



The Gift of Failure by Jessica Lahey
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"We have taught our kids to fear failure, and in doing so, we have blocked the surest and clearest path to their success."

Setbacks, mistakes, miscalculations, failures, disappointments, obstacles . . .

Why do we do rescue, pave the way, and shield our children from failure? What would motivate us to extend their dependence on us?

It makes me feel better when they need me
I see my successes as evidence that I'm a good parent
I'm parenting like it's a competitive sport

What happens when failure is not an option??
children are less engaged, less enthusiastic about learning, less motivated,
and ultimately less successful

Intrinsic Motivation: The Holy Grail of Parenting

Motivation:

Extrinsic motivation: behavior that is driven by external rewards (given by others), such as money, grades, and praise

7 Factors that promote intrinsic motivation:

CHALLENGE
CURIOSITY
CONTROL
FANTASY
COMPETITION
COOPERATION
RECOGNITION

Setting “negotiable” expectations:

“Homework will be completed thoroughly and on time.”

“Your room must be clean and neat before you have screentime.”

“Chores must be done before you play.”

Children need rules and behavior boundaries, discipline and the expectation of respect.

Controlling Parents:

- Give lots of unsolicited advice and direction
- Take over
- Offer extrinsic motivators in exchange for behaviors
- Provide solutions and answers before the child has had a chance to struggle
- Don't let their children fail

Autonomy-Supportive Parenting:

- Guide children toward solutions
- Value the mistakes as much as the successes
- Acknowledge children's feelings of frustration and disappointment
- Allow mistakes and the consequences of those mistakes
- Give honest feedback

The curse of “SMART” . . . a look at the research.

Tips:

- Praise for effort, not for inherent qualities
- Don't reinforce poor reactions to failure
- Adopt a growth mindset in your own life
- Make sure your child knows his failures/successes do not change your love or opinion of him/her
- Do not rescue your child from mistakes or the consequences of those mistakes

The FAIL and the “GOOD FAIL”