

# Overprotective parents hinder responsibility

When children are born, it's the job of parents to protect them in every way they can. Once they reach elementary school, however, they become more capable and are able to do lots of things for themselves.

Unfortunately, many parents still try to protect their children from everything. And all of that well-intended "protection" can smother their children's budding independence.

Overprotective parenting makes it difficult for children to learn essential skills for success in school and life—such as communication, negotiation, perseverance, responsibility and decision making.

To avoid the many pitfalls of overprotective parenting:

- Don't do everything for your child. Let him do things for himself. Will he make mistakes? Probably. But he will learn from those mistakes.
- Don't drop everything to rescue your child when he forgets things. If he leaves his homework or gym shoes at home, don't rush them up to the school. Instead, let him face the consequences.
- Don't try to negotiate a better grade for your child. If you or your child are confused about a grade he receives, let your child talk to the teacher about it first.
- Don't call the parent of a child your child is complaining about in school. Give your child a chance to work it out. However, if it is a serious problem, contact the school immediately.

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