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One kid of each sex creates a happier family, study says

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CBC News

Parents who have a son and a daughter are less likely to divorce than those with two children of the same sex, according to a new Australian study.

Research by the Australian National University released Monday found parents who have a boy and a girl are more likely to stay married than those with two boys or two girls.

ANU economist Andrew Leigh analyzed 60,000 families between 1981 and 2001 to find out whether parents' decision to get married, stay married or divorce was related to the sex of their children.

He found that the sex of their children had a significant impact on their parents' marital status.

In families with two children, one child of each sex seems better for relationships than two of a kind. Parents with a boy and a girl are more likely to stay married than families with children of the same sex, Leigh said.

The study asked whether it was better to have two sons or two daughters, but the results were unclear.

Research from the United States showed families with two daughters were more likely to divorce, but the Australian study found no such effect.

"There's something about having one of each that makes parents a little bit more satisfied," Leigh said.

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Split decisions

Parents with two children of the same sex are more likely to divorce than those with a boy and a girl, according to research by Australian National University economist Andrew Leigh, who analysed 60,000 families from the past five Australian censuses. Among two-child families, parents with two children of the same sex were 1.7 per cent less likely to be married than parents with a boy and a girl. US research shows parents of daughters are more likely to divorce than parents of sons, but Dr Leigh found no such trend.