

The enduring effects of mother-child interactions as children become adults

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Credit: Vera Kratochvil/Public Domain

Interactions between a mother and her child have been linked to cognitive outcomes in childhood, but little work has looked at farther-

reaching effects.

In a *Journal of Marriage & Family* study that examined data from the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study, more positive mother-child interactions during the first 16 years of life predicted [higher education](#) in adulthood, which predicted less decline in episodic memory, or the memory of autobiographical events. Additionally, more positive mother-child interactions were associated with better [episodic memory](#) through higher marital satisfaction.

The results provide evidence for the broad and enduring effects of early life maternal relationships on later life developmental processes.

"The findings highlight the importance of taking a more integrative and lifespan perspective to assess how early life experiences affect socioemotional and [cognitive development](#)," the authors wrote.

More information: Neika Sharifian et al, The Enduring Effects of Mother–Child Interactions on Episodic Memory in Adulthood, *Journal of Marriage and Family* (2019). [DOI: 10.1111/jomf.12569](https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12569)

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