# **Do Your Kids Rule the Roost? Here's How to Regain Control**

You want your kids to feel empowered. You tell them to speak up, be assertive and reach for their dreams. But what happens when you give your kids too much power? What happens when *empowerment* turns into *entitlement*?

Empowered children have a strong sense of self; they have passions, hobbies and ambitions. Sounds great, right? In contrast, entitled children remain dependent, bossy and perpetually unsatisfied. What kind of child will you produce? The outcome lies in your leadership.

To avoid being too permissive and causing your little darling to morph into a little monster, consider these six key points:

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#### **Give your kids what they need, not everything they want.**

#### Showering gifts on your kids may feel good to you, but children develop an unhealthy sense of entitlement when there are no limits on their wants. Free stuff is okay now and then, but too much free stuff always backfires. The more kids are given, the less they appreciate, and the more they demand. When it comes to gifts and rewards, moderation is best. A few meaningful items have more meaning than an endless bounty of plenty.

#### **Never let your kids diss you**

#### I am routinely shocked by the way children speak to their parents. In my office, I see children yell, curse and even hit their parents. Nothing destroys the peace of a household more than parents who let their kids get away with such shenanigans. No kid wants a parent he or she can push around. Kids who talk down to their parents suffer from low self-esteem, poor peer relations and depression. So if your kid disses you regularly, don't be wishy-washy. Put a stop to it. Be firm about behaviors that are unacceptable and strive to create a culture of mutual respect in your family.

#### **Don't be a "Fix Everything Parent"**

#### "Fix Everything Parents" are the hardworking superheroes of parenting, willing to do anything for their child in a heartbeat. However, they have a terrible habit of swooping in and saving their kids from frustrating situations. By doing so, they keep their kids dependent, rob them of growth opportunities and create gaps in their emotional development. Kids with Fix Everything Parents don't think twice about bossing or manipulating them. It's better to teach your kids how to work through frustration and come up with their own solutions. Don't save the day! Remember, frustration is the fossil fuel that drives maturity. Helping your kids work through frustration is far more emboldening than saving them from it.

#### **Encourage your kids to pay their own way.**

#### Unearned privileges and rewards deprive kids of self-confidence. Desire is a great jumping off point for ambition and creativity. Encourage your kids to get what they want on their own. Help them to set goals and work toward achieving them, the process fuels their hunger to succeed and fosters a healthy self-reliance.

#### **Don't be afraid to be unpopular**

#### Being a good parent requires making unpopular decisions now and then. If you surrender to temper tantrums or avoid conflicts to purchase peace, you're setting the stage for bigger problems in the future by teaching your kids that negative behaviors get them what they want—and that's the last message that you want to send. Grow a backbone, don't be afraid to be unpopular. In the end, your kids will appreciate and respect you more for it.

#### **Fortify your leadership**

#### When kids rule the roost, no one benefits. Parenting requires strong leadership. The more confident you are in your choices, the more your kids will respect you. Kids who respect parents develop a strong foundation for self-respect, they make mindful decisions and demonstrate greater thoughtfulness in relationships.

#### So put an end to your kids ruling the roost before it begins. Foster an environment of mutual respect in your family and empower your kids with healthy habits that will last them a lifetime.

[***Sean Grover***](https://www.seangrover.com/)*, LCSW, author of "When Kids Call the Shots: How to Seize Control from Your Darling Bully—and Enjoy Being a Parent Again," has worked in child development and adult psychotherapy for 20 years and maintains one of the largest private group therapy practices in the United States.*

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