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Stress, exhaustion and guilt: modern parenting

压力、疲惫与内疚：现代育儿法

Parenthood in the United States has become much more demanding than it used to be. 在美国，为人父母的要求已经比过去要高得多。

Over just a couple of generations, parents have greatly increased the amount of time, attention and money they put into raising children. Mothers who work outside the home spend just as much time tending their children as stay-at-home mothers did in the 1970s. 只在短短几代人的时间里，父母们花在抚养孩子上的时间、精力和金钱都大大增加了。外出工作的母亲照看孩子的时间与上世纪 70 年代的全职母亲一样多。

While this kind of intensive parenting – constantly teaching and monitoring children – has been the norm for upper-middle-class parents since the 1990s, new research shows that people across class divides now consider it the best way to raise children, even if they don't have the resources to enact it.

自上世纪 90 年代以来，这种不断教导和监督孩子的密集型育儿方式，已经成为中上阶层父母中的常态，然而，新的研究表明，现在不同阶层的人都认为这是抚养孩子的最佳方式，即使他们没有资源去做这件事。

There are signs of a backlash, led by so-called free-range parents, but social scientists say the relentlessness of modern-day parenting has a powerful motivation: economic anxiety. For the first time, it's as likely as not that American children will be less prosperous than their parents. For parents, giving children the best start in life has come to mean doing everything they can to ensure that their children can climb to a higher class, or at least not fall out of the one they were born into.

在此期间社会上也出现了反对这种育儿方式的迹象，反抗由一群所谓的“放养式”父母主导，但社会科学家表示当代这种密集式的教育方法之所以能持续这个热度，一个强有力的诱因是经济上的焦虑。这是头一次出现这样的情况，美国的孩子可能会没有他们的父母富有。对父母们来说，给孩子一个最好的人生起点意味着尽他们所能确保孩子可以走向一个更高的阶层，或者至少不会从他们生长的阶层跌落出去。

Experts agree that investing in children is a positive thing – they benefit from time with their parents, stimulating activities and supportive parenting styles. But it's also unclear how much of children's success is actually determined by parenting.

专家们也认为，在孩子身上投资是一件积极有利的事情，和父母共处的时间，趣味性的活动以及鼓励式的育儿方式都能让孩子受益。但孩子的成功究竟多大程度上取决于育儿方式，这点尚不明确。

"It's still an open question whether it's the parenting practices themselves that are making the difference, or is it simply growing up with college-educated parents in an environment that's richer in many dimensions?" said Liana Sayer, a sociologist at the University of Maryland.

“究竟是这种育儿方式本身起作用了，还是单单因为这些孩子的父母都受过高等教育，孩子在这种各个层面都更富有的环境下成长带来了改变，这还是个待考证的问题。”马里兰大学的社会学家利亚纳·塞娅如此说到。

——— 文章来源 / 纽约时报

重点词汇

exhaustion/ɪɡˈzɔːstʃən/

n. 精疲力竭，疲惫不堪 (exhaust v./exhausted adj.)

- I felt ill with exhaustion.
- Working too hard had completely exhausted me. (v.)

parenting/'perəntɪŋ/

n. 育儿，养育子女

- parenting classes
- parenting skills
- good/poor parenting

parenthood/'perənthʊd/

n. 父母身份

- fatherhood/motherhood

stay-at-home/'steɪ ət hoʊm/

adj. 在家里的，恋家的

intensive/ɪn'tensɪv/

adj. 密集的

- highly intensive
- labor-intensive
- energy-intensive industries

divide/dɪ'vaɪd/

n. 分歧，差异；分水岭

- new political divide
- the divide between rich and poor countries
- The mountain is the divide between the two rivers.

enact/ɪ'nækt/

v. 实施，实行

- Congress enacted a tax reform bill.

backlash/'bæklæʃ/

n. 强烈抵制，集体反对

- to spark an international backlash
- a public backlash against racism

free-range/friː'reɪndʒ/

adj. 放养的

- free-range chickens
- free-range eggs

relentlessness/rɪˈlentləsnəs/

n. 持续很久；严格苛刻

as likely as not

很可能，说不定

- Maoxi threw it away as likely as not.

prosperous/ˈprɒspərəs/

adj. 富足的，成功的，繁荣的

start/stɑːrt/

n. 起始优势，良好的基础条件

- They worked hard to give their children a good start in life.

stimulating/ˈstɪmjuleɪtɪŋ/

adj. 趣味盎然的

sociologist/ˌsəʊsiˈɒlədʒɪst/

n. 社会学家