

## **PARENTS: CHILDREN NEED MORE THAN 49 MINUTES**

### **Catholic Group Stresses Importance of Family Time**

LONDON, JUNE 10, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Popular primetime television shows engage audiences daily for an hour, longer than the average child gets to spend with his parents.

On average, parents spend 49 minutes with their children every day, the Catholic Children's Society of the Westminster Diocese reported Wednesday.

Drawing on the results of a survey of 3,000 parents and 1,000 children, the society informed that 68% of the adult respondents noted that money was one of the reasons for this limited time.

"This is an alarmingly short period of time for children to spend with their parents," said Rosemary Keenan, the society's chief executive.

"Children need to experience the love and warmth of family life if they are to grow up to become emotionally stable and mature adults," she asserted.

Keenan added that "one of the key ways in which this is done is by spending time together with a parent or both parents."

The study was undertaken as one of the activities surrounding National Family Week, which was celebrated May 31-June 6 in the United Kingdom. It aimed to motivate families to spend more time together.

#### Standard of living

Keenan acknowledged: "It is sadly a symptom of modern life that parents have to work such long hours in order to afford a higher standard of living or to make ends meet.

"Our society needs to understand that children are often the first casualties when we get the work life balance wrong and that cannot be good for the longer term future of a healthy society."

In fact, the society reported that 66% of the child respondents stated that they were happy to spend more family time at home, rather than going out.

"There is a great temptation, on the part of parents, to either think that their children need material goods to make them happy, benefit from extra tuition to achieve academic excellence, or group activities outside of the home to fend off boredom," Keenan stated.

"Our experience at the Catholic Children's Society, from working with children in counseling situations, reveals that they need relational stability and the self esteem which comes from feeling valued for who they are and unconditionally loved by their parents," she affirmed. "Such love is hard to convey in 49 minutes per day." Keenan concluded, "No wonder the children in the survey were happy to spend more time with family members."

The Catholic Children's Society has been providing child care services to families in the Westminster Diocese since 1859.