

Raising An Army of Helaman's Warriors: Helping Our Youth Prepare for Missionary Service



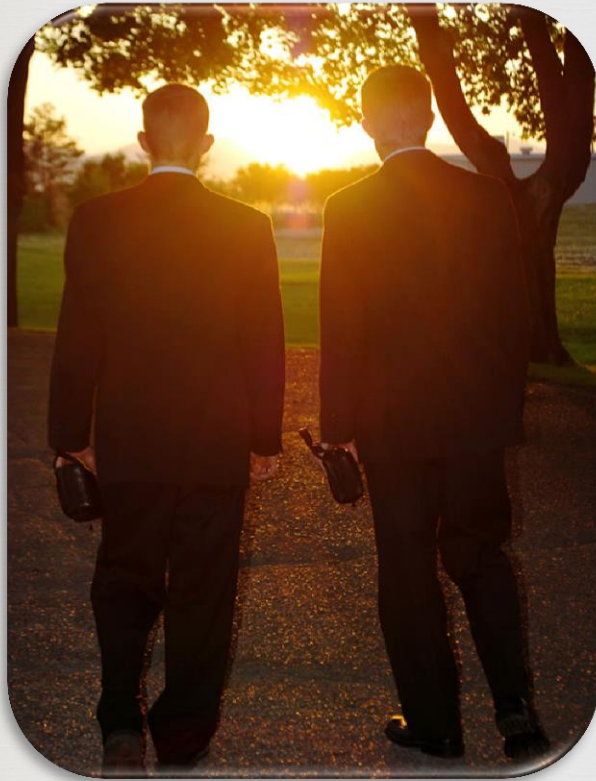
*Missionary Work is Work – Teaching Children to Do Hard
Things*

“It is the eternal, inescapable law that growth
comes only from work and preparation, whether
the growth be material, mental, or spiritual.
work has no substitute.”

--J. Reuben Clark, Jr.

Conference Report, April 1933, 103.

Missionary Work is Hard Work



“One of the greatest secrets of missionary work is work. If a missionary works, he will get the Spirit; if he gets the Spirit, he will teach by the Spirit; and if he teaches by the Spirit, he will touch the hearts of the people; and he will be happy....That’s the secret – work, work, work. There is no satisfactory substitute**”** (Ezra Taft Benson, Mission President’s Seminar, August 1982).

At Risk Teens



“America’s newly identified at-risk group is preteens and teens from **affluent, well-educated families**. In spite of their economic and social advantages, **they experience among the highest rates of depression, substance abuse, anxiety disorders, somatic complaints, and unhappiness of any group of children in this country**” (Madeline Levine, *The Price of Privilege*, [Harper Collins Publishers: New York, 2006], 17).



A Nation in Trouble



Moreover, social science researcher Hara Marano reports that “**More than twenty-one million prescriptions are written each year for stimulant drugs to enhance attention.....a** 400 percent increase over a decade ago. **Antidepressant use in children has risen 333 percent over the same time.** (Hara Estroff Marano, *A Nation of Wimps*, [Broadway Books: New York, 2008], 3).



How could this be? This is the same generation that has more than three television stations to watch, the internet, iPhones, and fruit roll ups! What could be better!

Bubble-Wrapped Childhood

“In many ways these are the best of times to be an American child: an age of prosperity, choice, technological plenty, and parental indulgence. **When have young people ever been more cared for, deferred to, or pampered? But these are also one of the worst times, because seldom if ever has a generation been less well prepared to cope with the world they will face. We aren't just failing to make 'rugged individuals.' We aren't even making competent adults**”
(Charles J. Sykes, *50 Rules Kids Won't Learn in School* [St. Martin's Press: New York: 2007], 2).

A Bubble-Wrapped Childhood

“The modern bubble-wrap mentality [instead of preparing children to deal with the inevitable scratches, bumps, and bruises of growing up, modern parents want to protect their children with bubble wrap!] **assumes that children are so frail and easily bruised that they have to be insulated from....life. No losing, no disappointments, no harsh reality checks. But a child who grows up in a bubble without developing any immunities to the outside world, a child raised in bubble wrap is not prepared for the symptoms of life:** failure, frustration, and having to make choices tougher than the color of their new iPod sleeve” (Charles J. Sykes, *50 Rules Kids Won't Learn in School* [St. Martin's Press: New York: 2007], 2).



Youth Need Life Experiences



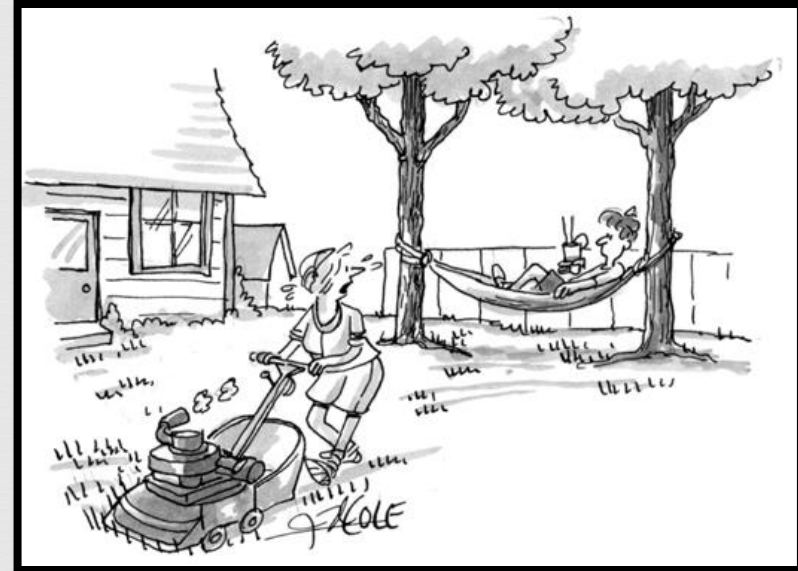
"MOW THE LAWN FOR FIVE BUCKS? I ALREADY HAVE FIVE BUCKS. DO I HEAR TEN?"

Dr. David Fassler, a child and adolescent psychiatrist and clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of Vermont, **says that too many teenagers these days "haven't had enough bad things happen to them.... In order for children to learn how to cope with normal frustrations, with ups and downs, we have to first experience them."**

How Will Children Learn to be Tough & Resilient?



“A Child cannot possibly develop resilience when his parents are constantly at his side, interfering with the development of autonomy, self-management, and coping skills” (Madeline Levine, *The Price of Privilege*, [New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2006], 77).



"NO, I CAN'T GET YOU ANOTHER LEMONAID... I STILL HAVE TO DELIVER YOUR NEWSPAPERS AND FINISH YOUR HOMEWORK!"

Too Many of our Children Have Been Done In!



“Those who do too much *for* their children will soon find they can do nothing *with* their children. So many children have been so much *done for* they are almost *done in*” (Neal A. Maxwell, “The Man of Christ,” *Ensign*, May 1975, 101).



No Work; All Play



- ❧ Indeed, many contemporary children expect much, but give little in return.
- ❧ Many youth of this generation cannot be asked to do any household work or chores without whining or complaining.
- ❧ In some families if children are asked to do work, they disappear, argue, or get deathly ill at a moment's notice!
- ❧ Ironically, the pampered generation often expends more effort trying to *avoid* blood, sweat, and tears rather than simply buckling down and getting the job done.
- ❧ **Today, 58% of teens (ages 12-17) report that they get their money from their parents; only 21% report that they have part time jobs**" (Charles J. Sykes, *50 Rules Kids Won't Learn in School* [St. Martin's Press: New York: 2007], 24).




Helicopter Parents




WIKI WORLD
by Craig Williams

HELICOPTER PARENT

is a term for a person who pays extremely close attention to his or her child or children, particularly at educational institutions. They are so named because, like a helicopter, they hover closely, rarely out of reach — whether their children need them or not.



A cartoon illustration showing a man in a suit and tie hovering in the air, holding a child's hand. The child is sitting on the ground, looking up at the man. There are some toys and a stroller nearby.



A cartoon illustration showing a woman in a blue dress and sunglasses hovering in the air, holding a child's hand. The child is running away from her. There is a sign that says "RESIDENCE HALLS" and a speech bubble that says "DON'T FORGET TO STUDY FOR YOUR PSYCH TEST...".

Although the term seems to have been in use as far back as 1991, it only gained wide currency when American college administrators began using it in the early 2000s as late-wave baby-boomer parents earned notoriety for practices such as calling their children each morning to wake them up for class and complaining to their professors about grades the children had received.

The rise of the cell phone is often blamed for the explosion of helicopter parenting; it has been called "the world's longest umbilical cord."

Text excerpted from the Wikipedia article *Helicopter parent*. 27 August 2007



Overprotected Children



“Overprotected and over-managed by their parents, and with few challenges of their own through which to sharpen their instincts and identities, kids are unable to forge their own unique adaptations to the normal vicissitudes of life. That not only makes them extraordinarily risk-adverse; **it makes them psychologically fragile.** In the process, **they’re robbed of identity,** meaning, and a sense of mastery, which **underlies real happiness.** **Forget too, about perseverance, not simply a moral virtue but a necessary life skill”**

(Madaline Levine, *The Price of Privilege* [New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2006], 77).

Work Will Bless Their Lives

“Children need to be taught the joy of honest labor and experience the satisfaction which results from seeing a job well done...I am shocked as I become aware that in so many homes, many of the children do not know how to make a bed, care for their clothing, squeeze a tube of toothpaste to conserve, turn off lights, set a proper table, mow a lawn, or care for a vegetable garden.

These simple acts of cleanliness, order, and conservation will bless their lives every day they live and prepare them to become self sufficient when they reach an age when they must be out on their own” (L. Tom Perry, “Train Up A Child,” *Ensign*, November 1988, 74; emphasis added).



“IF THERE'S ANY MONEY LEFT IN MY COLLEGE FUND, DAD, I'D LIKE TO GO TO HAWAII!”

A True Story



Youth of Zion?



“Teaching children to work, to take responsibility, requires some creativity. **Especially in urban settings, too many children are growing up in an environment when they do not have enough to do.** They are like the thirteen-year-old boy who was asked what he did all day in the summer.

“He said, ‘Well, I get up in the morning about ten or eleven. Then my mom gets me something to eat. Then maybe I’ll go with some of the guys and play a little basketball, maybe watch TV, and then go down to the mall and “hang out” for a while-- sorta watch the girls and stuff.’

Youth of Zion?

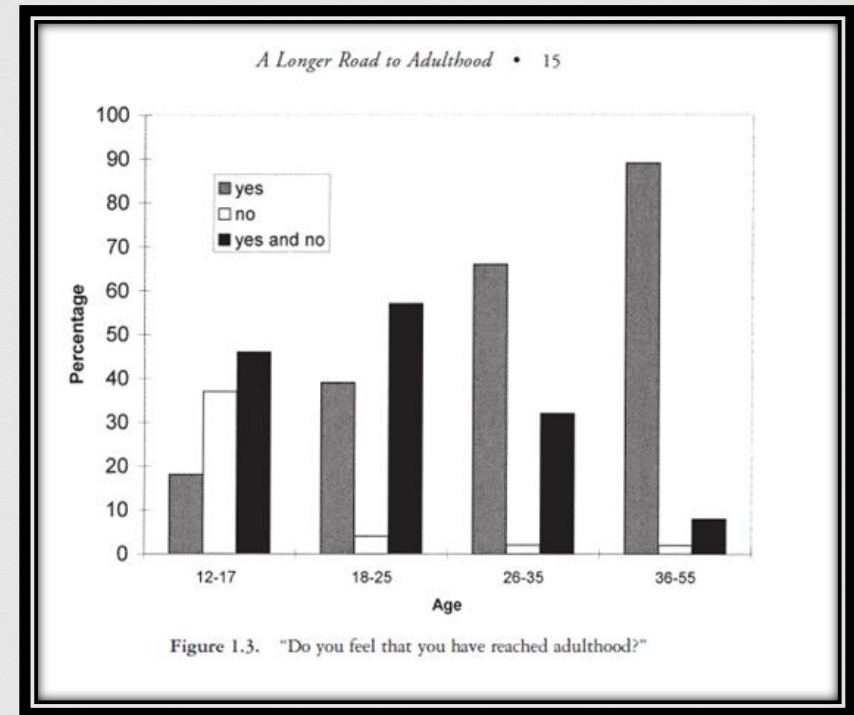


“When asked what time he got to bed, he said, ‘Oh, usually about one or two o’clock. I go over to a friend’s house and watch some videos. It’s really neat, because my friend’s mom told the guy at the video shop that it was all right for her son to check out any video he wanted--including R-rated.

“We could feel great concern for the future of that young Latter-day boy and his friends” (Joe J. Christensen, *One Step at a Time: Building A Better Marriage, Family, and You* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996], 79).

Do College Students Want to Be Adults?

- USA Today recently reported that only **16% of mothers and 19% of fathers** say that their children between the ages of 18-25 are adults!
- Their adult children don't even dispute it! **Only 16% of those between 18-25 consider themselves adults!**
- 46.7 of women and 53.7 of men between 18-24 still live at home!!**



The Doctrine of Human Development

“There is no development of character without resistance; there is no growth of spirituality without overcoming” (David O. McKay, *Conference Report*, October 1945, 133; emphasis added).

“While I do not believe in stepping out of the path of duty to pick up a cross I don’t need, a man is a coward who refuses to pick up a cross that clearly lies within his path. **No cross, no crown. No gall, no glory. No thorns, no throne**” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Area Conference Report*, Taipei, 1975, 3; emphasis added).

A Plea from Mission Presidents



President Mike Goodman
Bangkok Thailand Mission



President Rand Packer
Missouri St. Louis Mission

Lazy Parents = Lazy Kids

“It is a great deal easier, as many of us know by experience, to do a large proportion of household and other tasks than to teach children how to do them. ... Far too many parents, rather than assume the labor of teaching their boys and girls how to do the more difficult tasks of daily life, prefer to do the work themselves and keep the child at the same routine of petty choring. This is altogether bad policy for both parties. It discourages the child and effectually prevents the parents from reaping the full benefit of the child’s capacity.

“If the mother cannot have patience to teach her daughter how to make bread and cake, how to sew and how to manage the niceties of housekeeping, **who will teach her? ...**

“The same is true of boys. Those boys who are taken into companionship and fellowship with their fathers and gradually initiated into ways of doing business, entrusted according to their capability with the management of important transactions and instructed how to achieve results, **will almost certainly pass, with no unpleasant transition, from boyhood to manhood**” (George Q. Cannon, 15 July 1895, Juvenile Instructor 26:410-411, as cited in *Gospel Truth*, Volume 2 [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974], 139-140).

Teaching Our Children to Do Hard Things: #1--Work

☞ Doctrine & Covenants 68:31:

☞ “If children are raised with a poor attitude about work and do not learn to sustain themselves, **they will be weak and dependent as adults. They may ultimately become a liability to society instead of making a real contribution**” (Gene R. Cook, *Raising Up A Family To The Lord* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993], 226)



"THE MONEY YOU GAVE ME TO CLEAN MY ROOM? I SPENT IT ALL."

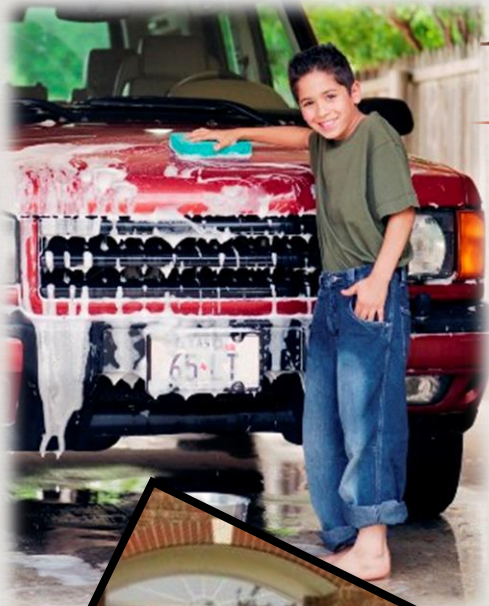
See 2 Nephi 5:10-27

Work = Happiness



“Work is honorable. It is good therapy for most problems. **It is the antidote for worry. It is the equalizer for deficiency of native endowment. Work makes it possible for the average to approach genius.** What we may lack in aptitude, we can make up for in performance...In the broader sense, **work is the means to achieve happiness, prosperity, and salvation.** When **work and duty and joy** are commingled, then **man is at his best**” (J. Richard Clarke, *Ensign*, May 1982, 77-79; emphasis added).

After Teaching the Gospel.... Teach Hard Work



Elder L. Tom Perry tells us, “I believe that **second only to ensuring** that every child receives an understanding of the gospel of our Lord and Savior **is teaching them the joy of honest labor**” (*Ensign*, November 1986, 66; emphasis added).

Parents Don't Cushion or Coddle

“Be careful, [parents], when you inordinately desire things to be better for your children than they were for you. Do not, however unintentionally, make things worse by removing the requirement for reasonable work as part of their experience, thereby insulating your children from the very things that helped make you what you are!

“Granted, some tactical situations have changed! For most [youth], there are no cows to be milked, pigs to be fed, et cetera. Yes, some of today's work may seem artificial and contrived. Nevertheless, young [people], be patient with your parents as they try to help provide reasonable and meaningful work. **In that connection, how blessed we would be if more sons could work alongside their fathers, if only occasionally. Fathers and sons, if such teaming up is not already happening at all, please, in the next three months, select just one, stretching chore to do together.**

Work Will Give You An Edge

“Young men, I do not know what your individual gifts are, but you have them! Please employ these gifts and stretch your talents – along with taking out garbage cans, mowing lawns, raking leaves, or shoveling snow for widows, widowers, or a sick neighbor.

“Knowing how to work will give you an edge in life, and experience with excellence – a special edge!

“Let us all be quick and generous to praise our youth for the work they accomplish, especially when they do it well!

“The rising generation will determine if Latter-day Saints will continue to be known for the work ethic. Long ago, President Brigham Young advised: ‘I want to see our Elders so full of integrity that [their work] will be preferred. ... If we live our religion and are worthy [of] the name ... Latter-day Saints, we are just the men that all such business can be entrusted to with perfect safety; if it can not [be] it will prove that we do not live our religion’ (*Discourses of Brigham Young* [1954], 232–33)” (Neal A. Maxwell, “Put Your Shoulder to the Wheel,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 38).

Families Work Together



“Children need to work with their parents, to wash dishes with them, to mop floors with them, to mow lawns, to prune trees and shrubbery, to paint and fix up, to clean up, and to do a hundred other things in which they will learn that labor is the price of cleanliness, progress, and prosperity” (President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Four Simple Things to Help Our Families and Our Nations,” *Ensign*, September 1996, 7; emphasis added).



Ideas from a Prophet



“The idle generation! Hours each day and nothing to do. ... We want you parents to create work for your children. ... ‘What can we do?’ ” they ask. **Do the shopping, work in the hospital, help the neighbors and the church custodian, wash dishes, vacuum the floors, make the beds, get the meals, learn to sew. Read good books, ... clean the house, press your clothes, rake the leaves, shovel the snow, peddle papers.** Lawmakers in their over eagerness to protect the child have legislated until the pendulum has swung to the other extreme. But no law prohibits most work [here] suggested ... , and parents can make work” (President Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982, 360–61).

Therefore, What?



- ☞ Children should have chores their home
- ☞ They should be engaged in family building projects, yard work, and other home improvement projects
- ☞ Teenagers should work in part time jobs and summer employment
- ☞ Working for *you is all right*, but they need to have the experience of working for someone else
- ☞ Children and teens should can also work by doing things for others in the ward, stake, and community

Teaching Our Children to Do Hard Things: #2-- Service



14 And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked; neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrell one with another, and serve the devil, who is the master of sin, or who is the evil spirit which hath been spoken of by our fathers, he being an enemy to all righteousness.

15 **But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another.**

16 And also, ye yourselves will succor those that stand in need of your succor; ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need; and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish (Mosiah 4:14-16).

Service is the Dividing Line

“Service is the virtue that distinguished the great of all times and which they will be remembered by. It places a mark of nobility upon its disciples. It is the dividing line which separates the two great groups of the world - those who help and those who hinder, those who lift and those who lean, those who contribute and those who only consume. How much better it is to give than to receive. Service in any form is comely and beautiful. To give encouragement, to impart sympathy, to show interest, to banish fear, to build self confidence and awaken hope in the hearts of others, in short - to love them and show it - is to render the most precious service” (Bryant S. Hinckley, quoted by Steven R. Covey, *First Things First*, 306).

Teach Children to Sacrifice and Deny Themselves



“As we teach our families to sacrifice, we should also teach them to deny themselves. The story is told of the Civil War general Robert E. Lee, who, when asked by a woman for advice in raising her child, said, *“Teach [your child] to deny himself”* (see Joseph Packard, *Recollections of a Long Life* [1902], 158).

“We must avoid saturating our children with material things. We may deprive a child of enjoyment when we give him too much. If we never allow him to want something, he will never enjoy the pleasure of receiving it.”

“Are we encouraging our children to sacrifice by giving their time and resources, such as helping a lonely neighbor or befriending someone who needs it? As they concentrate on the needs of others, their own needs become less important. True joy comes from sacrificing for others” (Carol B. Thomas, “Sacrifice: An Eternal Investment,” *Liahona*, Jul 2001, 77-79; emphasis added).

President Spencer W. Kimball Speaks Out on Service



- ☞ As President Spencer W. Kimball taught, “When we are engaged in the service of our fellowmen, **not only do our deeds assist them, but we put our own problems in a fresher perspective.** ... There is less time to be concerned with ourselves” (*Ensign*, December 1974, 2; emphasis added).
- ☞ “**God does notice us, and he watches over us. But it is usually through another person that he meets our needs. Therefore, it is vital that we serve each other.** ... So often, our acts of service consist of simple encouragement or of giving mundane help with mundane tasks, but what glorious consequences can flow from mundane acts and small but deliberate deeds!” (President Spencer W. Kimball, *Ensign*, December 1974, 5; emphasis added).
- ☞ “**Only when you lift a burden, God will lift your burden.** Divine paradox this! The man who staggers and falls because his burden is too great can lighten that burden by taking the weight of another’s burden. You get by giving, but your part of giving must be given first” (President Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 250; emphasis added).

Therefore, What?



- ☞ Teach your children to give anonymous service
- ☞ Cleaning up the neighborhood and community
- ☞ Cleaning the Church; stacking chairs, last family to leave the Church after an activity
- ☞ Being in tune to neighbors and others around us
- ☞ Helping families in the ward with meals, babysitting, and lawn mowing
- ☞ Giving our time, talents, and efforts
- ☞ Financial donations to those in need
- ☞ Always bring children to ward and stake service projects (i.e. helping people move)



Pure Steel



“Years ago I was in a Church History class at Brigham Young University. We had studied the Missouri persecutions, the exile from Nauvoo, the sacrifices of the Saints as they made the arduous journey across the plains to the Rocky Mountains- especially of the Willie and Martin handcart companies.

“After we rehearsed that catalog of adversity and suffering, one of the students asked this question: ‘Why was the way so hard?’ I know they were being tested, but did it have to be so relentless, so intense?’ The professor’s answer showed tremendous insight into the purposes of God.



Pure Steel



He said, ‘What you have to realize is this. There was a great work to be done, and these people were just common folk. They weren’t great crusaders or proven heroes. However, by the time they reached the valley, many of the physically weak had died, and almost all of the spiritually weak had apostatized. So what Brigham Young had left to work with was **pure steel**” (Gerald N. Lund, *Hearing the Voice of the Lord: Principles and Patterns of Personal Revelation* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2007], 306).



Wow!



“The special spirits who have been reserved to live in this time of challenges and who overcome will one day be praised for their stamina by those who pulled handcarts” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Notwithstanding My Weakness*, 18).

