

Child Independence Requires Parental Guidance

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People have been persuaded that having an independent child is beneficial for parents, but this perspective might lead to important developmental gaps that could harm children in the long run. To foster optimal child development, it is essential to establish clear expectations. According to Dr. Low (2022), thriving in this area is characterized by a sense of safety, allowing children to explore different environments while always having a secure base to return to. However, Maria Montessori placed the child's independence at the center of her method, seeing it as one of the great conquests of childhood. This may seem contradictory coming from such a well-respected educational philosophy, but the scientific evidence and methods behind it merit consideration. Thus, the Montessori method may be ineffective because it emphasizes child independence, which can undermine the parent-child bond, discipline, and self-regulation.

Montessori education emphasizes autonomy, a focus that can potentially weaken the essential bond between parent and child, which is crucial for fostering emotional security and overall health. As noted by IMS Sotogrande Montessori (2023), the model of unrestrained learning promotes self-reliance as a primary objective. Interestingly, it does not address the importance of parental guidance or the role of a socio-emotional support system. Research by Dr. Low (2022) highlights the significance of early bonding between children and their parents or caregivers, underlining its vital role in supporting healthy brain development and emotional well-being. Strong bonds have been associated with positive social and emotional outcomes, whereas their absence could negatively affect a child's maturity, leading to lifelong consequences such as emotional blocking due to a lack of confidence. It is important to note that while the Montessori approach seeks to cultivate self-reliance, the findings of Dr. Low (2022) suggest that insufficient parental involvement could unintentionally weaken these vital connections.

Without adequate parental guidance and structure, children in Montessori environments may face challenges with self-discipline. Ruhl (2024) emphasizes that a fundamental principle of this educational approach is to promote identity development through the creation of self-directed activities. Research indicates that young children require clear guidance and external discipline to grasp social norms effectively. When these elements are lacking, students may encounter difficulties with impulse control and respect for authority figures. The absence of organizational rules can create obstacles later in settings that demand higher levels of discipline.

Supporters of Montessori education argue that fostering self-sufficiency from an early age helps children develop confidence and problem-solving abilities. While independence is indeed important, a lack of parental presence may hinder self-regulation. In a study conducted by Dr. Low (2022), it was found that emotional security, which relies heavily on parental involvement, is crucial for children to thrive. Furthermore, this approach facilitates a more structured learning process that helps children navigate frustration and other emotions. Moreover, these internal struggles can lead to generational issues; as Dr. Low (2022) points out, children who form weak emotional bonds often find it challenging to establish strong connections within their own families.

The shortcomings of the Montessori educational system stem from insufficient parental involvement, which can result in fragile parent-child relationships, a lack of discipline, and difficulties with self-regulation. While the methodology's primary achievement is fostering child independence, this does not sufficiently address the other important issues at play. Parents and educators should strive for a balanced approach to child development that encourages independence while also providing strong parental guidance. This balance is essential for ensuring emotional well-being and promoting healthy growth.

References

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