

Baby bonus blues ahead for mothers

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Removal of the baby bonus will cause hardship for some. Credit: news.com.au

Young mothers who are not in the paid workforce or are marginally employed will be significantly disadvantaged by the removal of the Baby Bonus.

According to new research from the University of Melbourne, paid work was perceived as a luxury that was out of reach due to high childcare costs relative to their earning capability

Researchers conducted 19 interviews with young [mothers](#) aged 17-26 not eligible for Paid Parental Leave about their experience receiving the Baby Bonus.

Speaking at today's Australian Institute of Family Studies conference, lead researcher, Dr Cameryn Garrett from the Gender and Women's Health Unit in the Department of Population and Global Health, said women perceived the Baby Bonus as an important government support to help families financially adjust to a new baby.

"For many disadvantaged mothers, the Baby Bonus was an important safety net used to pay for essential items for the baby's health and wellbeing like nappies, formula and clothing and essential household items like utility bills. No mention was made of luxury items like expensive televisions," she said.

Research showed the Baby Bonus not only provided important financial support, but the payment signified that society valued their unpaid role as mothers and carers.

Women perceived Paid Parental Leave as glorifying women in paid workforce and was seen as yet another luxury that was not available to them. By contrast, the reduction in payments for mothers out of the workforce, was perceived as devaluing their role.

"We are concerned that the policy change from Baby Bonus to replacement with substantially reduced family tax benefit, may exacerbate disadvantage, and [young mothers](#)' sense of alienation, ultimately leading to greater inequality," said Dr Garrett.

Provided by University of Melbourne

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