



FAMILY!

Encouragement Works Praise Impedes

by Jane Nelsen

Rudolf Dreikurs taught, "A child needs encouragement like a plant needs water." In other words, encouragement is essential. Children may not die without encouragement, but they certainly wither.

Since encouragement is so essential, it's helpful for parents and teachers to know exactly what encouragement means and how to use it. Let's start with what encouragement is not.

Encouragement is Not Praise

Praise is not encouraging because it teaches children to become "approval junkies." They learn to depend on others to evaluate their worth. Research by Carol Dweck, Ph.D. a professor at Stanford

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Olympic Bed Jumping Dear Addy...

Guest author is Alyson Schafer

Dear Addy,

My 3-year old twins have been "experimenting" with jumping from one bed to another in their room, pushing the beds farther and farther apart (when I'm not in the room). I'm trying to stay out of it, since I'm told that natural consequences will teach them how far is too far. So what happens if they find out by falling on their heads and needing a trip to the E.R.? The news is so full of contradictory advice about being over protective versus legal issues about negligent parenting. Help!

—Mom In Need of Courage

Dear Courageous Mom,

No one ever wants to see their
[continues on page 3](#)

Let's Explore Benefits of Risk

Helicopter parenting vs "free-range" kids; playground risk-taking; learning from mistakes; facing the world with courage. Let's look at what some experts have to say about Risk.

Why Your Child Needs to Try The Importance of Risk

by Cheryl Erwin

When I was a kid—admittedly, a long time ago—I devoured every title in the "Nancy Drew" series about an intrepid teen detective who always got into tight spots, but managed to solve whatever mystery she'd stumbled upon. Her contemporaries, the Hardy Boys, did the same. When my son was 5, we discovered the Boxcar Children books, about a family of four orphans on the run from a mean grandfather who lived alone in an abandoned boxcar in the woods. My son loved these books, but he never ran away or tried to live in an abandoned boxcar, nor did I sneak out my

bedroom window to solve mysteries.

The issue of children and risk-taking has been in the news a great deal recently. A Maryland family is under investigation for allowing their 10-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter to walk a mile home from a park without adult supervision. And Tommy Caldwell and Kevin Jorgeson's astonishing free-climb of Yosemite's Dawn Wall has drawn criticism from parents who claim it will inspire kids and teens to take unnecessary risks. Seriously? Do we need to remove Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, the Boxcar Children, the

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Consider coaching, consider serving

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Helicopter Dad, risk on the playground

FE Section Co-Chairs Report...



Rob Guttenberg



Ruth Strunz

Dear Family Ed Section Members,

Greetings from Ontario, where we have been experiencing a “cold snap” that has even us hearty Canadians staying indoors! I’m a great fan of our bright, cold winters... but there are times when common sense prevails, and this weekend mine suggests that hot chocolate, blanket forts and warm socks are priorities!

Transitions: the Big News in NASAP

There is a wave of change happening within NASAP it seems! Even as many of us start to prepare for NASAP 2018 in Toronto, it’s important for us (as in every family) to pause and name our experience. At last year’s conference, we said goodbye and thank you to Beverley Cathcart-Ross, ending her three-year term as Co-Chair. Rob, Inna and I now are the new leadership of the Section; we are committed to working with our newsletter editor to provide encouragement and support to members of the FES.

Another transition, in fact, is that our *FAMILY!* editor, Bryna Gamson, is retiring after 18 years of volunteer service, so we gratefully welcome Jennifer Lee who has agreed to step in. This is a critical role, as the newsletter keeps us connected to one another. What aspects of your work will you share with FES members this year? Have something to share now? Contact Jennifer at <origin.counselling@gmail.com>.

In addition, Renee Devine is now NASAP’s Acting Executive Director, taking on that position after many years of dedicated service by John Newbauer. We welcome Jon Sperry as our Board President. Our team looks forward to working with both of them to ensure that NASAP 2018 meets the needs and expectations of the membership. It’s also time to think about a new Co-Chair from the USA as of June, when Rob’s term ends. Change is inevitable, but Adlerians are resilient and adaptable. (And know how to face risks, as this issue attests.) We recognize challenges as opportunities in disguise, and we lean in with interest, as the waves of change gently roll in on our shores!

NASAP 2018: ‘Community, Connections & Social Interest in Challenging Times’
In the fall, your leadership team enjoyed getting to know one another as we shared the privileged work of selecting the Family Education presentations for NASAP 2018 from among many excellent submissions. Plan to be there in Toronto June 7-10! Annual meetings are always fun and inspiring.

Now, we want to know who you are! Let’s connect with one another and strengthen our professional community. How can our Section support you in providing what your clients need, taking care of yourself and sharing Adlerian theory and therapy with families everywhere?

As 2018 begins, this is our invitation: reach out and connect with the FES! Use the listserv to find your tribe, and use the newsletter to share your work with the rest of us. Drop us a line directly, and come say hello at NASAP 2018. Let’s walk a piece of the journey together!

Warmly, Your Co-Chairs,
Ruth Strunz along with Rob Guttenberg ■

Adlerian Wisdom

Courage, simply put, refers to a willingness for risk taking and movement forward in the presence of difficulties.

-- (p.43) from “**The Psychology of Courage: An Adlerian Handbook for Healthy Social Living**” by Julia Yang, Alan Milliren, and Mark Blagen

2010

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<www.taylorandfrancis.com> and
<www.routledge.com/mentalhealth>

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Dear Addy...continued from page 1
 children hurt. However, when children get a bump or bruise (and yes, maybe even a stitch or two), they learn a better respect for evaluating risk and making better future decisions than if we prevent them from experimenting with their physical abilities and limitations. The fact that you are asking the question about whether there could be legal issues about neglectful parenting tells me that you are already a diligent enough parent to ask the question and reach out to our *Dear Addy* column to confirm!

Rest assured, police never want to separate a child from their home. When they do a home assessment they look for evidence of neglect like lack of food in the fridge, sanitation of the home, has the child been bathed and in clean clothes or diapers. They are looking for signs of a parent who is incapable. They can discern a parent who experienced a child's misjudgement from a parent who is a poor care provider.

There have been recent cases reported in the media of police being called to investigate children walking home alone, or playing in a yard alone and the result has been heightened parental paranoia and fear. Our parental culture is already one steeped in worries about our children. We think they are fragile and incapable, resulting in a tendency towards helicopter

or "snowplough" parenting. We keep children tethered on a short leash and we clear the hurdles from their path like a snowplough. In Adlerian lingo, we refer to this as pampering our children. Pampered children are deprived of the opportunity to develop themselves for proper social living in adulthood. So, ironically, when we work so hard to keep their bodies safe, we pay a much higher price in their internal development.

And remember, any child who signs up for a sport is exposing himself to broken bones and stitches. Probably the most dangerous thing our children do is ride in the car with us to school. Bed jumping is a low risk sport when compared to horseback riding and rugby. Let them enjoy their sibling Olympics and keep some ice in the freezer and steri strips in the medicine cabinet.

—Addy ■

Guest author is Alyson Schafer, past Co-Chair of our Family Ed Section, popular presenter and author of 3 lively books on Adlerian parenting. Her website is <<http://alysonschafer.com>>

Read more in an entry from Alyson on "free range" kids at <<http://alysonschafer.com/age-can-kids-walk-home-alone-any-way>>. She also writes for Huffington Post Canada, is called on for parenting expertise for TV news, and is quoted in many national and international news stories on childrearing issues.

Praise Impedes...continued from page 1
 University, has now proven what Adler taught years ago: too much praise is not good for children.

Dweck found that praise can hamper risk taking. Children who were praised for being smart when they accomplished a task chose easier tasks in the future. They didn't want to risk making mistakes.

(Dr. Carol) Dweck found that praise can hamper risk taking... [to avoid] making mistakes

On the other hand, children who were "encouraged" for their efforts were willing to choose more challenging tasks when given a choice.

As Dreikurs said, "Encourage the deed [or effort], not the doer." ■

*Excerpted by permission from Jane Nelsen's **Positive Discipline** blog <<https://www.positive-discipline.com/blog>>. Dr. Nelsen is the founder of PD, author and expert.*

On Courage

by Rudolf Dreikurs, M.D.

Excerpt from **The Challenge of Parenthood**

If it is true that children are by nature courageous and unhesitatingly attack any obstacles that confront them—even the difficulties presented by their own bodies and imposed by heredity—why then do they gradually lose this courage? Here the effects of improper training become apparent. A great many educators, professionals and laymen alike, are not aware of the importance of courage and hence disregard this fundamental need of the child. They continually diminish the child's self-assurance. All the many (and sometimes heterogeneous) errors of education converge at this point.

The child may be discouraged by having every obstacle carefully removed from his path, so that he is denied the chance to experience his own strength and the development of his capacities. Similar is the result if too many and too great obstacles are put in his way so that his powers prove insufficient, and he consequently loses self-confidence. Without knowing it, parents discourage children in a thousand small ways, and the cumulative result of these discouragements is the growing sense of inferiority in the child. Overprotection and neglect, indulgence and oppression, despite their fundamental difference in kind, result in the same breakdown of the child's self-confidence, self-reliance, and courage. ■

The Challenge of Parenthood
 by Rudolf Dreikurs, M.D.

ORIGINAL publication date 1958; quoted from revised Plume (Penguin) edition 1992, (p. 37)

Importance of Risk....cont. from page 1
Goosebumps series, and other thrill-inspiring literature from our library shelves, and place our kids in protective custody?

Not all risks involve dangling thousands of feet in the air or tracking criminals alone. It is a risk to try out for the soccer team, or to play in a game. It is risky to audition for honor band or choir. It's risky to ride your bike home from school, to cross a busy street, or to climb to the very top of the jungle gym. And there are children out there who are actively discouraged by loving parents from doing any of these things. They might get hurt; their self-esteem might be damaged. They might break a limb or injure themselves. And it's true: taking risks can lead to social, emotional, and physical injury. But that doesn't change the reality that risk is not only unavoidable for children, it serves an important purpose.

Most of the parents I meet these days are risk-averse. They worry so much that their children will be hurt in some way that they work overtime to eliminate any threat to their child's wellbeing. I know kids who aren't allowed to walk to school, even though they're only a block away. I know kids who can't play in the front yard because they might be abducted, or visit a new friend's house without an FBI background check on the parents. (Well, that might be a slight exaggeration, but you get my drift.) And with the best intentions in the world, parents sometimes discourage children from trying new things. After all, who wants to hold a crying child who wasn't selected for the team or who fell short of a goal?

It's important to recognize that children acquire confidence, problem-solving skills, and the ability to assess and trust their own competence by testing boundaries, physically, emotionally, and

socially. It's an important form of learning, and without it, children are in danger of losing their courage, avoiding new experiences, and isolating themselves from a world full of beauty, adventure, and yes, risks. They may never break an arm, but they may live with anxiety and doubt. Where would we be without history's risk-takers, the explorers and pioneers who were willing to try something new—and whose moms and dads released their grip long enough to let them try?

The first time my 9-year-old son asked to ride his bike with his friends from our home to the grocery store, about a mile away, my first reaction was to say no. But I remembered how I grew up, packing a lunch and disappearing into the hills near our neighborhood, playing and building forts until the sun began to sink and the street lights came on. So instead, I took a deep breath, reviewed safety rules and his route with him, asked him to call me as soon as he got home, and said okay. And for 90 minutes, I sat staring at the phone on my desk. And he did call me, elated, sweaty, and the proud possessor of a new pack of baseball cards—and he's been taking measured (and successful) risks ever since.

Overprotecting children only creates different risks for them. Open your grasp a bit, teach the necessary skills—and let go. Your child may discover how to fly. ■

Source by permission: Cheryl Erwin's Blog, January 24, 2015

http://www.cherylerwin.com/blog/display.cfm?entry_id=2AED9B18-9F45-98DF-B631F43980A4612B

*Cheryl Erwin is a licensed marriage and family therapist in the Reno/Sparks area. She is also the author or co-author of nine books on parenting and family life, including seven in the best selling **Positive Discipline** series, and frequent contributor to this newsletter. Contact Cheryl at <cheryl@cherylerwin.com>; website <<http://cherylerwin.com>>.*

Transition: Parent Education Plus Consider Coaching

by Dina Emser

Many parenting class leaders find themselves being asked to go beyond the parameters they've been told to adhere to, and instead are urged to give answers or coach. So what is coaching and how does a parent educator transition to that role?

Coaching actually is a natural fit for Adlerian parent educators.

While coaching is offered widely now in many areas of life, the process may be misunderstood by those who have not experienced it. Many coaching models grew from the athletic prototype, and yet they differ greatly from this traditional view of a person who knows more and sees more, and helps less-experienced players do their best to win the game. Coaching is different from education, mentoring, therapy and problem solving.

In most well-accepted coaching models, the client is considered the expert, and the coach offers expertise in the process of coaching. The client has the agenda. The coach and client collaborate to expand and explore options so the client can learn and take action towards specific goals (as defined and decided by the client.)

Many of the skills of a parent educator are similar to those of a coach. In parent classes, creating a safe environment for each parent to feel free to share and participate is critical. This is the first focus for a coach as well; creating safety and trust is essential and starts with an agreement to hold confidentiality. As in a parenting class, structure about how the coaching is going to be organized, and agreed upon roles and expectations in advance, are vital for the success of the relationship.

Other essential coaching contexts include deep listening; being

continues on page 5

Membership Matters

Elections Elections Elections

Once again this Spring, our Section will be seeking the nomination of a new Co-Chair. Rob Guttenberg's term will be ending as of the Toronto conference in June.

Our tradition is to have one Co-Chair from Canada and one from the USA. Ruth Strunz has brought a fresh voice to the role as our Canadian Co-Chair as of last year, and thus we seek an American member to step forward and join her in leading the Family Education Section.

This post can be instrumental in deciding the direction of not only this Section but of NASAP, since service on the COR, NASAP's governing body, is part of the job. Co-Chairs review proposals for inclusion at the conference, and thereby have a great deal of influence on the work being highlighted. Leaders have the opportunity to shape and to reflect the interests of this particular community. Though it seems a cliché, volunteers are indeed the lifeblood of an organization. It's also a résumé builder.

Don't wait to be asked. Think about offering to serve. Think about nominating someone you know who will step up with enthusiasm and take on the fulfilling challenges of helping to shape an organization.

Let us hear from you! Use the form on the back page. ■

Coaching...continued from page 4

curious and asking powerful (often short) questions; using intuition to understand the feeling beneath what is said and not said; encouraging the action of the client while also staying focused on what the client is learning; and modeling self-management.

How wonderfully simple it may seem, and yet it is not easy. In my experience, the coaching process takes time, commitment and practice.

Adler and Dreikurs focused much of their time and energy in support of parents and teachers. We all have far more power than we believe. We can continue to find ways to support those who have the most power to impact children and the future.

This description from **Co-Active Coaching** by Kimsey-House and Sandahl (2011) summarizes aspects of coaching that are highly

compatible with Adlerian parent education:

...coaching is not about solving problems, although problems will be solved. It is not primarily about improving performance, attaining goals, or achieving results, although all of that will certainly happen over time in an effective coaching relationship. We believe coaching is chiefly about discovery, awareness, and choice. It is a way of effectively empowering people to find their answers, encouraging and supporting them on the path as they continue to make important life-giving and life-changing choices. ■

Dina Emser, MA, CPCC, CPDLT, is a Positive Discipline Lead Trainer and Certified Coach. A past Co-Chair of the Family Education Section, she offers courses in PD as well as coaching. Contact <dina@dinaemser.com> and at <<http://dinaemser.com>>.

Letting Go

So

*I watch you swiftly go
Slipping through your youth
A leaf sailing down
A forest stream –*

Past

*A matted mass of grass
And snags – to catch –
Now struggling with the snare
Now twirling on –*

On

*Through distant, misty dawns
Too far for these fond eyes
To watch you
Sleekly slide. You're gone –*

Gone

*But in mind's eye abides
The visions of your budding
Bursting pride – now caught
forever
On the branches of my love.*

by Linda Jessup

*Written when her daughter,
Yohanna, turned 18.*

*Linda Jessup is the founder of PEP in Maryland, a past FES Co-Chair, former NASAP Membership Chair, and co-author of **Parenting With Courage and UNcommon Sense**. She can be reached at <LindaJPEPWest2@aol.com>.*

Post NASAP to LinkedIn & Facebook!

Are you interested in posting to LinkedIn or Facebook for fellow Adlerians? We could use your help in providing fresh ideas to engage a wider community.

Contact NASAP to assist with Facebook and/or LinkedIn presence at <info@alfredadler.org>. ■

Parenting Network Blog Responds to Confessions of a (recovering) Helicopter Dad

by Beverley Cathcart-Ross and Doone Estey

A self-diagnosed 'helicopter dad' was lamenting how he imagines, without fail, the worst-case scenario every day. In his article, he notes that,

*"As a culture, we are obsessed with protecting kids – from building playgrounds with cushioned surfaces to preventing them from climbing trees. Where does this worry come from? I don't want it, but can't escape it."**

We regularly hear the same fear and anxiety from parents in our courses. The best cure, we have found, is to help parents understand the source of their fears and then equip them with the tools to manage them.

Fear is an important and vital signal from our brain. It motivates us to respond quickly in life-threatening situations, protecting both us and our children. Another powerful motivator, one that we are all born with, is the desire to be adventurous, create and learn. The challenge for us parents is to know when to listen to our fears and when to let go of them - to harness both motivators effectively.

It may be counter-intuitive, but the best protection for our kids over time, is to help them build immunity by exposing them to certain risks, versus protecting them from imagined or potential hurts.

Some ways to ease a transition away from parenting with fear:

- 1) Ask yourself - "Is this a life-threatening situation?" If not, put your fear aside for now.
- 2) Let kids handle as many challenges as possible. Often we parent for the short term, stick handling for our kids now, hoping they'll learn later.
- 3) Believe in your child's ability to handle what comes their way. Take comfort that even if they struggle - skin a knee or have a disappointment - they learn that uncomfortable feelings can be sustained, be dealt with, and eventually overcome.

If you have succeeded in 'letting go' of your own fears please share your tips!

Warmly,
Beverley & Doone ■

Parenting Network

<http://parentingnetworkca.blogspot.ca/2015/02/confessions-of-recovering-helicopter-dad.html>

* pullout emphasis by editor of FAMILY!

Doone Estey & Beverley Cathcart-Ross are Certified Parent Educators, co-authors of **Raising Great Parents** and partners at Parenting Network, Inc. in Toronto, as well as having served in the past as FES Secretary-Treasurer and Co-Chair, respectively. They may be reached at www.parentingnetwork.ca.

About those cushioned playgrounds...

From the website of International School Grounds Alliance/ISGA

Risk is Essential for Health and Well-Being

If you don't take a step, you will never learn to walk. Children and young people need to take risks in order to develop cognitive, social, physical and psychological competencies.

Learning through Experience

Risk-taking allows children and young people to learn vital lessons about themselves and their world. These are lessons that cannot be taught and can only be learned through experience. Caution, resilience, courage, knowledge about one's own abilities and limitations, and the self-confidence to reach beyond them are learned through self-chosen action.

Since the world is full of risks, children need to learn to recognize and respond to them in order to protect themselves and to develop their own risk assessment capabilities.

Beneficial Risk

Research shows that an indiscriminate 'risk-minimization' policy can be a source of harm, not benefit.

Hurt can provide a positive experience. Children and young people learn by mistakes and therefore need opportunities to fail.

In sum, statements adopted in 2017

"School grounds should not be as safe as possible but as safe as necessary."

"Since the world is full of risks, children need to learn to recognize and respond to them in order to protect themselves and to develop their own risk-assessment capabilities."

– Risk in Play and Learning: Ubud-Höör Declaration, International School Grounds Alliance

ISGA website <http://www.international-schoolgrounds.org/risk/>

Sharon Gamson Danks, head of ISGA, is featured on this subject in a podcast interview on Nature Kids Radio (Nature Kids Institute) <https://youtu.be/yZxexA18XPI>

A Swan Song

by Bryna Gamson, Editor

This is the 45th issue of *FAMILY!* which I have gladly edited as a volunteer for members of the Family Education Section of NASAP since 2000. The goal in publishing it was to connect us to one another, sharing commentary and useful information in support of FES members. Seeking articles as newsletter editor, I was continually reminded of our practical, positive way of seeing the world. The experience provided me with a keen sense of belonging to this organization, and engagement with authors and leaders I might not have otherwise met.

Having FES members as resources in my own family life was a bonus gift. Each of the delightful and wise Co-Chairs who served during my tenure enriched my life. Many members were very generous with their written contributions to these pages, too many to list—though back issues are all available online and worth looking at since the articles are mostly timeless.

Thank you all!

I loved being able to “give back” to an organization carrying on such important work. The lessons of Adler and Dreikurs—especially encouragement and mutual respect—have been essential to my adult life.

The time has come to pass the torch to another generation, another voice. Organizations that don't refresh from time to time can become stagnant. I'm happily distracted by other important things in my life. It is certainly time for me to sign off as editor, and I welcome and am grateful to Jennifer Lee for stepping up so I can do so with a clear conscience!

I plan to keep attending our annual conferences, renewing friendships and listening to the latest Adlerian ideas on family education in particular—along with all the

Connect in Toronto, June 7-10, 2018

Put yourself into this picture and imagine scores more of friendly, helpful, fun-loving colleagues (who didn't run out to other activities too soon to be photographed) meeting in June in wonderful Toronto! These folks are leaders in Adlerian parent education—authors, teachers, coaches, and mentors. Our next issue will introduce you to the topics being addressed. The conference theme of *Community, Connections & Social Interest in Challenging Times* is certainly timely and appropriate!



NASAP Vancouver 2017: seated (l-r) Linda Jessup, Jane Nelsen, Alyson Schafer; standing (l-r): Bryna Gamson, Karen Haeg, Amy Lew, Inna Rosenfeld, Terry Lowe, Rob Guttenberg, Beverley Cathcart-Ross, Patti Cancellier

And a movie, too!

A video documentary made by Bryna Gamson in 1986-87 while she was on staff at the Alfred Adler Institute of Chicago (now Adler University) will be screened: *Sadie “Tee” Dreikurs: Partner In History*. As you may know, Dr. Dreikurs' wife was also an artist, and founder of Adlerian Art Therapy. Her fascinating, productive life began in 1900 in Chicago. She was mentored by Jane Addams and worked at Hull House. NASAP co-sponsored the making of the documentary. You should be able to view the 65-minute two-part program at NASAP online soon, and at the conference in Toronto. Be there in Toronto for the Q & A after the screening, too.

But don't forget your passports, Americans. ■

fascinating breakthroughs in brain research that confirm Adler's insights. I'll also be happy to pitch in now and then where needed, as so many of you have done for me as I compiled these newsletters.

I urge you to think about how you can contribute to Adlerian family education, in support of NASAP and your peers in this group.

Take a risk: write an article for our new editor, Jennifer Lee <origin.counselling@gmail.com>; offer to serve on the FES leadership team, and NASAP's Board. Help plan the next conference and meet the needs of the next generation.

I sincerely wish you all the best in your family education careers, and personally! ■

Take a look at the archive online at <https://www.alfredadler.org/family-ed-newsletters>.



Nominate A New Co-Chair

Term beginning at Toronto meeting June 7-10. 3 year term. Please send to Co-Chairs by mail or email by March 30.

Volunteer! YOUR NAME HERE: _____

I nominate: _____

Member Name: _____

Member Signature: _____

(see page 2 for addresses)

The mission of the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology is to promote growth and understanding of Adlerian (Individual) Psychology, the work of Alfred Adler, and effective approaches to living based on his philosophy. NASAP membership includes educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, parents, business people, community organizations and other interested people. The Family Education Section applies Adlerian principles to the home. Members are professionals and nonprofessionals dedicated to understanding and improving family relationships between children and adults, with couples, and among individuals.

**Toronto
Here We Come!**

**“Community,
Connections &
Social Interest in
Challenging Times”**



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66th
Annual
Conference



Toronto
June 7-10, 2018