Fighting The Tide of Entitlement:
Countering the Age of Overindulgence

Jim Grant
Educator, Author, SDE Founder
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Welcome!

• A few words...
  – About NAESP
  – About Jim Grant
Entitlement Mindset

Q. Why is there so much interest and concern about overnurturing, overindulgence, and entitlement today?

A. We are at a tipping point with the issue of entitlement and the younger generation. The evolving nature of today’s society, major changes in parenting styles, generational differences, and The Post Grit Era are the driving forces behind the recent interest and concerns about overindulging young people and the resulting entitlement mindset.
What Is an Entitlement Mindset?

Many people who have been overnurtured and overindulged tend to have an entitlement mindset and may have the impression they are somehow special. They tend to believe they are owed things, have the feeling or belief they are entitled to certain unearned rights, and believe they should have access to people and places for special consideration. This attitude of being self-absorbed tends to foster expectations of somehow being different and therefore should be afforded privileges, and preferential treatment.

New Norm

“What one generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace.”

John Wesley, Theologian

The unintended consequences associated with overindulgence and entitlement is of great concern to both teachers and parents.
Signature Traits of Overindulgence And Entitlement

People with an entitlement mindset may

1. expect they should be handed everything.
2. feel they deserve preferential treatment.
3. feel they deserve something they haven’t worked for.
4. think they should be given special privileges.
5. not connect the dots between working and receiving something.
6. have been raised by parents who inadvertently fostered this type of mindset.
7. **NOT** fully comprehend the impact of unintended consequences.
8. be unaware of the need to be grateful for what they have.

2A.
Unintended Consequences of Overindulgence And Entitlement

Unintended consequences may include, but are not limited to:

1. **NOT** being inclined to do their best and work hard.

2. feeling upset, angry, slighted if they are not treated special.

3. being surprised that they have to work hard for something.

4. being shocked when they aren’t given special privileges/preferential treatment.

6. being shocked when they’re not “rescued.”

8. being oblivious to the need to be grateful for what they have been afforded.

9. not accepting responsibility for their actions.
Four Goals
You will learn strategies to help young people

1. trace the origin and development of an entitlement mindset.

Seek Root Causes

mindset.
Societal Trends
Societal trends that impact young people’s health and well being and influence their mindset may include, but are **NOT** limited to

- a lack of respect for appropriate decorum.
- being oblivious to all types of traditional boundaries/limits.
- increased incivility.
- technology obsession and addiction.
- focus on brand names.
- the loss of free play.
- de-emphasis on traditional manners.
- ignoring traditional taboos.
- the increased incidence of stress/anxiety/depression.

**Seismic Shift**

“Change outside of school is happening faster than the change on the inside!”

~ **Bill Daggett**

**Ubiquitous**

Today’s young people are bombarded with unhealthy messages from every front.
Media Assault on Our Young People: A Generation That’s “old” Before Their Time

Young people are being exposed to adult themes and ways before they are ready to comprehend the meaning of it.

Sources of exposure may include, but are not limited to

- unsupervised television programs.
- television commercials.
- the internet/social media.
- magazine ads/store displays.
- adult decorum.

For some young people, adult exposures may create an “I want it all now” mindset.”
Entitlement

Could an assumption of entitlement stem from the Self-Esteem Movement of the 60s-80s?

Which Leads to Spurred Overindulgence

Which in turn fosters Connecting The Dots

Unfortunately...

Overnurturing, overindulgence, and entitlement seems to be the new normal.
Let's Have a Little Empathy!
Overindulging their children is how some parents make it through the day!

1. being overworked, overwhelmed, and
2. having to work long hours and/or multiple jobs.
3. being a single mother with little if any support.
4. wanting to be friends with their children.
5. finding it easier to give in rather than argue with their children.
6. wanting to live through their child.

Overindulgence is the result of well-intentioned loving parents trying to do the right thing for their children.

Survival mode!

Overindulging their children is how some parents make it through the day!
An Assumption of Entitlement: Exploring How We Got to This Point

Materialism
Keep in mind a person’s value is not determined by their valuables!

Many well-intentioned parents...
__ haven’t set clear boundaries, limits, and family rules.
__ want to be “friends” their kids.
__ don’t want their kids to cry.
__ don’t want their kids to “suffer.”
__ want their children to have material things PLUS opportunities they didn’t have.

An Assumption of Entitlement:
__ overnurture their children which in turn can lead to overindulgence. These actions tend to foster an assumption of entitlement mindset.

Exploring How We Got to This Point

Don’t give your children what you didn’t have.
Give them what you had...

Jim Grant

__ haven’t defined and/or articulated their family values.

Materialism
Keep in mind a person’s value is NOT determined by their valuables!
Parent Under Peer Pressure: Setting Boundaries & Limits

“All the other kids...

- have brand name clothes, sneakers, sports equipment, backpack, bags, toys, jewelry, accessories, etc.
- have a cell phone.
- have their own iPad.
- are enrolled in XYZ programs and activities
- have a TV in their bedroom.
- can charge their cell phone in their bedroom.
- have a computer with an internet connection in their bedroom.
- can stay up late and play video games.

GOODNIGHT iPad

Ann Droyd
a Parody for the next generation
Children who are over-programmed may...

“Simmer” time is key to processing and critical thinking.

- have no downtime/reflection time.
- have little free playtime.
- be deprived of figuring out things for themselves.
- be overtired from being out late on school nights.
- have little if any time for family chores.
- consume too much fast food on the fly!
- have reduced face-to-face family time.
“Helicopter” Parents

Parents engaged in excessive parenting may:

- do their child's homework.
- take their child's word against the teacher.
- demand the teacher give their child better grades.
- constantly "rescue" their child.
- fight their child's "battles."
- protect their children from a "dangerous world."
- direct and orchestrate their child's games.
- arrange the "rules of the games" their children play.
- spare their children from having to do chores.

Are we inadvertently raising a nation of fearful children?
“Snowplow” Parenting

Well-intentioned overnurturing parents may

 faithfully remove any hurdles in the path of their children.

gently protect their children from setbacks.

affectively shield their children from disappointments.

compassionately protect their children from making mistakes.

inadvertently weaken their children’s perseverance.

subconsciously undermine their children’s resilience.

intentionally inadvertently foster an entitlement mindset in their children.
Understanding The Unintended Consequences of “Overparenting”

Children who have been exposed to “overparenting” may

__ feel entitled.
__ lack courage.
__ fail to learn to be independent.
__ lack the skills necessary to bounce back after a defeat/setback/disappointment.
__ NOT take personal responsibility for their actions.
__ NOT demonstrate a sense of self-discipline.
__ show signs of anxiety.
__ lack perseverance.
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

1. Seek to understand what is meant by an entitlement mindset (see slide 2). Recognize the signature traits (see slide 2A) as well as the unintended consequences of overindulgence and an entitlement mindset (see slide 12B).

2. Determine if you have inadvertently contributed to fostering overindulgence and an assumption of entitlement with the younger generation.

3. Create an action plan to identify the steps necessary to make an entitlement mindset course correction (see Form A).

4. Teach young people to strive to acquire the hallmark traits of a considerate mindset (see slide 14A).

“If not us, then who?
If not now, then when?
John E. Lewis, civil rights activist
Entitlement Course Correction Plan

Where are we now?  How will we get there?  Where do we want to be?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents have…</th>
<th>Parents will…</th>
<th>Children will…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents have…</td>
<td>Parents will…</td>
<td>Children will…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Start With The End In Mind**

Results planning first starts with the right-hand side...desired outcomes.
Secondly, state where you are now.
Lastly, back plan to achieve your goals.

Note: Column number 1 must be measurable.

Form A.
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

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**West Point Prayer**

Make us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong…

☐ 2. have integrity and always choose to do the right thing.
☐ 3. respect the personal boundaries of others.
☐ 4. think in terms of “we,” **NOT** “I.”
☐ 5. practice gratitude.
☐ 6. tend to think about the needs of others, rather than just themselves.
☐ 7. think of the greater good of the family, community, and society.
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

What you Can Do

5. Help young people understand that they can’t have everything they want when they want it. Good things come to those who wait.

8. Allow children opportunities to grapple with ways to overcome “good failures,” setbacks, mistakes, missteps, and disappointments (see slide 15A).

People tend to appreciate things more when they have to wait a bit.

habit of asking themselves if what they desired is a want or a need.
# Sorting Out Wants From Needs

## My Wants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things I want…</th>
<th>Action:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ________________</td>
<td>____________</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. ________________</td>
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<td>3. ________________</td>
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<td>4. ________________</td>
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## My Needs

<table>
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<td>1. ________________</td>
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Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

What you Can Do

5. Help young people understand that they can’t have everything they want when they want it. *Good things come to those who wait.*

6. Teach young people how to differentiate between wants and needs (see Form BA).

7. Help young people understand the positive outcomes of delaying gratification.

8. Allow children opportunities to grapple with ways to overcome “good failures,” setbacks, mistakes, missteps, and disappointments (see slide 15A).
Understanding “Good Failures”

1. Failure is a normal part of everyday life. Everyone experiences a variety of failures throughout their lifetime.
2. “Good failures” provide opportunities to get things right.
3. Mistakes indicate there are still things to be learned (Chinese saying).
4. Failure is preparation for life and serves to make one stronger.
The Anxiety Reducing Benefit of “Good Failures”

Providing children opportunities to experience and handle setbacks, disappointments and “good failures” may serve to reduce feelings of anxiety.

Don’t Know What to Do!
Some children may feel anxious because they don’t know what to when faced with real life stresses due to having been shielded from experiencing setbacks, failures, and disappointments.
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

What you Can Do

9. Seek to understand how overnurturing and overindulging young people can lead to an entitlement mindset (see slides 16A-C).

10. Become familiar with the language of entitlement and the Me, Me, Me generation (see slide 16D).

11. Teach young people a new and different perspective on self (see slide 16E).

12. Rethink the concept of providing rewards for every little thing that a person does.

Read: Not Everyone Gets a Trophy.
OverIndulgence: The Road to Entitlement

Distorted beliefs of indulgent parents may include:

1. being too trusting.
2. thinking that children should be constantly happy.
3. wanting to correct the mistakes and/or missteps made by their own parents.
4. having their own identity too closely linked to their children.

Some parents try to “live” through their children!
OverIndulgence:
The Road to Entitlement

Distorted beliefs of indulgent parents may include

5. administering “sting-free” discipline and/or no discipline.

6. providing unconditional love. This is often a code word for allowing children to do whatever they want.

7. shielding children from their actions.

8. overlooking their children’s transgressions.
The Age of Overindulgence

Understanding the Harmful Effects of Too Much, Too Soon

Actions that create spoiled behaviors may include but are not limited to:
1. Buying or giving children whatever they want…whenever they want it!
2. Doing things for children that they could easily do for themselves.
3. A family structure that is too soft and lacks rules, boundaries, and limits.

Worn down parents cave in to the "nag factor!"
Many overstressed, overworked, and overwhelmed parents have little tolerance for a pouting, whining, and crying child.

Center for A New America
Dream Christian Science Monitor — August 7, 2002

Children report nagging an average of nine times before parents gave in.
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Read: Not Everyone Gets a Trophy.
Words And Phrases Associated Overindulgence And Entitlement

I get what I want… I have the latest…
I do whatever I want to do...

I have… "ME"
Get me… Give me…
Buy me…

Buy me something… I want…

selfie

Can you get me…

I don’t have to help…
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Read: Not Everyone Gets a Trophy.
“Gritty” Kids Are Different... They’re All About Self!

They are self-reliant.

They have self-motivation.

self-disciplined.

self-responsibility.

self-sacrificing.

self-determination.

self-starters.

self-control.

self-sufficient.

self-confidence.

self-assured.

self-efficacy*

*The belief in one’s ability to complete tasks and reach goals.

This affects how they think, feel, and behave.

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Read: Not Everyone Gets a Trophy.
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

What you Can Do

13. Expect ALL children to do age and individually appropriate chores (see slide 17A). Google age-appropriate chores for a suggested list of chores by age.

14. Seek to recognize and avoid enabling behaviors (see slide 17B and Form C).

15. Make young people aware of The Law of Sowing and Reaping.

16. Help the younger generation find a variety of ways to practice gratitude (see slides 17C-E & Form D).
“Child Labor?”

It is reasonable to expect young people to help with

- yard work.
- setting the table.
- clearing the table.
- washing/drying dishes.
- taking out the trash.
- vacuuming the floors.
- sweeping the garage.
- dusting.
- loading and unloading the dishwasher.
- stacking/carrying wood.
- raking leaves/shoveling snow.
- putting away groceries.
- watering plants.
- feeding pets.
- making their bed.
- cooking a meal.
- folding laundry.
- cleaning their room.
- running errands.

Let Common Sense Prevail!
Chores must be reasonable as well as age and individually appropriate for young people.
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence and Entitlement

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I AM THE PROBLEM

“In most situations I am the problem. My mentalities, my pictures, my experiences, form the biggest obstacles to my success.”

~ Flight of The Buffalo

This quote supports slides 17 #14 & 17B).
Do’s & Don’ts of Enabling Behaviors

Common Sense Advice to parents...

__ Don’t constantly bail out your children.
__ Don’t make excuses and/or cover for children.
__ Do be willing to say no.
__ Do act as a parent, rather than a “buddy” to your children
__ Don’t shield children from knowing the limits of your family’s resources.
__ Do use unintended consequences to teach life’s little lessons.
__ Do be aware that shielding children from obstacles, setbacks, mistakes, and disappointments can “hijack” their executive functions.
__ Don’t do things for your children that they could do for themselves.

17B.
## Changing Enabling Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enabling Behaviors</th>
<th>Correction Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. __________________ | 1. Action: _______________
|                    |                 |
| 2. __________________ | 2. Action: _______________
|                    |                 |
| 3. __________________ | 3. Action: _______________
|                    |                 |
| 4. __________________ | 4. Action: _______________
|                    |                 |

Form C
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

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16. Help the younger generation find a variety of ways to practice gratitude (see slides 17C-E & Form D).
An understanding of the concept of sowing and reaping will afford young people more control over their life.

The Little Red Hen is thought to be an old Russian folk tale that teaches children the virtues of showing initiative and having a strong work ethic.

The Ant and the Grasshopper is an Aesop Fable that teaches children the value of working hard and planning ahead.

We must inculcate the message...

“There is no such thing as a free lunch!”
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

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Defining Gratitude

**Gratitude**... “affirming that there are good things in the world — gifts and benefits that we’ve received — and recognizing that these sources of goodness come from outside ourselves.”

Vicki Zakrzewski, Director — Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley

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**Gratitude**... a feeling of appreciation or thanks. The state of being grateful. Merriam-Webster

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**Gratitude**... is an emotion expressing appreciation for what one has. Psychology Today

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**Gratitude**... Being grateful for acts of kindnesses shown and material things acquired and recognizing the source and being thankful for the gifts. Jim Grant

17C. supports slide 17 #16.
The Benefits of Gratitude

The positive aspects of gratitude include, but are not limited to

☐ fostering positive emotions by keeping students’ distress responses down.
√ increasing a sense of hope and social well-being.
☐ increasing trust in others.
√ fostering a desire to give back to their community.
☐ promoting the development of self-control and self-regulation.

Adapted from the work of: Giacomo Bono, et al, California State University, Fullerton and Vicki Zakrzewski, Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley
Thoughts on Gratitude

__ Being grateful puts the spotlight on the benefactor rather than the recipient of the kindness.
__ Being grateful recognizes people for what they have done for you.
__ Practicing gratitude will help counter an entitlement mindset.
✓ Be thankful for what you have, **NOT** what you don’t have.
__ Practicing gratitude fosters loyalty.
__ Practicing gratitude reminds you of where you came from.
__ Being grateful promotes prosocial behavior.
__ Expressing sincere **attitude of gratitude** can and will increase your social capital.

17E.
Practicing Gratitude

Ways I practice gratitude and thankful thinking include

1. ____________________________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________________________

3. ____________________________________________________________

4. ____________________________________________________________

Name: ___________________________  Date: ____________
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

What you Can Do

17. Teach young people to make the gratitude, loyalty, and commitment connection (see slides 18A-B).

18. Teach children the full and explicit meaning of the word NO!

19. Go back to the basics! Reestablish the traditional evening family meal. Openly engage in civil conversations about overindulgence and entitlement!

20. Teach young people about the “we’re-in-this-together” effect of shared sacrifice.
Gratitude Trilogy:
The Key to Connectedness

Gratitude makes people feel more connected to their family, school, and community.

Gratitude makes people feel more connected to their family, school, and community.

Commitment takes time!

Taken together these three traits foster a willingness to pay it forward and give back.
There’s Time

“Don’t say you don’t have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day given to Helen Keller, Louis Pasteur, Michelangelo, Leonardo de Vinci, Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein.”
— H. Jackson Brown

Where There’s a Will

“In truth, people can generally make time for what they choose to do, it is not really the time but the will that is lacking.”

Sir John Lubbock
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

What you can do

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20. Teach young people about the “we’re-in-this-together” effect of shared sacrifice.

“A ‘NO’ uttered from the deepest conviction is better than a ‘yes’ merely uttered to please, or worse, to avoid trouble.”

Mohatma Gandhi

NO... is a complete sentence!
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

What you Can Do

21. Work with children to set boundaries/rules/limits and natural consequences (see slide 19A).

22. Revisit the concept of establishing traditional developmental benchmarks (see slides 19B-C).

23. Suggest a variety of ways for young people to give back to their community.

24. Share parables, stories, Aesop’s Fables, and tales that have influenced your character and have stayed with you throughout your life.
Boundaries, Rules, And Limits: Setting Family Expectation

1. Basic manners
2. Public decorum
3. Spending habits/family resources
4. Use of technology

Family Business

Family business stays in the family and does NOT go on Facebook!

9. Confidential family business
10. Family loyalty
11. Friends/companions
12. Healthy lifestyle, sexual mores, etc.
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

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Traditional Milestones
Developmental Benchmark
Pre-1960

1. First dance... Fall 7th grade dance
2. Wear silk stocking... Fall 7th grade dance
3. Wear make up... Fall 7th grade dance
4. Pierced ears... 12-13 yrs. old
5. Double date... 15 yrs. old
6. Single date... 16 yrs. old
7. Girls... alone in a car with a boy... 16 yrs. old
8. Boys got a single-shot 22 rifle at 11 yrs. old
9. Curfews...established by age
10. Birthday slumber party... 10 yrs. old
11. Birthday party attendance...1 child more than the age of the birthday boy/girl

19B.
21st Century Birthday Party  
Birthday Party "GONE WILD"  
Checklist for today’s parents may include  
__ securing a large function room, movie  

Birthday Party Gone Wild!  
There seems to be nothing special for children to look forward to in the future.  
rent a bouncing house, etc.  
__ hiring a limousine.  
__ inviting 25 kids WITH their parents.  
__ buying alcohol for the adults.  
__ scheduling a spa day.
At one time families set limits, abided by traditional benchmarks, established boundaries, celebrated rite of passages (transitions), rituals, and recognized milestones. When these benchmarks were compromised, appropriate consequences were meted out.

Rite of Passage... All In Due Time

At one time young people had to wait be do certain things. Today, they basically wait for nothing.
Strategies to Counter Overindulgence And Entitlement

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Professional Reading

Duckworth, Angela. Google 8-Item Grit Scale.


Grit Building Children’s Books & Publications


Brimmer, Larry Dane; BIRMINGHAM SUNDAY, Calkins Creek, Boyds Mills Press, Inc., Honesdale, PA, 2010.


Cobblestone Magazine, JAPANESE AMERICANS, Volume 17, number 4; April 1996.

Cobblestone Magazine, ORPHAN TRAINS, Volume 19, Number 4, April 1998.

Grit Building Children’s Books & Publications
Finch, Mary; Slater, Kate; THE LITTLE RED HEN, Barefoot Books, Cambridge, MA; 1999.
Gunderson, Jessica; THE SHIRTWAIST FACTORY FIRE, Capstone Press, Mankata, MN; 2006.
Grit Building Children’s Books & Publications
Kamkwamba, William & Mealer, Byran; THE BOY WHO HARNESSED THE WIND; Dial Books for Young Readers, New York, NY; 2012
..........., MEMORIES COME TO US IN THE RAIN AND THE WIND, Red Sun Press, Jamaica Plain, MA; l998.
Grit Building Children’s Books & Publications

Polacco, Patricia; PINK AND SAY; Philomel Books; Penquin Young Readers Group, New York, NY; 1994.
Reynolds, Aaron; BACK OF THE BUS; Penquin Books; New York, NY; 2010.
Tucker, Phillip Thomas; CATHY WILLIAMS, FROM SLAVE TO FEMALE BUFFALO SOLDIER, Stockpole Books, Mechanicsburg PA. 2002.
Winter, Jeanette; THE LIBRARIAN OF BASRA; Harcourt Children’s Books; Mexico; 2005.
SAVE THE DATE!
Jim Grant will be presenting workshops on grit, mindset and entitlement at the following state and national conferences:

• Ohio Principal’s Summer Conference
  TRUE GRIT  June 11, 2015
• National Association of Elementary School Principals
  Long Beach, CA … June 29 - July 2, 2015
• Staff Development for Educators
  5 conferences co-located
  Las Vegas, NV… July 6-10, 2015

Jim Grant
Educator, Author, SDE Founder