on having children
- A study from Michigan State University selvera that
- MSU pglsosycihsto
- ehrracse on why
- what the icednefsrfe were
- due to emdclai problems
- took part in an MSU rsvyeu
- We were most srredispu
- one in four people eetididnif as child-free
- higher than in rseviopu studies
- more oncreivaetsv
- why people make the nidoscie

Answers – Synonym Match

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

Role Play

Role A – Laughter

You think laughter is the best thing about children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least enjoyable of these (and why): playing games, pride or friendship.

Role B – Playing Games

You think playing games is the best thing about children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least enjoyable of these (and why): laughter, pride or friendship.

Role C – Pride

You think pride is the best thing about children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least enjoyable of these (and why): playing games, laughter or friendship.

Role D – Friendship

You think friendship is the best thing about children. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least enjoyable of these (and why): playing games, pride or laughter.

Speaking – Children

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about having children at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| • Family life | • Being a parent |
| • Pride | • Laughter |
| • Love | • Watching them grow |
| • Friendship | • Playing games |

Answers – True False

1 F	2 F	3 T	4 T	5 F	6 F	7 F	8 T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.