

Warning Signs That You May be Doing Too Much for your Child

If you are doing her homework...

then you are standing in the way of letting her own performance shine- or not.

The hardest thing is to allow our children to fail.

If you are making excuses as to why you are doing her homework, my question for you is, "What are you afraid of?" In other words, what might happen if you don't help? You may have what you feel is a valid reason. "If I don't help her, she will fail." Then we must find another answer. You cannot be the answer, unless you know for sure that you can continue to bail her out through her adulthood.

If you are resolving his conflicts...

then your child is not learning to think for himself. Helping your child explore ways to resolve his conflicts is more helpful. If you are speaking for him, covering up for him, paying to break the window he broke, then you are resolving his conflicts, and he has learned only that you will bail him out.

If you are not consistently disciplining...

then you are teaching her that you don't say what you mean. Fair and consistent is the key. People who don't learn natural consequences early can build an attitude of entitlement, and continue to make the same mistakes. In other words, we can contribute to a culture of expectation that punishment does not follow crime.

If you change the rules of what's acceptable and non-acceptable on a regular basis...

then your child learns to be wishy washy and that you may not be reliable. This goes from whether or not they can watch a certain TV program, to who they can hang out with to what their bedtime is. Folks, kids KNOW how long our fuses are. They are forever figuring this out. If we are consistent and unfailing in what they can expect from us, then there is no question about where we stand.

If you are not helping them learn the value of a dollar...

then you are teaching him that things are easy to access, which again can build a sense of entitlement. Unless you plan on continuing to fund your child's needs for his entire life, you might want to help him learn how to earn, save and spend wisely.

If you are not expecting your child to help clean or take care of her personal property...

then you might be teaching her a lack of respect for hard earned things. Plus, you might be making her bed until (or if!) she moves out.

Parenting: it isn't easy! It is a process that always warrants evaluation. Children are unique individuals. What works with one child may not work with another. Top tips to help you on the journey:

Be fair and consistent.

Have expectations of your child.

Forgive their mistakes, but don't change your expectations.

Establish routines.

Control your anger-don't suppress it, express it-in a healthy way!

Be a good example.

Praise, praise, praise!

Show love and respect for yourself, your child, your life.

Good luck-it can be a jungle out there in that world of parenting!

Karen Lundy is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor. She has a private practice at 221 S. Metter in Columbia. You can reach her at 281-9282 , e mail her at strumlundy@yahoo.com or see her website: klundycounseling.com