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HOVERING TOO CLOSE: THE RAMIFICATIONS OF HELICOPTER PARENTING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Kathleen Vinson*

ABSTRACT

"They are needy, overanxious and sometimes plain pesky—and schools at every level are trying to find ways to deal with them. No, not students. Parents—specifically parents of today's 'millennial generation' who, many educators are discovering, can't let their kids go."[1] Some parents, called "helicopter parents" for constantly hovering over their children, are now making higher institutions their landing pads. They hover from the prospective admissions stage to graduation and the job market beyond—contacting presidents of universities, deans, and professors, disputing their child's grade; requesting an extension for their child; complaining their child does not receive as much praise as the parent would like; completing assignments for their child; requesting notification of grades their child received; and even attending job fairs and interviews with their child. They are intervening in their children's higher education in increased frequency and intensity, presenting challenges socially, pedagogically, and legally.

This article explores the phenomenon of helicopter parenting hovering over higher education institutions and the possible implications that may affect students' learning, teaching, grading, curriculum, future employers, and the law itself. Finally, the article provides recommendations to help strike a balance between the

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1. Valerie Strauss, *Putting Parents in Their Place: Outside Class*, WASH. POST, Mar. 21, 2006, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/03/20/AR2006032001167.html.

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changing rights, roles, and responsibilities of higher education institutions and their students' parents.

INTRODUCTION

"I wish my parents had some hobby other than me."[2]

An epidemic is running rampant in schools—helicopter parents landing on higher education institutions.[3] Helicopter parenting is a term used to describe the phenomenon of a growing number of parents—obsessed with their children's success and safety—who vigilantly hover over them, sheltering them from mistakes, disappointment, or risks; insulating them from the world around them.[4] Some helicopter parents may even cross the line into unethical areas, such as unknowingly teaching their children it is acceptable to plagiarize, falsify records, or bully others to get what they want.[5]

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2. Gaia Bernstein & Zvi Triger, *Over-Parenting*, 44 U.C. DAVIS L. REV. 1221, 1231 (2011) (quoting Hara Estroff Marano, *A Nation of Wimps*, PSYCHOL. TODAY, Nov.–Dec. 2004, at 58, 64).

3. RACE TO NOWHERE (Reel Link Films 2009).

4. Nancy Gibbs, *The Growing Backlash Against Overparenting*, TIME MAG. (Nov. 20, 2009), http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1940697,00.html. Helicopter parenting is a phenomenon that involves parents of all races, ages, and regions. *Id.* "Invasive parenting," "overparenting," "aggressive parenting," "modern parenting," "smothering mothering," and "snowplow parents" are some of the terms used interchangeably with helicopter parents. *See, e.g.*, *id.*; HARA ESTROFF MARANO, A NATION OF WIMPS: THE HIGH COST OF INVASIVE PARENTING 19 (2008) (describing "snowplow parents," who clear the path for their kids); Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1225 (describing "smothering mothering" as another term for helicopter parenting); Jeremy S. Hyman & Lynn F. Jacobs, *Ten Reasons Parents Should Never Contact College Professors*, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REP. PROFESSORS' GUIDE BLOG(May 12, 2010), http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/professors-guide/2010/05/12/10-reasons-parents-should-never-contact-college-professors (using the term "lawn-mower parents" to describe parents "whose blades actually move across the ground" to "mow down" whatever obstructs their child's success). In contrast, the terms used for the revolution of parents seeking to halt the over-protectiveness of parents also has many names, such as "slow parenting, simplicity parenting, [and] free-range parenting." Gibbs, *supra*.

5. These parents are often referred to as "Blackhawk" or "kamikaze parents." Judith Hunt, *Make Room for Daddy and Mommy: Helicopter Parents Are Here!*, J. ACAD. ADMIN. HIGHER EDUC., Spring 2008, at 9 (noting these brazen parents have interfered with admissions at colleges and the workplace); *see also* Don Aucoin, *For Some, Helicopter Parenting Delivers Benefits*, BOS. GLOBE, Mar. 3, 2009, http://www.boston.com/lifestyle/family/articles/2009/03/03/for_some_helicopter_parenting_delivers_benefits/?page=full (giving an example of a father writing a college essay for his nineteen-year-old daughter); Hyman & Jacobs, *supra* note 5 (noting parents may make a situation worse for their child when they intervene to complain about a grade and admit they helped their child with a paper, in violation of the course rules prohibiting anyone from reviewing the paper, collaborating or providing assistance). Additionally, a helicopter parent contacting a professor directly may actually be an attempt to bully the professor. *Id.*

Helicopter parenting can even have legal implications relating to privacy rights.

Although over-parenting has existed for a long time, before parents were christened with the term helicopter parents, it now seems to be a kind of parenting virus and the norm.[6] In fact, parents who ideologically resist the trend of helicopter parenting may feel pressured to conform.[7] In addition, while helicopter parenting can exist in all races, ages, and regions, some experts argue that it depends on class, race, ethnicity, culture and finances.[8] A divisive

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6. *See* Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (noting that in 1899 Douglas MacArthur's mom moved with him to West Point and lived in an apartment near campus so she could watch him with a telescope to make sure he was studying); Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1262–63; Katherine Ozment, *Welcome to the Age of Overparenting*, BOS. MAG., Nov. 29, 2011. at 2, *available at* http://www.bostonmagazine.com/articles/2011/11/the-age-of-overparenting (quoting child and family psychologist Richard Weissbourd, recognizing that "[w]e're in the midst of a giant social experiment"). Weissbourd, who is the author of *The Parents We Mean to Be: How Well-Intentioned Adults Undermine Children's Moral and Emotional Development*, notes "[w]e're the first parents in history who really want to be their kids' friends" and sometimes their best friends—which can "undercut their authority and derail normal development." *Id.* "Parents need to let their children separate in adolescence, of course, but that's much harder if Mom and Dad have come to depend on them for close friendship." *Id.* Michael Thompson, author of *Homesick and Happy: How Time Away From Parents Can Help a Child Grow*, stated "[m]odern parents feel that more time with Mom and Dad is always a positive—this is the single biggest change in American childhood—but the truth is that more time with [parents] isn't always a positive." *Id.* at 4.

7. Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (noting when helicopter parenting became the norm parents who did not hover were viewed by some as bad parents). Thus, in addition to the effects helicopter parenting may have on their children, it can also affect the parents. *See id.* For example, helicopter parenting can take a toll on finances and work schedules. *See* L.J. Jackson, *Smothering Mothering*, A.B.A. J., Nov. 2010, at 19, *available at* http://www.abajournal.com/magazine/article/smothering_mothering. Indeed, the pressure to conform to the helicopter parent child-rearing style may add to the stress that many parents feel—the need to be the perfect parent—and especially takes a toll on mothers. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1272–73; *see also* BECKY BEAUPRE GILLESPIE & HOLLEE SCHWARTZ TEMPLE, GOOD ENOUGH IS THE NEW PERFECT: FINDING HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS IN MODERN MOTHERHOOD 210 (2011) (telling a story of how a mother had to learn to stop comparing herself to other moms and believed "that loosening the reins on 'perfect' made for happier, better-adjusted children"). "In families where both parents were employed full-time, mothers spent an average of 2.1 hours per day on household activities" compared to fathers who "spent 1.4 hours doing those same things." *Id.* at 79; *See generally* LENORE SKENAZY, FREE-RANGE KIDS: GIVING OUR CHILDREN THE FREEDOM WE HAD WITHOUT GOING NUTS WITH WORRY (2009) (explaining that she wrote a book advocating giving children more freedom and dispelling irrational fears after being dubbed "America's Worst Mom" when she allowed her nine-year old to ride the subway alone).

8. *Compare* Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (describing helicopter parenting as a phenomenon that involves parents of all races, ages, and regions), *with* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1266–71 (arguing that intensive parenting is not a universal trend but rather is dependent on class, race, ethnicity, and culture, and some parents may be financially unable or ideologically unwilling to adopt it). Bernstein and Triger caution that helicopter parenting depends on class and cultural practices of child rearing because members of social classes without the resources or interest in emulating this practice resist this trend. *Id.*

debate pits helicopter parents, heralding its benefits, against a backlash of critics, arguing that helicopter parenting has numerous negative results.[9]

While hovering may be understandable with young children, it can continue to higher education.[10] This article examines educators' concerns when helicopter parenting continues into adulthood—hovering over a child's college, graduate school, and even employment—to monitor the child's life.[11] Helicopter parents are

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at 1270–71; *see generally* AMY CHUA, BATTLE HYMN OF THE TIGER MOTHER (2011) (discussing child-rearing practices of an Asian mom raising her two daughters in the United States).

9. Critics of helicopter parenting argue that the negative ramifications include producing a generation of weaklings through an armored childhood who are crippled by overprotection and a lack of freedom, and are instilled with fear and reliance instead of responsibility and independence, making it difficult for children to become healthy and well-adjusted adults. *See generally* MARANO, *supra* note 5 (arguing invasive parenting is bad for children, parents, and a democratic and economic future). Developmental psychologists have shown that experiences with independent risk-analysis and problem solving contribute to an individual's maturity and stability. Leon Neyfakh, *The Armored Child*, BOS. GLOBE, Aug. 14, 2011, http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2011/08/14/the_armored _child/?page=full; Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1274–78 (noting that although intensive parenting may have advantages, it can disrupt healthy psychological development in children); Jackson, *supra* note 8, at 18 (noting inordinate involvement in child's development results in emotional handicap). Some researchers argue that teenage years and young adulthood is filled with risks—emotionally, socially, sexually, economically, logistically, and psychologically—and that there are legitimate reasons for parents to remain deeply involved in their child's lives even after they are adults. Aucoin, *supra* note 6 (describing helicopter parenting as a positive style of child-rearing); *see also* Rick Shoup, Bob Gonyea & George Kuh, *Helicopter Parents: Examining the Impact of Highly Involved Parents on Student Engagement and Educational Outcomes* 11–17 (June 1, 2009) (unpublished paper presented at 49th Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research, Atlanta, Georgia) (using data from the 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement assessing frequency and quality of college students' interaction with parents and its impact on student engagement and educational outcomes). The study found that students with highly involved parents had higher levels of engagement, deep learning, educational gains and satisfaction. *Id.* at 18. Other observers argue that well-meaning and intelligent parents who want the best for their child but never want that child to fail end up doing them a disservice by hurting the child's growth, resulting in very anxious adults who take few risks. Judy Fortin, *Hovering Parents Need to Step Back at College Time*, CNN HEALTH (Feb. 4, 2008), http://articles.cnn.com/2008-02-04/health/hm.helicopter.parents_1_ helicopter-parents-college-students-students-with-higher-levels?_s=PM:HEALTH; *see also* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1230 (acknowledging advantages of intensive parenting but cautioning against its excessive and detrimental effects and speculating whether the social backlash beginning against intensive parenting may cause a social evolution away from this type of child-rearing).

10. MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 184 (describing an example of a parent who has her college son's syllabi and calls her son to remind him each time he has a test); Shoup, Gonyea & Kuh, *supra* note 10, at 11–17 (describing a study the authors conducted to determine parental involvement in their child's higher education). For purposes of this article, higher education includes college, universities, and other undergraduate and graduate programs. I use the terms interchangeably.

11. Alison Damast, *Helicopter Parents on the Rise at B-Schools*, BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK GETTING IN BLOG (Oct. 14, 2010), http://www.businessweek.com/bschools/blogs/mba_admissions/ archives/2010/10/helicopter_parents_on_the_rise_at_b-schools.html (reporting that 33% of admissions

now on the radar of institutions of higher education as parents' intervention in their child's higher education has increased in frequency, intensity, and minutiae, representing a cultural shift.[12]

The purpose of this article is to explore the ramifications of helicopter parenting in higher education.[13] Part I of this article will give an overview of the contemporary parenting trend of helicopter parenting.[14] Part II will discuss its prevalence in higher education, including the reasons for the growth of this phenomenon.[15] Part III will explore the potential implications of the presence of helicopter parenting in higher education, including relevant legal and ethical issues.[16] Part IV will offer recommendations for higher education institutions dealing with helicopter parents to avoid adverse consequences.[17]

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officers admitted that an "overbearing parent has compromised a [business school] applicant's chance of admission" and "parents are leaving a 'noticeable footprint' on applications"). The Veritas Prep, a Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) preparation company, conducted a survey showing one example of how helicopter parents are playing a role in graduate schools across the country. *Id.* The helicopter parent trend is most prevalent at undergraduate campuses according to a survey done in September 2010 by Kaplan Test Prep and Admission of admissions officers at 386 colleges and universities. *Id.* The survey reported that 77% of admissions officers said parental involvement in college admissions is increasing. *Id.*; *see also* Daniel de Vise, *Survey: Helicopter Parents Hover Over College Campus*, WASH. POST C. INC. BLOG (Sept. 27, 2010, 5:33 PM), http://voices.washingtonpost.com/college-inc/2010/09/survey_helicopter_parents_hove.html (noting some schools are cutting parents out of the admission process entirely). As a result of parental hovering, 61% of admissions officers have designed new initiatives for parents, such as setting up special websites, information sessions, newsletters, blogs, Facebook pages, tours for parents, and opening up an office of parent relations. *Id.*; Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (beginning in the 1990s, Ernst & Young created "parent packs" for recruits to give their parents, because they were involved in negotiating salary and benefits).

12. *See* SKENAZY, *supra* note 8, at 115 (explaining that parents want kids to learn to ride a bike but in order to do so they must let go of the bike at some point and watch their children take a few spills); Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1225–27 (noting that over the last two decades, child rearing practices have changed, using the term "intensive parenting," and recognizing the dominant contemporary parent is an intensive parent); Lisa Belkin, *Let the Kid Be*, N.Y. TIMES, May 31, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/magazine/31wwln-lede-t.html (describing the rise of helicopter parenting but warning that its days may be numbered); Jackson, *supra* note 8, at 18 (using the term "intensive parenting").

13. *See* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1225–26 (pointing out the lack of scholarship regarding the implications of intensive parenting and stressing that most legal scholars have addressed other aspects of parenting, such as liability in tort for their child's injury; abuse and neglect legal proceedings; and divorce).

14. *See* discussion *infra* Part I.

15. *See* discussion *infra* Part II.

16. *See* discussion *infra* Part III.

17. *See* discussion *infra* Part IV.

I. WHAT IS HELICOPTER PARENTING?

Helicopter parenting involves various forms of hovering and can begin before children are born and continue through graduate school.[18] Helicopter parenting during pregnancy starts when parents seek increasing amounts of information regarding achieving the optimal pregnancy and baby.[19] Once the child is born, it continues as parents try to place children in a protective bubble or armor, relying on numerous safety and monitoring devices like "nanny cams"; putting babies in helmets; using pads on toddlers' knees; and tracking children with GPS.[20] Parents schedule their child's play dates and

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18. *See* Judith L. Ritter, *Growin' Up: An Assessment of Adult Self-Image in Clinical Law Students*, 44 AKRON L. REV. 137, 149–51 (2011) (explaining hovering by helicopter parents can interfere with children becoming independent); Laura Markham, *Eight Ways to Avoid Helicopter Parenting*, BOS. MAG. BOS. DAILY BLOGS (Nov. 29, 2011), http://blogs.bostonmagazine.com/boston_daily/2011/11/29/roundtable-markham-ways-avoid-helicopter-parenting-draft-laura-markham (suggesting parents avoid "over-stimulating", "over-assisting," "over-tigering," "overprotecting," "over-scheduling," "over-reacting," and "overlooking emotional development"); Ozment, *supra* note 7, at 7–9 (cautioning that the signs of a helicopter parent include: "talking to your kids during every waking moment;" not letting your kids out of your sight; doing your kids' homework; constantly telling your kids and others how smart your kids are; having your kid as your best friend; and not allowing unstructured play, instead being in the "extracurricular arms race").

19. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1227; *see also* GILLESPIE & TEMPLE, *supra* note 8, at 4 ("Perfection became an addiction, motherhood a competitive sport . . . playing Mozart to our pregnant bellies."); *Id.* at 47 (noting how mothers immerse themselves in research regarding breast-feeding, sleep patterns, brain development, and Baby Einstein videos and then use this research to justify their lack of paycheck and to professionalize motherhood when they quit their jobs to devote time to family); MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 44 (reporting that since 2000 a reversal of a forty-year trend has occurred where women of peak working age, 25–54, have left the workplace to devote all their energy to raising children). Resume building and getting into an ivy-league college can begin as early as preschool. *See* RACE TO NOWHERE, *supra* note 4 (noting that parents use flashcards with infants).

20. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1233 (highlighting parents' protection methods); Neyfakh, *supra* note 10 (noting how protective products proliferate in an attempt to provide protective armor for children, such as protective foam covering every corner around the house and antibacterial soap everywhere); *see also* Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (commenting that parenting turned into a form of product development); Kate Tuttle, *When We Shield Our Kids from Scary Stories, Who Are We Really Trying to Protect?*, BOS. GLOBE, Aug. 11, 2011, http://www.boston.com/community/moms/articles/2011/08/11/when_we_shield_our_kids_from_scary_stories_who_are_we_really_trying_to_protect/ (noting how well-meaning parents cripple their kids' abilities to navigate risk when they try to make playgrounds safer). While advances in child safety, like seat belts, car seats, and bike helmets should be hailed, irrational responses to safety incite frustration in some parents who argue this overprotection is "infantilizing our kids into incompetence." Gibbs, *supra* note 5. Although death by injury dropped more than 50% since 1980, parents have lobbied to remove jungle gyms from playgrounds, strollers now have labels warning parents to "remove child before folding," and the percentage of kids walking or biking to school decreased from 41% in 1969 to 13% in 2001. *Id.* Further, playtime dropped 25% from 1981 to 1997 and homework more than doubled. *Id. But see* Darby Dickerson, *Risk Management and the*

every aspect of their lives.[21] Children have less freedom and play time today than in the past, as they are involved in an increasing number of school and after-school activities where every child gets a trophy for participating.[22]

Well-meaning parents hover outside of the home as well, "[b]e it sports or spelling bees," hovering over playgrounds, practice fields, and schools.[23] Once their child enters school, parents participate in an

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Millennial Generation, CAMPUS ACTIVITIES PROGRAMMING, Jan./Feb. 2007, at A12, A13–A14 (noting although Millennials are the most protected generation in history, they also grew up watching violent events, such as Columbine and 9/11). Although helicopter parents seem to have a distorted sense of risk, it may not be all that different from the rest of our society. To a certain extent, helicopter parenting may be simply an extension of this same risk-adverse, fearful mentality that many share along with the expectation of a "quick fix." This fear is reinforced and enabled through the media and marketing. It is problematic when this mentality is reinforced through higher education.

21. Millennials are the generation of mandatory car seats, bike helmets, sun block, playgroups, and soccer leagues. Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10; *see also* Susan K. McClellan, *Externships for Millennial Generation Law Students: Bridging the Generation Gap*, 15 CLINICAL L. REV. 255, 267 (2009) (noting parental pressure to achieve leads to focus on high grades and resume building, rather than using one's internal compass to achieve success).

22. Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (noting playtime dropped 25% from 1981 to 1997 and homework more than doubled). Studies show that playtime is a way to practice for adulthood and can help develop leadership, sociability, flexibility, and resilience. *Id.* (asserting the importance of playtime as an "essential protein in a child's emotional diet"). Even though some may have high grades and test scores, if they did not experience playtime as a child they tend to lack problem-solving skills. *Id.* (describing example where employer noticed younger engineers lacked problem-solving skills despite having top grades and test scores); *see also* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1277 (discussing negative effects from lack of time to play). Additionally, Bernstein and Triger point out studies finding that in addition to impairing children's independence, intensive parenting tends to be a factor in higher rates of substance abuse, anxiety, and depression. *Id.* at 1230. Some call this generation the "participation generation," as any child who participates in a sport gets a trophy and every moment of children's days are scheduled. *See* RACE TO NOWHERE, *supra* note 4 (showing how children feel stressed about too much homework and activities). Children are being robbed of playtime and their childhood is stolen. *See id.* (noting play is children's work and shows them how to survive in adulthood). To soften the intensity of high pressure environment of high expectations for children, constant praise is used as a panacea for the anxieties of modern parenting. Po Bronson, *How Not to Talk to Your Kids*, N.Y. MAG. (Feb. 11, 2007), http://nymag.com/news/features/27840/.

23. Brian Sullivan, *They Grow Up So Fast*, A.B.A. J. (Aug. 2011), http://www.abajournal.com/magazine/article/they_grow_up_so_fast_parents_write_script_expect_kids_and_courts_to_make_it/; Ozment, *supra* note 7 (reporting researchers in North Carolina found that children who were accompanied to the park by a parent were 45% less likely to be active than those who went alone or with friends); Tuttle, *supra* note 21 (noting how well-meaning parents cripple their kids' abilities to navigate risk when they try to make playgrounds safer); *see also* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1234 (noting parents can monitor their child's daily lives at some schools by reviewing what their child ate for lunch as well as their class attendance and grades); Sullivan, *supra* (describing a story where a father sued a school district alleging discrimination, arguing his middle-school sons who are half-Chinese, half-Caucasian did not get enough playing time on their basketball team); Ozment, *supra* note 7, at 6 (reporting that "free, unstructured play helps children learn how to get along with others and control their emotions, and it also lets them develop their imagination"); RACE TO NOWHERE, *supra* note

increasing number of school activities, volunteer in academic and nonacademic settings, and share tasks and decisions that traditionally were left for the teachers.[24] Disgruntled parents sue schools alleging their future Einstein has not had a perfect experience.[25]

Hovering continues throughout their education to secondary schools, college, and graduate schools.[26] While parents may no

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4 (noting how children are coached from the time they are young, which leads to employers being expected to coach their employees). A study by the University of Maryland's Sandra Hofferth revealed that from 1981 to 1997, American kids ages six to eight spent 25% less time engaged in free play, while their time in the classroom increased by 18%. Ozment, *supra* note 7, at 6. Meanwhile, their homework time increased by 145%, while time spent shopping with parents was up by 168%. *Id.* When Hofferth updated her research in 2003, free time continued to decline, while study time increased another 32%. *Id.*

24. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1233 (describing an example when a school had to cancel its fieldtrip because too many parents volunteered to chaperon and no parent would withdraw). Some parents demand homework in preschool. Gibbs, *supra* note 5; *see also* MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 102 (blaming schools for parents' over-involvement in their children's lives by helping reshape parenting into an intrusive activity); SKENAZY, *supra* note 8, at 41–48 (discussing notion of parental intercession in schools, the attitude that teachers work for the parents, and the impact of lawsuits on the safety measures taken by school officials).

25. *See* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1238 (describing lawsuit by New York parents against the city's Board of Education to strike down a provision prohibiting students from bringing cell phones to school because the parents wanted to have the ability to speak with their children on their way to and from school). Bernstein and Triger also note that helicopter parenting raises children who know how to make rules work in their favor. *Id.* at 1274; *see also* SKENAZY, *supra* note 8, at 45 (explaining that principals—paranoid of lawsuits—have eliminated tag, and a nationwide survey of five thousand principals found that 20%of them spend 5–10 hours a week writing reports or having meetings to avoid litigation); Dave Newbart, *The Coddled Generation: Generation Y Keeping Close Ties to Mom and Dad*, CHI. SUN TIMES, Dec. 27, 2005, at 3 (reporting concern about damaging student's self-esteem is a factor in grade inflation). Skenazy explains further that fear of lawsuits has an effect beyond school. SKENAZY, *supra* note 8, at 45–46 (recounting how one parent sued Little League for not teaching her son how to slide after he broke his leg; another parent sued a baseball league because she got hit by a ball that the coach "should have taught [her child] to catch"); *see also* MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 18 (explaining how a parent hired a lawyer to protect his child's grade on a senior project, which was a requirement for graduation, forcing the school to decrease the weight of the grade for the project as well as decrease the pages for the paper from 8 to 4). A mother sued a Manhattan preschool, demanding a refund of $19,000 tuition and complaining that her four year old was taught shapes and colors and was mixed in with two year olds. Sullivan, *supra* note 24. Another mother whose daughters barely missed the cutoff IQ score for a gifted program at their school appealed, had her daughters privately tested, and succeeded in getting them admitted to the program. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1233. Some schools are eliminating programs and activities for fear of an increasing amount of lawsuits by parents against schools and educators for a range of injuries. *See* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1234 & n.63 (discussing survey by the American Tort Reform Association with the National Association of Elementary School Principals and National Association of Secondary School Principals).

26. *See* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1238–39 (explaining that some cell phones allow parents to track their child's movement through GPS and offer features that let parents know if a child is in a car and what speed the car is traveling or send an email notification if the child does not attend school or another location).

longer hover constantly at this stage, they often strike like "stealth fighter parents" at particular moments; when the high school musical cast is chosen; senior year when college admissions comes into play; in college and graduate school when their child receives a grade lower than they are used to; or when they are about to graduate and enter a globally competitive world.[27] While universities have always interacted with parents of prospective and enrolled students at open houses, campus tours, parents' weekends, and in exceptional situations such as emergencies, the number of interactions with parents outside of these occasions is on the rise.[28]

Several factors contribute to the increase of helicopter parents in higher education. Hovering may result from fear for safety, fear of failure, and demography.[29] Also, the ability to be in constant contact with others via advances in technology may be a reason helicopter parenting is prevalent.[30] Economic insecurity and the increase in the

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27. Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (explaining stages of parental hovering as their children grow).

28. Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10–11 (noting universities' challenges to encourage student independence while attending college); Amanda M. Fairbanks, *Letting Your Grad Student Go*, N.Y. TIMES, Nov. 1, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/01/education/edlife/01guidance-t.html?pagewanted=all (reporting two-thirds of the admission officers surveyed at top business schools experienced more parental involvement in applications than five years ago).

29. Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (noting "parents born after 1964 waited longer to marry and had fewer children," meaning they guard their smaller families more zealously). Additionally, such parents also have more money and time to spend on each child. Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10; Ozment, *supra* note 7 (reflecting that because the author was similar to children in the '70s and '80s, her childhood "was marked by divorce, latchkey-kid-dom, and a nonstop diet of Twinkies and television"—leading to the over-parenting her own children). Issues such as terrorism and the environment may contribute to parents feeling these things are out of their control, thus they try to control their children. *See* Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 9–10; Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A13–A14 (noting that although Millennials are the most protected generation in history they also grew up watching violent events, such as Columbine and 9/11); Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (noting in the 1990s fear and anxiety increased yet crime went down).

30. MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 178 (claiming hovering no longer has geographical or temporal boundaries due to the cell phone); Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1236–41 (asserting that cell phones have become monitoring devices, allowing parents to engage in "remote parenting" of their children); Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 9 (noting a study where, "[o]f the 893 parents surveyed, 74% communicated with their student two to three times a week and one in three did so at least once a day"); Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A12 (noting college students report they contact their parents for big or small decisions and call, text message, email or use social networking to contact their parents three to five times a day, or more, resulting in the cell phone becoming "the world's longest umbilical cord"). Additionally, social networks enable parents to "friend" their children and stay current with status updates. *See* Kathleen E. Vinson, *The Blurred Boundaries of Social Networking in the Legal Field: Just "Face" It*, 41 U. MEM. L. REV. 355, 362 n.14 (2010) (recognizing parents or people over 30 are fastest growing population joining Facebook).

cost of education may also be factors.[31] The influence of rankings and ratings of higher education institutions contributes to an accountability factor and a perception of school choice as consumerism with parents seeking evidence of the value of their child's education by monitoring its quality.[32] Further, helicopter parents may measure their own self-worth based on the success of their child as well as the competitiveness of contemporary society.[33]

The final factor contributing to helicopter parenting in higher education is the arrival of the Millennial student generation on campus.[34] Many members of the millennial generation grew up with helicopter parents who micromanaged their children's lives well into adulthood.[35] The result may be "the most protected and programmed children ever," entering college and graduate schools without the life skills necessary to succeed in the realities of an increasingly competitive and complex workplace and economy.[36]

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31. Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 9 (suggesting the rise of the unemployment rate and outsourcing of managerial-level jobs has contributed to excessive helicopter parenting); *see also* Kristen Peters, *Protecting the Millennial College Student*, 16 S. CAL. REV. L. & SOC. JUST. 431, 460 n.207 (2007) (noting high tuition and high expectations result in many parents blaming schools whenever their kids get into trouble); Louis N. Schulze, Jr., *Balancing Law Student Privacy Interests and Progressive Pedagogy: Dispelling the Myth That FERPA Prohibits Cutting-Edge Academic Support Methodologies*, 19 WIDENER L.J. 215, 265 (2009) (proposing that a dramatic increase in cost of education results in heavy parental involvement in children's higher education).

32. Shoup, Gonyea & Kuh, *supra* note 10, at 4–5 (recognizing that the way popular magazines' reviews and rankings treat education as a commodity results in parental involvement to monitor their investment); *see also* RACE TO NOWHERE, *supra* note 4 (discussing the federal government's influence on the increasing accountability of teachers, students, and administrators upon the enactment of No Child Left Behind Act); *College Rankings and Lists*, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REP., http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges (last visited Nov. 2, 2011).

33. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1231–32 (recognizing intensive parenting is "the result of the competitiveness of contemporary society"); Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10 (pointing out a study that found 20% of parents based their own self-worth on the performance of their child).

34. *See* Anahid Gharakhanian, *ABA Standard 305's "Guided Reflections": A Perfect Fit for Guided Fieldwork*, 14 CLINICAL L. REV. 61, 73 (2007) (examining the generational considerations of the profile of law students and defining the beginning of generation Y, or Millennials, between the birth year 1980 to the mid-2000s). They are the first generation that have used email, instant messaging, and cell phones since childhood. *See* Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A12; Fairbanks, *supra* note 29 (noting that as the millennial students grow up they carry their habits into graduate school); *see also* Schulze, *supra* note 32, at 264–65 (describing the calls from helicopter parents as a reality as the current generation of law students enters law school); Shoup, Gonyea & Kuh, *supra* note 10, at 11–17 (examining the frequency, nature, and quality of the support college students receive from their parents).

35. Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 74 n.49 (recognizing a trend of parental involvement in child's life into adulthood).

36. *Id.* (quoting Strauss, *supra* note 2) (relaying experts' opinions that too much involvement can

II. THE IMPLICATIONS OF HELICOPTER PARENTING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The expectation and implications of helicopter parents in higher education present challenges both academically and legally.[37] Some studies show parents' engagement in their child's education is linked to better grades, higher test scores, less substance abuse, and better higher education outcomes; yet some parents are over-involved.[38] Helicopter parents are apparently on the rise, hovering over college campuses and graduate schools from the prospective stage to

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hinder students' independence, causing some colleges to hire "parent bouncers" at freshmen orientation meetings (citing Joel Gehringer, *Helicopter Parents*, LINCOLN J. STAR, Sept. 29, 2006, at D1, *available at* http://journalstar.com/lifestyles/faith-and-values/article_9c0b1cac-529e-59a3-94bb-d5525982aa1b .html)); Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A12–A13 (noting that because helicopter parents of Millennials have tended to make all safety-related decisions for their children, Millennials often lack basic safety skills when they get to college campuses, creating challenges for campus administrators). Critics of helicopter parents argue that the negative ramifications include producing a generation of weaklings and an armored childhood—crippled by overprotection and lack of freedom—instilled with fear and reliance instead of responsibility and independence, making it difficult for children to become healthy and well-adjusted adults. *See generally* MARANO, *supra* note 5. Development psychologists have shown that experiences with independent risk-analysis and problem-solving contribute to an "individual's maturity and stability." Neyfakh, *supra* note 10. Professors and law partners feel pressured to praise students and young associates who were raised in a culture of praise. Jeffrey Zaslow, *The Most-Praised Generation Goes to Work*, WALL ST. J., Apr. 20, 2007, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB117702894815776259.html (noting professors need positive student evaluations to get tenure so they are cautious to couch critical comments in praise or supportive criticism, "throw[ing] away [their] red pens" to avoid intimidating students (quoting Professor John Sloop of Vanderbilt University)).

37. Wendy S. White, *Students, Parents, Colleges: Drawing the Lines*, CHRON. HIGHER EDUC., Dec. 16, 2005, at B16, *available at* http://bama.ua.edu/~sprentic/695%20White%202005.htm (discussing challenges placed on administrators to obey laws defining relationships with students and also please concerned parents).

38. Shoup, Gonyea, & Kuh, *supra* note 10, at 17–21 (using data from the 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement assessing frequency and quality of college students' interaction with parents and its impact on student engagement and educational outcomes). Shoup, Gonyea, and Kuh found that students with highly involved parents had higher levels of engagement, deep learning, educational gains and satisfaction. *Id.*; *see also* Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (giving examples of how parents ghostwrite their child's homework and lobby for their child to be assigned a certain class). Gibbs also points out the argument that no matter what parents do to progress their children's lives, it may not have as much of an impact as they think. Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (highlighting *Freakonomics* authors Stephen Dubner and Steven Levitts' analysis of a Department of Education study). The study tracked children's progress "through fifth grade and found things like how much parents read to their kids, how much TV kids watch, and whether Mom works makes little difference," rather "'what kind of education a parent got, what kind of spouse he married, and how long they waited to have children matter the most.'" *Id.* (quoting Dubner & Levitt). *But see* Aucoin, *supra* note 6 (noting some researchers argue that the challenges today's adolescents face provide good reasons for parents to hover over their children).

graduation and the job market beyond.[39] Parents script their child's future with the expectation that schools, teachers, coaches, counselors, and courts will make it happen.[40] Parents' involvement in their child's daily life in higher education includes, but is not limited to, issues and decisions regarding admissions, housing, class schedules, grades, disciplinary matters, and relationships with roommates, advisors, faculty, and career services.[41] As a result, the possible implications of helicopter parents in higher education may affect students' learning, teaching, curriculum, administration, employers, and the law itself.[42]

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39. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1236 (acknowledging the rise of parental interactions with colleges and highlighting websites created to allow parents to access student's information); Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 9 (noting a significant rise of parental interactions with colleges); *see also* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1239–40 (recounting a professor at Syracuse University reporting that college students late to class will state their mother did not call to wake them that morning, and that one student called her mom during class to complain about a grade and then handed the phone over to the professor during class so the parent could intervene); Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (noting many colleges had to create a "director of parent programs" to handle influx of parental involvement). Students at the University of Georgia handed their advisors their cell phones, asking them to talk to their mothers, because the students were getting frustrated during registration. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1240.

40. Sullivan, *supra* note 24 (emphasizing how parents cannot fathom the possibility that their child is not better than other kids); *see also* Ozment, *supra* note 7 (describing University of California at San Diego economists Valerie and Garey Ramey's report regarding the influx of time spent with children). "[B]etween 1990 and the early 2000s, college-educated mothers came to spend an average of nine hours more per week with their children than their own mothers had spent with them; fathers spent an average of five more hours." *Id.* But "the bulk of it involved coordinating their kids' extracurricular activities in a mad dash to get them into good colleges." *Id.* "Playing with friends involves checking calendars and pre-set finish times. Nearly everything they do is orchestrated, if not by their parents, then by some other adult—a teacher, camp counselor, or coach." *Id.*

41. Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 74 n.49 (noting parental involvement in students' relationships, dorm conditions, class schedules and grades, and the impact of such dependence (citing Strauss, *supra* note 2)); Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 9 (indicating parental involvement in students' college homework, laundry, cleaning dorms, and calling to wake them up in the morning); *see also* Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A12 (emphasizing parents decide their children's extracurricular activities, complain about roommates, protest bad grades, and object to certain disciplinary processes); Fairbanks, *supra* note 29 (explaining how a helicopter mother gave her daughter a wake-up call each morning before class, beginning in college and continuing into graduate school when she attended Georgetown Law); Trip Gabriel, *Students, Welcome to College; Parents, Go Home*, N.Y. TIMES, Aug. 23, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/23/education/23college.html (describing parents going to their daughter's classes on the first day of the semester); Kathryn Tyler, *May 2007 HR Magazine: The Tethered Generation*, SOC'Y FOR HUM. RESOURCE MGMT. (May 1, 2007), http://www.shrm.org/Publications/hrmagazine/EditorialContent/Pages/0507cover.aspx (describing an incident where a student was caught cheating on a paper and his mom called and demanded the professor let him write a new paper); *infra* note 56 (discussing examples of helicopter parents who contacted professors to complain about the treatment of their children).

42. Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 76–77 (giving example of employers hiring consultants to "handle needy workers" and younger attorneys needing regular positive feedback and feeling frustrated

Helicopter parenting encourages dependence and is a factor in the diminished decision-making and coping skills of students.[43] College deans christen freshmen as "crispies"—who come to college already burned out from the treadmill of success their parents have placed them on and ratcheted up the speed and incline from preschool—and "teacups," who are ready to break at the slightest stress.[44] As a result, students often cannot analyze important decisions associated with the high-school-to-college transition, making bad choices "regarding [controlled substances] and sexual relationships; unresolved and escalating conflicts with roommates; [and] academic dishonesty."[45] The impact of having helicopter parents may have resulted in students' under-involvement in decision-making; reduced ability to cope; and lack of experience with self-advocacy, self-reliance, or managing personal time.[46] Further, these students' ability to engage

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if not praised); White, *supra* note 38 (noting bill under consideration that was spurred by concerned parents in Pennsylvania that would dictate how colleges deal with alcohol-related offenses).

43. Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 74 (noting helicopter parenting results in students' "under-involvement in decision-making; little or no experience with self-advocacy; lack of self-reliance; [and] inexperience[ ] in managing personal time"); Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10 (stating that universities are concerned that over-involvement is resulting in diminished critical decision making skills that are needed to succeed in a complex world); Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A12–A13 (highlighting that the decline in decision-making skills leads to an inability to "analyze important decisions associated with the high school-to-college transition" and results in poor decision-making regarding drugs and alcohol).

44. Gibbs, *supra* note 5. Some colleges even installed "Hi, Mom!" webcams in common areas to assist dependent students. *Id.*; *see also* MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 198 (describing the causes of severe distress in children as a range "[f]rom overprotection to under-experience, from lack of play to lack of challenge, from overscrutiny to ties that always bind, from an excess of expectations to an absence of experimentation"); Sullivan, *supra* note 24 (noting parents are placing their three-year-old children in elite private schools, rather than traditional preschools); RACE TO NOWHERE, *supra* note 4 (discussing how children are not prepared to be in college because they cannot engage in critical thinking and creative problem solving).

45. Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A12–A13; Tyler, *supra* note 42 (citing a neurology report concerning development of the brain). Neuroscientists "once believed the brain was almost completely formed by age 13" but have recently discovered that the brain continues to develop into the twenties. "That means [M]illennials' brains are still developing reasoning, planning and decision-making capabilities while they are depending heavily on technology," and their parents, resulting in Millennials who struggle with independent decision making. *Id.*; s*ee also* MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 142 (connecting the mental health crisis on college to over parenting—revealing helicopter parents can hinder a child's development socially, emotionally, and neurologically, which in return affects our democracy and economy due to lack of leaders or innovators).

46. Tyler, *supra* note 42 (stating Millennials spend seventy-two hours a week connected to others through cell phones and internet where they seek advice and input for the smallest decisions, resulting in unprecedented dependence); *see also* NEIL HOWE & WILLIAM STRAUSS, MILLENNIALS GO TO COLLEGE 59–60 (2d ed. 2007) (describing Millennials as "special," "sheltered," "confident," "conventional," "team oriented," "achieving," and "pressured"). Millennials often describe their parents as their best

in self-assessment is affected by the notion that "everyone is exceptional; grade inflation is the norm; egos have been massaged; [they are] unaware of [their] real talents and strengths; [and] not accustomed to being criticized."[47] Also, many Millennials prefer organization and dislike ambiguity.[48]

In contrast, higher education institutions focus on critical thinking, problem solving, dealing with ambiguity, and student-centered learning.[49] Stress levels are high, and coping skills and time

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friends. Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A12. The defining characteristics of Millennials, in combination with their incredible dependence on their parents, lead to many new challenges when they separate from their parents during college. *Id.* The pressure to succeed makes them more likely to commit academic dishonesty. *See id.* at A12–A13. Additionally, because Millennials are sheltered, special, confident, and team-oriented, they lack the ability to work on their own and consistently need individualized attention and prompt responses to any problems they perceive. McClellan, *supra* note 22, at 263–65, 255–56 (stating most law students are Millennials (citing HOWE & STRAUSS, *supra* at 10–12)). Approximately 13% of survey respondents admitted to going to law school because their helicopter parents wanted them to attend and were behind their children's push to get into law school. *Law School Applicants Willing to Brave Gloomy Job Market*, VERITAS PREP (Oct. 28, 2010), http://www.veritasprep.com/blog/2010/10/law-school-applicants-willing-to-brave (releasing the results of a survey of 100 law school applicants regarding what drives today's law school applicants); *see also* Ritter, *supra* note 19, at 149–54 (describing obstacles to self-growth faced by law students due to helicopter parenting and traditional law school pedagogy).

47. Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 74. Sociologists categorize law students as members of Generation Y and Millennials, with certain characteristics regarding learning, working, and self-assessment, who are used to self-esteem boosting, unrealistic expectations of attaining every dream, and constant praise. *Id.* at 73–74; *see also* McClellan, *supra* note 22, at 263 (noting how Millennials crave immediate feedback). Professors and law partners feel pressured to praise students and young associates who were raised in a culture of praise. Zaslow, *supra* note 37; *see also* Jonah Lehrer, *The Art of Failing Successfully*, WALL ST. J., Oct. 28, 2011, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204644504576651323346219428.html (discussing one of the essential principles of education is that students learn best when making mistakes; however, students need the right mindset to learn from their mistakes instead of believing they have a certain amount of intelligence that they cannot do much to change); Ozment, *supra* note 7 (reporting Carol Dweck, the author of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, cautions that incessant praise can be counterproductive). "When we tell kids that they are gifted, rather than hard-working, they can develop a fear of failing that leads to an unwillingness to take the risks necessary for true learning." *Id.* (citing Dweck). "Kids who are told they're hard workers, in contrast, are more willing to take on challenges and better able to bounce back from mistakes." *Id.* (citing Dweck). Additionally, Columbia University psychology professor Suniya Luthar "found that the children of upper-class, highly educated parents in the Northeast are increasingly anxious and depressed." *Id.* (quoting Luthar). "Children with 'high perfectionist strivings' were likely to see achievement failures as personal failures, Luthar wrote." *Id.* "And, she found, being constantly shuttled between activities—spending all that time in the SUV with Mom or Dad—ends up leaving suburban adolescents feeling *more* isolated from their parents." *Id.* (emphasis in original).

48. *See* MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 107 (noting how business leaders complain that college graduates lack basic skills in analytical thinking and problem solving); Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 11 (calling for future research to determine Millennial students' and helicopter parents' impact on teaching).

49. *See* Sarah E. Ricks, *Teaching 1Ls to Think Like Lawyers by Assigning Memo Problems With No Clear Conclusions*, PERSPS.: TEACHING LEGAL RES. & WRITING, Fall 2005, at 10, 10–11 (emphasizing

management are essential as grades often depend on one exam and students are expected to be engaged, prepared, professional, and independent.[50] Feedback is not as frequent in higher education, competition is high, work is demanding, and many students receive rigorous critiques and lower grades than they are accustomed to in their previous educational experience. Also, students are in college and graduate school to learn how to advocate and be leaders.[51] Thus, a parent advocating for their children in a graduate program, like law school where students must advocate for their clients upon graduation, is particularly ironic.[52]

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law students must learn the skill of legal analysis—a skill riddled with ambiguity and lacking definite answers); *see also* RACE TO NOWHERE, *supra* note 4 (commenting that students overly focus on standardized tests and cannot engage in critical thinking and creativity as these skills require more than memorization). For example, in medical school students must know how to detect an existing disease but they also have to have the ability to face a new disease and treat it. *Id.*; *see also* ELLEN GALINSKY, MIND IN THE MAKING: THE SEVEN ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS EVERY CHILD NEEDS 13–15 (2010) (claiming executive functions closely related to fluid intelligence are as important for children to develop as crystallized intelligence, which is measured by I.Q. tests).

50. *See* MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 182 (noting the importance of students taking more responsibility for their academic and personal lives during college years); *id.* at 198–99 (explaining how overparenting lowers tolerance for trial and error and mistakes, which leads to high levels of stress). Students in college and graduate school have more freedom than they may have had in the past, and those who struggle with learning have to learn how to manage their responsibilities without their parents. *Id.* at 184 (noting that students who have high dependence on parents during their first semester of college lack autonomy and emotional independence). Higher education instruction goes beyond memorization and requires the ability to identify a problem and solve it when there is no definitive answer. *See* Ricks, *supra* note 50, at 10–11.

51. Fairbanks, *supra* note 29 (noting "people go to business school to learn to lead other people," and if they do not take ownership of their application process, it is doubtful whether this person will be a good leader without someone pushing him); *see also* Ritter, *supra* note 19, at 149–54 (explaining law students who do not have adult self-images result in lawyers who may not be self-confident, assertive, aggressive, or effective). Empirical evidence supports the notion that the soft skills of lawyers, such as judgment, maturity, dealing effectively with others, self-confidence, and problem solving are those skills that differentiate the most successful lawyers from the rest. Susan Daicoff, *(S)Killing Me Softly: Unifying the "Soft Skills" of Law Practice and Legal Education (Synthesizing Leadership, Collaboration, Professionalism, Emotional Intelligence, Conflict Resolution,* Problem Solving*, and Comprehensive Lawyering)*, SANTA CLARA L. REV. (forthcoming).

52. *See* Anna Ivey, *Helicopter Parents Embarrassing Their Kids at Admitted Students Weekend*, ANNA IVEY CONSULTING IVEY FILES BLOG (Apr. 21, 2007), http://www.annaivey.com/iveyfiles/2007/04/helicopter_pare.html (explaining deans of students at law schools get calls from parents asking for their child's schedule to be changed and some parents come to their child's admissions interview). Ivey also reports that a law firm partner explained: "If you need Mommy to fight your battles, I don't think much of your chances going up against the plaintiffs' bar [or arguing a case in front of a judge]." *Id.*; *see also* Ritter, *supra* note 19, at 153–54 (explaining law students who depend on their "hovering" parents cannot become effective litigators until they create an adult self-image); Fairbanks, *supra* note 29 (noting "[p]eople go to business school to learn to lead other people" and it is doubtful that a student will become an effective leader with such parental dependence). Parents push their children but many

Anecdotal accounts of helicopter parenting and what to do about it are common topics of conversation and concern among faculty and administrators.[53] For example, millennial students and their parents who are not happy with grades can cause undue pressure on professors to change grades, resulting in grade inflation.[54] Professors have received angry text messages and emails complaining about their child's grade or advocating on behalf of their child for the chance to write a new paper, even though he was caught cheating on the original assignment.[55]

Additionally, helicopter parents can exacerbate a situation for their child. For example, when parents intervene to complain but then have to admit they assisted their child, it can reveal that their child violated

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graduates of Ivy League colleges "never reach their full potential or have so-called good jobs they hate. This is especially common when parents impose law and medicine on children whose passions and interests don't match those professions." Merle Bombardieri, *Are We Over-Managing Our Children?*, BOS. MAG. BOS. DAILY BLOGS (Nov. 29, 2011), http://blogs.bostonmagazine.com/boston_daily/author/mbombardieri/.

53. Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 74–75 (describing a discussion listserv creating an open forum for faculty and administrators to post emails from parents and seek advice regarding how to handle such situations); *see also* Marc Cutright, *From Helicopter Parent to Valued Partner: Shaping the Parental Relationship for Student Success*, NEW DIRECTIONS FOR HIGHER EDUC., Winter 2008, at 39, 39 (recalling how student affairs professionals commiserate regarding helicopter parents telling "'can-you-top-this' stories"); Fairbanks, *supra* note 29 (interviewing an admissions director who claims parental hovering, and what to do about it, is a topic of common conversation between colleagues); *Chronicle Forums: "Favorite" Helicopter Parent Emails*, CHRON. HIGHER EDUC., http://chronicle.com/forums/index.php/topic,46069.0.html (last visited Nov. 9, 2011) (for forum discussions between professors regarding helicopter parent emails).

54. *See* Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 9 (noting that students "give their parents their passwords to their college accounts so parents . . . may call the dean if they [are unhappy with the grades]"); McClellan, *supra* note 22, at 267 (recognizing pressure for high grades from students and parents has led to grade inflation); Peters, *supra* note 32, at 460 n.207 (noting high tuition and high expectations result in many parents blaming schools whenever their kids get into trouble). A sitting judge sent a threatening letter, on his official judicial stationary, to his child's professor complaining of "'mistreatment'" of the students because his daughter was intimidated by the professor's announcement that he expected his students to work hard and sacrifice—the judge was later reprimanded by the judicial regulatory board. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1235; *see also* Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 73–76 (noting how sociologists categorize law students as members of Generation Y and Millennials, with certain characteristics "regarding learning, working, and self-assessment" who are used to self-esteem boosting, unrealistic expectations of attaining every dream, and constant praise); McClellan, *supra* note 22, at 263 (noting how Millennials crave immediate feedback). Professors and law partners feel pressured to praise students and young associates who were raised in a culture of praise. Zaslow, *supra* note 37.

55. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1235 (highlighting the "emergence of a full-time parent liaison in camps whose job is to answer concerned parents' phone calls and emails"); Strauss, *supra* note 2 (commenting how some parents send teachers emails and text messages at the same time); Tyler, *supra* note 42 (describing an incident when a student was caught cheating on a paper and his mom called and demanded the professor let him write a new paper).

academic rules prohibiting receiving any assistance or collaboration.[56] A professor once received an email from a student complaining about the student's writing grade in which the student copied his parents (both attorneys) on the email, noting his parents' praise for his paper.[57] A parent may also reveal personal information, such as mental health issues or academic weaknesses, about their child to a professor.[58] In addition, helicopter parents' intervening could result in students receiving undeserved special treatment.[59] For example, an academic support professional was bombarded with phone calls from parents of students in the first semester demanding the professor personally tutor their child or put them on notice if their child needed extra academic assistance.[60] Helicopter parents have also contacted professors about not admitting their child into the professor's closed course, not giving their child an extension, not being nice enough to their child, or not giving enough positive feedback and praise to their child.[61]

Helicopter parents are not deterred by boundaries and often unnecessarily or inappropriately elevate issues to high-level administrators.[62] For example, parents have called a university president complaining about their child's grade, which they believed

56. Hyman & Jacobs, *supra* note 5.

57. Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 74–75 (pointing out the email was filled with errors). Another student handed in two different versions of a paper because he could not decide which one he liked better and asked the professor to read them both and grade the one the professor preferred. *Id.* at 75 n.54. After explaining to the student this behavior was unacceptable and would be "professional suicide[,] . . . the student chose the version he wanted graded and ended up with the highest points on the assignment." *Id.* A colleague of mine told me that a student's parents complained to another professor about a grade the student received from my colleague in the hopes the other professor could persuade my colleague to change the student's grade.

58. Hyman & Jacobs, *supra* note 5 (pointing out that sometimes a parent may divulge personal information about his child, such as health or psychological problems, when trying to intervene).

59. Shoup, Gonyea & Kuh, *supra* note 10, at 22 (suggesting more research is needed regarding levels of involvement by parents that may negatively affect development and learning). "Research has shown that" children of helicopter parents tend to "know how to make the rules work in their favor." Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1274.

60. Schulze, *supra* note 32, at 264–65 (explaining how parents can be unappreciative of "pedagogical philosophies" and demand extra attention for their child).

61. Hyman & Jacobs, *supra* note 5.

62. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 44–45 (recommending colleges provide detailed contact information for helicopter parents to avoid inappropriate petitioning to top officials at the schools about minor student issues).

was unfair; other parents claimed they would not donate money to the institution if the dean failed to notify them of their child's absence from a class due to suspected partying.[63] Deans of Students are often besieged with helicopter parents contacting them with questions, complaints, or advocating on behalf of their child.[64]

Helicopter parenting can monopolize other administrators as well. Career services departments in higher education institutions can be a lightning rod for helicopter parents. For example, helicopter parents have tried influencing hiring decisions and salary rates by calling recruiters and employers or showing up at job fairs and interviews.[65] Often children of helicopter parents are so used to being praised and feeling special that they believe starting salaries are beneath them.[66]

Helicopter parents' interference in higher education can also have legal implications. The law relevant to the complex relationships between parents, students, and higher education institutions is changing, not always consistent, and challenging.[67] Some positive laws related to safety on campus have been enacted as a result of

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63. *Id.* at 39 (reporting student affairs professionals are receiving complaints over "matters of minutiae that . . . they have never before witnessed").

64. *E.g.*, Lydia Hoffman Meunier & Carolyn Reinach Wolf, *Mental Health Issues on College Campuses*, NYSBA HEALTH L.J., Spring 2006, at 42, 44 (explaining how parents are demanding of college officials and often feel entitled to confidential information); Ivey, *supra* note 53 (noting that some parents come to their child's admissions interview).

65. Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10–11 (noting parents coming with children to job interviews and children not being able to accept offers without parental guidance; also explaining that while many recruiters are dealing with parents on an unprecedented level, they realize they must adapt to this reality because they need the young generation as future employees); Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 75 (listing companies such as Enterprise, Vanguard, Travelers, General Electric, and Boeing reporting incidents of helicopter parents interfering with hiring decisions and pay packages (citing Sue Shellenbarger, *Helicopter Parents Go to Work: Moms and Dads Are Now Hovering at the Office*, WALL ST. J., Mar. 16, 2006, at D1)); Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (explaining that beginning in the 1990s, Ernst & Young created "parent packs" for recruits to give their parents because they were involved in negotiating salary and benefits); Tyler, *supra* note 42 (reporting that employers have received calls from parents asking why their child was not hired, offered more money, or turned down for a promotion; also referencing reports of parents showing up with their child for their first day of work).

66. Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10; *see also* Tyler, *supra* note 42 (reporting employers receiving calls from parents asking why their child did not get more money).

67. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 41 (noting "even seasoned campus officials" consult lawyers "before acting in complex circumstances"); Meunier & Wolf, *supra* note 65, at 44 (indicating violation of FERPA includes termination of government funding of a college or university). While parents have a fundamental power to oversee the raising of their children, including the authority to make decisions regarding their child's higher education, institutions have changed models from institutional control to increased student independence. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 40–41.

helicopter parents.[68] But complicated legal issues defining the relationship between institutions, students, and parents are increasing because of the active intervention of helicopter parents in the everyday lives of their children.[69]

Laws protecting student rights and privacy limit what institutions are able to tell parents.[70] Specifically, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA),[71] makes it unlawful in certain circumstances for schools to disclose information about a student to anybody, including the student's parents.[72] Under FERPA, upon the child's eighteenth birthday or enrollment in a post-secondary school, parents are prohibited, in some circumstances, from viewing their

68. Peters, *supra* note 32, at 460 n.207 (recognizing positive laws that have been enacted "due to the influence of parents whose children have been injured or killed, such as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act"). *But see* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1242–65 (explaining that some laws may unfairly codify the helicopter parenting trend by incorporating intensive parenting norms into the law). In custody disputes, legislatures and courts may be enforcing intensive parenting norms by making the best interests of the child determination based on the quantity of parental involvement in the child's life. *Id.* at 1278–79 (arguing that the law plays a critical role in enhancing the socio-technological trend of over-parenting and cautioning against incorporating intensive parenting norms into the law). In tort actions addressing lead poisoning and parental immunity, courts require constant supervision, arguably encouraging helicopter-parenting trends. *Id.* at 1229 (arguing that the constriction of the Parental Immunity Doctrine and the rise of intensive parenting makes parents more likely to be sued for inadequate parental supervision); Jackson, *supra* note 8, at 19 (noting that parents now worry about liability for using traditional child-rearing practices, inviting helicopter parenting).

69. White, *supra* note 38 (explaining the conflict between helicopter parents who are increasingly becoming involved in their children's lives and federal statutes that limit what administrators are permitted to tell parents).

70. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 40–41 (explaining evolution of laws regulating relationships between parents, students, and institutions); Meunier & Wolf, *supra* note 65, at 44 (describing federal laws regulating institutional confidentiality rules).

71. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (2006).

72. §§ 1232g(b)(2)(A), (d); *see also* Schulze, *supra* note 32, at 222 n.19 (pointing out that the federal statute considers the student as the "rights-holder" after the age of eighteen or if the student is in postsecondary education). Section 1232g(d) states: "whenever a student has attained eighteen years of age, or is attending an institution of postsecondary education, the permission or consent required of and the rights accorded to the parents of the student shall thereafter only be required of and accorded to the student." § 1232g(d). In addition to the provisions regarding disclosure, FERPA also has provisions regarding the denial of access to education records. § 1232g(b)(1). The purpose of FERPA was "to protect [parents' and students'] rights to privacy by limiting the transferability of their records without their consent." Megan M. Davoren, Comment, *Communication as Prevention to Tragedy: FERPA in a Society of School Violence*, 1 ST. LOUIS U. J. HEALTH L. & POL'Y 425, 428 (2008) (citing United States v. Miami Univ., 294 F.3d 797, 806 (6th Cir. 2002)); *see also* Fairbanks, *supra* note 29 (discussing how FERPA safeguards students' education records and thus any specifics, like the status of an application, whether everything has been submitted, or why their child was not accepted to the school must be communicated with the applicant, not the parent of the applicant).

child's education record without the student's consent.[73] Though fraught with exceptions, FERPA prohibits the unauthorized release or disclosure of records by any means, including oral, written, or electronic communications.[74] Thus, a Registrar could violate FERPA by reading a student's grade over the phone or sending it via email, text, or regular mail to a third party without the student's written consent.[75] Although a single act does not violate FERPA, frequent and increasing pressure from helicopter parents could result in the adoption of policies by unwitting faculty, deans, and other administrators that could violate FERPA.[76]

The student holds the privacy interests and protections under FERPA. A student's consent is required to release or disclose information unless one of three exceptions exist: (1) the student is claimed as a dependent on her parents' federal income tax returns; (2) the disclosure relates to a health or safety emergency; or (3) the student is younger than twenty-one years of age and has violated a law or school rule regarding alcohol or a controlled substance.[77]

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73. § 1232g(d); *see also* Joey Johnsen, Note, *Premature Emancipation? Disempowering College Parents Under FERPA*, 55 DRAKE L. REV. 1057, 1059 (2007) (recognizing that tuition-paying parents cannot view their college or graduate school student's school record, disciplinary records, health reports or academic standing, and cautioning that it provides insufficient protection for students who have eating disorders, substance abuse issues, and have attempted suicide).

74. § 1232g(b)(1)–(2) (outlining proper authorization of release of education records); 34 C.F.R. § 99.3 (2012) (defining disclosure as "to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communication of personally identifiable information contained in education records by any means, including *oral*, *written*, or *electronic* means") (emphasis added).

75. Schulze, *supra* note 32, at 233–34 (describing examples of releasing a student's educational information).

76. The statute was enacted to address systematic rather than single violations of students' privacy. § 1232g(b)(1) (indicating the school must have a "policy or practice" of condoning authorized release of education records); Schulze, *supra* note 32, at 265 (recognizing parents are more involved in their children's legal education). Penalties for violations of FERPA include discontinued federal funding to a school that maintains a practice or policy of unauthorized disclosures of education records. § 1232g(b)(2).

77. 20 U.S.C. §§ 1232g(b)(1)(H)–(I), (i)(1)(2006) (indicating disclosure to parents of a dependent student for health or safety emergency or a violation of substance abuse law); 34 C.F.R. § 99.5(a)(1)–(2) (noting that although the consent requirement transfers to the student upon eligibility, there are still exceptions to students' privacy rights); *Id.* § 99.31(a)(8), (a)(10), (a)(15)(i) (outlining exceptions to students' privacy rights); Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 45 (noting that the results of a disciplinary hearing when the violation by the student involves violence is an exception to the prohibition on disclosure of a student record to parents under FERPA); Schulze, *supra* note 32, at 266 (describing exceptions pertaining to disclosure of education records under FERPA). Schools should use standardized forms for confidentiality waivers—when a student gives informed consent waiving FERPA and a signature—"as a

Thus, FERPA allows institutional communication with students' parents regarding a student's physical and mental safety and for some circumstances of drug and alcohol use; however, it still generally prohibits institutions of higher education from communicating with parents about attendance, grades, or other matters if the student does not consent or if an exception does not apply.[78]

Even if an exception allowing disclosure applies, a school does not have to disclose education records to parents; the exceptions just relieve the school of the legal duty to get the student's consent prior to disclosure.[79] Thus, a school can have a policy to refuse disclosure of education records to parents if the student holds the privacy interest.[80] Also, assertions of student privacy, parental interests, and laws—such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), which protects patient privacy—may be conflicting; put all parties in difficult positions; and ensure complex situations, regardless of the school's action.[81]

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condition of participation in a special academic recovery or readmission program" for students struggling academically. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 46. Doing so would facilitate communication with parents to help the student get back into good academic standing. *Id.* Waivers must specify records that may be disclosed, state the reason for the disclosure, and identify by name and status ("my parents") the persons to whom disclosure can be made. *Id.*

78. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 40–41 (noting that the ideal for many parents of *in loco parentis*—the college acting in place of parents—has shifted when "campuses have been held accountable to new laws and regulations about the environments they provide for students"; such as the requirement of uniform compilation and public reporting of campus crime statistics). *But see* Johnsen, *supra* note 74, at 1059 (noting that while exceptions to FERPA serve to protect students' health and safety, they nevertheless do not allow disclosure when students fall victim to problems like substance abuse, eating disorders, and suicide attempts).

79. Schulze, *supra* note 32, at 266–67 (explaining the exception "does not mean the school *must* disclose educational records to parents," but rather the school is merely *permitted* to disclose such information without the student's consent).

80. *Id.* (emphasizing the exceptions merely allow a law school to disclose education records to parents without their child's consent).

81. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 41 (noting how campus officials are in frequent contact with campus lawyers before acting, and legal actions have been brought against institutions for failure to act timely and share information about students who may have violent behavior towards others or self-destructive behavior, such as the presence of students who are diagnosed with mental health problems).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Parents of students in higher education are not a uniform group.[82] Some may be helicopter parents, others not; some may have been a helicopter parent at times and not a purely benevolent bystander—but it is those who constantly encroach on the physical, emotional, and intellectual space of their children that could interfere with the higher education goal of helping young adults develop the ability to think for themselves.[83] Even if students with helicopter parents only make up a minority of the campus population, they often monopolize administrative resources by making incessant demands and wanting frequent feedback and reports.[84]

Helicopter parents expect to be kept informed by both their children and their children's schools, and they expect their children's needs to be quickly addressed.[85] They are not hesitant about intervening and making demands on the higher education institution's administration (that they expect to be responsive), with or without their children's knowledge.[86] A common thread in the different types of interactions with helicopter parents is the high emotional context—anger, fear, or joy.[87]

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82. *Id.* at 40 (noting "parents are not a monolithic crowd"); Tyler, *supra* note 42 (noting that some think Millennials' perception of their parents as their friends is good and believe "helicopter parents are a small percentage of the total parenting population"). Others argue the goal of parenting is to help children become independent and autonomous. *Id.* (claiming that "parents' most important task is to help young people to become independent").

83. MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 222 (advocating for parents to remember that their children's ability to think for themselves is one of the goals of higher education); Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 74 (noting helicopter parenting results in students' "under-involvement in decision-making; little or no experience with self-advocacy; lack of self-reliance; [and] inexperience[] in managing personal time"); Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A12–A13 (highlighting the decline in students' decision-making skills); Tyler, *supra* note 42 (claiming that parts of the brain are still developing into the early twenties and heavy reliance on parents results in subpar decision-making skills).

84. MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 17 (explaining how invasive parents "hog administrative resources").

85. Meunier & Wolf, *supra* note 65, at 44 (explaining how parents often feel entitled to confidential information).

86. *Id.*

87. *See* Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 43 (discussing steps colleges can take "to work more collaboratively with parents"). Schools should try to lower the emotional environment by communicating empathy and committing to work through the issue of intensive parenting. *Id.*

Schools seem to have taken two approaches when dealing with helicopter parents: beat them or join them.[88] Some universities harness the parents' involvement to their advantage while others try to prevent parents from interfering.[89] Higher education institutions will need to decide which school of thought they subscribe to, develop policies accordingly, and provide education and clear communication for faculty, administrators, parents and students.[90]

Some schools make allies of parents by recognizing their concerns, giving them information and guidance in a timely manner, and giving them adequate avenues for appropriate relationships with the institution.[91] Some have implemented different programs to transform parents "from advocates, interveners, managers and adversaries to supporters, coaches, advisors and allies."[92] They seize opportunities like orientation as an event to cultivate parent partnership and solicit parents as financial contributors.[93] Some accommodate the helicopter-parenting trend by having information sessions to review the relevant law (FERPA) yet they give parents the message to let their children develop as adults.[94] They explain what students will be doing, expectations, the environment, changes students will go through, how students will be encouraged to handle and balance those changes, and how parents can support the students'

88. Tyler, *supra* note 42 ("HR professionals will need to decide to which school they subscribe and develop policies and procedures accordingly.").

89. Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10 (recognizing that some schools embrace the parents' energy and involvement while others attempt to stop them from interfering with the maturation of their child).

90. *See* Tyler, *supra* note 42 (suggesting that HR professionals who decline to speak with "helicopter parents . . . will need to enforce strong privacy policies and train managers on how to deflect parental interference").

91. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 47.

92. Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A13 (advising that programs for parents should involve college officials frankly discussing the difference between support and guidance and living their children's lives for them). Colleges should remind parents how intervening affects their children and the university. *Id.* By letting their children make mistakes and take responsibility for them, parents allow their college-aged children to learn from their mistakes and realize their potential to succeed and be safe on campus. *See id.*

93. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 44–45.

94. *Id.* at 43–44 (noting how some colleges treat orientation as an opportunity to inform parents of what their children will be going through and how certain laws affect the school's ability to disclose information); Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10 (describing how some orientation programs divide parents from children and "subtly push[] parents to give their children some space").

successful transition.[95] Others set up web sites, Facebook pages, and blogs; provide recommended reading lists and newsletters; and have created an office of parent relations, hiring a full-time parent coordinator on campus.[96]

Others have drawn a firm line, setting up strict policies that school officials will only speak to a student once he or she is accepted.[97] Schools can remain polite and explain that the school policy requires that they do not discuss student's issues with anyone but the student; then suggest the parent discuss the matter with their child.[98] Then if the child follows up with the professor, the professor explains why it is inappropriate.[99]

Whichever approach a school takes when dealing with the challenges of helicopter parents, higher education institutions should educate faculty and administrators regarding the trend of helicopter parenting, the potential implications of hovering parents, and the school's policies or recommendations regarding dealing with parental intervention.[100] Schools need to be clear at the outset about the boundaries and parameters for communication with parents to avoid negative consequences, build student success, ensure both parents

95. *See* Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 43–44; Hunt, *supra* note 6, at 10.

96. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1236 (noting that New York University has a parent services web page, which includes membership in a parents committee and a parents helpline (citing *Parents Guide*, N.Y. UNIV., http://www.nyu.edu/community/parents.guide.html (last visited Sept. 5, 2012))); Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A13 (noting universities maintaining web pages to keep families updated on campus events); Gibbs, *supra* note 5 (noting many colleges had to create a "director of parent programs" to handle influx of parental involvement). New York University's "Parents Guide" also has a list of recommended reading for parents. Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1236 n.75; *see also* Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 46 (discussing giving parents a recommended reading list of resources to ease the transition).

97. De Vise, *supra* note 12 (describing some schools' strict policies of communication with students and parents).

98. *Cf.* Tyler, *supra* note 42 (describing this approach taken by some HR professionals).

99. *Cf. id.*

100. *See* MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 185 (listing issues colleges need to clarify, such as what amounts to an appropriate level of help by parents and how much parents should be involved in academics); Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 43–46 (suggesting that colleges take steps to understand the trend of intensive parenting and develop a partnership relationship with the parents to offset potential adversarial relationships); Meunier & Wolf, *supra* note 65, at 51 (recommending that counseling staff "be thoroughly educated regarding [the] legal and ethical" implications of dealing with students' behavior on campus).

and students have appropriate expectations, and increase parental understanding of higher education.[101]

Faculty need to understand how helicopter parenting may affect teaching methods and the courses offered. Although graduate schools, such as law schools, are professional schools, most law students receive little guidance in their professional development—including their professional identity and interpersonal skills—because schools focus on doctrine and analytical skills.[102] For example, the Carnegie Report has prompted law schools nationwide to consider curricular reform.[103] Curriculum choices could be informed by professors' awareness of the difficulty Millennials have transitioning into higher education and the professional world.[104] In

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101. *See* Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 43–46; Fairbanks, *supra* note 29 (detailing how parents call on behalf of their children regarding applications and deadline extensions). Fairbanks notes that students should ask: Do I want to go to school or am I going because my parents want me to? *Id.* (quoting Associate Director of Career Services of National-Louis University, Andrew Cusick). Parents and children should make a list of everything the student and parent will be responsible for so expectations are clear. *Id.* Students should take ownership of their application, do their own talking, and untie the knot. *Id.*

102. ROY STUCKEY ET AL., BEST PRACTICES FOR LEGAL EDUCATION 7 (2007) (arguing that law school does not ready graduates for practice and proposing change in preparation of students to better prepare them for practice); WILLIAM M. SULLIVAN ET AL., EDUCATING LAWYERS: PREPARATION FOR THE PROFESSION OF LAW 2–9 (2007) [hereinafter CARNEGIE REPORT] (reporting a two-year study sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation that emphasized the evolution of law school pedagogy established a method of legal training that focuses on doctrine and analysis, and deemphasized learning to practice). Unlike other professional schools, such as medical school, law schools typically pay little attention to directing training in professional practice. *See id.* at 6; Ritter, *supra* note 19, at 151–52 (recognizing clinical education is an exception); Posting of [identifying information withheld], to lrwprof-l@listserve.iupui.edu (Oct. 7, 2011) (on file with author) (noting the importance of teaching practical intelligence, such as knowing what to say, when to say it, and how to say it for maximum impact, and its application for successful lawyering skills). The listserv also discussed teaching emotional intelligence in addition to doctrine in law school. *Id.*

103. *See* CARNEGIE REPORT, *supra* note 103, at 190–96 (proposing change in pedagogical structure of law schools to better prepare students to practice after graduation). The report recognizes there are two sides of legal knowledge—formal knowledge and the experience of practice. *See id.* at 12. Students who graduate without experience in "negotiating the complex issues facing the [legal] profession today can hardly be expected to take up active roles as civic professionals, contributing to the public direction of their areas of the law." *Id.* at 196. The report calls for an integrated model where theoretical and practical legal knowledge are taught together in the form of practical apprenticeships complemented with legal analysis. *Id.* at 194–96; *see also* Ritter, *supra* note 19, at 151 n.96 (citing CARNEGIE REPORT, *supra* note 103, at 190–96) (noting the trend to integrate more legal skills like counseling, negotiating, and oral advocacy into the curriculum).

104. Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 78 (emphasizing the benefit of field placement-focused externships for the current generation of students who are having difficulty transitioning into the workplace upon graduation); *see also* LAW WITHOUT WALLS, http://www.lawwithoutwalls.org/ about/ (last visited Sept. 5, 2012) (seeking to integrate and innovate legal education and practice); *Legal*

addition to trouble transitioning into the workplace that Millennials generally have, the market is also changing and there are fewer opportunities for training, especially within the legal field.[105] Legal employers are less willing and able to train new lawyers.[106] So even though not all law students are members of the Millennial generation or may not share "millennial traits," exposure to legal employers and law practice—through internships and clinics, speakers, and skills training throughout the curriculum—can help educate, acclimate, and prepare our students for the rigors, demands, and expectations of working in the legal field upon graduation.[107] Thus, the reality of the changing legal profession, coupled with certain "millennial traits," make clinical and externship experiences all the more relevant and necessary.

Also, faculty can help students transition into the legal community by explaining that the assignments, policies, and deadlines in a course are grounded in the realities of the practice and procedures in the legal profession.[108] Faculty should also engage in self-reflection and consider whether they are engaging in helicopter teaching, for example, by constantly reminding students of deadlines, continuously checking up on students, being available or reachable at all times, continuously giving them extensions, or inflating grades, rather than see their students falter.[109] This trend may only continue as technology has changed expectations of privacy and boundaries, and also as education seems to trend away from tenure and towards the

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Education and Practice Partnership (LEAPP), SUFFOLK UNIV. L. SCH., http://www.law.suffolk.edu/academic/lps/leapp/ (last visited Sept. 5, 2012) [hereinafter *LEAPP*].

105. David Segal, *What They Don't Teach Law Students: Lawyering*, N.Y. TIMES, Nov. 19, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/20/business/after-law-school-associates-learn-to-be-lawyers.html?pagewanted=all (noting downturn in economy has led to firms cutting training).

106. *Id.*

107. CARNEGIE REPORT, *supra* note 103, at 191–96 (emphasizing the benefit of integrating practical experience into traditional law school theory, rather than merely adding it to the curriculum); Gharakhanian, *supra* note 35, at 78; *see also* LAW WITHOUT WALLS, *supra* note 105; *LEAPP*, *supra* note 105.

108. Any course that discusses the issues of confidentiality, privacy, and plagiarism could also incorporate hypotheticals regarding helicopter parents as a teaching opportunity.

109. *See* Posting of [identifying information withheld], to lrwprof-l@listserve.iupui.edu (Sept. 21, 2011) (on file with author) (discussing professionalism and students meeting deadlines). If a faculty member or administrator senses that a student poses a health or safety concern for himself or others and reaches out to the student, I would not consider it hovering.

use of contract and adjunct faculty, where even fewer professors will feel they can safely set limits with their students. Our goal as educators includes teaching our students self-reliance, confidence, independence, and self-awareness.[110]

Parental involvement in children's lives has many benefits; however, schools should be wary of accommodating helicopter parents in higher education, especially in graduate schools like law school. Schools should respect the boundaries separating parents from children's independent higher education experience.[111] By accommodating helicopter parenting, higher education could be reinforcing it, which can carry social ramifications for those parents who do not have the resources to adopt or disagree with this type of child-rearing.[112] It could also enhance the potentially negative effects of helicopter parenting in higher education—students who are less independent, less able to problem solve and more likely to engage in substance abuse—resulting in less-prepared professionals.[113]

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110. There is a difference between hovering and being supportive and guiding students if a faculty member or administrator senses that a student poses a health or safety concern for himself or others. CARNEGIE REPORT, *supra* note 103, at 9 (emphasizing that professors must teach students "the ability to both act and think well in uncertain situations" because "[t]he task of professional education is to facilitate novices' growth into similar capacities to act with competence, moving toward expertise"). One of my goals of teaching is for my students to stop needing my assistance because I have taught them the skills and professionalism necessary for legal practice to guide them to independence.

111. MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 193 (describing The College Parents of America organization that promotes parental involvement and gives colleges report cards assessing their performance from parents' perspectives; a quarter of the parents said they feel colleges are not doing enough for the parents); *Id.* at 242 (recognizing that some blurring of the boundaries is inevitable); White, *supra* note 38 (noting "[w]e are all in this together").

112. MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 102 (blaming schools for parents' over involvement in their children's lives by helping reshape parenting into an intrusive activity); *see generally* SKENAZY, *supra* note 8 (noting that the author was dubbed "America's Worst Mom" because she disagrees with helicopter parenting and promotes her children's independence).

113. *See* Bernstein & Triger, *supra* note 3, at 1251–66 (arguing against the incorporation of the norms of intensive parenting into legal standards because of both the possible negative individual and social ramifications as well as the possible prevention of a social evolution away from intensive parenting); Hara Estroff Marano, *A Nation of Wimps*, PSYCHOL. TODAY (June 22, 2012), http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200411/nation-wimps (citing Harvard psychologist Jerome Kagan who showed that anxiety in children is caused by "parents hovering and protecting them from stressful experiences"); *see also* GALINSKY, *supra* note 50, at 252–53 (emphasizing that parents who shield their children from stress and failure are not preparing them for adulthood). Galinsky recommends that parents do not shield their children from everyday stress, as it is a necessary part of life. *Id.* at 287. "[P]arents who are overprotective of their . . . children can actually do more harm than good." *Id.*

Balancing the rights and responsibilities of higher education institutions and parents benefits everyone—schools, faculty, administrators, students, future employers, and the parents themselves.

CONCLUSION

While parenting is private, helicopter parenting can have repercussions in higher education.[114] The relationship between higher education institutions and parents may be shifting. There is a growing recognition by higher education of the changing roles and expectations of parents. Parents—and maybe even students—expect more and exert more pressure on higher education institutions regarding student safety and accountability to ensure that students are getting a good education for their investment.[115] Helicopter parents are the most extreme manifestation of this phenomenon. While they may be a minority of parents, as Millennials continue to come up through the ranks to higher education this may be just the beginning.[116] Indeed, higher education professionals lament the over-involvement and interference of helicopter parents, which is more intense and tedious than ever before.[117] While I see the issues from

114. *See* MARANO, *supra* note 5, at 249 (describing children as living in an "anesthetized, sanitized, and polarized cocoon of their parents' creation"); *see also* Ozment, *supra* note 7 (noting helicopter parenting can be detrimental to parents as well). Columbia University psychology professor Suniya Luthar notes that our children are depressed and anxious, but "maybe they're learning it from us." *Id.* "Overparenting takes a toll, particularly when you consider the steady stream of nerve-rattling information we get hourly, from toy recall notices to Amber Alerts." *Id.*

115. *See* Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 42 (recognizing that college education has shifted from a "societal good" to "a personal investment and possession"); Peters, *supra* note 32, at 459–60 (highlighting the fact that parents expect more from colleges than an ordinary duty of care); Dickerson, *supra* note 21, at A13–A14 (noting the increasing amount of safety measures being taken on campuses as a result of the expectations of Millenials).

116. Fairbanks, *supra* note 29 (noting that there are fifteen more years of Millennials coming into higher education).

117. Cutright, *supra* note 54, at 39.

both the cockpit and the ground,[118] higher institutions should not become landing pads for helicopter parents.[119]

118. I am a parent, a professor, and an administrator. Education is an expensive commodity, and parents are going to want to protect their investment, but children must take risks and maybe even "fall off the bike" a few times in order to intellectually grow and learn.

119. *See* White, *supra* note 38 (declaring parents "must manage our legitimate concerns and expectations so as to respect the boundaries separating us from our children's independent college experiences"); Ozment, *supra* note 7 ("[O]ur generation doesn't have it all right and our own parents didn't have it all wrong. Maybe it's just time for some middle ground.").