

# Better Parenting: Are You an Overprotective Parent?

By Sonia Spackman MA, MFT

Your kids have a lot of chances to succeed and to fail. They need both to become well balanced. Your daughter may not be invited to the overnight party she wanted, your son may blow his chance on his ball team. Your kids will feel the rejection of their first breakup.

As their parent you want to be their soft place to land, but if you take away the learning from these experiences by protecting them from problems and from the consequences of their choices you can cause them a lifetime of hardship.

Ask yourself when you see your child hurting or bored, do you go into a "fix it" mode? Rather than allow your child to experience the consequences of their choices do you step in to defend your child? Do you do any of these?

1. Contacting your child when they are away from you.
2. Working hard to make sure your child succeeds.
3. Constantly talking to your child, spouse, friend, teachers to make sure everything is alright.
4. Not giving household chores.
5. Discouraging your kids from taking risks.

What motivates you? Are you

wanting to look good in front of other parents by helping your child look good? Do you get over involved at school with your child's problems? Do you do your child's homework so your child can look good to their teacher or other parents? Have you lost your own identity because you want your family to feel good?

**If any of these things are things you do, here are some ideas to try to let go and help your child bloom into a strong adult.**

1. Trust yourself that you have helped your child - and step aside and be there only if advice is really needed or wanted.
2. Take a time out and let your child settle an issue and experience the emotions without you rescuing. This may help them develop coping skills.
3. Instead of solving your child's problem let them suffer the consequences of their own decision.
4. Ask yourself what's the worst thing that can happen when your child is facing a situation. Let your child solve it unless there is risk of severe mental or physical harm.
5. Let your child make their own decisions. They will learn about themselves.
6. Encourage your teen to make their own choices otherwise they may never develop good problem solving skills.
7. Let your child fix their own mistakes.

If your child hurts someone's feelings let your child realize the need for an apology and fix it on their own.

8. Don't get them things to amuse them. Encourage them to do things for others to think outside of themselves. It is unrealistic to think your child will be happy all the time.

9. Teach your child to work through their problems and then let them do it.

10. Get professional help if your family is struggling with dependencies and attachments that may be hindering your child.

**Say goodbye to being an overprotective parent by doing these things:**

1. Encourage your younger children to explore, climb and master new activities. This will provide opportunities for you and your kids.
2. We can become fearful when we watch our kids learning to skate, swim, and climb but this shouldn't be translated into fear for them.
3. Let go of your attachment to be an overprotective parent and find ways to release yourself from your fears before you give them to your children.
4. Let go and allow your kids to fall, make mistakes, feel jealousy and suffer defeat.
5. Believe in your teaching as long as you have done a good job of teaching them about right and wrong. They are capable of making good decisions.
6. Remember, before you run to rescue, give them space even when they are overrun with their own or your emotions.
7. Learn to listen---then offer suggestions. But leave the final decision to them to handle on their own.
8. Let your teen suffer the consequences of their choices. Do not intervene even if it seems harsh. This will give them a sense of responsibility in their future.
9. No is an answer. It is not a must that

your child gets what they want. Make them learn that the world will not always give them what they want when they want it.

10. Let them be their own advocate. This will help them know when to speak up and be independent.

**Why is it harmful to be overprotective parents?**

If you are an overprotective parent, there is a likelihood your child could suffer the following effects as an adult.

**Limited Happiness**

Children of overprotective parents tend to suffer anxiety and depression. They may feel the world is not a safe place.

**Lower Confidence**

Just like adults, kids gain confidence by working hard toward goals. If you are overprotective you limit their chances of gaining skills on their own and feeling the satisfaction of accomplishments.

**Inhibited Growth**

As a parent your job is to prepare your child to be an independent and responsible adult. If you are overprotective you deny them the chance to mature. These negative effects may lead children to develop a poor self-image as adults. They may become stubborn and have low self-confidence. Some turn into rebels and have problems conforming to rules and the law. This is not what you want. You want a happy, well-adjusted child that is able to face life's problems.

*Resources: New Health Advisor; <https://www.distractif.com>, 26 signs-you-have-overprotective-parents-1197886422.html, Living Parenting, 6 Things Overprotective Parents Do Wrong, Charlotte Alter, Over Protective Parents, New Health Advisor; [www.NEWHEALTHADVISOR.com](http://www.NEWHEALTHADVISOR.com)*

## What's Happening at the Vernonia Library

**Upcoming Events**

**Summer Reading 2016: On Your Mark, Get Set...Read!**  
For children birth through age 14, sign up at the library through July 22. Receive free Oregon State Fair tickets and other incentives. Enter a weekly prize drawing for every hour you read. Return your time log between July 25 and August 12 to choose a free paperback book and enter a grand prize drawing.

**Upcoming Programs and Performances (Free!)**

**"Move Like a Mammoth"**  
Wednesday, July 13, 10:30 am  
For family audience with grade school children, presented by a museum educator from the Museum of Natural and Cultural History (Eugene, OR).

**Lego Challenge**  
Thursday, July 21, 4pm  
Get a plate full of legos, a base plate, and the challenge to create. Lego creations will be put on display at the library. For children K-6.

**Stages Youth Academy Performance of the Musical "Arf"**  
Tuesday, July 26, 10:30 am  
Children's performance group based out of Hillsboro, OR. For a family audience.

**Reptile Man\***  
Thursday, July 28, 6:30 pm  
Richard Ritchey is the Oregon "Reptile Man" bringing live reptiles to Vernonia. For children and

families. \*Performance at the Cabin in Vernonia (Scout Cabin) by Hawkins Park

**Writer's Group**  
Thursday, July 21  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month, 6 – 7:30 pm. For writers with all levels of experience.

**Book Discussion Group**  
Monday, July 25  
Last Monday of every month, 5:30 pm  
Selection for July: *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

**Storytimes**

**Baby and Toddler Time**  
Mondays, 10:30 – 11:15 am  
Songs, rhymes, books, toys, and bubbles! For ages 0 – 3. Older siblings welcome.

**Story and Craft Programs**  
Every Tuesday, June 14 – July 19, 10:30 – 11:30 am for Pre-K through Grade 5

**Preschool Storytime will resume Friday mornings starting in September**

**Library Hours & Contact**  
**Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10 – 5**  
**Tuesday, Thursday: 1 – 7**  
**Saturday: 10 – 4**  
**Closed Sundays**

**Phone: (503) 429-1818**  
**E-mail: [library@vernonia-or.gov](mailto:library@vernonia-or.gov)**

## City News *continued from page 5*

Mitchell told Council the California Avenue Project is on temporary hold until a plan to clean up debris has been developed and approved by DEQ.

Mitchell told Council that staff has completed and submitted all documentation to FEMA to receive reimbursements for expenses incurred by

the City during the high water event last winter.

Mitchell told Council a member of the Public Works staff has suffered a medical issue and will be unable to work for several months. The City is in the process of hiring temporary help to replace the employee.

**Councilor Thanks VRFPD for Fireworks Show** – Councilor Bruce McNair thanked the Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District (VRFPD) for the fireworks display on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, calling it "the best fireworks I've seen in the entire time I've lived here. Kudos to all the people that put the effort into it," said McNair. "They did a great job!"

Vernonia's Voice is published on the 1st and 3rd Thursday. Look for our next issue on July 21st.

**Friends of the Vernonia Public Library**

**Membership Dues:**

|          |  |             |        |
|----------|--|-------------|--------|
| Family:  | \$10.00  | Individual: | \$5.00 |
| Minimum: | \$1.00 plus 2 hours minimum of work in the library |             |        |

**Make checks payable to: Friends of the Vernonia Public Library**

**Mailing Address: 701 Weed Avenue, Vernonia, OR 97064**

|               |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Name _____    |                          |
| Address _____ |                          |
| City _____    | State _____ Zip _____    |
| Phone _____   |                          |
| Date _____    | Amount Enclosed \$ _____ |

I am interested in helping with the following committees (optional):  
Please Circle • Membership • Endowments • Book Sales • Publicity & Public Relations • Fund Raising • Library Services • Finance-Budget-Legal Matters