

WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO IMPRESS

Women have changed so much in the past 100 years, we've gone from being discriminated against, to the ability to choose to be anything we want. We can have a career or be a stay-at-home mother or anything else we want to do. We still don't quite make as much as our male counterparts in the same jobs, but you can't deny we've come a long way, baby.

The thing is after all this equality, and the ability to be whoever we want to be, we are still trying to prove our worth to both ourselves and to others. We feel less than, if we don't think we are living up to our potential in every way. Moms are especially guilty of this. Whether they work at home or outside of the house so many moms define themselves by how well their children are turning out. If your child isn't doing a sport, playing an instrument, and doing something in the arts, all at the same time, then you're failing as a Mom. And if you have two or more children, if you aren't driving each child back and forth between all their activities to the point that your car breaks down then you're not doing your job. So, when did it stop being okay for your kid to come home from school, do his or her homework and then just hang out, and you not feel like you aren't giving them everything? It's not enough anymore for child to be doing well on their sports team, now you have to join a traveling team and spend weekends running around your state. And if your child isn't good enough to be in the orchestra by middle school, then you should be ashamed of yourself. Why didn't you start him on the oboe in preschool like everyone else?

Most of these parents know their child isn't going to be a professional athlete, or a conductor in the symphony, but yet they push them anyway. But do they push them for the sake of the child or the sake of their own egos. The kids who are spending all their time and weekends after school running from one activity to another, only to be staying up until midnight trying to get their homework done. This is more exhausting than having a full-time job.

When I was a kid, we came home from school, did our homework, and then walked to the neighbor kid's house to play. My mother was home making dinner or out running errands, but my entertainment was not holding her down. I made my own entertainment. I put on shows in the neighborhood, I walked to the corner grocery store to get candy and when I really wanted to go somewhere, I rode the bus with a friend to the local mall. I felt loved and taken care of and independent all in my own way. I was also smart, and curious and after college went on to a good career. My mother didn't base her importance on how well I was doing in my guitar class, she was simply happy that I enjoyed it.

We could blame all these extra activities on parents wanting kids to get into college, but if that were the case, these activities wouldn't start until high school. Parents are pushing their kids from the moment they're in Kindergarten now and believe me, writing on your college essays that you excelled in finger painting or little league is not what a college admissions director cares about.

My kids take drums and tennis, but other than that, they come home from school, study and do homework and then yes, entertain themselves with You Tube and video games. If you want to call me a bad mother, go ahead, but both my kids get good grades, are happy and enjoy hanging out with the family. There will be plenty of years where my kids will be on their own, earning a living and having to arrange their schedules so they can find some free time. At this point when their brains are still growing, I want my kids to have free time and relax just because they are kids. If they begged me to join some traveling sports team, I wouldn't do it. I know my child isn't going to be a professional athlete and he knows it, so why would I want any of us to spend weekends in the car racing from one city game to another. Am I selfish, maybe? But I also know what is best for my kid and I don't have to live up to anyone else's expectations other than mine.