



# The Let Grow Project

A simple, free project for schools that gives kids a chance to start doing some things on their own.

**PROBLEM:** Students are showing an increase in anxiety and narcissism, as well as a decline in empathy. These social/emotional issues show up at home and in the classroom. They have been developing over the past generation as childhood has become more structured and supervised. Our culture has decided to treat young people as remarkably fragile. But they aren't.

While we all want our kids to learn how to roll with some punches and solve some problems without adult intervention, they have fewer and fewer opportunities to do so. One way kids used to acquire resilience and self-control was by doing some things, even negotiating some risks, on their own. Most of us remember playing outside, walking to school, running errands. These are actually maturity milestones.

But when adults do everything with or for their kids, the kids don't get that same chance to grow. How can parents feel confident giving their kids some healthy, old-fashioned independence?

## **SOLUTION:** The Let Grow Project at school

The project is free, fast and straightforward: Teachers tell the students to go home and ask their parents if they can do one thing they feel ready to do that, for one reason or another, they haven't done yet: Walk the dog, make dinner, get themselves to school—almost anything their

parents did at their age. The students can do this project alone or with another kid or kids.

This one independent experience has enormous repercussions:

- Parents who have not been sure when or how to let go finally do, because an entire class or even school is doing the same
- Kids who have been under constant adult supervision at last discover their own resourcefulness
- Parents report that afterwards, they feel exhilarated: Their worries have been replaced by pride and joy in their blossoming child
- School counselors report a shift in maturity (and calmer parents)
- Kids are now ready to do more things on their own—including homework!

Our society underestimates children and overestimates danger. As a result, today's kids are often overprotected, leading to feelings of anxiety and helplessness (and, ironically, MORE overprotection).

This project helps restore the perspective our fear-based culture has taken away. As parents loosen the reins, their children rise to the occasion and mature. Everyone feels more confident, capable and just plain happy.

# Let Grow projects to do alone or with a friend



- Walk to school
- Make dinner
- Run an errand
- **Walk the dog**
- Wait at the bus stop
- Ride your bike to a friend's house
- Skateboard
- Make a fort
- Explore the woods
- Climb a tree
- Pick up something from the store
- Build something out of junk



- Go get ice cream
- Go get pizza
- Spend some time at the library
- Ride a local bus
- Organize a visit to a friend's and get yourself there
- Visit a relative
- Buy a surprise for your parent
- Build a surprise for your parent
- **Play in the park**
- Do something with your brother or sister outside



- Organize a game outside with your friends
- Go to a museum
- **Mow a neighbor's lawn**
- Get to an after-school activity on your own
- Take the subway
- Pick up your sibling from an activity
- Get yourself ready for school and out the door
- Play night tag



- Get the ingredients for a cake and make it
- **Bake something delicious**
- Make your lunch for tomorrow
- Camp out in the backyard
- Trick or treat
- Go to a friend's and then go together to find another friend
- Share your ideas on **letgrow.org!**

**Let Grow would like to help you implement this project at your school. It's free!**

For more information, contact us at [info@LetGrow.com](mailto:info@LetGrow.com).