

# 5 Proven benefits of putting your child in daycare <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS

If you're a working parent with children in daycare, you may have received your fair share of judgment from those who think that kids should only be cared for by their parents. However, daycare is a reality for many parents who must work to support their families — not to mention the fact that plenty of parents want to work.

There are actually many proven benefits for kids who go to daycare. So if you're ever experiencing mom guilt about this decision, check out these five perks for your child that come from going to daycare and stop apologizing for this perfectly acceptable — and positive! — parenting choice.

### 1. Daycare prepares kids for school.

Sooner or later, your little one will have to leave the nest for school. If they've already been going to daycare for a while by the time preschool or kindergarten rolls around, the transition of leaving home for the day will be easier.

Not only that, but children who attended daycare perform better when they get to school. A 2016 study found that by age 5, kids who attended formal childcare programs had stronger reading and math skills compared to kids who attended informal, home-based care programs.

### 2. Daycare makes kids better communicators.

Daycare offers a great opportunity for your kids to socialize at a young age, and in turn, it can help them learn communication skills as well. A study in 2013 found that kids in daycare have an improved ability to “adjust their non-verbal communication to take into account the age of the person they are playing with,” according to Science Daily, likely because they've been more exposed to kids of different ages.

### 3. Kids in daycare are more likely to go on to earn college degrees.

A 30-year study led by the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill found that adults who had been enrolled as infants in a high-quality childcare program were four times more likely to have earned a college degree, and were also more likely to remain consistently employed.

### 4. Daycare helps reduce infections later on.

While it may seem like kids constantly pick up bugs while in daycare, those kids will get a reprieve later in life. A study published in the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine showed that kids who attend large-group childcare centers before age 3.5 get more respiratory and ear infections than those cared for at home, but they are less likely to get them once they enter elementary school.

While there's never a good time for your child to feel unwell, the argument can be made that it's less convenient once being sick means missing school, and thus crucial learning.

### 5. Daycare may help kids try healthier foods.

Children in daycare were more willing to try nutritious foods when daycare staff members sat with them and ate the same food, according to a study in the Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics. It also helped when those daycare staff talked with the kids about the healthy foods they were eating. A willingness to try more foods while they're younger can pay off over time when parents try to introduce those foods in meals later on.

Did you send your children to daycare? Did you attend daycare yourself as a kid? How do you think this affected you?

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