

## **HELICOPTER PARENTS: HELPFUL OR HARMFUL?**

*You who are on the road...Must have a code that you can live by  
And so become yourself...Because the past is just a good bye.  
Teach your children well...Crosby Stills Nash & Young*

### **WHAT TO KNOW!**

- ❖ Helicopter parents are so known because of hovering over their children and not allowing them any breathing/growing space
- ❖ The term was coined by college administrators to describe parents who are overly involved in their adult children's college and work lives
- ❖ The term applies to parents of children of all ages
- ❖ These parents are preoccupied with their child's activities, practices, schedules
- ❖ They fight their child's battles for them, such as negotiating salaries and protesting unfair grades
- ❖ They will use cell phones, the world's longest umbilical cord, to call or text excessively with their children;
- ❖ They very much want to be their child's friend and are often afraid to say no
- ❖ They will often do their child's school projects and homework assignments
- ❖ They often talk in terms of "we" when referring to their child; "We are applying for scholarships" or "We don't like the grade we got".
- ❖ These parents can do harm by preventing their children from facing hardship or from facing any problems
- ❖ They prevent their children from learning from their own experiences
- ❖ They impede the maturation and development of self confidence in their children
- ❖ Their children don't learn to succeed on their own or how to overcome adversity
- ❖ Their children don't learn how to become their own advocates
- ❖ On the positive side, their actions keep their children involved in their learning and activities and motivate them to achieve
- ❖ Their actions may keep them from getting involved with unsavory characters
- ❖ Their actions may prevent their children from drugging and drinking
- ❖ Their actions may insure that they get the best teachers and instructors

### **WHAT TO DO!**

- ❖ Give your children roots and wings to fly on their own
- ❖ To encourage independence, back off and stop rescuing them
- ❖ Allow them to make their own decisions and then give your advice
- ❖ Let them struggle with conflict; offer to support them but don't solve for them
- ❖ Let them have their own chores and responsibilities
- ❖ Let them come to you instead of intruding on them
- ❖ Be involved but not too much; don't weaken them
- ❖ Seek professional help if you are unable to detach from your children

## **WE CAN HELP!**

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at **DrKimmel@aol.com**.

**Joel I. Kimmel, Ph.D. P.A. and Associates**  
**5551 N University Drive**  
**Coral Springs FL 33067**