

Stress, exhaustion and guilt: modern *parenting*

Parenthood in the United States has become much more demanding than it used to be.

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.

parenting 子女教育

tend 照料; 照看

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.

intensive 集中的

intense 强烈的

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.

backlash 联合抵制

free-range 放养

relentless 无情的; 不间断的

prosperous 富有的; 繁荣的

as likely as not 很可能

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.

"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.