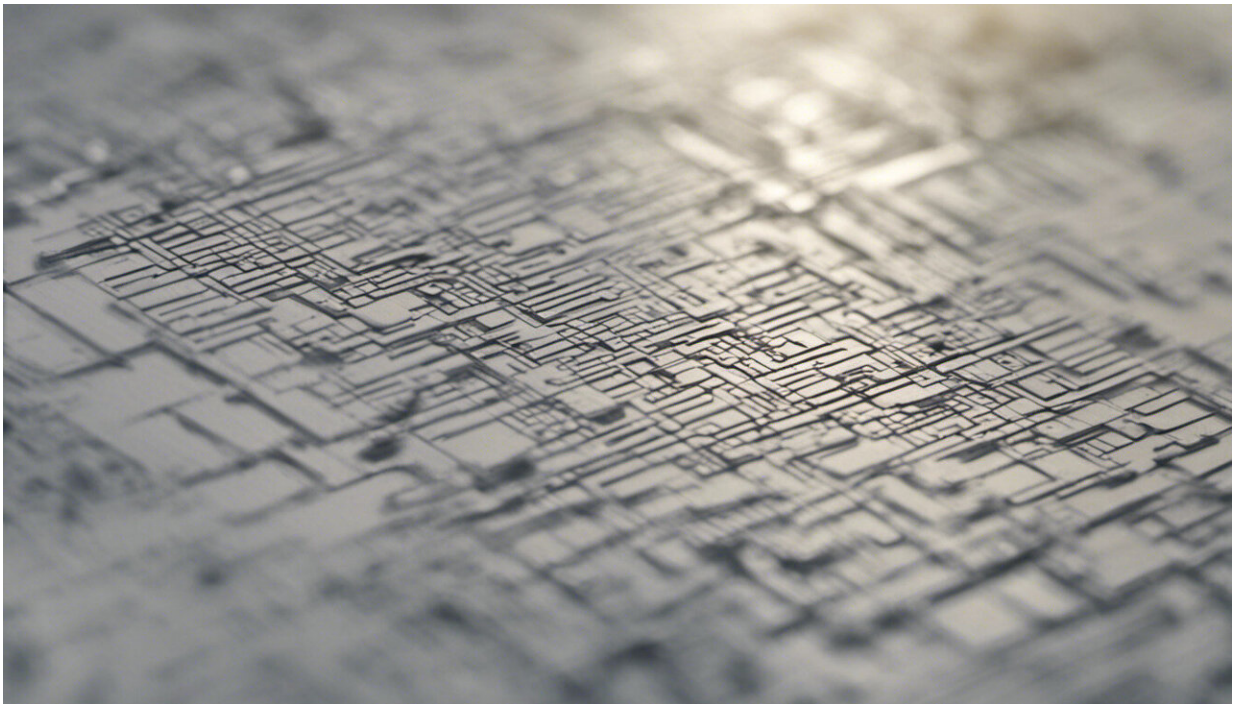


Working outside office hours does not necessarily harm the family

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Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

Working outside office hours does not necessarily harm the family. Working in the evening, at night or at weekends actually gives parents more opportunities to care for their children themselves. This is the conclusion of Melissa Verhoef's PhD thesis 'Work schedules, childcare and well-being'. It puts this type of work schedule in a more positive

light than previous research found and prevailing public opinion holds. Verhoef defended her doctoral thesis on Friday 19 May at Utrecht University. Her research was carried out with funding from the NWO Research Talent programme.

Verhoef investigated the connection between [parents'](#) work schedules, [childcare](#) and the well-being of parents and children. Her investigation revealed that work done outside [office](#) hours gives parents more opportunities to care for their children themselves.

In spite of this, childcare is still important for the well-being of these parents. In families that make use of childcare facilities, fathers who work outside office hours have higher well-being than fathers who work during office hours. On the other hand, in families that do not make use of childcare facilities, mothers who work outside office hours have lower well-being.

Children's well-being

The relationship between parents and the staff at the childcare facility is important for children's well-being. The better the relationship, the better it is for the child, according to Verhoef.

Verhoef: 'Incidentally, the role of childcare is not the same in all countries. I compared Dutch families with families in Finland and Great Britain. Dutch parents who work outside office hours tend to make less use of formal childcare than Finnish parents.'

Furthermore, Dutch children have lower well-being than British [children](#) if they remain in formal childcare for a longer time. These differences can be explained in part by the fact that childcare policy and social norms are not the same in each country.

More information: The choice for child-care arrangements and consequences for the well-being of families. [www.nwo.nl/en/research-and-res ... ects/i/46/10846.html](http://www.nwo.nl/en/research-and-research-projects/i/46/10846.html)

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