The secret to a longer life? Try having children

**Chris Smyth, Health Editor**

March 14 2017, 12:01am, The Times



Parents who reach the age of 60 can expect to live almost two years longer than people without children, Swedish researchers have foundGETTY IMAGES

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It may be some compensation for all those long hours changing nappies and re-reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*: being a parent makes you live longer.

Parents who reach the age of 60 can expect to live almost two years longer than people without children and the gap persists to extreme old age, Swedish researchers found.

Karin Modig, of the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, compared the 1.4 million people born in Sweden between 1911 and 1925, finding that at the age of 60, men with children could expect to live another 20 years, compared with 18 years for those without. Women with children could expect to live for almost 25 years past the age of 60 — 18 months longer than those without, she reported in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.

Ms Modig said: “We called it payback time. That’s how life works — you give and then you get back. Biologically, perhaps that’s the idea.”

**Creative writing teacher sent girl explicit messages**  
A creative writing teacher sent “highly sexually charged” and explicit messages to a 17-year-old pupil after they read *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

Thomas Stirling, 24, claimed to have been comparing the “grammar and content” of the erotic novel with Shakespeare’s *Macbe*th. But his 18-year-old girlfriend found “compromising” pictures on his phone and alerted the authorities.

Stirling, who was teaching at a college in Grimsby, Lincolnshire, admitted causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity while he was in a position of authority.

Grimsby crown court was told that he was sacked by Franklin College in 2015. He broke off contact with the girl, who was weeks away from her 18th birthday. Patricia Doherty, in mitigation, said that Stirling, of Bakewell, Derbyshire, had no previous convictions and accepted that he should not have befriended the girl.

Recorder Eric Elliott, QC, ordered Stirling to do 15 days’ rehabilitation. He must attend a sex offenders’ treatment programme and register as a sex offender for five years.

**Cheetah escape sends families running for cover at zoo**  
Families hid in a zoo’s shop and toilets after a cheetah escaped from its cage. The animal was on the loose at Port Lympne wildlife park, Kent, for nearly half an hour before keepers lured him back into his pen using lumps of meat. Visitors were escorted to safe areas and no one had been in danger, a park spokesman said.

Maggie Jones, 38, from Maidstone, who was visiting with her husband Gary, 39, and their children Danielle, 11, and Harry, 13, said: “It was pretty scary. Word quickly spread that a big cat was on the loose and parents were shooing their children into the shops and even into the toilets. Everyone was looking round nervously in case it was about to jump out on us.” Cheetahs, the world’s fastest land animal, reach speeds of up to 65mph.

**British man and Australian lover jailed for Bali killing**  
The son of a vicar from Yorkshire who bludgeoned a police officer to death on the Indonesian island of Bali last year in a dispute over his girlfriend’s stolen handbag has been given a six-year sentence. David Taylor, 34, had said that he acted in self-defence. Wayan Sudarsa, 53, was found with 42 wounds on Kuta beach on August 17 last year. Taylor’s Australian girlfriend, Sara Connor, 46, who had denied being involved in the attack, was sentenced to four years at the district court in Denpasar.

**Ivory dealers back calls for antique ‘passports’**  
Ivory sellers should be forced to obtain “passports” proving that the items are more than 70 years old, a report by Portsmouth University recommends. It is illegal to sell ivory from elephants killed after 1947 but the system relies on the honesty and skill of experts. Dealers backed the proposals, which would reduce the risk of them being prosecuted for an error in determining the age of an item. The Conservative Party pledged to “press for a total ban on ivory sales” in their manifesto in 2015.

**Squalid prison cells**  
Prisoners were left exposed to the elements in squalid cells, an inspection report reveals. Most of the 180 cells on three wings at Swinfen Hall prison, near Lichfield, Staffordshire, had windows without glass in when inspectors arrived unannounced in October. They also found a shortage of clothes for the 600 inmates. The category C jail is recruiting more prison officers.

**Cycle lane slip warning**  
A coroner investigating the death of a motorcyclist has called for London’s cycle superhighways to be resurfaced, warning that the blue painted surface could be too slippery and might cause further loss of life. Fiona Wilcox issued a “prevention of future deaths” report to Transport for London after an inquest into the death of Milan Dokic, 49, in March last year. She found that Mr Dokic had lost control and hit a bollard after skidding on a wet cycle superhighway in Battersea.

**Power bills up by 7%**  
SSE will increase electricity prices by 14.9 per cent on April 28, a rise of £73 annually for 2.8 million households. Gas prices will not rise, resulting in an average dual-fuel increase of 6.9 per cent. SSE is the last of the “big six” to raise prices in recent months after dual-fuel increases of 1.2 per cent by EDF Energy, 9.8 per cent by Npower, 7.8 per cent by Scottish Power and 8.8 per cent by Eon.

**‘Cannibal’ killer inquest**  
An ex-convict killed and partially ate a woman two weeks after he was released from prison and died when he was shot with a Taser by police, a double inquest in Newport, Gwent, was told. Matthew Williams, 34, killed Cerys Yemm, 22, after she went to his room at the Sirhowy Arms hotel in Blackwood, south Wales, in November 2014. The inquest will resume tomorrow.

**Prostate cancer hope**  
A drug found in antidepressants could help to stop the spread of prostate cancer, scientists believe. Bone cancer is found in 90 per cent of deaths. In experiments on mice, a team at Washington State University found that an enzyme called MAOA triggered signals allowing cancer to get into bones. The drug clorgyline disrupted the signals. The “promising” findings are published in *Cancer Cell*.