

THE HELM

GROWTH & CONTROL

CASCO LEARNING COLLABORATIVE



THE BITTERSWEET SPIRAL OF CHILDREN'S GROWTH

WRITTEN BY MARIA J. CASCO

Do you ever feel like you and your child are just going in circles? Well, that is probably because you are. But fear not, that is not necessarily a bad thing!

Children's development is not linear.

Their progression and learning would be better represented by a spiral. Depending on your perspective (does that sound familiar?!), it can appear to be a repetitive circle, when in fact, it is an ever so slow, upward moving spiral.

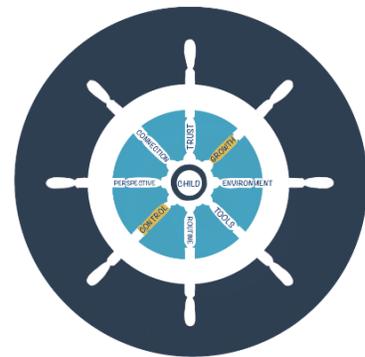
Why bittersweet? Think about it this way. Witnessing children finally learn new concepts and gain mastery in new skills makes our lives easier and, as a result, our homes more cooperative. Sweet for sure. Revel in those victories!

On the flip side of that, when we witness our children learn something new, we also witness them leaving behind parts of their childhood.

So when you remember that a spiral goes round and round, try to see those repetitive moments precisely as the the ones where your child is working to turn a corner and progress to the next level. Hang in there; that is when they benefit from additional support the most!

PARENTING HELM

Growth & Control



***TRUST YOUR
CHILD IS GOING
TO LEARN WHAT
THEY NEED,
WHEN THEY
NEED IT.***

BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF

By Jenna M. Hill

How much do you try to control your child's life?

How much do you intervene with their ideas and thoughts?

Are you molding your child into whom YOU want them to be, or do you step back and observe them for who they really are?

Most of our confusion and frustration with parenting is thinking about what might happen if we do or do not do something for our child, or what other people will think of our family and parenting styles.

And remarkably, when it comes to education, society sometimes makes us think our kids need to be doing something, all of the time, and at certain ages, and on a particular timeline, and this is just not true!

As a result, we (the adults) try to turn EVERYTHING into a meaningful experience.

But why don't we step back a bit and let the kids be kids?

Grow with your child without pushing them into learning something you think they should gain from every experience. Observe and trust the process.

You will soon discover that you do not need to control every second of the day because learning happens naturally!

We know within our CASCO community that life is so much more than work.

Life is not just about growing up and getting a job. Kids need to hear this from us! Academics are not the only things that matter in life.

And for a gentle reminder, most assessments are isolated and insignificant snapshots of your child's potential and understanding.

Your child is more than any score, any data point, and any percentage.

No standardized assessment is going to tell me who my daughter is.

Assessments are just one piece of the puzzle.

Your eyes and ears will tell you far more about your child than any piece of paper.

And the funny thing is, the "weird" things your child is interested in will most likely be their most significant assets one day. Celebrate uniqueness!

The tips below demonstrate how to observe when your child is engaged and ready to explore without you holding on to the reins so tightly.

Tips for letting go of the reins!

- Avoid comparing your child to other children.
- Try not to overschedule activities: when you add too many things to your child's plate, there is no time for them to process or engage profoundly with an activity.
- Let your child work and avoid asking questions while working; interrupting them may change their trajectory.
- You do not need to quiz or test your child in everything to seek evidence that learning is taking place.

Signs your child is learning!

- They are engaged with their whole bodies (tongue sticking out, focused eyes, body in a weird angle).
- They ask more profound questions (what if, repeating the same questions, seeking validation of their ideas).
- The child's actions are different from what you had planned/ inquiry shifts actions.
- The world around them seems to disappear.
- Repeating the same activity/skill.

