

Permissive Parents

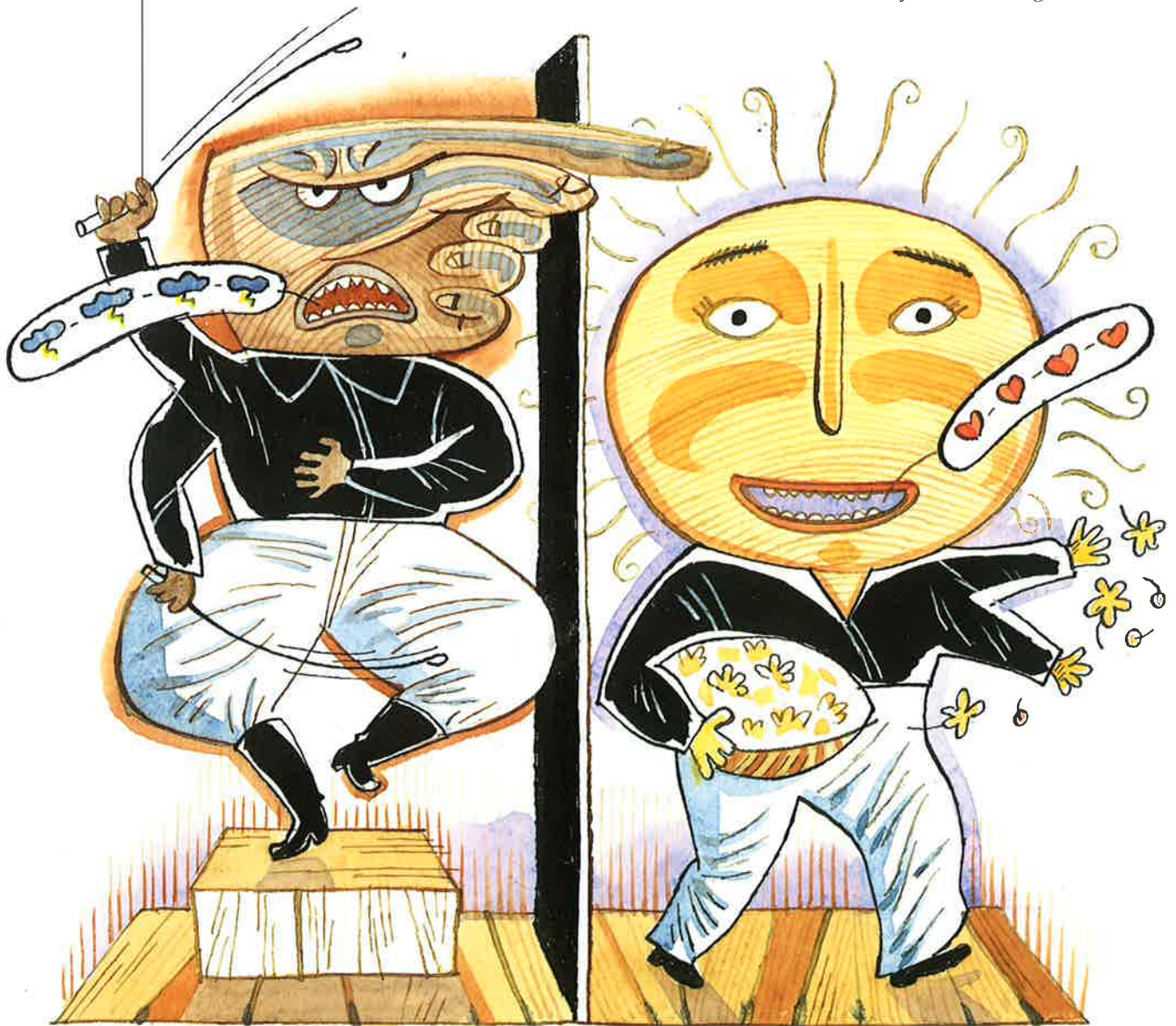
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Andy and Dave are best friends, and they always eat lunch together in their high school cafeteria. Dave is planning a big party for Saturday night, and so of course he wants Andy to come.

Andy: "Thanks for the invitation, but I can't make it. Of course my parents would let me come, but I've got a lot of homework this weekend, and I promised Mom I'd take my little brother to baseball practice early Sunday morning. She's really busy at the office these days, and she needs to catch up."

Dave: "No problem. Your parents sure are workaholics, aren't they? Don't you wish they were around more?"

Andy: "Well, my parents both really love their jobs. My Mom would be miserable if she had to stay home with us all the time. I think it makes us appreciate each other more; the family time we have is always special. I do what I want a lot of the time, but my parents trust me not to do anything stupid or dangerous. Being allowed to control my own life most of the time has made me more self-confident. My cousin Scott's parents never let him do anything, and now that he's in college he's totally out of control. Also, I kind of like the responsibilities that go along with my freedom – we all help with the cooking and the cleaning, and I'm closer to my brother than I would be if we were a more 'traditional' family. Even though



'dinner' is often just a pizza Dad picks up on the way home!"

Dave: "It may sound weird, but sometimes I wish my parents were a little more strict! I mean, it's great that they're letting me have this party, but sometimes I feel like they only say 'yes' so often because they don't want to deal with us kids. They're always so tired when they come home from work. This weekend, for instance, I'm allowed to use the house because they're going away all weekend by themselves to relax. I think they also feel kind of guilty about being so wrapped up in their jobs, and so they show affection by never saying 'no' or punishing us. It's not that I'm ungrateful – but sometimes I wish they would give me more direction. I mean, I make sure that I get my homework done, but it would be nice if my parents would show

some interest in it. My sister Rebecca is another story. She's only fourteen, but she stays out as late as she wants with older kids. I suspect that even if my parents tried to give her a curfew, she would throw a tantrum! She's spoiled rotten and I worry about how she will turn out."

Andy: "Yeah, your sister does seem a little messed up. But you never know – maybe she'll come around. It could be that your parents are just confused about their role. I know that mine often give me permission to do things they don't approve of because they're worried that being too strict will make me resent them, or become really rebellious and start getting into trouble just to spite them. Well, I hope everybody has a great time at your party – give me a call on Sunday and let me know how it went!"

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Permissive Parents

1. Children are essentially good.
2. Children should obey their parents without question.
3. Parents should be held responsible for their children's actions until the children are at least 14 years old.
4. Up to the age of 18, children should have the permission of their parents before they can leave home, enter employment, or get married.
5. You should never hit a child.
6. Children under 18 should not be allowed out after midnight.
7. Parents should let their kids experiment with alcohol, drugs, and sex so that they will learn from their mistakes and take responsibility for their own choices.

GETTING IN TUNE



'Most people tend to think that food obsessions are strictly a girl thing. In today's feature, Catherine Cooper, a life guard, tells us about her boyfriend Josh. Catherine, welcome to the studio. Now what happened to Josh?'

📖 Read, listen and discuss.

The pupils of 5B have been given the following article from a newspaper to read and discuss.

What did we do wrong?

Dear Sir:

We are a middle-aged couple with a teenage family. We have always worked hard at our professional careers and our jobs, have always paid our tax and tried to do the best for our children.

We have never objected to our children following the latest fashion in whatever they wanted, accepting standards set by the media that we never even thought about - how to be more beautiful, desirable, seductive, how to drink the right drinks, smoke the right cigarettes, wear the right underwear, smell the right smell. We never objected when they watched TV plays with the obligatory bedsessions. Then the doctors were allowed to give teenagers the pill.

We went through the stages of torn jeans, pink hair and white clown make-up. And foul and vulgar language. At fifteen our daughter was on the pill. Our family doctor had believed her when she said she was having a steady relationship with a boy. She was not, but it was a status symbol in the class to be on it.

Then she disappeared. We found her bed empty one morning after a hefty row the night before about us not understanding why it was important for her to go to all-night parties where they smoked pot. The police found her late one night thumbing a lift on a motorway. She was not going to live at home again, she said.

So we gave her money and clothes and allowed her to go to London.

After short periods of time at four different jobs, she discovered the joys of Social Security, living with one workshy alcoholic after another.

Now, at the age of twenty, she is convinced that living on Social Security is the right way of life, and that no job, after tax, would give her a bigger or better income.

She has been in conflict with the law four times, so has her present boyfriend.

She has no intention of changing her way of life.

What did we do wrong?

Yours, etc.

Take your shoes off before you come in.

Don't slam the door.

Shift your schoolbag from the hallway.

Switch off the telly.

Turn off that stereo.

Have you finished your homework?

Tidy up your room.

Not now, can't you see I'm busy?

Could anybody ever accuse you of not talking to your kids?

Ever listened to yourself when you talk to your children?

How many opportunities do they have to express an opinion or develop a conversation?

If we could just talk with our children instead of talking at them, we might begin to understand them better.

Because a dialogue between a parent and child is more than conversation.

It's an essential part of a child's upbringing.

Have you talked to your parents today?