

## NURTURE SHOCK

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- Of children praised for their effort, 90 % chose the harder set of puzzles. Of those praised for their intelligence, a majority chose the easy test.
- Emphasizing effort gives a child a variable that they can control.
- Highly aggressive, violent people happen to think very highly of themselves, debunking the theory that people are aggressive to make up for low self-esteem.
- To be effective, researchers have found praise needs to be specific.
- Sincerity of praise is also crucial.
- By the age of twelve, children believe that earning praise from a teacher is not a sign you did well, it is actually a sign you lack ability and the teacher thinks you need extra encouragement.
- Teens discounted praise to such an extent that they believe it is a teacher's criticism – not praise at all – that really conveys positive belief in a student's aptitude.
- American mothers carefully avoided making negative comments. They remained fairly upbeat and positive with their child. The majority of the minutes were spent talking about something other than the testing at hand. The Chinese children were likely to hear, "You did not concentrate when doing the test" and "Let's look over your test". The majority of the break was spent discussing the test and its importance. After the break, the Chinese kids' scores on the second test jumped 3%, more than twice the gain of the Americans.
- Persistence turns out to be more than a conscious act of will; it is also an unconscious response, governed by a circuit in the brain. When it switches on, it is telling there is of the brain, "Don't stop trying. There's dopa on the horizon."
- The performance gap caused by an hour's difference in sleep was bigger than the gap between a normal fourth-grader and normal sixth-grader. A loss of one hour of sleep is equivalent to the loss of two years of cognitive maturation and development.
- Sleep disorders can impair children's IQ as much as lead exposure.
- A tired brain perseverates. It gets stuck on a wrong answer and cannot come up with a more creative solution, repeatedly returning to the same answer it already knows is erroneous.
- Sleep loss debilitates the body's ability to extract glucose from the bloodstream. Without this stream of basic energy, other prefrontal cortex suffers more than the rest of the brain. Tired people have difficulty with impulse control, and their abstract goals like studying take a back seat to more entertaining diversions.
- Memories that are emotionally laden get processed during REM sleep. The more you learned during the day, the more you need to sleep that night.
- Sleep deprivation hits the hippocampus harder than the amygdale. The result is that sleep-deprived people fail to recall pleasant memories, yet recall gloomy memories just fine.
- Dropping below eight hours of sleep doubles the rate of clinical-level depression.
- Hallmark traits of modern adolescence – moodiness, impulsiveness, disengagement are also symptoms of chronic sleep deprivation.
- Bigler contends that once a child identifies someone as resembling most closely himself, the child likes that person the most. Anything he does not like thus belongs to those who look the least

similar to him. The spontaneous tendency to assume your group shares characteristics (niceness, smarts, etc.) is called essentialism. Kids ever think groups are random.

- During the period of our children's lives when we imagine it is most important to not talk about race is the very developmental period when children's minds are forming their first conclusions about race.
- The same way we remind our daughters "mommies can be doctors just like daddies," we ought to be telling all children that doctors can be any skin color.
- White children who got the full story about historical discrimination had significantly better attitudes toward blacks than those who got the neutered version. Explicitness works.
- The more a culture emphasizes individualism, the more the high school years will be marked by subgroupism. Japan, for instance, values social harmony over individualism, and children are discouraged from asserting personal preferences. Thus, less groupism is observed in their high schools.
- Teens who were visibly sure of membership within the minority community were protected from this insult and thus more willing to act outside the group norm. The light-skinned blacks and the Anglo-appearing Hispanics, their status within the minority felt more precarious, so they acted more in keeping with their image of the minority identity, even if it was negative stereotype, in order to solidify their status within the group.
- By their fourth birthday, almost all kids will start experimenting with lying. Children with older siblings seem to learn it slightly earlier.
- The better a young child can distinguish a lie from the truth, the more likely she is to lie given the chance.
- Four-year-olds will lie once every two hours, while a six-year-old will lie about once every hour. Few kids are an exception.
- Lying is related to intelligence.
- It is not until age eleven that the majority of children demonstrate awareness of the harm lying does to others. At that point, 48% say the problem with lying is that it destroys trust, and 22% say it carries guilt. Even then, a third still say the problem with lying is being punished.
- Fully one-third of the brightest incoming third graders would have scored "below average" prior to kindergarten.
- Rather than triumphantly arguing that emotional intelligence supplants cognitive ability, one influential scholar is proving it is the other way around: higher cognitive ability increases emotional functioning.
- Getting what you want from a parent is easy. It is getting what you want from friends that forces a child to develop skills.
- The Mod Squad study confirmed the hypothesis that teens turn to drinking and drugs because they are bored in their free time.
- Researchers found that kids are so accustomed to their parents filling their free time that they did not know how to fill it on their own.
- Galvan noted that the response pattern of teen brains is essentially the same response curve of a seasoned drug addict. Their reward center cannot be stimulated by low doses – they need the big jolt to get pleasure.
- The teen's prefrontal cortex seemed to show a diminished response whenever their reward center was experiencing intense excitement. The prefrontal cortex is responsible for weighing risk and consequences. At the very moment when experiencing an emotionally charged excitement, the teens' brain is handicapped in its ability to gauge risk and foresee consequences.

- The fear of embarrassment turns teens into weenies.
- The teen brain can think abstractly, but not feel abstractly – at least not until it has had more life experience to draw on. Feeling like it is a bad idea is what it would take to stop oneself from doing it.
- To an adolescent, arguing is the opposite of lying. Filipino teens fight their parents over the rules, but not over the authority of the parents to set rules. American teens do not bother to argue. Instead, they just pretend to go along with their parents' wishes, but then they did what they wanted to do anyway.
- During playtime, children learn basic developmental building blocks necessary for later academic success, and in fact, they develop these building blocks better while playing than while in a traditional classroom.
- Young children learn abstract thinking through play, where a desk and some chairs become a fire engine.
- Asking kids which "D" is better triggers self-analysis of what a good D looks like and what they would like their own D's to look like.
- Being disciplined is more important than being smart.
- The more educational media the children watched, the more relationally aggressive they were. Most educational shows spend most of the half-hour establishing a conflict between characters and only a few minutes resolving that conflict.
- Children's emotional well-being and security are more affected by the relationship between the parents than by the direct relationship between the parent and child.
- Aggressive behavior, like many kinds of rule breaking, is interpreted by other kids as a willingness to defy grown-ups, which makes the aggressive child seem independent and older – highly coveted traits.
- When we changed the channel from violent television to tamer fare, kids just ended up learning the advanced skills of clique formation, friendship withdrawal, and the art of the insult.
- The average teen spends sixty hours a week surrounded by a peer group and only sixteen hours a week surrounded by adults. This has created the perfect atmosphere for a different strain of aggression-virus to breed: one fed not by peer rejection but fed by the need for peer status and social ranking. We wonder why it takes twenty years to teach a child how to conduct himself in polite society overlooking the fact that we have essentially left our children to socialize themselves.
- The children of progressive Dads were aggressive and acted out in school nearly as much as the kids with fathers who were distant and disengaged. Children need Dads to consistently discipline/guide them.
- The more complex aspects of language, such as phonetics and grammar, are not acquired from TV exposure.
- If babies hear speech while looking at an abstract shape, instead of a face, they cannot segment the sounds. Even for adults, seeing someone's lips as he speaks is the equivalent of a 20-decibel increase in volume.
- How often a mother initiated a conversation with her child was not predictive of the language outcomes – what mattered was, if the infant initiated, whether the mom responded.
- Students who kept a gratitude journal were 25% happier, were more optimistic about the future, and got sick less often during the controlled trial. They even got more exercise.
- While praise can undermine a child's intrinsic motivation, it does not have this effect on adults. It has the opposite effect: being praised by managers increases an adult's intrinsic motivation, especially in white-collar professional settings.