

Study links parental support and career success of children

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A recent study finds that young people who get financial support from their parents have greater professional success, highlighting one way social inequality is transmitted from one generation to the next.

"The question underlying this work was whether [parental support](#) gives adult children an advantage or hinders their development," says Anna

Manzoni, an associate professor of sociology at North Carolina State University and author of a paper on the work.

To address this question, Manzoni looked at data on 7,542 U.S. adults between the ages of 18 and 28. The data was from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, which collected data from study participants over time, allowing researchers to track an individual's occupational status. This status reflects the average education and income of people in a given occupation.

"By using models that account for other individual and family-level variables, I found that parental assistance could help or hinder [young people](#), depending on the nature of the assistance," Manzoni says.

Specifically, Manzoni found that the more direct financial support young people received from their parents, the higher their occupational status. This was particularly true for college graduates who got direct support from their parents.

On the other hand, young people who received indirect [financial support](#) by living at home had lower occupational status. Again, this was particularly true for [college graduates](#).

In other words, [college grads](#) who got money from their parents did especially well professionally, while college grads who lived at home did especially poorly.

"This highlights one way that [social inequality](#) is carried forward across generations," Manzoni says. "Most families want to support their kids, but not all families are able to give money to their children as they enter adulthood. Children whose families can afford to provide direct support do very well. Other families offer the only support they can afford, by offering their kids a place to live. But this appears to adversely affect

career outcomes.

"It's a Catch-22 for families."

The paper, "Parental Support and Youth Occupational Attainment: Help or Hindrance?" is published in the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*.

More information: Anna Manzoni, Parental Support and Youth Occupational Attainment: Help or Hindrance?, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* (2018). [DOI: 10.1007/s10964-018-0856-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-018-0856-z)

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