

# Raising Likeable, Responsible, Respectful Children in an Age of Overindulgence

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## All They Want To Be Is Rich, Famous & Look Good [Research] by

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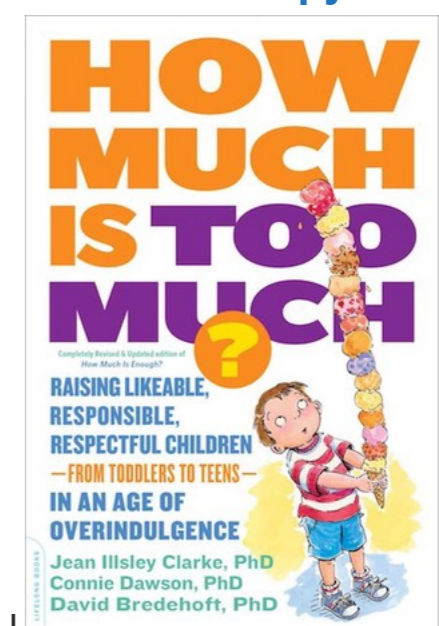
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**“We have given our children everything and now look at them.** Just look at them....the most important things to them are money, fame, and getting the most [“Likes”](#) on Instagram or the longest [“Snapstreak”](#) on Snapchat. They only care about themselves. They don’t give a hoot about others. Where did we go wrong?”

Parents all over the world want the best for their children and many have given them “everything,” but something has backfired, gone awry. Instead they have overindulged them. I believe that overindulgence is the process parents unintentionally use to instill materialistic values in their children.



## The High Price of Materialism

[Tim Kasser](#)'s book titled "[The High Price of Materialism](#)" suggests that there are two types of people. The first type is motivated by things outside of themselves. He calls this extrinsic aspirations (wealth, fame, image). The second type of person is motivated by what he calls intrinsic aspirations (meaningful relationships, personal growth, community contributions). His research shows that materialism (extrinsic aspirations) affects everyday happiness and psychological health. If your children value wealth, fame and image, they "face a greater risk of unhappiness, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and problems with intimacy."

## What Are Extrinsic Aspirations?

They are the desire for:

- **Wealth** (to be very wealthy, to have lots of expensive things, to be rich),
- **Fame** (to have my name known by many people, to be admired by many people, to be famous), and
- **Image** (to be attractive, to look good, to wear the latest fashions).

## What Are Intrinsic Aspirations?

They are the desire for:

- **Meaningful relationships** (to have good faithful friends, to have intimate committed relationships, to have deep enduring friendships),
- **Personal Growth** (to learn new things, to live a meaningful life, to accept myself), and
- **Community Contributions** (to work to improve society, to help others without receiving anything in return, to help others make their lives better).

## What About Today's Youth?

- **Wealth** (81% of [incoming college freshman students](#) — an all-time high — reported that "being very well off financially" is a very important personal goal, up from 79.6 percent in 2011).
- **Fame** (Teens post a picture on Facebook or Instagram and hope for [as many "likes" as possible](#). They consider 100 likes or more, good. Less is a poor showing, even embarrassing).

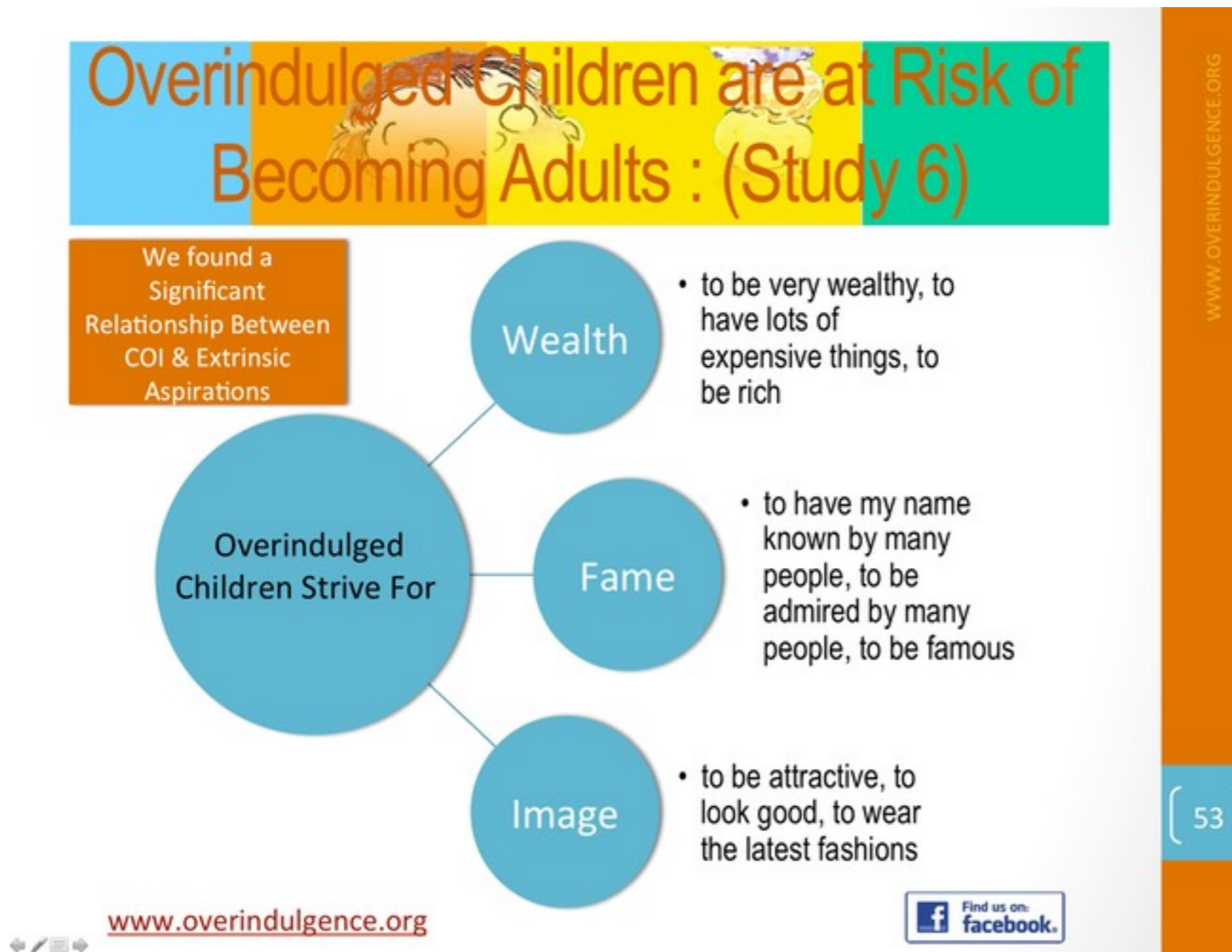
Some teens say they'll delete pictures that don't hit 100 or more likes).

•Image ([14 Teens To Look To For Style Inspiration](#) – included in the 14 are: Zendaya, Malia Obama, Nasreen Osman).



## The Link Between Overindulgence and Materialism (Extrinsic Aspirations)

My theory is that parents who overindulge their children run the risk shaping them into extrinsic adults who desire wealth, fame, and are highly concerned about their image. [To test my hypothesis](#) I recruited 369 participants (80.5% female, 19.5% male; ages 14-81; Mean age 38.25; Median age 22.00) from 37 states, Spain, France, Canada, Australia, Belgium, India, New Zealand, Slovenia, and the United Kingdom.



Participants filled out two inventories. One called [Overindulged](#) and the other titled [The Aspiration Index](#). I found that all three types of overindulgence ([Soft Structure](#), [Overnurture](#), and [Too Much](#)) contribute to materialism; the importance of wealth, fame and Image. Further, I found that overindulged children grow up into adults who are not interested in meaningful relationships, personal growth, or making the world a better place.

## Things You Can Do To Let Go of Materialism

1. Teach your children about consumer culture

2. Clarify intrinsic values
3. Focus on self-growth
4. Emphasize closeness with friends and family
5. Model things that make the world a better place
6. Make financial decisions based on (1) your self growth goals, (2) things that bring you closer to friends and family, and (3) things that make the world a better place and helps others.
7. Read [14 Tips For A Less Materialistic Lifestyle](#) by Scott H. Young.

There is more help about avoiding overindulgence in [How Much is Too Much? Raising Likable, Responsible, Respectful Children – From Toddlers To Teens – In An Age of Overindulgence](#) (2014, DaCapo Press Lifelong Books).

**Photos from [www.Pexels.com](http://www.Pexels.com), graphic by David Bredehoft**

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