

# Evidence from Maternity Leave Expansions of the Impact of Maternal Care on Early Child Development

Michael Baker and Kevin Milligan

## Abstract

We study the impact of maternal care on early child development using an expansion in Canadian maternity leave entitlements. Following the leave expansion, mothers who took leave spent 48–58 percent more time not working in their children’s first year of life. This extra maternal care primarily crowded out home-based care by unlicensed nonrelatives and replaced full-time work. Our estimates suggest a weak impact of this increase in maternal care on indicators of child development. For example, measures of temperament and motor and social development show changes that are small and statistically insignificant.

Received February 2008.  
Accepted September 2008.

© 2010 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System

« Previous | Next Article »  
Table of Contents

### This Article

doi: 10.3368/jhr.45.1.1  
J. Human Resources Winter 2010  
vol. 45 no. 1 1-32

» Abstract  
**Full Text (PDF)**  
References

### Classifications

Articles

### Services

Email this article to a colleague  
Alert me when this article is cited  
Alert me if a correction is posted  
Similar articles in this journal  
Download to citation manager

### Citing Articles

### Google Scholar

### Related Content

### Current Issue



Fall 2020, 55 (4)

Alert me to new issues of J. Human Resources

Activate/Manage Subscription

About JHR

Editorial Board

Submission Guidelines

Permissions/Reprints

Advertising

Indexing/Abstracting

Recommend to Library

Related Publications

University of WI Press

Privacy Policy



### Most Read Cited

1. Labor Market Concentration
2. The Role of Conferences on the Pathway to Academic Impact: Evidence from a Natural Experiment
3. The Early Origins of Birth Order Differences in Childrens Outcomes and Parental Behavior
4. The Consequences of Academic Match between Students and Colleges
5. Intergenerational Economic Mobility in the United States, 1940 to 2000

» View all Most Read articles

2008. "Evidence from maternity leave expansions of the impact of maternal care on early child development." *J. Human Resources*. Vol. 45, no. 1. Fox, E., G. Pascall and T. Warren. However, due to sample size restrictions, the next investigation of these factors—first on whether parents take any leave, and secondly on the length of leave—is limited to children living outside Quebec. Mothers who work full time are more likely to take leave. In a model predicting whether non-Quebec resident mothers take any leave, several employment characteristics were found to be important when controlling for the child’s sex, whether the child was first born, maternal age, and parental education and income. We study the impact of maternal care on early child development using an expansion in Canadian maternity leave entitlements. Following the leave expansion, mothers who took leave spent between 48 and 58 percent more time not working in the first year of their children’s lives. We find that this extra maternal care primarily crowded out home-based care by unlicensed non-relatives, and replaced mostly full-time work. However, the estimates suggest a weak impact of the increase in maternal care on indicators of child development. This paper represents the views of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the views of Statistics Canada or the National Bureau of Economic Research. Download Citation. MARC RIS BibTeX. We study the impact of maternal care on early child development using an expansion in Canadian maternity leave entitlements. Following the leave expansion, mothers who took leave spent between 48 and 58 percent more time not working in the first year of their children’s lives. We find that this extra maternal care primarily crowded out home-based care by unlicensed non-relatives, and replaced mostly full-time work. However, the estimates suggest a weak impact of the increase in maternal care on indicators of child development. Measures of family environment and motor-social development sh