1. [Lifestyle](http://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle)
2. [London Life](http://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life)

**Positive, confident fathers less likely to have children with behavioural problems, study finds**

* [**NATALIE GIL**](http://www.standard.co.uk/author/natalie-gil), [**REFINERY29**](http://www.standard.co.uk/author/refinery29)
* Wednesday 23 November 2016
* [0 comments](http://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life/positive-confident-fathers-are-less-likely-to-have-children-with-behavioural-problems-study-finds-a3402901.html#commentsDiv)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | http://www.standard.co.uk/sites/all/themes/ines_themes/ines_theme/img/facebookShareButton.png |  | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | http://www.standard.co.uk/sites/all/themes/ines_themes/ines_theme/img/twitterShareButton.png |  | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | http://www.standard.co.uk/sites/all/themes/ines_themes/ines_theme/img/emailShareButton.png |  | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | http://www.standard.co.uk/sites/all/themes/ines_themes/ines_theme/img/blank.gif |  | | **3** | |

Click to follow  
ES Lifestyle

**Men who approach fatherhood with confidence and a positive attitude are less likely to have children with behavioural problems, according to a new study.**

The research found that how a man feels about fatherhood after his child is born, and how secure he feels in his role as a parent and partner, have more influence over the child's later behaviour than how much childcare and household chores he does, [The Guardian reported](https://www.theguardian.com/science/2016/nov/22/mens-attitude-to-fatherhood-influences-child-behaviour-says-study).

In the study, which was published in the journal [*BMJ Open*](http://bmjopen.bmj.com/lookup/doi/10.1136/bmjopen-2016-012034), academics from the University of Oxford investigated fathers' influence on their children's behaviour by looking at data from the large-scale [Avon longitudinal study](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alspac/), which tracked the health and development of thousands of children born in the UK in the early 1990s.

Mothers filled out questionnaires about how their child's behaviour at age nine and 11 – including their ability to share, levels of restlessness, attitudes towards other children and their confidence in new situations.

Meanwhile, fathers answered surveys about their own attitudes and approach to parenting shortly after their child was born – including their emotional response to the baby, their confidence as a parent, and involvement in childcare and housework.

By analysing these sets of data together, researchers found that children with fathers who were confident about being a parent and happy about their role were less likely to be badly behaved.

How much childcare and housework the father did, by contrast, apparently wasn't linked to their child's behaviour.

“It is the emotional connection and the emotional response to actually being a parent that matters enormously in relation to later outcomes for children,” said Maggie Redshaw, a developmental and health psychologist at Oxford, who co-authored the research.

However, the researchers admitted the results may not be accurate because the study was based on self-reported data and the men's attitudes to parenting could have changed over time.

Nevertheless, they said it highlights the influence of parents' own feelings about their roles as mums and dads on their child's development.

Redshaw said: “It is part of the approach that early experience matters and it matters from the point of view of both parents,” reported *The Guardian.*

Still, we don't think this is any excuse to let dads off the hook when it comes to childcare and housework. [Especially if they want to maintain a healthy relationship with their partner](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/science-news/11972672/Men-who-help-with-housework-have-more-and-better-sex.html).