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Listening, learning, and living together: it's the science of life.

Going Back to Work After Baby is Born¹

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Once a baby is born, deciding the best time to return to work can be emotional and difficult. Parents often wrestle with questions, such as how daily separation might affect the attachment relationship or the mutual, warm, enduring bond between an infant and his or her caregiver.

As more moms are devoting time to their careers, babies are spending more time with caregivers who aren't their parents, and it's well known that babies develop attachments to fathers, siblings, grandparents, and even caregivers outside the home. Still, infants up to one year old, show a preference for a primary caregiver (Bowlby, 1969), especially when they are distressed (Lamb, 1997).

According to a nationwide study done by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (1997), no attachment differences were found between infants who had received nonmaternal child care over much of their first year of life and those who were cared for primarily by their mothers. Infants separated from their mothers were similarly upset, regardless of whether most of the care they received came from their mothers, fathers, other relatives, or nonrelatives inside or outside the home. What was shown to be related to attachment insecurity in this study was mother's insensitivity to infant's needs, combined with poor child care or frequent changes in child care. So, for

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parents who worry that their baby won't love them as much if they work, with quality child care and your loving attention, you should be just fine.

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To listen to the radio broadcast:

http://www.radiosource.net/radio_stories/goingback.mp3

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