

# CHILDREN SHOULD BE MENTORED NOT MANAGED

In today's fast-paced, competitive world, parenting has taken a new level of intensity. From the moment children begin school, their lives are carefully mapped out. Their days are defined by routines: Wake-up times, school schedules, homework, extra lessons and co-curricular activities. Even resting is sometimes planned with precision.

Many parents are no longer just raising children; they are managing them. Every aspect of a child's life is monitored, evaluated and adjusted to produce the best possible outcomes.

Performance becomes the dominant language of parenting and success is often measured by visible achievements.

Yet, amid all this structure and intentionality, something human is quietly being lost.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

A project is something that is planned, controlled and measured against set targets. It has timelines, deliverables and expectations. While this approach works well in professional spaces, it becomes problematic when applied to children. In many homes today, parenting conversations are heavily centred on grades, improvement targets and comparisons with peers.

The future is discussed in terms of success trajectories, often long before a child has discovered their own interests. Over time, this shifts the parent-child relationship. Instead

of feeling understood, the child begins to feel evaluated. In such an environment, relationships give way to regulation and connection is replaced with control.

## EXCESSIVE MANAGEMENT

Children who grow up in highly managed environments often learn to perform, but this performance can come at a hidden emotional cost. Some begin to associate their worth with their achievements, feeling valued only when they succeed and uncertain of themselves when they fall short. Others develop a quiet fear of failure. Rather than seeing mistakes as part of learning, they begin to avoid risks in order to maintain approval. In some cases, children conceal their struggles altogether, choosing silence over the possibility of disappointing their parents.

Some respond differently. Instead of striving harder, they withdraw. They disengage emotionally or academically, not necessarily because they lack ability, but because they no longer feel seen beyond what they produce. What appears on the surface as laziness or indifference may, in reality, be a deeper sense of disconnection.

## ILLUSION OF CONTROL

At the heart of excessive management is often a genuine concern. Many parents are driven by the fear that if they do not stay in control of every detail, their children may fall behind



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in an increasingly competitive world. However, not everything that matters in a child's life can be controlled.

Qualities, such as confidence, resilience, emotional intelligence and character are not developed through pressure and constant oversight. They are nurtured through trust, relationships and consistent emotional support.

When parenting becomes overly controlling, it may produce short-term compliance, but it risks weakening the long-term connection.

A child may do what is expected, yet feel distant from the very people guiding them.

## REDISCOVERING THE CHILD

Every child carries a world within them: Thoughts, fears, questions and dreams that are not always visible on report cards or in school performance. When parenting is overly focused on

## LET CHILDREN BE HUMAN

Children are not designed to be perfect. They will make mistakes, experience setbacks and have areas of both strength and weakness. This is not a sign of failure; it is a natural and necessary part of growth.

When parents create an environment where children are allowed to be human, they give them the freedom to learn, to try again and to discover who they truly are. Such an environment builds confidence, not just in ability, but in identity.

outcomes, these inner realities can easily be overlooked.

To truly raise a child is to engage with who they are becoming, not just what they are achieving. This requires intentional presence. It means creating space for conversations that are not centred on performance, but on experience. It involves listening carefully, without rushing to correct or judge and allowing children to express themselves freely.

Often, the most meaningful moments in parenting are not found in structured activities, but in simple, unplanned interactions, shared laughter, honest conversations and the quiet assurance that a child is safe to be themselves.

## FROM MANAGING TO MENTORING

What children need most is not a manager, but a mentor. While a manager is primarily concerned with results, a mentor is invested in growth.

Mentoring involves walking alongside a child, guiding rather than controlling and correcting without diminishing their sense of worth. It is about encouraging effort, nurturing potential and helping a child develop their own sense of direction.

When children are mentored, instead of managed, they begin to develop internal motivation.

## REMINDER TO PARENTS

As the school term unfolds, it is easy to become consumed by schedules, expectations, and performance targets. The demands are real and the desire to see children succeed is both natural and commendable.

However, it is important to pause and reflect. Are we raising children, or are we managing projects?

In the end, children may not remember every instruction, schedule or performance target, but they will remember how they were treated, how they were spoken to and whether they felt seen and understood. Let us raise children who are not only successful in what they do, but secure in who they are.

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