



Can we afford a baby and not break up?

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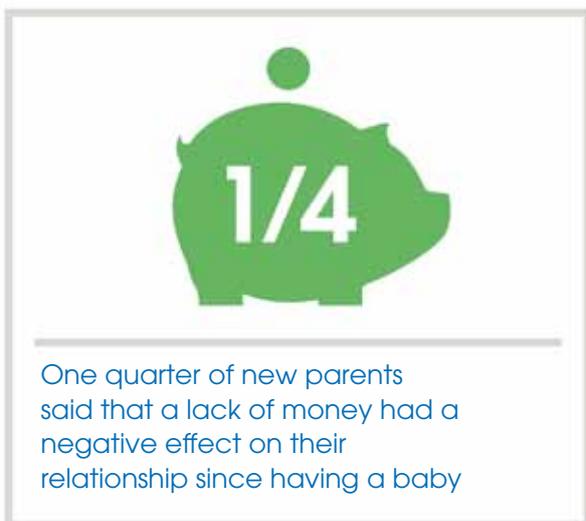
Money worries

There is little that can compare with the excitement of having a new baby. But sometimes lost amid shopping for a pushchair or tiny baby clothes is the financial impact. The Money Advice Service¹ estimates the cost of a new baby can be up to £7,200, in their first year.

Recent research² carried out by relationship charity OnePlusOne shows 35% of new parents longed for more money once the baby is born. .

The transition to parenthood can be a particularly difficult time for couples, as a new baby puts them under pressures they may never have experienced before. With a new baby sometimes come more traditional roles for each parent, that of homemaker and breadwinner. Many households have to adjust to receiving a single income and as one partner stops work, even in the short term, the nature of the relationship changes to one of greater dependence on each other.

New mums often say that they feel uncomfortable having to ask for money instead of having their own income and according to Netmums³, almost half of mums feel stressed about the dilemma of whether to work or not. They say that many mums feel guilty about not going back to work because of the loss of income



Our survey said:

- 35% of new parents longed for more money once the baby is born.
- One quarter of new parents said that a lack of money had a negative effect on their relationship since having a baby
- Finances were the second biggest cause of stress for new parents

Less money and new expenses can cause financial stress and lead to arguments, especially if the couple is already in debt. When planning for a baby, couples need to consider how a child will affect their finances and how to discuss money issues without falling out.

What people said:

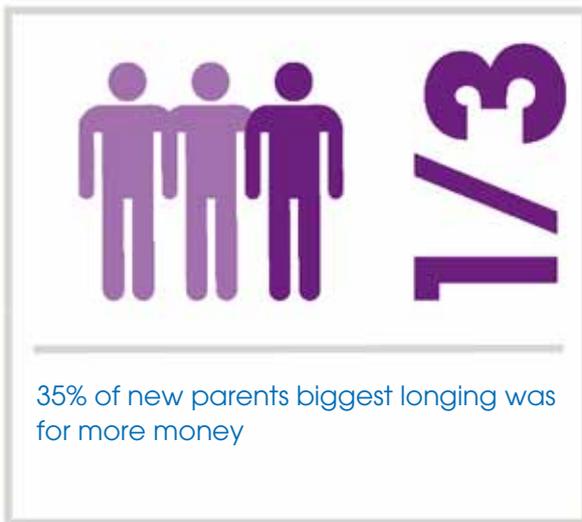
Amy - "Don't let money get to you once the little one arrives, try and save a bit here and there if you can, and you will be well prepared once he arrives. Having a baby isn't nearly as expensive as you may think over the first year and don't go overboard with toys, as they are really not that interested until they are at least 1!"

Jane - "Also - because you have just finished your employed life for a while it will feel very strange to not have your own income. Ask your partner to put aside some money for you to spend whilst on maternity leave. It's not nice having to ask for money every time you need it and need it you will- once you have got used to eventually getting out of the house you will benefit from meeting friends or other Mums for lunch or coffee."

1. <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/>

2. ICM surveyed 1,403 parents, including 512 new parents who's eldest child under the age of three. The research was carried out between April 19th and 24th 2013. ICM also hosted an online community followed up by focus groups to gather qualitative data referred to in the report.

3. <http://www.netmums.com/>



Case Studies

Chrissie, mother of two from Liverpool

"Money has been a challenge for us. When you have children you do have to make major sacrifices."

Tami, mother of two from Hull

"For the first 13 months we argued more; it builds and builds until you just snap. We didn't talk much about it; we probably should have talked more."

Penny Mansfield, Director, OnePlusOne:

"When planning for a baby, consider the financial impact and how to manage sensitive discussions about money and new roles without falling out. To keep your relationship strong, plan ahead, agree a budget and keep talking – it's important to share your feelings and support one another."

About OnePlusOne

As the UK's leading relationship research organisation, OnePlusOne is committed to strengthening relationships. Through its webservice TheCoupleConnection, OnePlusOne places its wealth of research directly into the hands of couples and parents, empowering them to work on their relationships themselves

Top Tips

- Embrace the hand-me-down - Yes, you want to bring your baby home in something sparkling new. After that, though, think second hand. Anything you are handed down is money you won't have to spend.
- Take a fresh look at your benefits – It's worth checking out what benefits you are entitled to. As your circumstances have changed you may be entitled to more. You can find out more at the Money Advice Service website.
- Take a look at the 'baby costs calculator' on the Money Advice Service website – this will help you to prioritise, especially if money is tight – it also has lots of useful information.
- Netmums have a handy checklist and top tips for new parents considering returning to work.
- Dads.info have excellent advice on budgeting in advance of the new arrival.
- Try to spend some quality time with your partner to help you feel able to communicate and bring you closer together.

OnePlusOne

Strengthening relationships

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And the [ParentConnection.org.uk](https://www.ParentConnection.org.uk)

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