



The Biggest Temptation of Working Moms

Father Val J. Peter, JCD, STD (NAPSA)—Do not despair, working and single moms.

Like most parents, you're doing a terrific job, but there is a little test your children are going to put you through (if they haven't already), and I would like to help you pass the test.



Val J. Peter

As your children begin to settle into the school year, they are probably getting into a pattern of "let's make Mom feel guilty and take advantage of it."

Kids are very bright. Their antennae pick up these guilty feelings. Then, they try to take over the home. That's right! Kids try to teach Mom to back off from discipline; and kids teach Mom to buy lots of things for them to help mom ease her guilt. Then when the kids start running the house, they use it to make Mom feel even guiltier.

Don't worry, Mom. There are some basic things you can do to take back your family and your home, especially if you are starting to lose control of the decision-making process and your children start to believe they are in charge.

First, if your schedule is crazy, make your kids' schedule crazy, too, in a good way. Make eating with your children a must. If you can't eat dinner until 8 p.m., make sure that your kids are there to eat with you. It will be a little goofy at first, but after a while you'll all like it.

Second, take time to meet your children's coaches and instructors. Making the extra effort to meet teachers and coaches means you will get good feedback from them about your kids' behavior. This is also an important part of your support system.

Third, establish a support system of extended family. Sometimes you just have to ask for help. Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Usually, an uncle, aunt or a grandma or grandpa will be happy to help.

Finally, make sure you have a fallback plan. Troubles beyond your control will happen on occasion. Perhaps there is bullying at school. Or perhaps you become sick. This is when you pull out your fallback plan. This is when you call Grandma and she's willing to come over to help. Or this is when you call your pastor or youth minister and they roar in like the Marine Corps to save the day.

Remember, the alternative to your taking charge is that your kids will run your home. So take charge early; ask for help when you need it; and establish a support system.

It will be a little difficult at first, but before you know it your children's behaviors will be better, and you will feel better about it—with no guilt.

Keep spending time with your children and keep smiling. Don't forget to give yourselves a pat on the back once in a while. Thank you for doing such a great job!

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Girls and Boys Town also assists 1.5 million children and parents through its National Hotline (1-800-448-3000), outreach and training programs and community partnerships.

