

**HOW NOT TO
MENTALLY
FUCK UP
YOUR KIDS**

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CHAPTER ONE

EARLY CHILDHOOD LOVE AND NURTURING

Beyond having their physical needs for food, water, shelter, and hygiene met, young children also need plenty of emotional and cognitive support, love, and nurturing. Adult caregivers should make it a point to express love and affection for their children every day. Doing so helps young children to feel safe, comforted, and included in a warm, bonded relationship. Such feelings of security actually increase children's capacity to learn and to develop mentally and physically.

Caregivers can show love to their children in many different ways. Cuddling, hugging, tickling, or (safely and gently) wrestling can all be used to communicate physical affection. Families can also verbally nurture their children through statements of unconditional love, such as a daily, "I love you." Reinforcing words of praise can be offered any time caregivers notice their young children making a positive choice, displaying a new skill or ability, or being loving towards others. For example, Mom can say, "Jimmy, thank you so much for helping us set the table for dinner." This statement of praise shows Jimmy that he (and his behavior) is important to Mommy. Furthermore, he'll start to internalize such affirmations and they will encourage him to engage in helpful behavior in the future. Love and nurturing can also be shown through thoughtful gestures. Dad can make a point to remember that Katie enjoys helping him whenever he works around the house. By asking her to join him in building new shelves, Dad shows Katie that her presence is enjoyed and wanted.

Overall, caregivers communicate love and nurturing through how they live their own lives. If caregivers keep an upbeat positive attitude, smile, and stay as calm and patient as possible during difficult situations, they will create a peaceful and positive environment for their children, young and old. However, this doesn't mean that caregivers should neglect appropriate discipline and guidance. Maintaining age-appropriate expectations of children and setting consistent consequences and privileges based on their behavior will actually help to show children that they are loved in addition to helping keep them safe and secure.

It's important to remember that no adults, and especially parents and caregivers, are perfect. Everyone has a bad day now and then. Caregivers need to expect and to accept that they will make mistakes. However, if caregivers find that they are consistently grouchy, irritable, negative, or sad, they need to get assistance to help them be as healthy and as happy as possible for themselves and for their children. Depressed or otherwise troubled parents can reach out to their support system: friends, grandparents, religious group members, neighbors, etc for encouragement and assistance. Sometimes though, talking to friends and family members isn't enough. If caregivers have

symptoms of low mood, excessive irritability, sleeping or eating problems, or other issues that affect work and interpersonal relationships, obtaining help from a mental health professional is a good idea. Admitting that you need professional help is not a sign of weakness. It's one of the bravest things caregivers can do to show their children how much they love them and to model good self-care.

Mental health clinicians in the United States can be found in our online therapist directory, or by looking up "mental health" in your local telephone directory. If money is tight and you are worried that you may not be able to afford care, let the agency or therapist know that during your initial contact. Many mental health agencies and practitioners offer sliding-fee scales (reduced fees that are based on a family's level of income) to people without insurance or when money is tight.

Beyond showing love and affection, caregivers can nurture young children's growing minds by providing interactive and stimulating activities. While it may be tempting to allow young children to watch lots of television, especially educational or age-appropriate cartoons, it's not healthy. Young children should watch a maximum of one to two hours of educational television a day. More than this can rob important time away from physical exercise, creative activities, or family time that will help children grow and develop. In addition, preschool-aged children are especially sensitive to the effects of media, as they are not yet capable of separating fantasy from reality. As a result, excessive violence or other intense programs can frighten young children.

Instead of allowing their children to watch endless amounts of television, caregivers can read stories, sing songs, play board games, or put puzzles together with their young children. Children can also use different art mediums such as drawing, coloring, molding clay, or painting. Encouraging make-believe games and play, such as dress-up, "auto shop," or "house" can also provide hours of entertainment. Young children can get their exercise through outdoor games or trips to the playground or park. Furthermore, caregivers can arrange fun trips to the zoo, museums, or other places where educational and entertaining activities for children take place.

Even though parents often have busy schedules of their own, they should make it a daily priority to spend time with their families. It's also important in homes with multiple children that each child get some one-on-one time with each parent on a regular basis. Even unstructured activities can provide this needed one-on-one time. For instance, allowing children to go to the pharmacy with Mom or sit in the kitchen while Dad washes dishes can provide an opportunity to share feelings, catch up on news, and laugh together. The important goal accomplished here is that young children feel included and part of the larger family home.

CHAPTER TWO

FIVE WAYS TO NOT SCREW UP YOUR KIDS

“They fuck you up, your mum and dad, they may not mean to, but they do.

They fill you with the faults they had, and add some extra just for you.”

It is one of the most quoted poems around, and Philip Larkin’s simple and shocking words resound in my head when my clients talk of unhappy childhoods and poor parenting models. Perhaps if their own parents had spent some time in a therapist’s chair in those early, struggle-full days of childrearing, then it’s possible my client wouldn’t be sitting there in front of me now, trying to untangle the brain wiring that’s responsible for the belief that they are unlovable, worthless, stupid. Of course, as Larkin goes on to say: “But they were fucked up in their turn,” by their parents before them, and grandparents before them. With time travel sadly still in the realm of science-fiction, all we can do is stop the buck here with our own parenting. Here are five ways how to not screw up your kids.

Separate their identity from their behavior

Tell your young daughter that she’s a naughty girl enough times, and her unconscious will begin to believe it. The brain will then drive those behaviors that reinforce that belief. I’m a naughty girl - what do naughty girls do? Naughty things. Whereas, tell your child that she’s a good girl who is doing something naughty, and she’ll hear that there’s nothing wrong with her ‘self’, but that it’s her behaviour that is causing friction. Our faults do not exist permanently in ourselves and it’s far easier to change our behaviours than to change who we think we are. Instead, reinforce her identity positively. Tell her, “You’re a helpful girl”, “You’re a good girl” and “You’re a kind girl.” Show her that it’s not her but her behaviour that’s challenging. For instance, instead of saying: “You’re an unkind child,” try, “That was an unkind thing to do,” or even, “Do you think that was a kind thing to do?”

Allow emotional expression

If you shut down anger, fear and sadness by telling a child to stop crying or to man up, it teaches him that it’s not OK to feel what he’s feeling. Emotions are a natural part of being human. Allow him to experience them without interruption. Support him, and you’ll see how quickly those emotions disappear and his innate happiness returns. Just as our bodies heal cuts without our conscious involvement, our emotions return to a

state of balance too. Allow your child to see that emotions and feelings come and go and that there's nothing wrong with any of them, and he will feel comfortable with his emotions as an adult. Children who are emotionally intelligent achieve more, form stronger relationships and make healthier life choices.

Love him unconditionally

If you love your child unconditionally, it means that you never put any conditions on that love. "I love you," means, "I love you no matter what." Withholding love at any time will shake the foundations upon which their sense of security is based. Loving unconditionally means accepting your child and their behaviours as they are. It means parenting the child you have not the child you want to have. Helping your child to understand on a deep, subconscious level, beyond doubt, that they are safe, good and loved no matter what, allows them be in touch with their own psychological wellness throughout childhood and into adulthood.

Listen deeply to her

Stop what you are doing, put your phone down, close your laptop over, give your child your full attention. Listen with nothing on your mind. Listen without judgement and without analysis. Hear what they say, without questioning or offering answers that haven't been asked for. This lets your child know that they can express themselves safely and that they will be heard fully and completely. Deep, connected relationships are built on trust, and listening deeply to your child in this way will teach them that they are valued, loved and respected. From here they will go on to connect deeply with others, and create healthy relationships as adults.

Forgive yourself for your mistakes

You know, it's OK to make mistakes. It's inevitable. Parents are only human after all, and we're all doing the best that we can with the resources we have available to us. We can't get it right all the time, so forgive yourself, apologise if you need to, and move on. Beating yourself up about mistakes you made in the past serves no-one - not you or your child. Allow your child to see you as fallible, vulnerable and they'll learn that it's OK not to get it right all the time too. Let your child see that you can forgive yourself and move on, and they'll do the same too.

CHAPTER THREE

HOW TO SET LIMITS FOR KIDS WITHOUT HARSHNESS, FEAR OR SHAME

I am not a proponent of permissive parenting. Kids need boundaries and limits to feel safe. But setting and enforcing them is tricky, especially if you are trying to avoid coercion, threats and bribes. The “calm and firm limit” is a parenting muscle that has to be exercised and built over time. I was way better at it when I was interacting with someone else’s child. Recently, I’ve had to practice — a lot.

When your child behaves in a rude or unsafe manner and your fuse has gotten short, emotions will run high. In the worst of these scenarios, your amygdala hijacks your prefrontal cortex and floods your body with adrenaline and cortisol, sending you into fight-or-flight mode.

At this point, you are no longer a rational human.

Once your “downstairs” brain (as Dan Siegel MD calls it) has taken over; your ability to think is diminished, you are emotionally unregulated and your perception of the situation is likely skewed. The best way to stay in your “upstairs” brain is to take very good care of yourself, and keep the “marathon-not-a-sprint” perspective on raising the children — children with whom you’ll hopefully have long, wonderful relationships.

As help, here are 10 more tips for making limits and boundaries easier.

1. Think ahead. Make a plan and be strategic. In parenting, you have to be one step ahead. Luckily, we have the developed cerebral cortexes our young ones lack. We often know the places where our kids will push or fall apart. Whether it’s mealtime or bedtime, take the space to think things through and know where your limits lie ahead of time.

2. Don’t use wishy-washy language. One of the best tips I ever got as a teacher was to record myself in the classroom for an hour and then play it back to myself. I heard quite a few verbal habits I wanted to break, and using weak language when giving directives and setting limits was one of them. Aim to eliminate statements like, “I don’t really want you to do that,” (really?) and the ubiquitous “OK?” at the end of your sentences.

3. Check your body language and facial expression. Even though I wrote a book about saying the right thing, studies show that nonverbal cues carry huge importance. Don’t go all sing-song-y if you mean business. And always, always, always get low. You are huge

and intimidating to a child. You can mean what you say while crouched down, in close proximity and wearing a neutral facial expression.

4. Ensure that your tone is warm, but firm. A sharp tone or staccato cadence can be over-stimulating and scary to a young child, setting off their fight-or-flight alarm. Yelling will trigger this as well — save it for emergencies. A scared child is likely to comply only after you've diminished their feelings of connection with you — and they need that connection to stay emotionally regulated.

5. Don't expect a child to comply without upset. Set the limit where the limit is for you. Then make space for the feelings. It is unrealistic to expect a child to accept "No," with, "OK, sure." That will rarely happen. But, it will happen more if you are calm and reassuring: "I said 'no' to another cookie. You really wanted it. I will listen to your upset." Have faith they can work through the tough feelings of not getting what they want. Handling disappointment is not something people learn by being shut-down emotionally. Hand in Hand Parenting has excellent resources for helping parents with the very hard task of keeping ourselves calm while children "offload" their messy feelings.

6. Have developmentally appropriate expectations. 1-year-olds get into everything. 2-year-olds cannot share without protest. 3-year-olds will say, "no" often. 4-year-olds must know "why." 5-year-olds can be quite sassy, and on it goes. Brush up on where your child is developmentally. Remember how much they are growing on every level — emotional, physical, mental and psychological. That they hold it together, and are pleasant as often as they are, is the real miracle!

7. Stay decisive, even when you change your mind. Confidence in your decisions is crucial. If you aren't sure whether or not you should let them jump on the bed, that is more problematic than if on Tuesday you say, "Yes, today you may jump on the bed," (You feel well-rested, focused and able to keep this activity safe), then on Wednesday you say, "No, today is not a jumping-on-the-bed-day," (You had insomnia, got a fat parking ticket, and have a headache). Staying consistent in your decisiveness is way more important than a rule being unwavering.

8. Be physical if you need to. Unless you are feeling really frustrated, it is okay to corral a child physically to keep them (or others) safe. In your lap facing outward (so you don't get hurt either) is a useful way to do this. Check in with yourself and stay calm — NEVER touch your child when you are angry. Pay close attention so you are not hurting them. Sometimes, only a moment of contact is needed. Always let go as soon as a child is able to safely control themselves.

9. Don't explain the reason for the limit more than once. It can be helpful to give the reason for the limit. But do not repeat yourself; it will only irritate you. Offer the explanation once, and then keep quiet. Hold your tongue — or as Carrie Contey PhD says, “Zip it!” — especially if they deteriorate into an emotional meltdown. When they are in their “downstairs” brain, language is not as accessible. You are wasting your breath. If you want a mantra to say out loud when a child is really losing it, “You are safe,” is my favorite.

10. Use humor. I cannot stress enough how well this works. Animate, and imbue with wit, objects like the toothbrush or bathtub water (Seriously!). Try a silly voice or tone, or invent a wild character. Not long ago I got a ton of mileage out of using a British accent. I guarantee this does not take any longer than bargaining, hollering or bribing.

Try on some of these suggestions. See if they fit. You will definitely know if they are working better than, “You better get dressed right now,” “How dare you talk to me like that!” or, “Fine, have the darn cookie.” If we want children to be internally motivated to behave well, we have to be firm and kind, stay connected to them, and listen to their feelings.

CHAPTER FOUR

HOW TO TEACH YOUR KIDS SUCCESS BY FAILING FORWARD

Failing Forward is a powerful life lesson.

As adults, we know we don't have all of the answers. We fail, we make mistakes, and we struggle. But if we have the mindset that we can learn from these mistakes and failures, then we persevere and get better. Too many times, though, we get stuck in the pervasive idea that failure is bad, unacceptable; heck, there's even tag lines quoting "Failure is not an option". The problem with this thinking is, if failure is not an option, then how do we ever progress forward?

Changing our mindset to one of growth, helps us be great examples for our kids on how to tackle their failures. These 6 tips will help you and your kids achieve your best self.

Failing Forward and Letting Kids Fail

Too many times as parents, we get so impatient with our kids' ability to finish something in a certain amount of time. We must remember that they are kids and need to, learn. Doing things for our kids teaches them nothing; wait, it does. It teaches them dependency. If our kids can't learn to be independent and have their own way, of thinking, then we will cripple them in their future.

Change Your View of Failure

Let's face it, failing is not fun. It is so much more fun to win. Maybe we have been condition to avoid failure at all costs because it is seen as "bad". What we may not realize is our fear of failure caps our children's view of what is possible. Instead, we need to help kids learn from their failures.

Model Failing Forward

It's time to swallow that pride. As difficult as it may be, let your kids see when you fail or share times that you have failed with them. This helps them see that even adults makes mistakes, but the important thing is learning from them. You can even give them

examples of others failing forward. When kids see that failure does not occur in a vacuum, they have more freedom to make the mistakes they need to make to grow.

Not Everyone Gets a Trophy

Teach your kids that not everyone wins a trophy. This is a tough one. This Lesson helps kids appreciate the times they do win. Not only that, it helps kids set and work toward a goal. To help your child achieve, ask them questions about how they think they can improve.

Failing Forward Teaches Perseverance

Teach perseverance. Try. Try again. Then, try again. This is grit. When kids learn how to keep going even when it feels like it is impossible, they learn to reach their full potential.

Have a Sense of Humor

The power of having a sense of humor when we make mistakes. Having resiliency through humor when we fail immediately changes our perception of the situation and also shows others that we do not fear failure. Failure is a fact of life. Dealing with it with less drama and more laughter brings more positivity to a situation.

In order for kids to learn to embrace failure, we need to embrace it ourselves. It won't be an easy road, but definitely worth the ride.

CHAPTER FIVE

TEACHING KIDS LIFE SKILLS

The irresponsible teenage boy has become a caricature of modern adolescence: He can't find his schoolbooks to do his homework. He regularly runs out of clean underwear. He has to borrow money from Dad to go to the mall. "Cooking" consists of operating a microwave oven. Teen girls often do not fare much better. These young people are at the age when they will soon launch into the real world, but have they been equipped to handle it?

During my early years of parenting, I had a mistaken notion that childhood was a time of endless fun, and that parents were kind of like cruise directors for their kids. Now I have two young adults and two teens, and I've come to realize that childhood is a training ground for the real world.

Imagine your child at her first job or in her first apartment. What skills do you want her to bring to these settings? Do you want her to understand how to interact with others? How to manage her time, money and belongings? Maybe you want her to figure out a few basic skills like doing her own laundry.

Interactions with others

Chances are excellent that your son or daughter will someday land a job, get married and encounter various conflicts and disagreements. Can your child handle that tension? He'll be better equipped if he's had to deal with and resolve conflict in his formative years.

Sibling interactions are great practice for the inevitable conflicts in marriage and employment. Quarrels are a part of family life. Learning to disagree while maintaining self-control and respect for the other party may take years, but it's worth the effort.

During one season, my children were particularly brutal to one another. Without disclosing the reason, I had them trace their bodies on large sheets of paper, and I hung them up. Each time they hurt their sibling, they had to go to that child's tracing and tear off a piece of the drawing. This had a great impact on teaching them not to tear one another down.

Time management

Consider tracking how your family spends time over a typical week to give you perspective on all the little time wasters that are not productive or beneficial. Too much television or shopping could signal neglect in relationships.

You may also introduce your toddler to time sequences: morning, noon, evening. Today, tomorrow, yesterday. Cut out or draw pictures to make a visual timeline of his daily routine.

As your child matures, he should have his own alarm clock. This shifts responsibility to your child, and the morning battle becomes between child and the clock and not between child and Mom and Dad.

Encourage your child to stay organized with schoolwork. Your child may be noting daily responsibilities in a planner, especially if her school encourages students to track homework assignments and long-term projects. Make sure she's also turning in her assignments on time and that she stays on task while searching the Web for class projects.

From time to time, compare the pace at which your child operates with the pace required for her daily commitments. If your child is feeling rushed, find ways to alleviate stress through family time and adequate rest. Your child's time-management skills will be a cardinal asset as he enters adulthood and the workforce.

Money management

When our kids were still young, we allowed them to make financial decisions. They were able to learn and make mistakes with small sums and small stakes. Our kids had to agree on how and when to spend the money. If there were conditions to that privilege, we spelled them out. For example, we set a weekly budget for treats. When the money was spent, it was gone for the week.

Set goals for long-term savings, such as paying for summer camp, and shorter-term savings goals for things they want in the near future, such as a new toy.

Provide a way for them to divide their earnings or allowance into different categories. For example, their tithe could be 10 percent, long-term savings could be 30 percent, short-term savings 30 percent and everyday spending 30 percent. Try using jars, paper envelopes or plastic zipper bags to separate each category. This has the advantage of kids being able to see the money as it accumulates.

Organizing and DE cluttering

Having kids means having stuff — lots of stuff. Both parents and children need to be "stuff-savvy" to keep their possessions organized.

Keep clutter at bay by involving your children in paring down belongings and donating long-forgotten toys. Work together to sort and store items, disposing of any broken or damaged toys. Consider creating a "memory box" for each child to store treasured pieces of artwork. The box could also serve as the repository for cards, letters and other mementos.

Repair and maintenance

Once your children have proven they can take care of their belongings, they can help with the big things that require regular maintenance. Include your children in everyday household and vehicle upkeep, preparing them to be more self-reliant.

Each of our kids has enjoyed trips to the hardware store holding Dad's strong hand. Because my husband and I quickly discovered that we possess few repair skills between the two of us, we've learned the following lessons about home ownership:

Have a sense of humor. Something always breaks. Cleaning three inches of water out of the basement might not be your choice for the day, but it can be an opportunity to teach teamwork

Be willing to learn. When your children see you try something new, like how to apply caulk, they learn that it's possible to acquire new skills, even if those abilities aren't in their area of strength.

Be willing to ask for help. If a home project is over your head, you can teach your children a valuable lesson by simply asking for help and then working together to accomplish the task.

Beyond home repairs, remember that basic tasks such as mowing the lawn or weeding the garden can be great learning experiences for your kids.

Homemaking basics

With all that goes into running a home, it's important to be proficient in the basic, daily tasks. Whatever my children do with their lives, however God calls them, I want them to know how to take care of themselves and their homes.

I began many of these lessons in the kitchen. I'd let them cook and help prepare food. Even a young child can spread peanut butter with a butter knife or tear lettuce for a salad. There's also much to learn from meal planning each week based on what foods are in season or on sale. The whole family can get involved in meal planning: Help your children list seven breakfasts, lunches and dinners on index cards, and work together to make a shopping list from this plan.

For older children, give them grocery flyers and a weekly budget, and have them plan the menu for the week. Math comes alive as kids make lists, check cupboards, clip coupons and keep a total on the calculator while shopping.

Let your child join you on a shopping trip for an introduction to the factors involved in making food purchases for your family such as quality, price per ounce, nutritional value, budgetary considerations, and so on. This may help your child make the connection as to why snacks from the checkout line may not be the best choice.

When doing the laundry, let your kids help you sort light and dark clothing. Even a young child can fold small towels. As your child grows, he can be responsible for loading the machines, but not before teaching him about soap and water levels, water temperatures and colors of clothes. As for stacking clothes neatly in drawers — he can do that, too.

Another important lesson is the necessity of a good attitude. When my first two kids were young, I gave them a bucket of warm, soapy water with sponges — and then put them in their bathing suits. They had a fabulous time washing the kitchen floor. I plunked them in the bathtub and mopped up the excess. I had happy kids and a clean floor.

Of course, not all chores are fun or need to masquerade as something else in order for your kids to keep a good attitude. Their outlook on a situation, no matter how unappealing the task, should be positive, a needed skill to develop for the real world.

Healthy habits

Family life is where healthy habits are formed. Exercise as a family, and work together to practice good nutrition. And does your daily communication support a healthy view

of the body? Your words condition children in their perception of themselves — positive or negative.

You may also need to remind your kids of the basics of health and hygiene. Do they clip their nails? Are they using soap in the shower? Are they changing their undergarments at regular intervals? These things require regular upkeep, now and always. Don't let your kids get lazy with their hygiene.

As my children grow and go out to explore the world, I pray they will remember our home as a place where we celebrated, worked, fought and trained well.

Decision-Making Skills

Making good decisions involves discernment. Try these techniques to help your child make better decisions:

Look to the future.

Ask each of your children to make a list of all the big decisions they will make over the next 10 to 15 years of their life, such as college, career, car, apartment, city, marriage and children. Discuss together the factors that constitute each big decision.

Stick to the facts.

"I can't possibly join AWANA this year," your daughter sighs. "They make you memorize the whole Bible!" Do you know that for sure?" you ask.

Look for opportunities to teach your child about getting all the facts. Discourage conclusions based on incomplete information.

Brainstorm together.

Your child needs to choose a science project. He doesn't know where his interests lie. On a piece of paper write the word science in a cloud, and as you discuss science topics, draw branches of ideas stemming from the cloud.

As you fill in the major subjects, encourage your child to think of subtopics within those areas. Maybe the study of animals strikes a chord with him, and he remembers a longtime love of guinea pigs. Voila! He now approaches the project with enthusiasm and a sense of ownership.

List pros and cons.

Let's say your child has to choose between playing soccer and taking ballet lessons. List the pros and cons of each option to help her reach a decision.

CHAPTER SIX

THE OVERLY STRICT PARENTS

This is a story of a 21years old and who still live at home with his parents, and a lot of these rules still apply for him.

When he was younger he could only watch TV or play on the computer for 2 hours a day, 3 on weekends. He never really watch TV anymore, so the rule doesn't really apply anymore, but if his parents sees him infront of the TV for a long time, they'll be pissed off at him. Every night he has to set his own seat at the dinner table and he doesn't sit to eat until everyone is ready to sit down.

He have to do all his laundry, and make his bed every day, pajamas on top of his pillow, bathrobe either at the foot of his bed or hung up in the bathroom, any slippers that he is not wearing under my bed neatly. My room has to be kept clean all the time.

He has shoes off, slippers on rule. He can't walk past the hallway right by the door without putting his slippers on. He has always worn slippers around my house, no socks, no shoes, no barefoot. Even when people are over, friends, family, anyone, slippers only.

When he was young, he has to be ready for bed at least 2 hours before my bedtime. Bedtime was anywhere from 8 to 11 growing up, he to be ready for bed by 6. The latest he could sleep in was 9, and up by 7 every morning. Breakfast was ready at 7:30 on school days, and had to be ready for school by then too, or he wouldn't get a full breakfast. On non-school days, breakfast was at 8, and they eat together in the kitchen in their pajamas. He lounge around in my pjs till about a quarter till 10 on these days, have to be dressed and out of pajamas by 10 on non-school days. Whenever he's in his pajamas, he have to be in a night time slippers This isn't so much a rule anymore, but I still choose to follow this.

Here are his punishments. Whenever he's being yelled at, he had stand with his hands behind his back and maintain perfect eye contact with his parent and use "sir" and "ma'am", if he looked away or even called them "mom" or "dad". His punishment was worse. The main punishment that his parents used was that he would not be able to play with any toys, watch TV, and use the computer or anything like that for a period of time. He will also had to wash all the dishes in this time, help his parents with every chore they did, any pretty much sit in his room where the only thing he could do was to read or do homework. Also in this time, he had to be ready for bed immediately after he got home from school, or by 3 on non-school days. Same as before, shower/bath, pjs, bathrobe, slippers. No matter if people were over. He even had friends over like twice because they had to work on a school project. As soon as they got into the house, his mom will made him go get ready for bed. The one time they built a solar car, and had to

take pictures and make a poster, so him and his friends took a picture of all of them with the car, and there he was, 13 years old, in his fuzzy bathrobe and claw slippers (That was another thing, his mom made him wear that pair because they were more embarrassing). He was so embarrassed after that and so many kids laughed at him.... This story shows how overly strict some parents might be.

You just have to follow their rules and regulations more like being in the military. Funny though.

CHAPTER SEVEN

STORY OF GARRET AND HIS OVERLYKIND MOTHER.

More like a son to me is this young toddler I watched him grow because he and his mom lived much closed to my house. The mother lost his father in a ghastly car accident while still pregnant with Garret.

The love and affection she had for her husband was drawn and showered towards Garret so much more that the boy hardly has a fault. He was overlypampered and not made to see anything wrong in his acts and actions. You know toddlers and their temper tantrum which needs to be corrected sometimes was not the same in this situation .The mother usually blame herself for any wrong doings of Garret.

He was never scolded nor punished nor any form of discipline drawn into him. Even the normal teaching skills he was supposed to have known was not imbibed into me because the mum felt he is the only one and should not be stressed too much. The little boy sees himself as the king of the castle where he lived with maids and servants at this beck and calls. On several occasions at a visit to Garret's house I have watched and concluded how overly kind the mum is to him .Sometimes I want to correct the boy for some misconduct but I have drawn my conclusions that that is the kid of parenting pattern the mom chose to give him. Need I say the boy is always happy cos the mom has never seen any wrong doing in him.