

Good afternoon, my name is Diane Campbell and I live in Northern Colorado in the town of Windsor. I have a graduate degree in Early Childhood Education and I have spent over 45 years working with young children ages 2 through 8 in all kinds of settings—public schools, private schools, childcare facilities and family organizations. Again and again I have seen young children flourish when given an appropriate amount of independence and responsibility. We do our children a disservice if we don't allow and even encourage them to do more on their own – to become experienced problem solvers.

I am here to heartily support the Reasonable Independence bill.

It makes me happy to think of the thousands of children I've known that have been able to accomplish something that some people assume they cannot handle. A few years ago I had a preschool classroom that had a kitchenette attached. The four and 5 year olds eagerly learned how to stir, measure and use real knives. The pride they had was wonderful to see. We would make fruit platters, sandwiches and soup- lots of chopping and cutting and never an injury. One Saturday I got a call from a parent who had undergone surgery on her arm and was struggling to make dinner with one hand. Her 4 ½ year old son had told her that he could chop the ingredients and make dinner. She was asking me if he was telling the truth- did he use a knife at school? She made the decision to let him use a knife when I told her he had done it safely and competently for a couple of weeks. By the end of the school year he was making a simple meal for the two of them and both mother and son were very happy about it. It may seem like a small thing but it makes a difference to a family.

Even small children are eager to figure out solutions to problems.

A girl in a kindergarten was excitedly telling the other children that she had seen 3 butterflies on her walk to school. When someone said "you walk to school?" she replied "All by myself, if you're 5 you can do stuff."

She knew.

I'm looking forward to the children of Colorado being allowed to "do stuff" that makes them proud and confident as that little girl.

Thank you for your time.

Senate Health & Human Services
 03/09/2022 01:30 PM
 HB22-1090 Reasonable Independence For Children
 Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Diane Campbell For Self</p>	<p>Good afternoon, my name is Diane Campbell and I live in Northern Colorado in the town of Windsor. I have a graduate degree in Early Childhood Education and I have spent over 45 years working with young children ages 2 through 8 in all kinds of settings—public schools, private schools, childcare facilities and family organizations. Again and again I have seen young children flourish when given an appropriate amount of independence and responsibility. We do our children a disservice if we don't allow and even encourage them to do more on their own – to become experienced problem solvers.</p> <p>I am here to heartily support the Reasonable Independence bill.</p> <p>It makes me happy to think of the thousands of children I've known that have been able to accomplish something that some people assume they cannot handle.</p> <p>A few years ago I had a preschool classroom that had a kitchenette attached. The four and 5 year olds eagerly learned how to stir, measure and use real knives. The pride they had was wonderful to see. We would make fruit platters, sandwiches and soup- lots of chopping and cutting and never an injury. One Saturday I got a call from a parent who had undergone surgery on her arm and was struggling to make dinner with one hand. Her 4 ½ year old son had told her that he could chop the ingredients and make dinner. She was asking me if he was telling the truth- did he use a knife at school? She made the decision to let him use a knife when I told her he had done it safely and competently for a couple of weeks. By the end of the school year he was making a simple meal for the two of them and both mother and son were very happy about it. It may seem like a small thing but it makes a difference to a family.</p> <p>Even small children are eager to figure out solutions to problems. A girl in a kindergarten was excitedly telling the other children that she had seen 3 butterflies on her walk to school. When someone said "you walk to school?" she replied "All by myself, if you're 5 you can do stuff." She knew.</p> <p>I'm looking forward to the children of Colorado being allowed to "do stuff" that makes them proud and confident as that little girl.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>
<p>Lenore Skenazy For</p>	<p>Esteemed Committee Members:</p>

<p>Let Grow Inc., a nonprofit promoting childhood independence</p>	<p>This is regarding HB22-1090, the so-called "Reasonable Childhood Independence Bill," which I am in favor of.</p> <p>My name is Lenore Skenazy. After my column "Why I Let My 9 Year Old Ride the Subway Alone" landed me on every talk show from The Today Show to Dr. Phil, I founded the book, blog and movement Free-Range Kids, which has grown into the non-profit Let Grow. At Let Grow, we believe in safety: Helmets, seatbelts, carseats... We just don't believe kids need a security detail every time they leave the house.</p> <p>And yet, despite crime coming down about 50% since its peak in the '90s, many kids today are driven from activity to activity, and plenty more spend hours on the couch, staring at a screen. There's a river of reasons for this, but one is that some parents worry that even if they know their kids are capable of walking to grandma's, someone else might consider them "neglected" and call 911.</p> <p>They are scared by stories of parents whose confidence in their kids was mistaken for neglect. Parents like Kari Anne Roy, who let her 6-year-old play outside within view of the house, but was investigated for neglect when a passerby called the cops. Parents like Natasha Felix, who let her kids, 11, 9 and 5 play at the park across from her apartment and she, too, was investigated for neglect.</p> <p>And that's not to mention the parents who have little money, leaving them no choice but to trust their kids with independence as soon as they believe the kids are ready for it. This makes overly broad neglect laws into a social justice issue: Who can AFFORD to helicopter parent? Not everyone.</p> <p>But childhood freedom is not just a parenting issue. It's a health issue. As children's independence has been going down, childhood obesity, anxiety, and even suicide have been going up.</p> <p>A Reasonable Childhood Independence Bill would reassure Colorado parents that giving their kids some old-fashioned freedom--by choice OR rank necessity--will not be mistaken for neglect. Neglect is when you blatantly disregard your child's safety and welfare. Not when you trust them to start becoming part of the world.</p> <p>Let the authorities investigate TRUE cases of neglect, not parents who give their kids the kind of childhood we grew up with.</p> <p>Yours,</p> <p>Lenore Skenazy President, Let Grow Inc. Author, "Free-Range Kids"</p>
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