

The invisible load of motherhood

and how to share it more equally

Want to practice shared parenting?
Or think you already do?

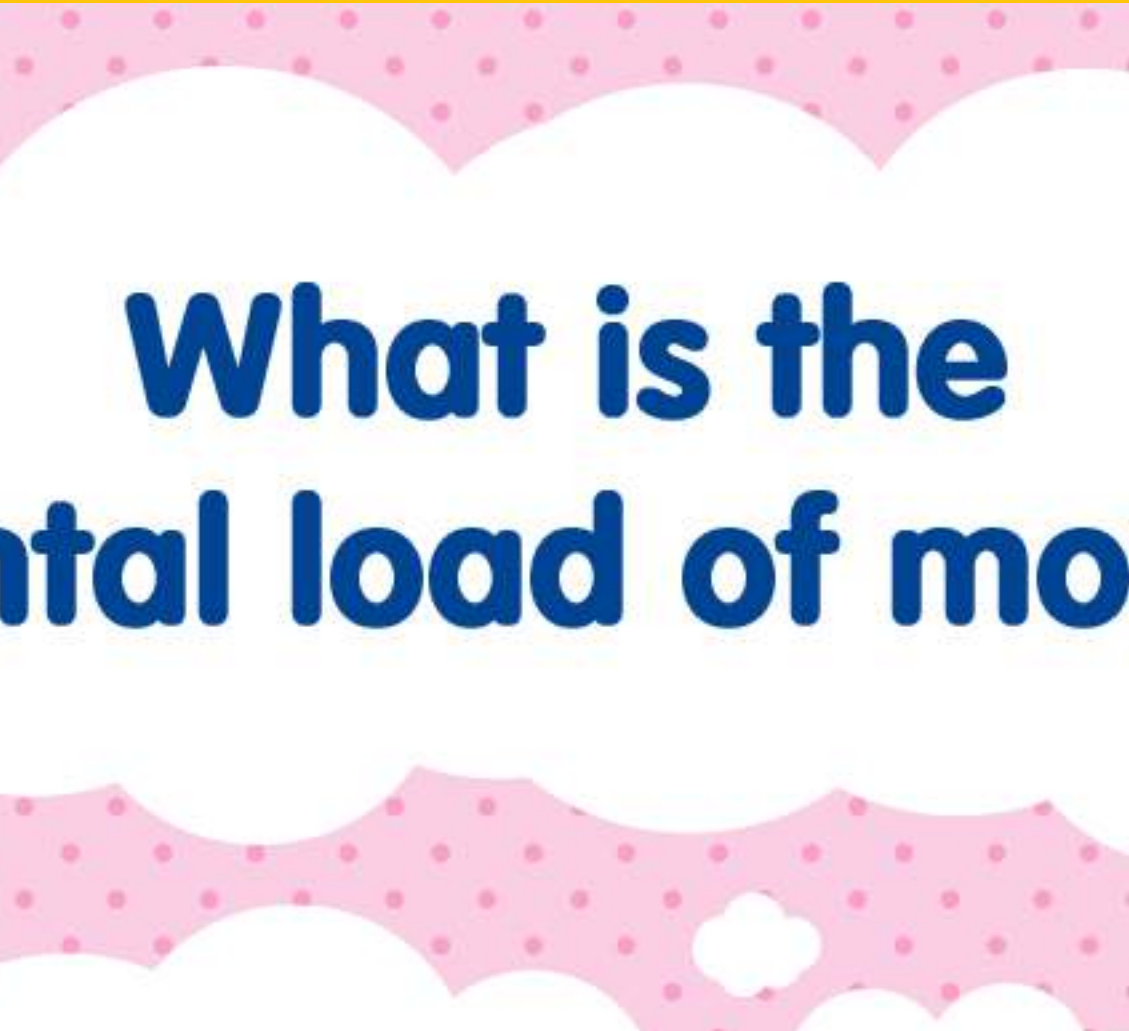


Don't forget to account for the unseen organizational and emotional work, plus the household and childcare tasks that often get overlooked. The invisible load of motherhood, while being tricky to measure, can quickly add up and take its toll.

The good news?
Together, you can lighten it.

30%

47%



According to The Parenting Index commissioned by Nestlé, almost half of dads (47%) claim they share parenting, whereas less than a third of moms (30%) say they do, highlighting a perception gap between partners.

What is the mental load of moms?

This includes all the planning, organizing, and general household admin, plus the emotional labor that moms often take on, for example:

Remembering birthdays

Delegating

Being in charge of family documents

Paying bills

Researching nutrition and health concerns

Managing the calendar

Arranging get-togethers

Taking calls and messages

Making family to-do lists and other life admin

Emotional labor like dealing with "mom shaming", feeling guilty that you're not doing enough, or worrying about your child's future.

Meal planning

Planning childcare

Planning holidays

Pointing out the imbalance of the mental load to your partner. Yes, even this!



Remembering those overlooked tasks

Cooking, cleaning, and caring for baby may be relatively visible types of work at home. But what about some of the less obvious daily tasks that often go unnoticed? Individually they may seem minor, but taken together they can really add to the burden that moms bear:



Packing daypacks



Entertaining & playing



Nightly feeds



Quick clean-ups



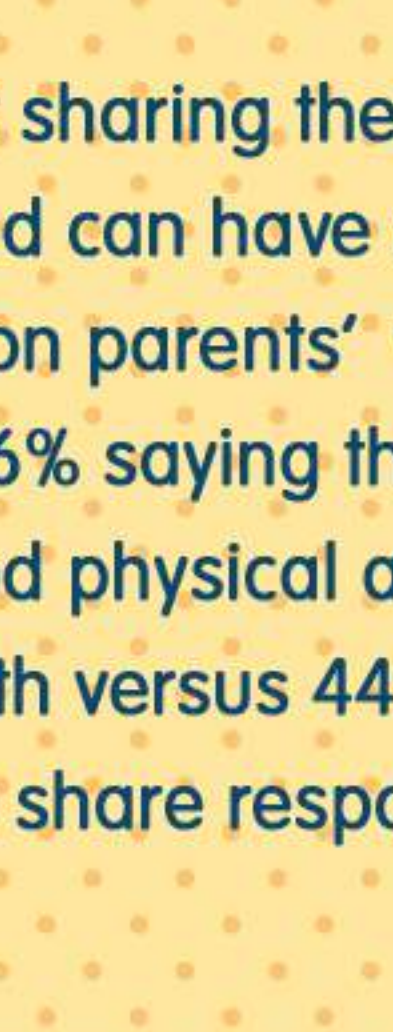
Baby care



Party preparation

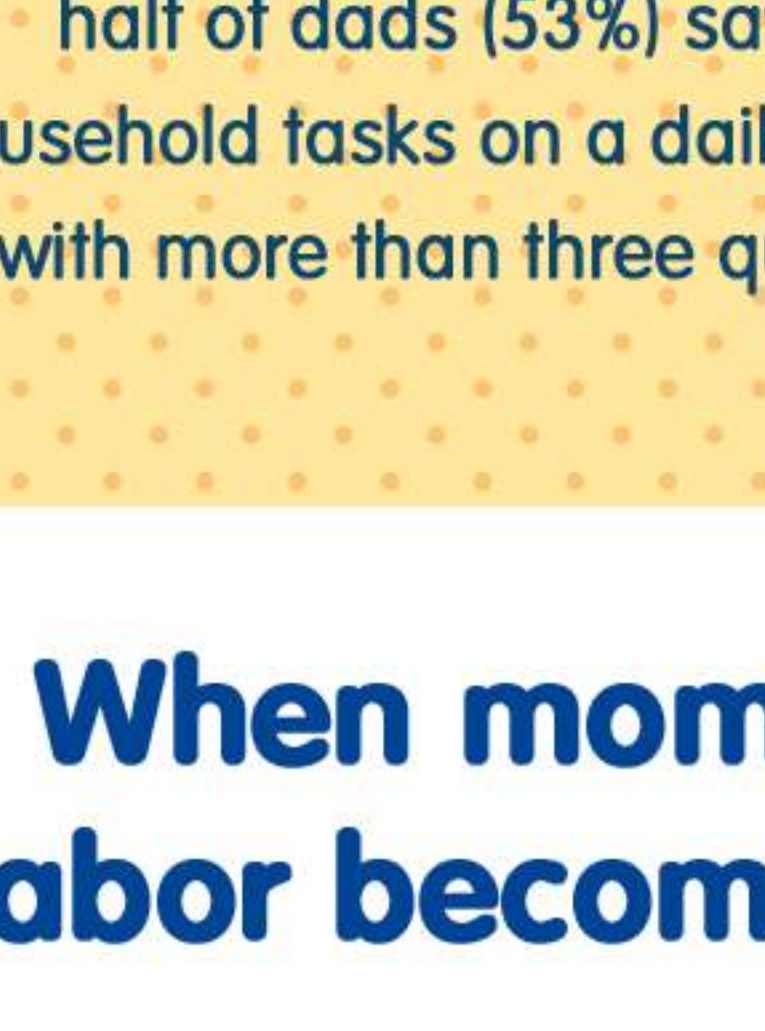


Sterilizing bottles



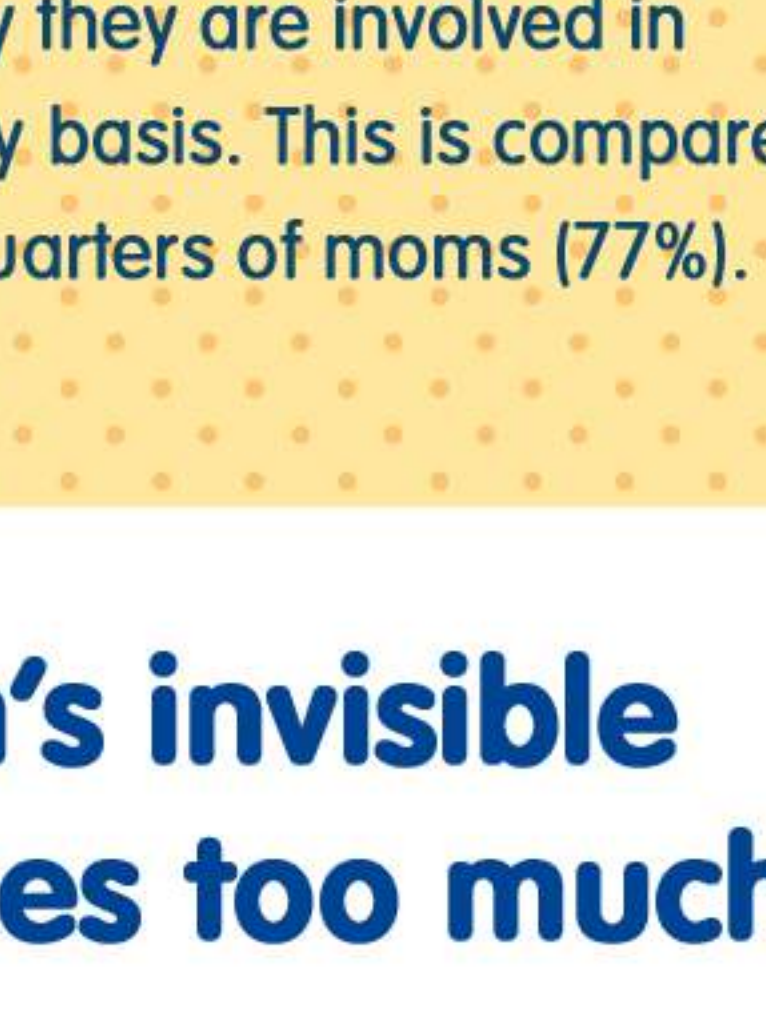
Buying presents

53%



Dads

77%



Moms

Of those who claim to share parenting, only just over half of dads (53%) say they are involved in household tasks on a daily basis. This is compared with more than three quarters of moms (77%).

When mom's invisible labor becomes too much

Left unchecked, an excessive invisible load can lead to resentment, sleep loss, burnout, feelings of guilt, loneliness, and depression.



66%

Not sharing the parenting load can have a negative effect on parents' wellbeing, with 66% saying they are not in good physical and mental health versus 44% of those who do share responsibilities.

How to lighten the invisible load?

Do

Talk to your partner

about how sharing the invisible physical and mental load will benefit the whole family

Make your load visible

Write it down, be vocal

Share parental leave

if you can

Let go a little

give your partner space to bear their share and be flexible as life changes

Draw strength from support

Whether it's a group of moms, friends, or family

Have regular check-ins

Show your partner gratitude and be mindful of any emotional labor they may have

Don't

Expect tasks to just get done

or believe that they don't constitute "real work"

Say "Just tell me what to do"

That's asking your partner to manage you

Default to one parent

or view responsibilities along gendered lines

Micromanage

or gatekeep over your partner's responsibilities

Take others' expectations

on board, such as family, friends, or social media

Praise your partner while not offering help

What are you really saying when you call her a "supermom"?



- Mutual respect
- Empowerment
- A sense of pride