

INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose - leading parenting educator



Easy ways to develop independence in kids

If you are anxious about your child's safety and tend to be more protective than you want, then start creating JUNIOR VERSIONS of independent living, so that kids can learn to stand on their own two feet rather than be dependent on you.

A major challenge for parents is to find ways of safely moving children from being reliant on adults to a position of independence. This can be tough because your natural instinct is to nurture them.

Training for independence starts from a young age and continues into adolescence and beyond. Developing independence is one of the best ways to promote self-confidence.

When you teach children to do jobs for themselves, you send a powerful message that you believe that they are capable. Your actions speak louder than words.

Developing independence in kids can be tricky these days. Recently I heard a brilliant, yet deceptively simple idea that all parents can use to develop independence in their kids of any age.

I attended an advanced presentation skills seminar, conducted by Australian professional speaker Glenn Capelli.

Glenn said that many speakers complicated matters for audiences, making things too complex. One way of making it easy for audiences to learn is to create a JUNIOR VERSION of whatever we are talking about.

He likened this to the way that many sporting bodies have now developed modified versions of adult sports, so kids can learn the basic skills of the sport in fun, enjoyable ways.

I had one of those light bulb moments as I listened, and realised that effective parents create JUNIOR VERSIONS of the GAME all the time to help kids develop the skills of self-sufficiency and independence from a very early age.

Here are some examples:

1. We get toddlers to smooth the doonas and arrange their teddies on their beds – that's a JUNIOR VERSION of making a bed.
2. We encourage early primary school kids to make snacks, prepare breakfasts and help prepare a meal. That's a JUNIOR VERSION of cooking an evening meal.

3. WE drive primary school kids half way to school and let them walk the rest. That's a JUNIOR VERSION of walking to school.
4. We let an early teen go to a local cinema with friends. That's a JUNIOR VERSION of going out without adult supervision.

There are plenty of ways to create JUNIOR VERSIONS of independent living every day so kids can become more self-sufficient.

What JUNIOR VERSIONS of independent living are you creating for your kids?

If you are anxious about your child's safety and tend to be more protective than you want, then start creating JUNIOR VERSIONS of independent living, so that kids can learn to stand on their own two feet rather than be dependent on you.

Remember, REDUNDANCY is your aim as a parent!

Similarly, one way for kids to develop self-help skills is to create JUNIOR VERSIONS of what you already do, so they can develop the skill-sets needed to look after themselves, and help out the rest of the family.

Now that's an idea worth thinking about!

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