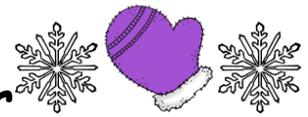


# Kremmling Preschool Newsletter



January 16-22, 2019



© Can Stock Photo

If **ANY** of your contact information (work number, cell number, emergency contacts info, address, etc.) has changed, please **UPDATE** this information in the preschool office with Michele.

**PICKUP TIMES** - Please note the following pickup times:

<b>Morning Class</b>	<b>11:00 am</b>	<b>Afternoon/Full Day</b>	<b>3:45 pm</b>
----------------------	-----------------	---------------------------	----------------

Please make note of these times as late fees will be enforce. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

**REMINDER** - Please be mindful of the fact that the elementary school is in session when you drop off and pick up your child at preschool. The teachers are often times teaching right up to dismissal which is at 3:55pm. During drop off and pick up please come straight to/from preschool rooms, making any stops only for restroom use or to check in/out at the front desk. After picking up your preschooler, you may wait for your **elementary student** outside the front doors. Thank you for your cooperation with this!



## **CALENDAR of EVENTS:**

- Feb. 18 President's Day, Preschool Closed
- Mar. 8 Preschool Screenings (for children not yet enrolled in preschool)
- Mar. 10 Daylight Savings Time begins "spring" forward
- Mar. 13 Preschool Board Meeting, 630pm
- Mar. 15-24 Spring Break, Preschool Closed
- April 1 & 2 Parent Teacher Conferences
- April 10 Preschool Board Meeting, 630pm
- April 15 Early registration for morning preschoolers currently enrolled
- April 16 Picture Day
- April 22 Preschool open enrollment
- May 8 Preschool Board Meeting, 630pm
- May 23 Pre-K Preschool Graduation, 630pm

Please do not hesitate to call or stop by with any questions or concerns!  
Michele DeSanti, Director (970) 724-9483.

# Are You Doing Too Much for Your Child?

By Janet Lehman, MSW

As parents, many of us do things for our kids that we were able and expected to do for ourselves when we were children. Our parents didn't often feel the need to negotiate with our sports coach, solve our every problem, or entertain us in our free time. A big difference from today, when all too often we are over-involved in many areas of our children's lives. Sounds funny, I know. How can a parent be too involved or do too much for their child? Isn't that just being a good parent? But when we don't expect our kids to take responsibility for chores or their behavior, and we attempt to smooth away all the bumps and bruises that are a natural part of childhood, we aren't doing our kids a favor. Instead, we're bringing them up to avoid taking personal responsibility and to expect that others will take care of things for them – *even when they are really able to take care of themselves*. We're teaching our kids that life is full of unmanageable problems, when what we want them to learn are the basic skills to manage those problems. Stepping back and taking on the role of coach and teacher instead of “do-er” and “fixer” was one of the hardest things I had to do as a parent. But as my husband James Lehman said, it is also one of the best things you can do to help your child build their social and problem-solving skills and learn responsibility.

When you come home after having to work late and find that your child's homework isn't finished (again), ask yourself these questions before doing anything: Whose chore is it? Mine or my child's? Who should be responsible for getting it done?

## Why Are Today's Parents Different?

In past generations, parents were a bit more detached from the moment-to-moment life of their children. The powerful reality of two World Wars and the Depression meant that families survived by having each member share in its burdens. Children took on a lot of responsibility early. Parents attended to their children's needs, but in the context of keeping the family together. With the peace and prosperity of the 1950s, 60s and 70s, many families were able to give their children free time, time separate from their parents. Kids had large numbers of playmates they spent time and connected with, whether siblings or neighbors, and parents had their own “adult” lives. Parents were a very real presence in the lives of their children...but in the background.

Of course, things are different today. Most parents have less time to spend with their kids. Work and other responsibilities mean that we aren't home, consistently in the background. This leaves us feeling guilty. And guilt leads to over-doing. It relieves our guilt when we do something that is really our child's job, like homework or the dishes, instead of getting them off the computer. We also over-do when we are tired or time is tight. It often seems easier to just go ahead and do the work ourselves. Making the time to teach our child to do a task, coaching them through the process, and holding firm with expectations takes patience – something hard to muster after a long day at work!

## Recognizing When You Are Over-Doing

In my practice, parents would often ask me: How do I know when I am doing too much for my child? How do I recognize it? You'll know if:

- you feel more pain than your child seems to;
- when your child is refusing to do even the simplest chore;
- when you realize that you've lost perspective about what to expect from your child.

Think of it this way. When you come home after having to work late and find that your daughter's homework isn't finished (again) and your son is sulking because he argued with a friend, ask yourself these five questions before you do anything:

1. Are you fighting the same battles over and over and getting no further ahead?
2. Whose chore is it? Mine or my child's?
3. Whose problem is it?
4. Who should be responsible for getting it done?
5. What do I usually do in these situations? Do I swoop in, taking care of everything (over-doing)?

If you come to the realization that the chore (or the problem or responsibility) is your child's and that your typical response is to over-do, then it's time to step back and find a different approach. This doesn't mean that you have been a bad parent; it just means that you've taken on too much of what belongs to your child. It also doesn't mean that you don't love your child – you do – but now it's time to try a more effective way to help them grow up.

### **Coaching, Not Doing**

Hands-on involvement – *as a coach and teacher* – will help your child develop the skills they need to face new or disliked tasks and to overcome obstacles. If your basically disorganized primary school son really needs to clean his room, he likely needs your involvement to learn how to effectively do this. When you work alongside him instead of doing the work for him, you can teach him along every step of the way (something especially important for younger children). Your son likely would be lost without this type of hands-on involvement; with it, he learns what's needed to accomplish the task. Maybe your middle school daughter has proclaimed her hatred of assigned summer reading. You can offer to also read the book so that you can talk about it together, discussing her perceptions and what you both found interesting. By doing so, you are showing her that reading can be enjoyable and you are helping her think through her book report without doing the work for her. Both examples incorporate the parental teaching and coaching role. By doing *with* instead of *for*, you are spending time with your child while also developing their abilities and building their character. It's a win/win for you both.

### **What Happens When We Over-Do for Our Children**

- Your child learns the wrong lesson – how to avoid unpleasant tasks or challenges instead of facing them. By getting you to do things for them, your child learns to manipulate others instead of how to take responsibility for his or herself.
- Children begin to underestimate their abilities. If your son or daughter has never tried new or difficult things, they won't know how to start or how to pick themselves up and try again. They'll think they can't do it.
- You will be exhausted and not have accomplished much in the long-run. Yes, the dishes may be done quickly and up to your standards, but what did your son learn? Yes, the laundry was done, but when your daughter goes off to a far-away college next year, who will do her laundry then?
- Protecting your child from life's knocks comes at a cost. Children need to learn to manage setbacks, which they won't if we always shelter them. As tempting as it is to be the one to negotiate with the coach for more playing time, what will your child do when they're on a team where the coach expects direct communication from the players? How will your child learn to speak for him or herself?

### **Difficult Moments = Opportunities for Growth**

Facing challenges are great opportunities for kids to grow and mature. Yes, it's painful to observe our child going through difficult times. As parents, we want to make this stop. Our tendency is to want to jump in and fix things. But, this is when it's most important that we step back and not step in. Take on the role of teacher and coach, supporting your child through the difficulty, while letting them discover their own capabilities. Remember, *learning to manage obstacles in life makes us all stronger people*. If we step in, we stop the learning process and run the risk of stunting our child's growth. We prevent our child from developing the courage needed to try new things, even when it is hard or they might not succeed.

I see this as a “right” of growing up – to learn from our problems and become stronger, more capable people. If you take over and don’t allow your children to come up with their own solutions and discover their strengths, you may be preventing them from finding their path to resiliency. It’s the difficult twists and turns in life that often teach us the most about how strong we really are. These experiences and the learning that comes with them are essential to becoming responsible and capable adults.

Obviously, we can’t just let go completely as parents. We need to make sure that our children are safe and protected, and have the skills to manage the problems that come their way. This often takes planning on our part, along with awareness of how our child learns and what support they need. It also takes some trust in our child’s abilities to do more for his or herself – not always easy, I know.

### **Special Challenges**

Keeping in mind James’s advice to “parent the child you have and not the one you wish you had,” there are children whose behavior can make this work so much more difficult. Children with learning challenges, attention problems, academic weaknesses, constant agitation, irritability or defiance have behaviors that place greater demands on you as the coaching and teaching parent. Remember to tailor your approach, based on your child’s needs. Maybe you’ll need to explain things over and over until your child really understands. Or find creative ways to teach and reinforce new skills, like using charts and tangible recognition. You may have to break tasks down into small pieces and teach and coach one step at a time. You’ll need to understand your child’s specific challenges, coach to those challenges or needs, and work to gain insight about what works for your child. It is hard work – but it will pay off. It does take patience, insight and a willingness to remember why you’re going through all this effort; you are teaching your child how to solve problems and manage life’s obstacles so that they can become responsible adults.

For many of us, we’ll have to work at this our child’s entire life. It’s a process that changes as you and your child change. As you get better at stepping back, and as your child picks up skills and abilities, there will be improvement. Your child will grow into a capable and responsible person. It’s a parent’s job to help our children learn how to deal with life’s obstacles, to slog through the hard stuff. It may feel like a tough job at times, but you can do it. Both your child and you will learn and grow along the way.