

It is actually sad that there is a psychological syndrome on pampering. Family counsellor Maggie Mamen coined this term following her twenty years of experience in dealing with children's psychological issues. She wrote a book of the same name, and the name has stayed. Another similar term is 'Affluenza', which is a portmanteau of Affluence and Influenza. Both these apparent 'diseases' are clearly the outcomes of parents allowing their children anything they want. Specifically put, these are materialistic conditions where the easy availability of money spoils the child. The dictionary states that to pamper is to "treat with excessive care and attention." Note that "excessive" is the key word here.

What Is 'Pampering'?

Pampering is defined as 'the act of indulging or gratifying a desire, translating into catering to someone's needs and desires, in an excessive way that it ends up adversely affecting the character, nature or attitude of a person. Now think of these terms with respect to a child – whose whims and fancies are catered to, with parents going out of the way to please and appease him. Letting the child have his way, whether legitimate or not, sets the foundation of adults who are stubbornly snobbish, attention seekers, and selfish to some extent.

Why do Parents Pamper a Child?

Now as parents, we end up letting our kids have their way in the name of love and inconvenience. There is also tremendous pressure on modern day parents to be 'perfect', however we cannot forget that the seeds we are laying today will blossom into fruits tomorrow. Let your child do things he is capable of doing, without extending undue help and concern, (unless really required). Do not jump in to help your child at the slightest hint of a struggle. Let him learn and grow. If you are always there to assist your child at the slightest sign of a struggle, you will only deprive your child of numerous opportunities that are crucial for his development, and he will always be dependent on you. A child learns through difficulties and experiences, and though most parents bleed to see their wards in trouble, we need to let our children develop and grow progressively, independently, and responsibly into well matured adults.

Symptoms of Pampered Child Syndrome

The responsibility is entirely on the parents. Every child is born innocent, but wrong upbringing spoils him or her. The abundance of money is something that is totally unrelated to the innocence of children. Connecting innocence and money spells a serious corrosion of moral fabric from a very early age. The common symptoms of a pampered child are as following:

- The child has the tendency to take everything for granted.
- The child begins to appreciate the abundance of money from an innocent age.
- The child has to take no effort to learn or do anything challenging of his own. Always someone else is available to do it for him.
- The child perceives people without money as unworthy and inferior.

- The child has no creative tendencies.
- The child is a prolific liar in getting whatever he wants, at any cost.
- The child has more of anything than his peers do. If his peer has one video game, an extremely pampered child has more than one.
- Significant loss of interest and short attention span from the child is another major symptom. Even if he may have all of the latest video game consoles, he may not find any of them interesting after a few days.
- The child is obstinate to the point of disrespecting elders.
- The child uses expletives without realizing their shock effect.

What are the Effects of Pampering a Child?

Pampering a child can have serious after-effects on his personality and the character, hence there are definitive limits set to indulging your child. Let the 'privileges' not be misunderstood as 'rights', and you are just about right. The damage to sensitivity can grow into a severe stage if unchecked. Take the case of the Texas 'Affluenza' teenager Ethan Couch who killed four people and debilitated two others in an incident of drunk driving. The lawyer explained his condition as 'Affluenza', a state where the child is unaware of emotional values due to affluence.

A psychologist attending the court to explain this condition stated that the child has never learned to say sorry when someone is hurt. He only knows that when you hurt someone, you compensate it with money. The teenager also showed little or no signs of remorse in the courtroom even after killing four innocent people and seriously injuring two others. Even when the situation is not this extreme, circumstances note that pampered children grow into egoistic and self-centred adults, insensitive to the idea of hurting others.

Parenting Techniques that Encourage Pampered Child Syndrome

If a child is showing one or more of the above symptoms, the parents are usually to blame for an unbalanced upbringing. Satisfying all realistic and unrealistic demands, not correcting or taking action, and treating the child as a delicate human being is not the right way to show love for your child. Instead, this makes the kid imbibe the same attitude of being fulfilled when dealing with the world outside the periphery of his comfort zone, which spells trouble for the kid, the parents, and other people who have to deal with the kid.

- When you do not rectify your lying child, you are culpable in the charge of corrupting an otherwise innocent mind.
- When you provide your child with just anything he wants, you inculcate the habit of taking everything for granted. This eventually becomes irreversible as the child grows to an adult.
- When you do not take the effort to correct the expletives used by a child, you are encouraging a severe moral corrosion. Making matters worse, inconsiderate parents maintain no restraint in using the same words themselves in the presence of their kids.

What Should Parents Do?

There is still time now, but it may cross over all points afterwards like the spoiled brat Ethan Couch. The teenager was drunk with three times more alcohol than permissible limits when he rammed his

car into four pedestrians. How would you like your child pleading guilty to manslaughter in a court? What he has done cannot be undone anymore, but you may still have time to take the right approach.

Pampered child syndrome cannot be “fixed” overnight. The first step to help your child would be to admit that you have a problem, and you need to work that out. You could track your steps backwards as to how and why this happened, when you have been so careful. Something to do with your parents? Did you grow up with nothing and want your child to have everything? Is it easier to just give in to your child than say no? Is it for your own comfort and peace? Analyse. The solution would be to ‘unpamper’ your child. Now this could be a huge challenge, and you will be required to be very, very patient and calm. It is best to begin making the changes as quickly as possible – believe us, your pampered child is not a happy child.

Parents must first correct their mentalities on raising a child. Helping a child grow into a responsible adult is not an easy task at all. Despite your bank balance, you need to make sure your child does not get whatever catches his fancy. It is not a matter of your financial ability. It is an issue of your moral responsibility as guardians.

Courtesy

"Pampered Child Syndrome: Causes, Symptoms, Corrective Actions." *Being The Parent RSS*
Web. 18 Apr. 2016.