

Parentline on “The Crunch”

Widespread cutbacks, relationship breakdown and a lack of quality time together as Recession bites. Survey commissioned by Parentline Plus reveals

The recession is taking a terrible toll on families' lives, causing some families to make cutbacks (88%) , to be on the brink of relationship breakdown (10%) and to spend more time working and less with their family to make ends meet (19%) , a survey carried out commissioned by parent support charity Parentline Plus has revealed. Worryingly, the survey also shows that a significant number of families believe the financial strain and insecurities due to the recession have affected their children's quality of life (39%). Conducted by YouGov, the survey was commissioned by Parentline Plus – the leading independent provider of parent support in the country – as it launches a major campaign to help families suffering due to the recession. The survey provides a nationwide snapshot of the devastating effects the recession is having on family life for parents with children under 16. Key findings include:

88% of parents have made cut backs due to the recession

49% of parents feel that the uncertainty of potential job losses have increased the strain of their day to day life

10% of parents believe that concerns about money are putting them at greater risk of separation or divorce

19% of parents have less time to spend with their

family because they have to work more to
make ends meet

39% of parents believe that financial strains have
impacted on their children's quality of life

31% of parents feel drained and lacking in
enthusiasm in the time they spend with family
because of financial worries

The findings are released as Parentline Plus launches a major campaign to help ease the pressure on families who are suffering hardship and risk family break up and increased stress due to the effects of the recession. The Department for Children, Schools and Families has given £150,000* to the charity to ensure parents struggling with the emotional stress of the recession are aware of the support that Parentline Plus can offer. Parentline Plus will be launching a local radio advertising campaign on 85 stations across England; distributing a free recession pack to callers to their free, 24-hour helpline – 0808 800 2222 - and sending one million leaflets packed with tips and information on beating the recession to schools, children's centres and other places that parents visit. Parentline Plus Chief Executive Jeremy Todd said: *"These survey results are extremely worrying. They show that families across the country are under real strain and the recession is impacting on all aspects of family life. I urge anyone who feels like the recession is taking its toll, or is struggling to cope with normal family life, to get in touch. Whilst we work with thousands of families each year, we know that there are many more who are struggling but don't know about the free support services we provide."* The charity is urging parents not to be put off asking for help because they fear they will be labelled as 'bad parents.' In a stressful situation, asking for help is a sign of parenting strength, and parents should

be encouraged to access the support available, such as the free* and confidential Parentline service available 24 hours a day – 0808 800 2222. What is crucial is that parents know they can either pick up the phone or make contact by email anonymously and confidentially. The Parentline Plus helpline is free and is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Parents can also visit www.parentlineplus.org.uk online and all emails sent in do get answered.