

## Instead of Overprotecting, It's Better to Accompany Them Through Ups and Downs.

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Recently, I saw a friend share a short video on Facebook, featuring her 5-year-old son demonstrating how to cut broccoli with a serrated knife. The edited video lasted about three and a half minutes and was filmed entirely by the mother. In the video, the boy's cutting skills were not exactly proficient, but he wore a calm expression and explained his actions confidently.

As a therapist, I completely agree with the mother's approach of allowing her child to learn and gain experience from life. After all, the harm from a serrated knife is limited; even if he does cut himself, it would likely only result in a minor injury, and children tend to recover quickly. However, as a mother myself, I couldn't help but feel worried while watching the entire process.



When the boy successfully cut through the broccoli, I let out a sigh of relief. I greatly admired his patience and effort, but I was even more impressed by the mother's courage.

Many parents often struggle between allowing their children to try new things and worrying about them facing setbacks. While many parents rationally understand that children need some autonomy to develop a sense of responsibility and confidence, the instinct to protect their children from failure or pain is powerful. These worries and anxieties lead parents to protect their children from making mistakes in various ways, such as making decisions for them, completing responsibilities they should handle themselves, or persuading them to solve problems in the parents' way.

Parents' concerns about their children's potential failures come from a place of love, which is natural. However, the greatest gift parents can give their children is not to protect them from making mistakes or getting hurt, but to accompany them through the highs and lows, as well as the successes and failures. This kind of companionship includes respect, trust, and support for the child—respecting their right to make their own choices, trusting that they can handle the consequences of those choices, and providing unwavering support when they face difficulties and setbacks.

No one can guarantee that a child's life will be smooth sailing, but a parent's presence can assure their child that they are never alone. Only then can children confidently explore, learn, and develop their strengths.