

BATTLING ENTITLEMENT: EVERY PARENT'S FEAR

Please read the following statements carefully. As you go through them, circle or highlight any that resonate with you, whether through personal experience, observation, or witnessing. This exercise will help us better understand and discuss your experiences during our sessions.

Look around. There is entitlement lurking in most households. Growing up with the belief that their needs always come first can lead to a distorted sense of self-importance in children. This might make it challenging for them to develop empathy and consider the needs of others, impacting their social interactions and relationships outside the family. Over praising, fixing their problems, or making sure they always get what they want will only create a world of entitlement as well as what others will call “a spoiled brat” that no one will want to be around.

Distorted Self-Image:

Children may develop an inflated sense of self-importance and entitlement, believing they are superior to others.

False Sense of Self:

They often operate under a delusional belief that they are better than others, even when evidence suggests otherwise.

Overconfidence Masking Insecurity:

May appear overly confident externally, yet struggle with feelings of inferiority internally.

Difficulty with Peer Relationships:

Such children often struggle to form healthy, egalitarian relationships with peers, as they may view others as inferior.

Chronic Criticism:

They might frequently criticize others to boost their own ego and maintain a perceived hierarchy where they feel most comfortable.

Defensiveness When Challenged:

If not the best or on top, they automatically resort to criticizing others or making excuses for their weaknesses.

Impaired Empathy:

Being consistently prioritized can hinder their ability to empathize with others, as they are unaccustomed to sharing attention.

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Anxiety and Pressure:

The burden of living up to a parent's expectations can create significant anxiety and stress.

Conflict with Authority:

These children may challenge authority figures who do not affirm their perceived superiority.

Resistance to Feedback:

Accepting constructive criticism or feedback can be difficult, as it conflicts with their self-image.

Social Isolation:

Over time, the behavior may lead to social isolation as peers may withdraw from unbalanced and negative interactions.

List of Unhealthy Enmeshment Behaviors

Living Vicariously Through the Child:

Some parents may try to achieve their unfulfilled dreams or correct their past mistakes through their children, pressuring them to pursue specific interests, careers, or achievements.

Over-identification with the Child's Successes and Failures:

When parents base their self-worth on their child's achievements or setbacks, it can lead to an unhealthy level of involvement in the child's life.

Lack of Boundaries:

Sharing too much personal information with a child or relying on them for emotional support blurs the lines between parent and child, creating a role reversal that can be harmful.

Hyper-focus on the Child to the Exclusion of Other Relationships:

When a parent's world revolves solely around their child, neglecting their own needs or those of their partner, it can lead to a breakdown in family dynamics.

Intrusiveness:

Constantly invading the child's privacy, from reading their messages to micromanaging their daily activities, undermines the child's independence and sense of self.

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Using the Child as an Emotional Crutch:

Relying on the child for emotional support, especially during marital disputes or personal problems, places an inappropriate burden on them.

Overprotection:

Shielding the child from every possible harm or failure doesn't prepare them for the real world and fosters dependency.

Making Decisions Based Solely on the Child's Wants:

Consistently prioritizing the child's desires over the needs and opinions of the other parent can harm the marital relationship and the family's functioning.