



The Sopranos

Blackhawk Helicopter Parents



Definition helicopter parent:

“a parent who pays extremely close attention to his or her child’s or children’s experiences and problems, particularly at educational institutions”

Definition “Black Hawk parent”:

“those who cross the line from a mere excess of zeal to unethical behavior, such as writing their children's college admission essays”

Source: Cline, Foster W., : Fay, Jim (1990), *Parenting with Love and Logic: Teaching Children Responsibility*, Pinon Press, 23-25.

Source: Wikipedia “Helicopter Parent”

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EducationUSA.state.gov](http://EducationUSA.state.gov)**



Introduction case # 1:

Mr. Brown

Discussion and feedback (15 minutes)



Introduction case # 2:

Mrs. Lewinsky

Discussion and feedback (15 minutes)



Best practices: Dutch experience and solutions:

Manage expectations: create context

Communicate with students directly

Dedicated time for parents: pre-orientation, post-departure

Parent-to-parent coaching

Online communities for parents

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Question & Answers

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CASE STUDY 1

Mr. Brown

Mr. Brown has set very high standards for his daughter Julie. She attends the most exclusive private high school in the Netherlands, where she participated in all extracurricular activities offered and in sports. Yet she is, academically speaking, a weak student, with average TOEFL and SAT scores. Her recommendations are mediocre. Her teachers feel that her ambitions do not match her achievements. She is unable to distinguish herself from the crowd.

Mr. Brown is a self-made millionaire who makes 30 times as much as you do. He is used to getting his way with people. He is determined to have his daughter admitted to an Ivy League school. He is convinced that you can make this happen. Mr. Brown and his daughter Julie have made an appointment with you for an individual advising session in early December.

Questions

1. How will you handle this situation?
2. Do you recognize this situation? Is there a name that you can attach to this situation?
3. How did you respond?

CASE STUDY 2

Mrs. Lewinsky

Mrs. Lewinsky has hired you as her adviser. She wants you to work with her and her son Bill on his college applications. No sooner than later you find out that it is really Mrs. Lewinsky that you are working with rather than her son. While Bill is doing a great job on his applications, Mrs. Lewinsky calls you with at least three questions every single day. To give you an idea:

- Should she secure more letters of recommendation?
- A school of Tom's choice dropped a few places in the US News rankings. Should "we" still apply?
- You have drawn up a list of schools for Bill. Yet, his relatives in the US question the quality of the schools that Bill is considering applying to. They attended highly selective colleges in the 1970s.
- Mrs. Lewinsky refuses to fill out the necessary financial forms (FAFSA, et cetera) and disclose income. Yet, Bill wants to qualify for financial aid.
- The residence halls on the college website look scruffy. Are they really that bad?
- Bill's entire family want to accompany him to his orientation.

Questions

1. Do you recognize this situation? Is there a name that you can attach to this situation?
2. What type of parent do you think Mrs. Lewinsky is?
3. How would you "deal" with her efficiently?