

# Helicopter Parenting Can Hurt Future Family Business Leaders

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[Link to video](#)

The founders of many longstanding family businesses likely had parents who insisted on responsibility and let them learn from their mistakes.

This is not so today -- the era of helicopter parenting, snowplow parenting and everyone-gets-a-trophy parenting.

Diana Clark, Chief of Clinical Operations at the O'Connell Professional Group, spoke recently with FamilyBusiness.org Editor Kimberly Eddleston about how today's parents can help their children be better equipped to lead the family firm someday. Her main takeaways: Do less, say less and watch more.

Clark, whose consultancy addresses behavioral and relationship problems that threaten family businesses, says parents can change their parenting styles at any stage of a child's development, even into adulthood. They can ask three-year-olds to set the table, and say nothing if they do it wrong. They can give praise only when it's merited, focusing on effort as well as results. They can avoid giving unwanted advice to their emerging adult children, and invite them to speak up if they think Mom and Dad are trying to do too much for them. And at any age, parents should model good behavior and commitment to others.