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**Level 5 – 26th January 2026**

## Number of children affects lifespan of mothers

**FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:**

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2601/260126-having-children-and-lifespan-5.html>

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Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2601/260126-having-children-and-lifespan-5.html>

A study suggests the number of children a woman has might affect her rate of ageing. Research from Finland found that women who had five children or more, or no children, aged faster than those who had few kids. A researcher said: "From an evolutionary biology perspective, organisms have limited resources, such as time and energy. When a large amount of energy is invested in reproduction, it is taken away from bodily maintenance and repair mechanisms, which could reduce lifespan." She was surprised about the shorter lifespans of women who never gave birth.

The researchers analysed health data on 14,836 women. Researchers examined DNA data and blood, then modelled the effects of reproduction on women's rates of longevity. A researcher found that having fewer pregnancies could have positive effects on a mother's health. One benefit is a possible lower risk of breast and ovarian cancer. However, the "wear and tear" from multiple childbirths could reverse this lowered risk. Another factor that could increase longevity is the social support a mother receives for having children.

Sources: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/parents-might-age-faster-or-slower-based-on-how-many-kids-they-have/>  
<https://lifespan.io/news/the-impact-of-childbearing-trajectories-on-aging/>  
<https://www.helsinki.fi/en/news/public-health/number-and-timing-children-linked-biological-aging>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2601/260126-having-children-and-lifespan-5.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. affect her rate             | a. biology perspective |
| 2. women who had five children | b. birth               |
| 3. from an evolutionary        | c. invested            |
| 4. organisms have limited      | d. or more             |
| 5. a large amount of energy is | e. of women            |
| 6. repair                      | f. resources           |
| 7. the shorter lifespans       | g. mechanisms          |
| 8. women who never gave        | h. of ageing           |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. health                        | a. tear               |
| 2. researchers examined DNA data | b. a mother receives  |
| 3. the effects                   | c. data on 14,836     |
| 4. risk of breast and            | d. increase longevity |
| 5. wear and                      | e. of reproduction    |
| 6. multiple                      | f. ovarian cancer     |
| 7. Another factor that could     | g. and blood          |
| 8. the social support            | h. childbirths        |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2601/260126-having-children-and-lifespan-5.html>

A <sup>(1)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ number of children a woman has might affect her rate of ageing. Research from Finland found that women who had five children or more, or no children, <sup>(2)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ those who had few kids. A researcher said: "<sup>(3)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ biology perspective, organisms have limited resources, such as time and energy. When a <sup>(4)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ energy is invested in reproduction, it is taken away from bodily maintenance and repair mechanisms, <sup>(5)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ lifespan." She was surprised about the shorter lifespans of women who <sup>(6)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

The researchers analysed <sup>(7)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ 14,836 women. Researchers examined DNA data and blood, then modelled the <sup>(8)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ on women's rates of longevity. A researcher found that having fewer pregnancies could have <sup>(9)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ on a mother's health. One benefit is a possible lower risk of <sup>(10)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ cancer. However, the "wear and tear" from multiple childbirths could <sup>(11)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ risk. Another factor that could increase longevity is the <sup>(12)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ mother receives for having children.

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2601/260126-having-children-and-lifespan-5.html>

A study suggests the number of children a woman has might affect the rate of ageing. Research from Finland found that women who had five children or more, or no children, aged faster than those who had few kids. A researcher said: "From an evolutionary biology perspective, organisms have limited resources, such as time and energy. When a large amount of energy is invested in reproduction, it is taken away from bodily maintenance and repair mechanisms, which could reduce lifespan." She was surprised about the shorter lifespans of women who never gave birth. The researcher analysed health data on 14,836 women. The researcher examined DNA data and blood, then modelled the effects of reproduction on women's rate of longevity. A researcher found that having fewer pregnancies could have positive effects on a mother's health. One benefit is a possible lower risk of breast and ovarian cancer. However, the "wear and tear" from multiple childbirths could reverse this lowered risk. Another factor that could increase longevity is the social support a mother receives for having children.

# HAVING CHILDREN SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2601/260126-having-children-and-lifespan-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about having children in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.  
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2601/260126-having-children-and-lifespan-5.html>

Write about **having children** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.

[illegible]