



Are You Overparenting Your Child?

Overparenting or helicopter parenting is not done from a place of love but a place of fear. Fear for your child's physical safety, for their academic well-being, and fear of how you will look to others if your child is not high achieving. How will they succeed in elementary, middle, high school, and college, if we don't monitor their work, grades, extracurriculars, and advocate for them with their teachers, coaches and even employers?

If are you overparenting your child, *of any age*, you are causing psychological harm, according to psychologist and author, Dr. Madeline Levine. She suggests that when we overparent, "we deprive our kids of the opportunity to be creative, to problem solve, to develop coping skills, to build resilience, to figure out what makes them happy, to figure out who they are, in short, it deprives them of the chance to be human."

Overparenting tells our child that we don't trust them to do anything without us. This can lead to depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Our job is to love and enjoy our kids, and be consultants on their life journey.

According to Dr. Levine, here is how to tell if you're overparenting (this applies to any age child):

YES/NO Are you doing *anything* for your child that they can **ALREADY** do?

YES/NO Are you doing *anything* for your child that they can **ALMOST** do?

YES/NO Is your parenting behavior motivated by you own **EGO**?

These "anythings" encompass everything from tying their shoes to picking their college classes.

These are signs in your child that you may be overparenting:

YES/NO Is your child depressed, anxious, sad, unmotivated, angry, or suicidal?

YES/NO Is your child not enjoying their extracurricular activities?

YES/NO Is your child not proficient in doing age-appropriate chores, and day-today life skills?

YES/NO Is your child unable to handle school, social life, and employment without your help?

Children who have no responsibilities, who are not allowed to make their own choices, who never struggle and experience failure, disappointment, and consequences for their actions, and feel that they are unable to do anything without your input and help will feel anxious, depressed, and hopeless.

These are signs that you, the parent, that you are overparenting your child:

YES/NO Are you happy in your job and enjoying your life?

YES/NO Are you regularly pursuing your passions and interests?

YES/NO Are you able to exercise regularly and eat right?

YES/NO Are you regularly doing fun things with your child and alone with your spouse or partner?

If you answered no to any of these you may be overparenting. Parents are role models for their kids. If you want your child to enjoy a happy and rewarding life, you need to model that life for your child.

How Parents Can Raise a Capable and Resilient Child (developed by Stacy Ashlund):

It takes time and patience to teach your child the skills that they will need to navigate their life on their own and become happy and successful children and adults.

1. First, we do it for you.
2. Then, we do it with you.
3. Then, we watch you do it.
4. And then, you do it completely independently.