

**PARENTS ON PARENTING: HOW ARE CANADA'S  
CHILDREN BEING RAISED?**  
*Part I: The Challenge Of Parenting, And The Importance Of  
Closeness Between Parent and Child*



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# ***PARENTS ON PARENTING: HOW ARE CANADA'S CHILDREN BEING RAISED?***

## ***Part I: The Challenge Of Parenting, And The Importance Of Closeness***

**Toronto, Ontario** – Parenting today appears to be an extremely challenging task, as nine in ten (90%) Canadian parents agree with the statement “parenting is more challenging than any other job I’ve ever had,” according to an Ipsos-Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail survey of Canadian parents released today.

Parents also believe that giving affection is a very important part of parenting -- as almost all (92%) agree that a “parent’s emotional closeness with their baby can strongly influence their intellectual development.” Further, only one in five (19%) agree that “a parent can spoil a baby by talking to them and holding them too much,” while 80% disagree with this notion.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail poll conducted between February 24 and March 4, 2004. The telephone survey is based on a randomly selected sample of 648 adult parents living in Canada. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 3.9$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian parent population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.*

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## ***Nine in Ten (90%) Agree That Parenting Is More Challenging Than Any Job They've Ever Had***

Almost all parents (90%) agree with the statement “parenting is more challenging than any other job I’ve ever had” (15% agree somewhat, 75% agree completely). One in ten (9%) disagree with this statement (7% disagree somewhat, 2% disagree completely).

- Agreement by region: Alberta (95%), Atlantic Canada (93%), British Columbia (93%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (89%), Ontario (89%), and Quebec (88%).
- Mothers are more likely than fathers to agree with this statement (95% vs. 85%).
- Level of agreement is consistent across parents with different age children: Children age 0-5 (94%), children age 6-11 (92%), and children age 12-17 (89%).

## ***Nine In Ten (92%) Think A Parents Emotional Closeness With Their Baby Can Strongly Influence Their Intellectual Development***

Almost all parents (92%) agree that “a parent’s emotional closeness with their baby can strongly influence their intellectual development” (25% agree somewhat, 67% agree completely). A small percentage (7%) of parents disagree with this notion (5% disagree somewhat, 2% disagree completely).

- Nine in ten in each region agree with the statement that a parent’s emotional closeness with their baby can strongly influence their intellectual development: Ontario (96%), Atlantic Canada (94%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (94%), British Columbia (92%), Alberta (90%), and Quebec (87%).



## ***One in Five (19%) Agree That Parents Can Spoil A Baby By Talking To Them and Holding Them Too Much***

Only one in five (19%) parents agree with the statement “a parent can spoil a baby by talking to them and holding them too much” (10% agree somewhat, 9% agree completely), compared with the strong majority (80%) of Canadian parents who disagree with this suggestion (15% disagree somewhat, 65% disagree completely). The remaining 1% of respondents indicate they don’t know.

- Parents living in urban areas are more likely than parents living in rural areas to agree that parents can spoil a baby by talking to them and holding them too much (21% vs. 13%).
- As education level rises, level of agreement with the statement that parents can spoil a baby by too much talking and holding abates (35% among those with less than a high school, 25% of those with a high school education, 20% of those with a post-secondary education, and 9% of those with a university degree).
- As annual household income rises, the percentage of those who agree with the statement that a parent can spoil a baby by talking to them too much declines (31% less than \$30,000, 19% \$30,000 to less than \$60,000, and 14% of those with \$60,000 or more).
- Level of agreement by age of children living in household: Children age 0-5 (20%), children age 6-11 (17%), and children age 12-17 (19%).



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