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Trend: Helicopter parents win kids in divorce

12:05 am August 13, 2010, by Theresa Walsh Giarrusso

One of our regulars Deidre_NC sent me this awesome story about helicopter parents and divorce.

We talk about them all the time and many of you believe they are hurting their kids by their constant presence. However, according to this ABC News story divorce courts think helicopter parenting is the new standard of good parenting! (Or as the ABC News headline succinctly declares: Custody goes to the craziest parent!)

[From ABC News.com:](#)

“Increasingly, courts are using intense, even smothering, parenting as the legal standard of *good* parenting, says Seton Hall law professor Gaia Bernstein, co-author with Zvi Triger of ‘Over-Parenting.’ Their study, to be published in the *UC Davis Law Review*, looks at the world of custody hearings and finds that judges are buying into the idea that the more a parent hovers, the more that parent cares.”

“Result? ‘We talked to attorneys and they describe this ‘race for involvement’ that’s going on,” says Bernstein. “So if somebody’s about to get divorced, and it’s a parent who was less involved, they’ll go to a divorce attorney who tells them, ‘Now you have to get really, really involved. So you should get to know all the names of your children’s teachers and friends, and coach their Little League and attend Parent-and-Me classes if the child is young?’ And the attorneys are pretty good at telling them not to overdo this, but parents just go crazy! So they start texting their child 20, 30 times a day, and they take photos of the cellphone to show they’ve done that, and they completely overtake Little League, and they leave the children with no independence...”

” ‘You hope at some level that the courts will stay neutral about what kind of parenting, within reason, people choose to follow,’ says Walter Olson, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute. Instead, they seem to be siding with the same folks who brought us the new infrared baby monitor –a real item that allows you to watch your baby, even in the dark, even when she’s sleeping, presumably because you should be watching your children. ALL. THE. TIME.”

The article is pretty editorial and was written by Lenore Skenazy, the founder of the book, blog and movement, Free-Range Kids. We’ve talked about her and her movement before.

So with the background of the author in mind, what do you think of this story?

Is this true in you and your friends’ experiences that the “craziest” parent gets the kids? (I told Michael this morning I would WIN!!! He says calmly, yes, yes you would.)

What standard should courts use to decide who should get the kids? What shows good parenting?

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