



Risk-taker's advantage

There's *risk* – train surfing or driving in a car with a drunk driver, and there's *risk* – standing up to a bully or auditioning for a part in a school play for the first time. Perhaps we need to 'reframe' risk as an opportunity to show confidence and try something new and succeed, rather than follow a path to failure.

Think about when you were growing up. What risks did you take? What did you learn from taking those risks? Were those lessons helpful, unhelpful or both? How will you allow your child to learn those same lessons?

Challenges and 'bumps in the road' are a reality of every child's life. Taking risks in life, small and large, is part of a child's development. Denying children the 'risk taker's advantage' can create anxiety among children and doesn't give them opportunity to experience appropriate amounts of challenge and responsibility.



Risk-taking

- Shows confidence and helps your children to stand out.
- Can be a necessary step in actively pursuing success.
- May open up new possibilities.
- Provides an opportunity for internal growth.
- Helps your children to overcome fear of failure.

Encourage 'safe' risk taking

Children need to take some risks to learn more about themselves and test out their abilities. Here's a few ideas.

- Find some outdoor challenges – camping, rock climbing, canoeing, orienteering, mountain biking, martial arts.
- Find some activities that provide a thrill and challenge – drama performances, public speaking, solo singing.
- Let your children navigate their community by walking to school, catching the bus, riding a bike.
- Encourage your children to volunteer or have an after school job.
- Let your children play responsibly with 'dangerous toys' – chemistry sets, scooters, extreme sport gear, skateboards.
- Talk about the skills that will help your children to take risks in life – problem-solving, speaking assertively, knowing how to manage a disagreement, setting goals.

The strongest oak of the forest is not the one that is protected from the storm and hidden from the sun. It's the one that stands in the open where it is compelled to struggle for its existence against the winds and rains and the scorching sun.

Napolean Hill,
1883-1970

Let your children fail and learn.