

How To Raise a Spoiled Child

by Erik_Deckers

"Children need booundarieees," child psychologists harangue in that sing-songy, whiny voice that annoys the crap out of me. "They need limits on what they're allowed to dooooo." I wholeheartedly agree. I am a firm believer in setting boundaries as a way to help children grow. My own kids have learned the Basic Rules for Getting Along in the Deckers' House: be respectful to others, never hit your siblings, and never, ever cheer against the Colts. After all, testing and learning boundaries are how children find out what they can and can't do. They learn they're not allowed to touch a hot stove, run out in traffic, or stick their hand in a strange dog's mouth. And the best way to teach a child not to do these things is with a sharp "no," before the kid actually does them. It's how kids learn to get along in the world. Unless you live in the Australian part of the world. It seems administrators of some day care centers in the Land Down Under have decreed that teachers are no longer allowed to tell students "no" or "don't." Why? Because it "hinders their development." (I'm especially interested in how they relayed this information themselves without using the forbidden words. "You can no longer--dangit. Please don't -- \$@&#!") How does telling a child they can't do something hinder their development? I mean, it's one thing to tell people not to lock their kids in the closet because they took the last beer. But what are you supposed to do if your kids are about to do something terrifyingly dangerous? The administrators instead want the teachers to say "stop." Okay, I'll buy that. If a kid is about to whack another kid on the head with a cricket bat, "stop" will work just fine. But that's about it. We still need the word "no," just to function in every day life. There's no such thing as a "yes or stop" question. If someone asks you to marry them, "stop" is not one of the choices. "Can I have \$20?" cannot be answered with "stop." And what will happen to manners? When your grandmother offers you a third helping of her Tuna Surprise, are you supposed to say "stop, thank you?" Young Student: Mrs. Murphy, can I set fire to the toy box? Mrs. Murphy: Ummm. . . stop? Young Student: Okay, then can I climb up on the roof and pretend I'm Superman? Mrs. Murphy: Uhhhh . . . Mission accomplished, I suppose. The student is able to continue on with his development most assuredly unhindered, although his physical growth will be stunted for the next three years. So what's a broken leg to a child who feels emotionally nurtured and fulfilled? Is that the end of it? Of course not. There's ALWAYS more when it comes to politically correct administrators in positions of authority. Aussie teachers are now also forbidden from saying "good boy" or "good girl," because it's sexist. Sexist?! What's sexist about calling a boy a boy, or a girl a girl? Sure, you don't call someone over the age of 18 a boy or girl, but before that, it's open season. You call them boys and girls because, well, they're boys and girls. Instead, the soft-heads running the asylum want teachers to say "congratulations." Student: Mrs. Murphy, I didn't set fire to the toy box! Mrs. Murphy: Thank you, Kenneth. You're a very. . . congratulations. Look, I'm all for letting children develop unhindered. Let them paint pink skies and orange grass. Let them have imaginary friends and talk to stuffed animals. That's unhindered development. But refusing to establish boundaries -- or making them paper-thin -- is a poor way to help a child grown into a well-adjusted adult. If you want a kid to grow up normally, they need to get used to hearing "no" once in a while. They're going to hear it when they're adults, so you might as well get them used to hearing it when they're kids. No you can't have ice cream. No, you didn't get the job. No, you can't move back home. The world is already filled with too many spoiled brats who didn't hear "no" and "don't" enough when they were young. Now they're grown up with kids of their own, and those kids will only turn out more spoiled than their parents, especially if they're in the Australian day care system. So, to the Australian day care administrators, let me say: No, don't take away the one tool a teacher could use to set a kid straight. What's that? You'll think about it? Congratulations, you're all good boys and girls!

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