

Children Early in Your Career

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Pick Your Advisor Wisely

- Married at beginning of GS, wanted a life
- Picked an adviser who respected decisions
- It could be either a junior or senior faculty, but it takes the right personality to be understanding
- Prepare your advisor from time to time

Adjusting your expectations

- Less time means things take longer
 - Might need to take an extra year
 - Kids get sick, you need time w/ spouse
- Priorities might lead to "settling"
 - Settle for dirtier house
 - Settle for less gourmet food
 - Settle for less "excitement"
 - (You'll make these choices gladly!)

Financial Issues

- Kids are expensive!!!
 - Childcare in Boston: ~\$1500 / month
 - Extra Insurance cost: ~\$2000 / year
- Money-Saving Tips
 - Hand-me downs
 - Store-brand supplies/food
 - Cook more, Bring lunch more
 - Buy/cook in bulk

Getting Help

- Financial Support
 - Childcare scholarships are available
 - Departments can help with individual needs
 - You are entitled to paid maternity leave
- Emotional Support
 - Having family nearby is great
 - Grad student parent groups exist
 - Outside parental groups bring perspective
- There are early intervention services

Will I be less successful?

- Kids redefine your definition of "success"
- You'll learn how much research matters to you
 - If parenting >> research, you'll happily "settle"
 - If great love of research remains, you will cope
- A successful career is possible either way
 - Resources are available to help you
 - Career detours are becoming more accepted
 - Ultimately it is your passion that matters

Time Management

- Perhaps the single biggest issue
- Priority: more family == less work
- Practical tips: getting two uses from time
 - Ride to work (transportation / exercise)
 - E-mail on the bus (transport / job work)
 - Family Walks (community / exercise)
 - "Homework time" (community / job work)
 - "Chore time" (community / house work)

Now is a golden time: think big!

- Thinking big academically
 - This is a **foundation building** time
 - Later you'll be left with whatever you built
 - Do as much preparation as possible *now*
 - You won't have time to "learn that someday"
- Thinking big with your lesiure time
 - Great time for learning a new hobby, exploring some part of the world, or training for a sport
- With kids, life is much more "day-to-day"

Form good habits early

- Good professional habits:
 - Practice reading widely in your field
 - Develop a citation-storing system
 - Figure out how to organize your thoughts/work
- Good personal habits
 - Cultivate an attitude of sacrifice
 - Learn to live under a reduced budget
- Habits formed now will pay dividends later!!
When the deluge comes, you'll be ready.

Start Saving Money

- Remember that kids cost money?
- Saving money now has multiple benefits
 - Compound interest!!!
 - You'll have a buffer when kids come
 - You'll develop fiscal discipline early
 - You'll be prepared to pass these values on

So Why have a kid so early?

- You'll be younger
 - Easier to conceive (really!)
 - More energy to deal with kids
 - You are younger when they leave
- Grad-School specific advantages
 - Potentially a good time in terms of flexibility
 - Gives you perspective during tough times
 - You learn parenting before large responsibilities
- You'll never **feel** less busy: "later" → "never"

Our Kids!



Aiden – age 3



Audrey – age 2.5