



DO YOU EVER THINK YOUR CHILDREN ARE VERY SPOILED?

You may be right.

by PIERRETTE DESROSIERS, M. Ps.,
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"I have to go wake him up four or five times to get him to go do the milking. And sometimes I am afraid of the fit he's going to pitch," a discouraged father confides in me about his 21-year-old successor. "The worst is that I have invested hundred of thousands of dollars in a more modern farm. I had no choice if I wanted him to stay."

The "golden child" has always existed. Today they are spreading like a virus. Afraid of bullying our children, we have forgotten that limits and authority are essential to their development and stability.

How do we recognize a golden child? He's a manipulator who refuses to compromise. He is disdainful of authority and has hysterics when he is frustrated. He has shown himself incapable of taking on responsibilities and constantly wants to be the centre of attention. Feeling guilty for not being present enough, afraid of not being loved, afraid of being rejected, a strategy for preventing hysterics, these are all reasons parents will give a child everything. Of course we want the best for our children. However, some parents have forgotten their first mission: being a parent.

Saying no to your child and setting high, yet realistic, age-appropriate standards is helping your child to one day become a mature and responsible adult, able to deal with life's sometimes very difficult realities.

When I asked this father if he would accept this behaviour if it came from his employee rather than his son, he replied immediately, *"Never. He would be out the door. But I can't allow my son to go work elsewhere."* Yet, in several cases, even for not-so-golden children, working elsewhere and having a "real" boss is one of "real life's" best learning experiences.

Let's be honest, being your child's employer is far from simple. Emotions sometimes win out over reason. Of course, there is the risk that the young person may not return to the farm. If that is the case, perhaps it is better that he leave now, rather than five years after the transfer. Frankly, when I see some young people who must repeatedly be woken to go to work, or who need to have the most modern farm right from the start, I wonder if they have the right profile for a businessperson.

You can't tell if someone is a golden child by his or her possessions. Rather, it is how the possessions are obtained. Golden children come from different generations. They are a challenge in the school system,



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but also in the work world and for the succession of any business.

A golden child will become a golden adult, whether employee or boss. In both cases, this is a major handicap for a business.

Remember that it all starts when the child is very small. Giving in to keep the peace is playing ostrich and putting off the problem. This little problem can become insurmountable.

Comments or suggestions? Please contact Pierrette Desrosiers.

Available on Canadian Farm Management Council's web site– November 2008



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