



A NEW study into motherhood in Ireland, carried out by organic dairy Glenisk, explored the challenges of motherhood.

It was commissioned to co-incide with the launch of their organic parenting initiative iMoo (Irish Mothers of Organic).

The survey found that:

- 87% of mothers regard Ireland as a good place to raise children
- 74% find motherhood 'difficult'
- 65% cite children as their greatest source of joy
- 73% consider health-care a top issue of concern
- Less than one in four families eat dinner together each evening
- Mums continue to shoulder large majority of domestic responsibilities

Clinical Psychologist and best-selling author, David Coleman, is a member of Glenisk's iMoo parenting panel. Commenting on the findings of the research, he said: "It is easy to underestimate the impact of having children but this survey shows just how demanding, yet rewarding this radical change in lifestyle is.

"There is no doubt that the calmer we feel, the better able we are to respond to the many pressures of parenting. When parents have a successful way to relieve stress it makes for happier families."

On the subject of family mealtimes, David adds: "It is a salutary warning for us that family mealtimes are definitely changing.

"I believe that the reduced contact and social interaction during meals, demonstrated

Ireland IS a good place to raise children

by the survey, is just a reflection for many of us of how hard it is to really achieve the kind of work/life balance that we want.

"It is really important for children to have times in the day when they can really talk to parents rather than simply passing them by in a whirl of activity or retreating into the isolation of the TV or computer-games.

"Research shows that children who sit with their family for regular meals are less likely to smoke, take drugs and drink alcohol. They tend to do better in school and have fewer mental health problems and they tend to eat a more

balanced and healthy diet."

About iMoo: Irish Mothers of Organic was established by Glenisk to offer support and advice to those interested in parenting the organic way. iMoo topics are not limited to organic but instead cover a broad range of parenting issues.

Updates

Contributors include internationally renowned US paediatrician Dr William Sears; clinical psychologist and presenter of RTE's Families in Trouble, David Coleman; nutritionist Siobhán Julian; child-birth expert and author Tracy Donegan; and iMoo's Eco Daddy, Ben

Whelan, director of Cultivate, Ireland's sustainable living and learning centre.

As well as monthly live web chats with the expert panel, the site offers discussion forums allowing visitors to exchange views and information, and also features blogs from mothers, organic recipes and profiles of organic farmers. www.glenisk.com is also home to 'Have a Cow', a fun and educational programme, designed to help children understand where our food comes from. Children can sign up to 'adopt' their own farm animal and receive regular updates about life on a family farm, penned by their own cow or goat.