

Does the State Interfere Too Much in Parenting?

In recent years, the free-range parent movement has swept the nation, encouraging parents to teach their children responsibility by allowing them to do things on their own like walking to the local park.

But sometimes parents who give their children responsibility at young ages get into trouble with our over-cautious society.

Such is [the case](#) with an Indiana mother who left her two children – ages 9 and 1 – in her car while she ran inside Kmart for a short errand. The children were noticed, the police notified, and now the mother is facing a Level 6 felony charge for neglect. According to one [legal source](#), a Level 6 felony charge in Indiana can receive a sentence of 6 months to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Granted, in some cases, giving a 9-year-old the responsibility of watching a younger sibling for a short time in the car may border on unwise. But what if the mother knew her child, trusted her, and realized it was time to give her more responsibility? Is it right for society to clamp down and overrule her parenting instincts, saddling her with potential separation from her children and huge legal fees?

If parents could raise their children without fear of continual interference from society and the state, would we see more responsible and capable children?