FATHERS TO THE FORE

The way we look after our children is experiencing a rapid and profound transformation. Where once mothers did virtually all the caring, today there is a greater sharing of that task by dads. Typically, where a mother is working outside the home, fathers now do a third of parental childcare—a great increase in a generation for fathers of pre-school children, according to the Equal Opportunities Commission.

This revolution from one-parent to two-parent care in the UK is a direct consequence of women taking a greater role in the workplace and the falling away of gendered roles in our society. These changes can bring great benefits. Where fathers and mothers are both doing a good job with them, children are more likely to excel at school, stay out of trouble, and grow into well-adjusted adults. Care from both parents also helps girls and boys to question gender stereotypes that so limit what they think they can do in terms, for example, of future careers.

These social changes create important questions. If fathers are now looking after children—including small babies—for long periods of time, fathers need the same skills and knowledge that we have traditionally expected mothers to have. And this means services which support parents should be organized to support fathers as well as mothers.

(The Guardian, February 1, 2006)

Glossary
to the fore: en primera plana

1. Are the following sentences TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)
   a) The government must adapt public services to help fathers.
   b) At present, fathers share childcare on equal terms.

2. In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer these questions. Be careful with the grammar and write precise answers. (Puntuación máxima: 6 puntos)
   a) What are the reasons for this change in parental care?
   b) Explain how it can affect children.

3. Grammar. Follow the instructions for each part of this question. (Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)
   Complete the following sentences. Write the appropriate form of the word in brackets, when given:
   a) Today parents have a ................. active role .............. they used to have twenty five years ago.
   b) When I ................. (be) a child, my father never .............. (do) the housework.