

Do Not Put Your Child's Grades on Social Media.

I have noticed something that, during recent years, has become one of my concerns. It is how freely parents display their children's end-of-term school grades, and sometimes the actual report cards on FaceBook and other social media sites. Each time I see this I ask the question: "Why are these parents doing this?"

Is the displaying of grades on social media too much information to share? Yes. I remember when the world was private. Certain parts of our lives were not known to the world. Now we are living in a digital world, and without a cost we can actually expose ourselves to the world. Things like when we are on a vacation, out shopping, what we just bought from a store, etc. I like the idea of sharing, but how much is too much?

When it comes to displaying one's little child's grades on FaceBook, it is my view that doing this can be in the long run, emotionally wounding to the child. Actually, most times it is just boosting the parent's ego. "She how good MY CHILD is." I am also troubled when I see college students put their Grade Point Average (GPA) on Facebook and boast of being on the Dean's List or Principal's List, etc.

When doing research on this topic, I came across an article on Odyssey website entitled "Think Twice Before Posting Your Grades." Here is a quote I found important: "Think about the several fellow students that read your status about your high GPA or your Dean's list status. Several of those students probably did not receive as high of a grade as you, while a handful might have done better. Think of the "average" students, who now feel embarrassed for their lower grades, even if they worked very hard to get them. It takes away the joy of those with lesser scores on their transcripts, even if they should still be very pleased with what they have earned. It undermines others when you post your higher GPA, regardless of whether you intended to put others down or not."

The author further makes another key point: "When you post your grades on social media, you are further perpetuating the suffocating culture of comparison we live in. . . I am not "offended" when you post your grades. Instead, I simply feel embarrassed over my "lesser" GPA. I feel like my own hard work means nothing when I still won't earn what society deems perfect."

Parents, when you post your child's grades on FaceBook, what are you actually doing? Are you seeking validation for yourselves while boasting about your child's grades? There are some parents who do the same with birthday parties. They would have an expensive or lavish birthday party for their little toddlers but in the end, it is really to display their own wealth and pride. Think about it. Is this kind of behavior really emotionally healthy for the child?

In another article entitled, "Parents Criticized for 'Boast Posts' on Facebook Over Children's Exam Results," Anna Davis, gives another perspective. "Of course, it's fair enough to be proud of children who've worked hard or done well, but it's also good to be a bit sensitive about the fact that not everyone will be in the same boat."

Once again, it is my view that posting grades on FaceBook is not the best for persons of any age, but more importantly, those little ones who are in the early grades. Here are a few more points to consider. (1) When you put your child's success on FaceBook by putting the actual grades or grade card, you might be adding unnecessary pressure on that child and gradually instilling a fear of failure. (2) Making public the grades will be setting the child for an unhealthy form of competition that the child might not always succeed in. (3) Putting your child's all "A" report card on FaceBook might be setting up the child to think that any lesser grade is not as good. The child can grow to believe that true success is only measured by all "As." Parents, would you display your child's grade card with all "Bs"? I have never seen it. (4) If you have more than one child and one has a very high GPA and perhaps a straight "A" report card and the other has a report card with all the letter grades, will you display that report card? In reality, doing so can cause great damage intellectually and emotionally to both children. (5) Making a high GPA or achieving all "A" is not usually proof that one would

be a good citizen or employee. Many straight “A” achievers have difficulty relating in healthy ways with others.

Carey Nieuwhof in the article, “5 Signs You Might be a Boastful Parent,” shares with parents this first point I rephrased into a question. “Are you as passionate about people knowing about your child’s achievement as you are passionate about your child’s achievement? Don’t get me wrong, parents are supposed to be proud of their kids. But pride may have won the moment when you become as passionate about other people knowing how awesome your kids are, as you are about your child’s awesomeness.”

Parents, being boastful is not healthy. Carey Nieuwhof states: “Telling grandmas and grandpas, the wider family, and some good friends (who also care about your children) is different than trumpeting it to everyone you know or don’t. If you feel a need to make their best moments public, you might well be prone to boasting.” Parents, be wise, avoid sharing your child’s private life to the world.

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