



# The long-arm of motherhood: motherhood “penalty” for wellbeing over the life course?

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# Research Motivation

Child's

Mother's wage

Short-term

effect on mom's health

THE IDEAS ISSUE: 23 1/2 BIG IDEAS

the Atlantic

WHY WOMEN STILL CAN'T HAVE IT ALL

By Anne-Marie Slaughter



Chris Christie & Bruce Springsteen: A Love Story  
By Jeffrey Goldberg

The Surprising Comeback of the Family Farm  
By Chryslia Frestland

PLUS  
The World's Most Self-Aware Man  
By Mark Bowden  
My Romance With JFK  
By Gailtin Flanagan

Ice Man: A Short Story  
By Elmore Leonard

Contradiction between devoted mothering and paid work

Contemporary mothering

ideology of intensive mothering  
increasing investment (i.e., time, money) on children

Women's Wellbeing across the life course

- Young adulthood to midlife
- Physical, mental wellbeing, health habits

Shifting contemporary mothering (beliefs, behaviors) -> mother's long-term health

# Breastfeeding and mother's health

## Breastfeeding

- Labor-intensive
- Emotion-absorbing
- Value-laden, expert guided
- **Earliest mothering stage**

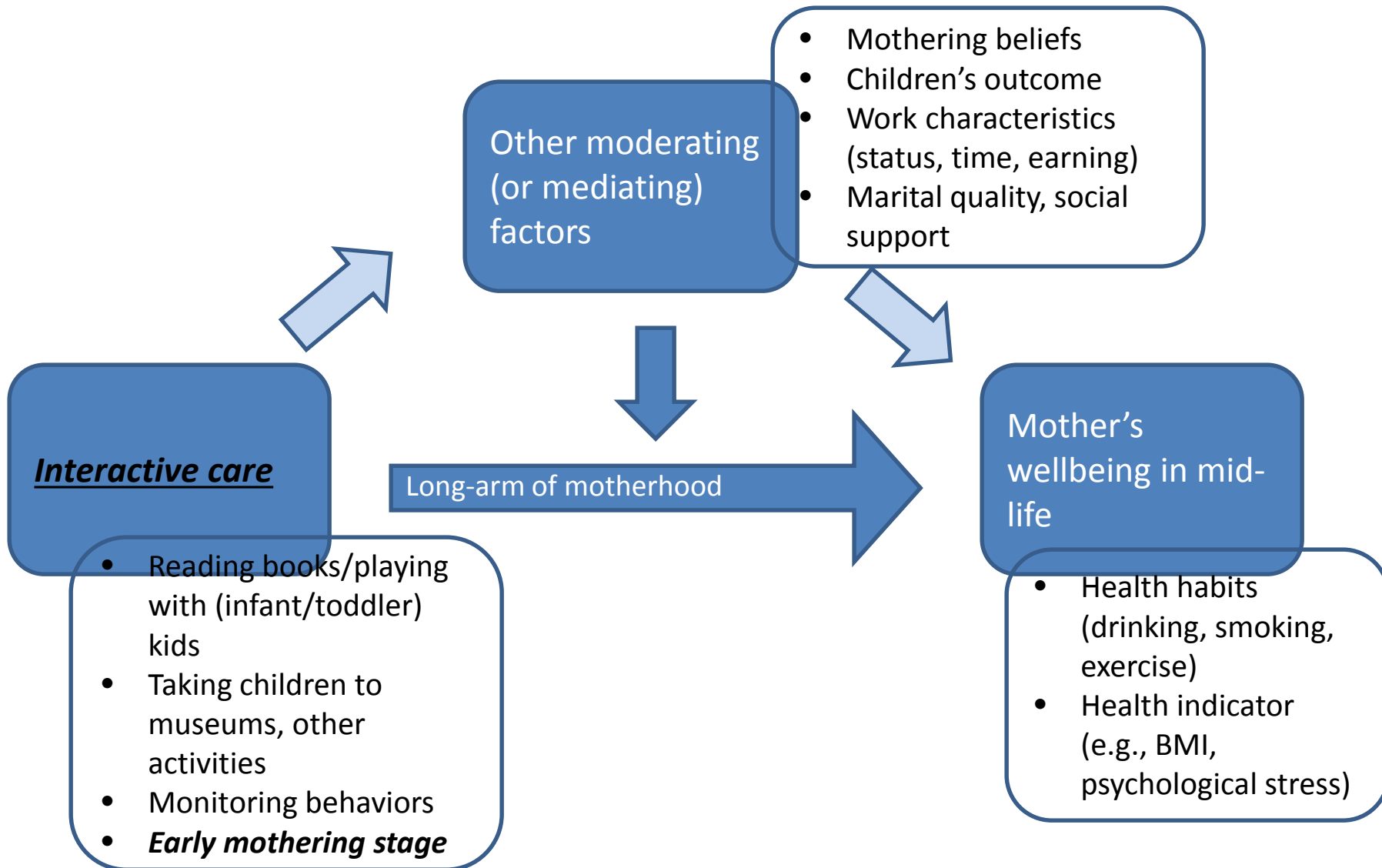


beliefs  
outcome  
characteristics  
(e.g., earning)  
quality, social

Mother's  
wellbeing in mid-  
life

- Health habits (drinking, smoking, exercise)
- Health indicator (e.g., BMI, psychological stress)

# Interactive care and mother's health



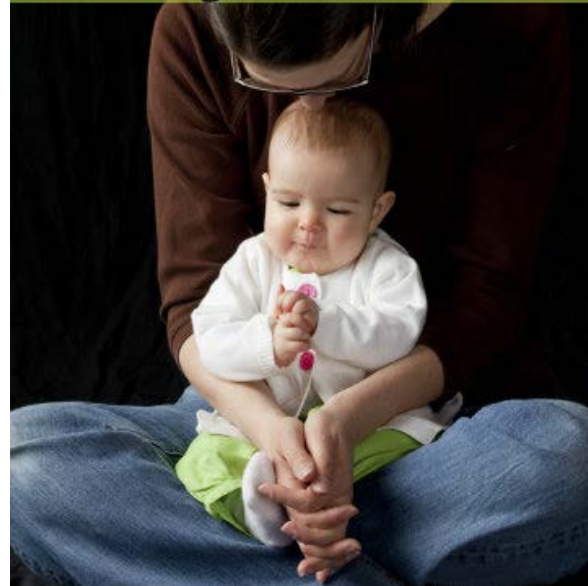
# Summary

*Why mothering behaviors in early life matter across the life course?*

Of course I'm a good mother.  
They're still alive,  
aren't they?



*Because  
You Never Stop  
Being a Mother*



Am I a  
**BAD** Mother?  
Or just a  
*Different*  
one?

**Important issue to keep in mind: social patterns of mothering**