

# Free Range Kids with Lenore Skenazy

**Lenore Skenazy:** [00:00:00] the whole idea of growing up, you know, raising a kid is that eventually they separate from you and they do things independently and they goof and then they bounce back and they make some mistakes.

, and if they're not allowed to do anything without, you know, somebody minding them, that one guy said it was like somebody always looking over his shoulder, that's a very different existence. that was Lenore Skenazy on psychologists off the clock.

**Yael Schonbrun:** We are three clinical psychologists here to bring you cutting edge and science-based ideas from psychology to help you flourish in your relationships, work, and health.

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**Yael Schonbrun:** I'm Dr. Yael Schonbrun, a Boston based clinical psychologist, assistant professor at Brown University, and author of the upcoming book Work, Parent, Thrive.

**Jill Stoddard:** And from sunny San Diego, I'm Dr. Jill Stoddard author of be [00:01:00] mighty and the big book of act metaphors.

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This is Yael here with Jill to introduce an [00:03:00] episode on free range kids and interview that I got to do with Lenore Skenazy who, whose work I'd actually been following for some years. So it was really exciting for me to get to talk to her. And this topic is one that's near and dear to my heart.

I was raised in a very anxious household and I think. Had I not gotten into psychology into behavioral science and been exposed to some of this work that Lenore Skenazy and her colleagues do on the value of leaning back and giving your kids more freedom.

I would be a very, very different kind of parent, because I think the mill you, that we live in really encourages the opposite of allowing our kids to be free range kids.

**Jill Stoddard:** It's, it's such an interesting thing to think about and you know, we've done a number of episodes on kind of a similar topic, justly he's gifted failure and . Julie left got Hames. How to raise an adult, Kim Brooks, small animals, and I am a hundred percent on [00:04:00] board with this movement. And yet I struggle. And so I was listening to this episode, just thinking, what are the obstacles like?

What is it that gets in the way of leaning back and giving kids more freedom? And I realize it's two things. One is maybe similar to your parents. Yell. My husband is a little bit more on the anxious, worry, doing the worst. First thing that you guys get into later in the episode. But really, I think the biggest culprit is perceived peer pressure that I, you know, it matched my values around being a quote unquote, good mom, whatever that means, you know, I want to be a good mom.

And I, I think I am guilty of worrying too much about what other parents would think about the way that. Parenting. Right. So like when I see my friends, putting all of their kids into a thousand activities, I feel like the worst parent, because my kids have zero activities. And you and Lenore have this [00:05:00] great example of this conversation about your oldest son and the bus stop. And being the only kid without a cell phone. And I noticed myself feeling so anxious the whole time I was listening to it because I was worried for you. And wondering if you were worried about what other moms were thinking about you.

So anyway, it just got me thinking about what gets in the way, and, and this kind of social pressure that, that I think is happening in the cultural mill. You, as you say,

**Yael Schonbrun:** I probably am pronouncing it wrong. Um, I am definitely privy to. Get anxious about social judgment. I think we all are right. Our brains are wired to care about what other people think there's nothing abnormal about having those concerns. And what I think helps is having clarity both about the science of, you know, the best kind of parenting practices and what hovering parents.

Can do to a child's sense of independence, to their competence, to [00:06:00] their ability, to build resilience, to their ability, to creatively problem, solve, to

be patient, to trust themselves. All of those things helped me to sort of turn towards some of those leaning back parenting practices and my values and sort of what I'm trying to model for my kids.

So for example, As much as I might feel uncomfortable about parents judging me. Imagine how my 12 year old feels about his peers, judging him for not having a phone. And I do want to actually update something because he actually just recently got a phone

and now that he has it, I'm trying to engage. Free range, parenting styles, even though he has a phone. So for example,

my phone can track his phone so I can know where he is at all times, but we had a conversation. I said, I'm going to turn that feature off because I think it's important for you to know that [00:07:00] a sometimes I'm not going to know where you are, that you're on your own And you have to figure it out.

Now you can contact me if you really need. But for the most part, I want both of us to agree that the expectation is that you figure out how to get yourself, where you need to be. This is an opportunity for you to gain more independence.

Not for me to monitor you even.

**Jill Stoddard:** And you're sending the message. I trust you. I trust you to be able to do these things on your own and to figure this out on your own and that I don't need to know where you are all the time.

**Yael Schonbrun:** a hundred percent. but as you're saying Jill, you know, that fear of like, if other parents. No, what I'm doing, and they're having the judgment of your L your child could be unsafe. They could be kidnapped. , they could be in trouble, not be able to reach out to you.

What kind of a parent are you? Those thoughts certainly come up. , and the choice. I'm clear enough on my values that I'm able to reconnect to what matters most to me. And also knowing the science that [00:08:00] statistically, it is much less likely for harm to come to my child and much more likely for me to hamper his growth.

If I engage in that worst, first thing, kind of thinking, and.

**Jill Stoddard:** Well, it takes a lot of psychological flexibility, right? It's like to have willingness toward the discomfort and you know, the worry about being

judged the worry about something bad could happen, and I could have this information and I've chosen not to have it, and to really connect to those values instead.

So it's, I think it's something that we need to just be like more conscious of. Right. Like psychological flexibility takes some efforting to be aware of what are my thoughts and feelings. How do I observe those thoughts? Make space for those feelings and really make choices based on values even when it feels scarier or uncomfortable.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah. And if you listen to all the way [00:09:00] through the episode, Lenore actually gives some really concrete exercises that you and your child or children can try that are small bite sized, sort of within your wheel house of. Uh, pushing yourself a little bit, but not so far out of your comfort zone that it feels inaccessible.

**Jill Stoddard:** And , she even has a cool invitation to send her some pictures of free range, parenting and action. And I'm going to send her some pictures of my kids walking to school by themselves for the first.

**Yael Schonbrun:** , were you inspired to encourage them to do that based on this episode?

**Jill Stoddard:** Yes, a hundred percent. And we also watched the Netflix show that she talks about in the episode, which I loved and made my son think if these little kids can do this stuff, I should be allowed to too. So that's another thing she talks about toward later in the episode that I loved.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Well, I hope listeners add there as inspired as Jill and I have been. And we hope that you enjoy this episode. I am so excited to be speaking today with Lenore [00:10:00] Skenazy, who is a speaker blogger, columnist reality TV host author, founder of the free range kids movement and president of let grow, which is a nonprofit promoting childhood independence. And. She's here to talk with me today about her incredible book, free range, kids, how parents and teachers can let go and let grow. And I have to just start off by saying this book is one of the funniest parenting books I've read in a long time. So I just first want to thank you for bringing more humor to the parenting literature, which is sorely needed.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Yeah. I think there's a lot of humor needed pretty much everywhere, you know? So why not? But thanks for recognizing that. Now I can

hang up. I really just wanted to write a funny book. So any, any messages are sort of superfluous.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Well, I there's actually research showing that humor makes information not only more enjoyable to approach, but it also allows information to actually get in, which is so effective.

**Lenore Skenazy:** I think, I think jesters figured that out. At some point in human history, it's like, wait a minute. He's going to either cut off my head or laugh. Let's make them laugh.

**Yael Schonbrun:** [00:11:00] So began your career. As I understand it as a columnist and then entered the sphere of parenting, writing through a personal parenting decision of letting your then nine-year-old son and take the subway home alone. And that became a national story and prompted massive media attention caused you to get designated as America's worst mom by some major media outlets.

But from that experience through this whole. Which is now more than a decade old. So you're here with your second edition of free range kids. And I just wanted to sort of start off by getting like the historical context. What do you think has changed in the decade between the first edition release of the book and this current second edition?

**Lenore Skenazy:** Oh, thanks for asking. Um, yeah, I had to figure that out too. When I was writing, like, why am I writing a new version? What has changed? Um, it felt like some things are better and some things are worse better is that I'm not considered a nut. I was really like, I was considered just this crazy person. Why would anybody let their kids do anything on supervise?

And as the years went by and people were recognizing that. Sort of suffering from a [00:12:00] lack of independence and sort of withering on the vine. There there's so many analogies, but the one that is currently accessible in my brain is they built the biosphere. I think in the 1970s or eighties in Arizona, it was like this giant geodesic dome and inside was supposed to be the perfect, um, the perfect weather, the perfect space.

For all these wonderful tropical pants to grow. So we would have them forever and not only did the people want to kill each other and they had to end this experiment early because of human nature, but the trees that they planted in this very rich soil and they'd given them the fertilizer and the sun was obviously

coming in through the windows and they had enough rain and they wilted, they, they actually drooped.

And, um, what they finally figured out is like, okay, it's perfect. It's too perfect. Without any wind. The trees, we're not learning to stand up straight. It was like, almost like they'd been assisted their all lives and then you'd let go. And I was like, and people have been recognizing that as, um, sort of [00:13:00] the perfect metaphor for our culture.

Um, in the last five or 10 years, I'd say people are starting to recognize like, gee, I, you know, today's childhood looks so different from mine and the stuff that I appreciate. As a kid, you know, little hi-jinks or the, you know, running around or staying out until the streetlights came on. I can't tell you how many times I've heard that phrase.

People recognize that sort of has evaporated and with, it seemed to go a lot of kids, , resilience, spunk, even their interest in being, uh, vibrant it's it's like what I'm hearing for teachers. I'm talking to one tomorrow. Is that the kids are so worried about messing up, that they are very passive because if they take a chance on anything, even raising their.

They might mess up and that would be the end of the world. And so as that sort of revelation has left from the classroom and from people's individual homes into the culture at large, I mean like two weeks ago, I was talking to the surgeon general about this very issue. So I might've been America's worst mom maybe was still am, who knows?

I asked my kids, but, [00:14:00] um, but the point is that there's a recognition that there is a problem when kids have so little independence that they are withering on the vine. The, the other thing that changed so dramatically. And I think you're well aware is that technology, became so much more a part of our lives.

I think these last let's see the nine-year-old is 24. So it's like, I can't figure it out. Like this took 10 years. Um, and, and what interests me is. kids going online and what they're doing online, I feel like there's a lot of people studying that. A lot of people worrying about it. Nobody seems to be writing about what it feels like to grow up constantly tracked.

And just this morning, I was reading over my notes for my interviewed like six teenagers who are attracted by life 360. You know, I just was underlining so many things like, you know, it feels like, um, this is my mom's hobby. You

know, they sort of track me for their leisure activity. , I feel like my parents are sort of living my life.

I don't, I have a life and, how come they don't, you know, they say they [00:15:00] trust me, but if they trust me, why are they tracking me all the time? I can't even prove I'm trustworthy because they can always check. So that seems like an enormous. Change in everything, including family life, family structure, because the whole idea of growing up, you know, raising a kid is that eventually they separate from you and they do things independently and they goof and then they bounce back and they make some mistakes, and if they're not allowed to do anything without, you know, somebody minding them, that one guy said it was like somebody always looking over his shoulder, that's a very different existence.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah, well, so I want to actually dive into that. It's such a common issue that comes up for, I have young kids and so a lot of my friends. Other parents who have young kids who are sort of, you know, beginning to have phones.

And there's a lot of activity, social activity that's happening on the phones, but there's also a lot of movement, right? That you, you can like literally know where your kid is at all times, if they're carrying some kind of a device. You note that [00:16:00] trust means like allowing your kids to not be surveilled and that if we're surveilling them, that it really isn't trusted out.

But what do you recommend doing when we really are concerned about their physical, emotional, or social safety? Like for example, if there is text bullying going on and our child may be. Be a part of that almost unwittingly, wouldn't it be better for parents to know about it and to intervene either for our own children or if our child is bullying somebody else that we can help protect another child.

**Lenore Skenazy:** This is such a big issue. And I wouldn't say I'm actually an expert on this particular aspect of parenting or childhood bullying. Um, I'm going to sort of, um, slightly live the question and talk about my one easy solution. Cause all I like are like easy, free things to do, which is there has to be a, um, Almost a sanctuary, , like a, like a wildlife sanctuary.

There has to be a child life sanctuary where kids are not on phones, [00:17:00] where kids are just interacting as young people of different ages, hanging out together, having fun, making things happen, getting into arguments and solving

them themselves. I feel like there's so much adult intervention. That might be one of the reasons that we are more concerned about bullying either.

We're seeing so much more than we ever saw. Or we're elevating things. So I was just talking to, I was just at an event this morning with a parenting expert. Believe it or not. I, I do have a life outside of this, but there you have it. And, , somebody was telling her . That her daughter had called her after school and said that she had been at the counselor's office with a friend and they were because they were discussing. And it's like, what do you mean? It's like, well, we thought we had to discuss our feelings with the counselor and I'm all for counseling and psychology.

I see a big psychology sign behind you

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah, watch what you say about psychologists.

**Lenore Skenazy:** I do want it. And so what I want to say is I've been through a bunch of therapy and, uh, so has basically everyone that I know, including my family, but, that being said. There's something about [00:18:00] trusting kids to get through some of their, unhappiness and some of their spats without. A professional, you know, professional has, has figured everything out and it's sorta like, you know, if you want your kid to learn how to run a race, you can't put them on your back and run the race.

Cause you're faster. And then look, you've gone over the finish line because yeah, you've, they've gone over the finish line literally, but they haven't done any of the running. And I think that, you know, one of the reasons we are more worried these days about, you know, bullying and hurt feelings and the social emotional growth of our kids in general is that we're, we're we're with them so much of the time.

Intervening helping, you know, honey, give you know, to his turn, you know, why don't you, you know, you give him the ball. Now, all the stuff that we do, because we want our kids to be nice and socialize is almost taking out the. Th the fiber of how kids would normally learn how to do these things. You know, they'd be mad at each other.

Nobody would play with them. Nobody plays with you. Then what are you going to do? You got to change your [00:19:00] behavior as opposed to the counselor, discussing this with you and it being yet another psychological issue, as opposed to everyday life where things don't always go your way. And then you can have fun again.

And, there's a, there's a headmaster in England who I was talking to the other day, too. All I do is talk to people as you can tell, and his school is doing what we call a, let grow play club, which is just a branding exercise for keeping the school open before or after school for all the ages together to mix and mingle and play.

And, the kids at the beginning will come up to the, to the adults who are there and say, you know, he took the ball. It was my turn. And, , what the headmaster has instructed his teachers to say is, you can, you know, you can go inside and think, you know, or you can keep playing, what do you want to do?

And then. Keep playing and it sort of puts it back in their court. Like they are more competent than we've given them credit for, because we're always there helping them. So if [00:20:00] you step back and let them figure this stuff out, they can, , there was once some graduate students who went to watch recess in, , Scott.

And they were bubbling to tell their professor what they've just seen. It was the most remarkable thing she said, what'd you see? And she said, well, there was this little kid and she fell down and then no adult came to help her or, you know, dust her off or take her to the nurse. And so instead her friends helped her up and then she kept running and.

The fact that this was like news to graduate students in education is news to me because it just shows that almost nobody has seen, you know, a child in the, in the wild before all they've seen is sort of super supervised kids and we've forgotten what they're capable of.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah.

I have actually, , a related personal story, which is that my son who's my oldest son. Who's in sixth grade. Doesn't yet have a phone, although it's hard to imagine that he won't soon have. Literally all of his peers have it. I've, I've sort of am [00:21:00] so much in the behavioral science, in the parenting literature that I've really been adamant about holding up. He takes the bus home. And there was one day that the bus was extremely late and the other kids were able to telephone their parents from their cell phones. And I soon had a couple of parents calling me, oh, I know that your son doesn't have a phone. Do you want me to pick him up? And I got so worried because I hadn't heard from him.

Sometimes he emails me if something is going on, but he didn't have email access. Cause he was out by the bus stop. And so I said, sure, I don't, you know,

can you let them know too that I'm worried about him, that I can come get him? And she said, no, I'll, I'll, I'll take care of it. And then a different parent called me and said, Um, he didn't want to come.

He wanted to wait for the bus. And I, and I sort of went back and forth. Should I be worried or should I kind of let him figure it out? And sure enough, the bus came eventually it took a while. He was patient enough. He was one of the few kids who waited for it. He took the bus home and he was so proud of himself.

And he said, mom, You know, you told me to figure things out. [00:22:00] Like I figured it out. Why? I don't even know why you were in touch with other parents. And it was this moment where I, I really had that thought. Cause you know, I've been following the free range kids movement with, a lot of excitement.

I think it's such a cool idea to give your kids more opportunity to figure things out by themselves. And at the same time, I can recognize the fear. I mean, my child was, you know, like six miles away without a way, an easy way to contact me and things sometimes happen. And, you know, He did figure it out.

And so I do think it is like that idea of, you know, letting your kid encounter some adversity, figure out some strategies. And if it didn't go perfectly for the most part, it's not a total disaster. But one thing that you write about is that we often do this thing that you call worst first thing. And so I wanted to ask, you know, what, if you could define what is worst, first thing, and how should we respond to this tendency as parents.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Yeah. I mean, if you're asking sort of what has changed, not just in the last 15 years, but since I [00:23:00] was a kid, Um, when my mom let me walk to school, it was back in the day. And so I was five, it was normal, all the moms, even the nervous Jewish moms like mine, let their five-year-olds walk to school. And when you got to the corner, a ten-year-old not a, not a grown up a 10 year old would be the, the, the crossing guard and healthy across.

So, , how did that, you know, what happened when that disappeared? What happened is we sort of got infected with what I do call worst first or worst first thinking, which is it's new, but it feels innate this, this ability to imagine the very worst case scenario first and proceed as if it's likely to happen.

And I know that my mom, who was a nervous mom who quit her job to be homeless. You know, didn't go through the names of 10 kids who had been kidnapped over the last 40 years before she let me walk to school, you know,

biting her nails and, you know, and SRE Ang, if I go the whole Yiddish route, , you know, worrying, oh my God, you know, I hope she makes it if she doesn't, I can [00:24:00] never forgive myself.

Why was I so crazy? I'll go get the car. I'll follow her. That that's certainly wasn't something that people did and it is something that's now. I just have to keep referring to people that I've talked to. That's all just talking about another guy, another podcast, who's a dad in suburban Kentucky. And he decided once he talked to me to start letting his kids do more things on his own, and he let his 12 and 14 year olds go shopping for groceries on their own.

And he said, I have to tell you two stories. One is that the first time he did. He actually was told by the police to move because he had parked in the fire lane. And the reason he parked in the fire lane is because from that particular angle, he could see both the, the main entrance and the truck entrance.

Right. He could see both the entrance and the exit of this grocery. You know, I don't want to embarrass him or anything because I'm embarrassing, but you don't know his name. , it's like, come on, you have a 14 year old and then she can have her own kid at this point with your 12 year old they're in suburban Kentucky, they're shopping for macaroni and cheese [00:25:00] or whatever.

And you feel like you have to watch both exits it's that dangerous, but obviously his mind just automatically went to, well, if they're kidnapped, I want to be able to see them come out, eat the main door or the back. And so then the great thing about doing something like that is that it gets easier and easier to the point where you can't remember why you did that.

And so a couple of months later was talking to him again and he had led his 12 year old walk, two houses down to her friend's house. Once again, suburban Kentucky and, you know, played with the friend there. And then after the play date, which I hate calling a play date for a 12 year old, but after the play date, the mother of the friend walked her home, the two houses.

And so the message is, you know, who's crazy enough to let your kid walk two houses down. What if something terrible happens? So, so this, this neighbor didn't feel like a nut. , but there's something that has infected us with, I would say incredible paranoia, brain eating, flesh, eating, um,, [00:26:00] fear that has been implanted by, you know, the media and by a litigious society.

And, with the immediacy of everything on Facebook and regular old fashioned media, which isn't even old fashioned. So I can't give you the exact reasons we think this way, but I can guarantee you that it feels innate and it's not.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah. So there's a bunch of things I want to unpack there, but, but one part is that you're pointing to is that we get this reinforcement of all the dangerous from media and from peers that are. Worst first thing as well, and we're really bad at assessing risk. But when you look at statistical risk, things like kidnapping are far less dangerous than driving with your kid in the car and you offer a bunch of those sort of helping to, you know, reshift our perspectives on what is risky versus what's not risky for our kids, but we have this sort of like constant onslaught of.

You know, you [00:27:00] have to watch out, you have to be careful, otherwise terrible, terrible things could happen, and it will be your fault as the parent.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Yes. That fear of it's a double whammy fear. It's fear of something terrible happening and something terrible is often not even. Specified. It's just terrible, you know, or we sound like babies. We say the bad man will come from. It's like, come on. What are you saying? Are you saying that your child is going to be, you know, scooped off the street and the two houses down to your house?

, so there's the, there's the media pressing it upon us. And then there's the social norm that grows up upon it, which is that, you know, the other lady thought that she was doing a nice thing, walking this kid home, and that maybe the dad was a total slap. For not offering to come and pick her up. So the thing that interests me about what we just saying is that we're terrible at assessing risk.

, I think we're even terrible at talking about risk. We shouldn't be talking about risk when we're talking about walking two houses down or waiting at a bus stop for 10 minutes, , in a neighborhood that's generally pretty safe [00:28:00] or we're walking to school or looking both ways and crossing the street, but there's sort of no downside to.

Obsessively, , underestimating kids. And the, the example that makes me most mad is that the American academy of pediatric. Just sending this to it. Somebody else today, has a paper out and it, Patty paper, route a paper out. And it says, , that children, shouldn't cross the street by themselves until they're 10.

And then they start giving reasons, oh, they could be Spacey. Sometimes they have magical thinking and it's like, I can be Spacey. I can have magical

thinking, but if you put me in a corner and you've taught me to look both ways, you know, and wait for the walk SIG. I can handle that. And so can a ten-year-old and in fact, we have proof because I was crossed by a 10 year old interested with the, you know, the little kids on their way to school.

And there's this fantastic new series out on Netflix. It's not new, but it's new to Netflix called old enough. Have you heard about it? You will [00:29:00] only be hearing about this for the next week. I swear to God, it's a show that was done in Japan. Obviously they've chosen the best episodes out of 10 years. This reality show where it in, in, in Japan, it's called my first errand.

And you see a kid, , like age five for three, sometimes two years and 10 months old being told by a very loving parent, you know, daddy forgot his, uniform and he needs it at the sushi restaurant. Can you bring it to daddy? And it's like, Okay. You know, and sometimes the kid cries and sometimes the kid goofs off and sometimes the kid is just, can't wait to do it.

There was one kid who there's a narrator who narrates this whole thing. There was a kid who walked, , like basically the equivalent of half a mile. She ran the whole time. And the poor camera man were like, but she was so excited. She was bringing the apron to her dad or she was going to pick up the soba noodles.

I can't remember what I mean. You see all this yummy food from Japan. [00:30:00] And you just realize how incredibly motivated kids are, how competent they are, how, how desperate they are to prove themselves, and to be part of the grown-up world. There was one girl who was three years old and her mom had, had said, pick up a, they had a farm, she'd go to the shed and get a cabbage and some onions.

And the girl walks all the way on this dirt road by herself, except for the cameraman. And then she gets to the shed and she forgot to, she's supposed to get it from the. And she thinks she has to pick a cabbage from the patch and cabbages are on stocks that are like thick and sinewy and, and the camera man, watch her.

And she does it for 20 minutes trying to twist the cabbage off the stock. She can't get. And they go, okay, well, I guess she'll give up. And it's like, no, then she does it another 10 minutes. And she has to like walk it around in a circle, like a merry-go-round and she gets it and it's as big as her. Cause it's not just the little cabbage part that we see at the grocery.

It's all the extra leaves and it's this giant stock and she's [00:31:00] dragging it home with the onions and it's getting dark and she was so determined. And the great thing about an Aaron like that is that the kid gets to see. I'm I'm trusted. I'm I'm totally can do this. My parents believe in me and the parent gets to see, I can trust my kid and, and what I feel that's happened in our culture is that we've denied both generations.

That joy. Right. The kids think that they're going to be kidnapped or that their parents don't trust them. They don't think they're going to be where they say they are. So of course my parents are tracking me or I'm in such danger. My parents are watching me all the time and the parents never get to go look at my kid.

You know, my God, that's the biggest you, that cabbage look what you did. All that. I sure am glad I got you, you know, the, the plastic cabbage and we're taking it from the, you know, together and I'll drive you home and I'll watch you get in the house and then I'll follow you in and, , you know, feed you your mush.

So it [00:32:00] makes, it makes childhood less exciting and less developmentally rich, and it makes parenting a drag.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah, it just, it reminds me. So you, , in the book, I interviewed a child anthropologist by the name of David Lancey, who I've had the chance to talk to. He's wonderful. And he has this article called playing with knives. I don't know if you've read it, but it's terrific, but he talks about how. , you know, a lot of, and you talk a lot about this in your, in your work that a lot of the parenting practices that we've adopted we assume are kind of preordained, but they're not they're so culturally embedded both,

you know, because we're American and Western and , have certain resources available to us, but also just like from a historical perspective, You started off saying like it didn't always used to be this way.

There used to be a pretty different approach to parenting that gave children more room to make mistakes on, you know, by themselves. And just wanted to read a quote from your book to lead into the next question. And that quote is forget the fact that 300,000 years of evolution have [00:33:00] made human children pretty sturdy and parents pretty competent at raising them.

We have entered an era that says you cannot trust her. Trust a product instead. And I think that this kind of gets to the heart of what you're saying is like, we

don't trust our kids, but we also don't trust ourselves. And part of that is driven by our consumer driven culture.

And I guess my question to you is how can parents given that this is the culture that we live in? What can we do to learn, to trust ourselves more in this role of being parents?

**Lenore Skenazy:** That's a great question. And certainly one that has been weighing on me for all these years. So, um, what I came to discover after, you know, I crisscrossed the country and then the world giving lectures about free range kids and people would always nod along. This sounds good. Yes. I remember my childhood.

Oh, it was really great. I love climbing trees. Of course. I went into my own kid country, so people not, not, not that bad and then they'd go home and nothing would change. And so when I was approached by Jonathan Haidt too, you might've heard

**Yael Schonbrun:** I love his work. , I, love all [00:34:00] of his writing. Yeah.

**Lenore Skenazy:** he is fantastic. , so he was concerned that kids were getting to college and feeling very fragile, um, that if you know that the, the college counseling services were overwhelmed, the things that used to be something that you might be able to shrug off were suddenly, overwhelm.

To the kids. And he said, and he was talking to, a guy named Daniel Shackman, who is now our chairman. , and they were saying, you know, it can't just be happening. The second they put their foot on the quadrangle, you know, at college it must be happening younger. And so who's fighting a culture, that's sort of undermining our kids.

And of course they came to me and I said, well, it's not just me. If you're gonna, you know, you're gonna, if you're gonna have me work with you, we also have to bring in Peter Gray. Who wrote a book called free to learn who has really studied his whole life about how important free play and especially mixed ages are together just for kids, all learning how to get along, make friends solve problems.

And so, , when we started let grow, which is the nonprofit that grew out of free range kids, our goal [00:35:00] was forget changing minds. We must change. You know, I can talk, talk, talk to you. You can not, not, not, but unless you actually experience like you did with your son, by himself at the bus stop, you

know, coming home, you know, sticking it out when everybody else is being picked up, you don't have the, the gut level experience of like, oh, wow.

This is who he is. I can step back a little, I can breathe easier and look at I'm watching my child blossom. So let grow is dedicated to changing behavior into. We have two programs, both are absolutely free. So I have to do is go to let grow.org and download them. You press the school programs. , there's home versions too, but school is better and I'll tell you what these are and why school is better.

So one program is I was mentioning it before. It's the let grow play club where the kids are playing, you know, before or after school, we have one school that's doing this fancy fantastic study where, there's, 24 English language learners. And second. And 12 of them are in a [00:36:00] mixed age, playgroup twice a week, and 12 of them are doing, I don't know what else, twice a week.

And, , the assumption and I'm sure it's going to be found to be true, is that when kids are playing. The, you know, the, the, the, the expressions kids are ahead taller when they're playing, because they're trying to figure things out because there's so much going on. We're playing tag. If I go this way, you know, she's already running that way.

Let me go the other way. It's like, oh, wait, now she's turned this way. I better go hide behind the tree. You're just, every neuron is firing. You're physically excited. You're mentally on fire. , you're working with your friends. You're strategizing. And so Andrew talking, cause it's like, no, that's not fair.

Give me back the ball. And so, if you have a, let grow play club at your school, which the only expenses, I guess somebody's watching the group, , then you have given kids back this experience that they can come and tell their parents about their making new friends. There's kids. We heard from a kid who had no friends and he said, well, you know, now that there's play club, you know, before, like of course I didn't have any friends.

Cause if you're the slow kid. You know, or if you're the kid who doesn't speak [00:37:00] English yet, or you're so much smarter and everybody's boring, you, you know, you finally find this entire garden full of kids to be friends. And you start making a life for yourself through play. I mean, that's how kids have always learned.

If you go back, if David Lancey will tell you this too, the idea of parents playing with kids, he said is as weird as getting down on the floor and, you know,

lapping from a bowl. I mean, it just like, why are you doing that? You're not a dog. You're not a kid. Why are you on the floor? So you just have to give free, play back to kids.

And if you have that in any kind of. Place other than a park where they won't go by themselves. It's always somebody running a, you know, it's a, it's an afterschool sport or it's a camp and those are great, but you're getting the skill of learning soccer or of learning, you know, rope climbing, but you're not getting the skill of making a friend and just making things happen.

So the let grow play club is, , one of our two initiatives and the other one is called the let [00:38:00] grow project. And that's what. Sort of like the story you were telling kids, get a homework assignment, go home and do something new on your own without your pants. And it can be, you know, kids discuss it with their parents because they're not allowed to do something that the parent says no to, but the parents are way more likely to say yes, because everybody in the class is doing it.

And so the kid wants to go run an errand and then they do, and they come back home and they come first through the door and they've got, they got the milk for dinner and everybody's excited and there's high fives and let's have milk, you know, yum, this is delicious milk. , it just changes things. You've gone from.

Spreading that your kid can't do it. That something terrible is going to happen. You're going to regret it forever to look at my kid blossoming. And if you do it a couple times, I had printed out, , one, girl's a little statement today about how she was afraid to walk home by herself, but she decided she would do it.

And she had to convince herself and her parents and her parents finally said yes. And she said she got off the bus. And then she had eight blocks to walk home. And she was, this is an 11 year old and she did it. And she said at [00:39:00] first we were all scared and she said, and now I do it all this. 'cause you just have to break through the fear and the only thing that breaks your fear is reality.

Not thinking about it again and again, it seems like it'd probably be safe. I guess they could do it. You know, I've looked at all the statistics, Lenore says it's okay. None of that works. So the parent needs. To let go and they need to feel normal because everybody else in the class is doing it. Everybody else at the school is doing it.

And then they need the reinforcement of seeing, even if the kid screws up, I, you know, the milk spilled on the way home. Okay. You know, go get more milk

or you'll go get something else you're in a bad mood, you know, go get  
Kool-Aid. I mean, reality is. Easier to deal with than the fears in your head and  
you need reality.

So let grow is totally dedicated to giving parents and kids the experience, not  
the thought of, of independence.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I love so much about that. One thing I just want to point out  
too, is that. in psychology. We often talk about at least in the kind of therapeutic  
practice that I, that I [00:40:00] do called acceptance and commitment therapy.  
We often talk about moving towards a goal. Yeah.

**Lenore Skenazy:** I think I'm having that done. Yes. It's really fun. Yeah. I love

**Yael Schonbrun:** Oh, yeah, it's, it's an amazing, amazing treatment. So all of us  
co-hosts practice acceptance and commitment therapy or act, and it's, a really  
phenomenal treatment and it's very behaviorally oriented. Right. Get out of your  
mind and get into your life kind of an idea. And what I love about your  
approach is that it sort of gives you something to move towards as opposed to  
avoiding, right?

Because in our minds, we're always trying to avoid the risk of, for our, towards  
our kids and, you know, from social judgment as parents. And there's so many  
things that we can be afraid of, but if you. As you do in this assignment, really  
encourage people to focus on like, what is one thing that your kid can do, and  
that you, as a parent can support them in doing by, by kind of getting out of the  
way.

The thing that you feel comfortable as sort of, you know.

a little bit of a risk, but within your sphere of, I, I feel like this isn't so risky that  
I'm not willing to move towards it, agree with your kid and then get out of the  
[00:41:00] way. And it's such a nice concrete move towards exercise and you  
get to you and your child, or hopefully led by your child, get to pick it.

And focus on that as opposed to focusing on moving away from fears, which is  
like you, you can't because there's so many of them, again, there's this constant  
on slot. So it's a really nice forward movement and behave really focused,  
which I just love. I think it's such a great exercise and I'm so glad that it's a free  
resource for.

**Lenore Skenazy:** It is, it is it's, you know, teachers can do it. A principal can do it. And we do have a, like a quote unquote home version. It sounds like board game, , where, you know, you can download basically the same materials and look at a whole list of activities that kids might want to do. Obviously the list is not comprehensive, but it really helps to have more than just you doing it because the whole idea is.

If the re normalizing of giving your kids some independence, I mean, letting your kid wait at the bus stop without you a generation ago, everybody did it. And now it's abnormal. So how do you get it back to normal? You let a bunch of kids wait at the bus [00:42:00] stop without any of you. So it's, you know, it's really easy and I've watched it change people so much.

You know, I did this television show called,

**Yael Schonbrun:** was just going to say I, these talk about it. Cause I watched a couple episodes and they're really cool. I wonder if maybe you can share the America's worst mom reality show is, is it's really cool.

And you really intervene in a very concrete way and help people move forward. So maybe you can share like one of your favorite, , episode stories.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Okay. Yeah. Thank you. , that's exactly what it was. And, and remember, I'm not a psychologist, I'm a reporter. That's, that's my whole background. And I just happen to write about my son taking the subway alone and then sort of switched gears towards childhood independence. But, um, so the, this, this show was not my idea.

It was the producer. So they come up. Brilliant idea that I didn't have any idea would work, which was, they found me the 13, most over-protective families in Canada and America that you could imagine. I mean, there was a mom who still fed her 10 year old son in his mouth, right? Like with a spoon. Yeah.

That's the first one. And then, um, [00:43:00] there's a mom who let her son have a skateboard, but only if he stood on it. Like it could, the wheels could not move, but at that way, and a mom who thought that everybody would think she was a terrible mom. She used to laugh at the other moms whose kids came to school with a bandaid.

Cause that obviously proved that the parent had been a slacker and a mom who went into the Natalie, took her daughter into the women's room with her, you know, to go to the bathroom, but then stay stayed in the stall with her even when

she was. So these were people. I was like, every time they introduced me to another family, I'm like, are you kidding me?

What am I supposed to do? Remember reporter, not psychologist. But what I did was simply this, I would sit with the parent and I'd say, uh, first they'd give me a list of all the things that they don't let their kids do. You know, I don't let him go on a sleepover. He can't force all Malik. He can't rock to school.

He can't, , you know, go on a, on a play date, whatever, , camp. Fine on and on and on. And then the kids would give me a list too. And then we picked something that I was like, okay, today's going to go into the forest with his brothers. And the parents would be [00:44:00] somewhere between sullen and hysterical. I mean, I had a lady kicked me and, um, and I would just sit with them while the kids did it.

And when the kids came back, You know, with all the things that they'd never been allowed to do before, which were very simple things, go get the mail from the mailbox. Um, the parents were so extremely excited and delighted and proud that I was like, wait a minute. Why don't you just don't want weren't you the one who said that he couldn't write the fate.

My favorite stories and this boy, the first kid, the one whose mom was feeding him in his mouth with the spoon, um, had never written a book. And so, and, and he hadn't done a lot of things. So the first day I'm with him, I teach him how to use a knife by Googling. How do you use a knife? Cause I don't know how you actually teach somebody.

I know you should curl your fingers under anyway. So he starts to use a knife and he feels so great. And the next day the cameras break down and I'm with him for like three hours in his house. And we're just slicing everything. He goes, let's slice more stuff and we're slicing the mangoes and we're slicing the bananas.

And it's just, it was this joy and this freedom. And then another activity [00:45:00] for him was to learn how to ride a bike and. I felt bad for him because this'll be broadcast on TV and his friends will see this. Ten-year-old not riding a bike. Right. But. Darned if he didn't, you know, keep getting back on and he, he only remembered to use one foot to, to peddle with.

So he would always go like in a circle and a spiral and then fall. But eventually he got to the point where he could go pro an empty parking lot, go go, sigh. You know, like with wise in the parking lot. And so that was amazing. I mean like

suddenly he has wings basically. And so he came home and once again, the camera crews outside and I go inside and the mother comes to the grandma who's Russian and she goes, guess what, mom.

Sammy could ride a bike and the Russian grandmother goes are Sammy ride bike. Yeah, man. He can ride a bike. He can ride a bike and ride a bike and they're ecstatic and they're so proud and happy. And I was like, this is my first family. I'm like, what's going on? Did they just say they didn't [00:46:00] want to ride a bike?

Were they going to hate. And so once that happened, by the end of those four, one of his other activities was he had to go on an overnight with the boy Scouts and he had a meltdown the night before, and his mother was so scared. She locked herself in the bathroom. I mean, there was a lot of actual drama and I didn't know how to deal with it, but the next morning he does go, uh, uh, with the boy Scouts on this overnight.

And then. He joined the boy Scouts and that summer he went on overnight BMX bike camp for two weeks. So the, the thing that we were talking about before the, the level of like fear and is everything risky and worst, first thing, it seems, it seems like permafrost, like this will never melt. This is part of our culture.

Can't get out, we're stuck, right? We're in a bell jar of ice of fear. And then it turns out. Hmm. Hmm. I mean, I, I was with these families, I wasn't sleeping over. I just saw them each for four days in a row. And like one day they [00:47:00] ride a bike. One day they'd go to the mall one day, they'd climb a tree or whatever, and they have the 13 families, 12 of them changed completely.

Like couldn't remember why they hadn't let their kids join the basketball league on Saturday mornings. So. I mean, the thing that allows me to keep going 15 years into this same issue and the person who used to be a daily news reporter with a different story every day is that I know how deep this fear is, and it feels like it will never end and it can't possibly change.

And actually the, the opposite is true. It is, it is wafer thin. And once parents get to see how amazing their kids. You know, we're we've completely changed childhood parenthood and, and the psychology of children today.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah.

And you, you say that you're a reporter, not a psychologist, but you've, you've collaborated with Peter Gray, who is a psychologist and Jonathan Haidt. Who's a social psychologist. And, you know, there's so much evidence backing what you're doing, which is [00:48:00] again, get out of your mind and get into your life, pick a behavior and approach it and find a way, you know, do it in a way that feels safe enough, even though there is some risks, like enter into some risks, but, but do it in a very deliberate way where you're just deciding, you know, Value line.

This is important for my child to be able to grow, to approach and support them in doing that without interfering and allow that evidence to come back. Correct. Some of the fears that you might have had to help you change your perspective through action. And so I think, you know, w what you saw in, in your reality show was like, It's kind of exposure therapy in action, and you get to really see it.

And the change is really remarkable. It's not comfortable, as you're saying, like, a lot of the parents were really scared. Probably the kids were terribly uncomfortable. Um, but. The support and probably some pressure from, you know, the fact that it was being filmed. They moved towards some change and found that.

Hey, like [00:49:00] I can do this, we can do this as a fan.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Yeah, no, it was really cool. I have to tell you, my favorite family was one that actually was here in New York, upstate and, the mom, this is a mom who went into the stall with her 10 year old, you know, just in case you'd be raped or murdered while she was going to bathroom. And what, let her kid go on any play dates.

And when the kids were playing in the backyard, I stood in the backyard and watched them the whole time. There was a park, like a playground, literally across their quiet sleepy street in upstate New York. And she wouldn't let them go there ever. So the first thing was to just let them go there and look for like bugs and stuff like that.

But, um, in the end, this is once again, the, the, the producer's idea, not mine. We took them to a water park and we wanted the 12 year old boy. , to go down this giant water slide that I would never go down in a million trillion years. Right. It's 10 stories high. So we just want the mom to see, and we want the son to see what he can do.

And sure enough, Downy comes. You have to look like you're sort of in a coffin, you have to put your arms across your [00:50:00] chest and go feet first. And it just seems really scary. Um, but there he comes down and I'm really happy for him. And it's great. And then we look up. Is that Phyllis on the platform? What Phyllis, the mom, the mom who ruined every weekend because the family was always going on a boat that the husband loved and Phyllis was like, get up, put on your life, preserver, this is terrible.

Why are we going home? What about sunscreen, et cetera, et cetera. There's Phyllis up there and I'm not up there. I'm not saying, go do it. You have to it wasn't even part of the show. And then. She came, you know, sheesh comes down, it takes like two seconds and she gets out of the water. And at the end, you all have to write something on a big whiteboard.

Like, you know what, you know, what it means to you or whatever. And she said, I feel like now I have two birthdays because she, you know, was sort of reborn as a different person. And the fact that now she gets to live such a happier life.[00:51:00] , I mean, you're a psychologist. That's why you do your job so that people can leave behind stuff that is making them so unhappy.

And isn't helping them in any way. Isn't helping their relationships. Isn't helping their sleep, isn't helping their lives. And if this is, if it's this simple, if all you need to do is see your kid do something independently and, and you can change and they. I think that this should be in every school. I think, you know, I was talking to the surgeon general.

I'm hoping that he promotes it. It just seems like there's too many lives being wasted in unhappiness and fear and dread. When, when there's an alternative that's, that's, that's around the corner and you just have to go, literally have to walk around the corner and let your kid walk around the corner without you.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Without you. Yeah. So you, you're bringing up another, , domain that I wanted to talk about, which is, you know, we've lost faith in ourselves. We've lost faith in our kids, but also we've gotten so [00:52:00] entrenched in thinking about our kids as products, as opposed to focusing on relating to our kids as human beings.

Right. You have this great analogy of like, you know, we think that there's a certain recipe that we have to. Execute perfectly to make this cake, you know, this cake kind of product that is our child in order to allow them to live like a happy, fulfilling life. And we get very focused on the various steps in protecting them and making sure they have exactly what they need I need.

And your recommendation is really to sort of like let go of making the cake properly and just relate to your kid as a human being. And I wonder if you think. Give some like concrete on the ground advice for how to pivot behaviorally day-to-day when, again, like the pressure is so omnipresent to sort of help your kid succeed in, in various ways, you know, make sure they get into the right college and that they're on the right professional track.

Make sure they have the right kind of friends, make sure that they're taking enough extracurriculars, make sure that they're, happy enough and have the same kind of products. Tools and toys that their peers have. [00:53:00] Um, so how, how can we as parents unhook from that pressure so that we can direct our attention more on just relating to our kids as, as people, it seems so simple, but it's hard.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Yeah, it is hard. I guess I'm going to sound like a broken record. Nobody will know what that means. , the, the only way you can start relating to your kid as a kid is to see what they're interested in and what they do without you, you know, promoting it or prompting it or, , enrolling them in it. And so, , let me ask you a question.

What did you do just for fun? When you were a kid, there was like you weren't in a class. There was no coach. What'd you do in some of your free time?

**Yael Schonbrun:** This will surprise no one who listens to the podcast, but I, I I've always been a reader. I used to hide in my closet and just read books, getting lost in worlds. In the world. Authors have created. And I love [00:54:00] words and the beauty of words and, , just, it was like a train being transported into a magical place.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Okay. Was that wasted time? I mean, you weren't doing your homework, you weren't getting a trophy.

**Yael Schonbrun:** It wasn't, but one could argue that it's a part of what's allowed me to create the professional life that I hadn't been. So what about the kinds of activities that kids are involved in that don't look like they would attach to a future? Aspiration. I think that that is so that isn't just to be clear like that isn't actually how I feel, but this is some of the conversation that happens both in the therapy room and, um, with peers that, you know, people get really concerned.

Like I need to make sure that my kid is going to be successful and they don't seem motivated on their own. I need to pressure them. Otherwise, nothing will happen. They'll just sit there on a video game, not go outdoors.

And so what, what do I do? What's my alternative, other than pressuring them.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Well, a couple of things. , first of all, let's talk about what kids do in their free [00:55:00] time. That might be. Quirky or weird. And if you're going to ask about video games, I'm pretty ambivalent about video games. Actually. I'm finally reading, ready player one. It's so great. Oh my God. It makes me actually want to play video games.

It's just a great story was made just Spielberg movie about it. Video game kid who probably conquers the world. I don't know. I'm only on the like six jacket. , kids when they have free time are bored and then they find something that interests them. We did a study at the beginning of COVID. Like in April and may asking kids, what are you learning?

Just for fun. If anything. Because suddenly there was no afterschool sports or school kids were learning. I mean, there's so much baking going on, but there was also, you know, making stuff, painting, learning about 1940s gangsters studying bugs. My favorite kid was an eight year old studying Bitcoin.

Imagine if I had been her just two years ago, buying Bitcoin, you know, that'd be so great. , but that wasn't me. And the thing is that kids are drawn to things. , and sometimes it's video games and [00:56:00] sometimes it's, you know, you can do what, , this woman named Audrey monk who wrote a book called happy campers.

She's a camp director. So it is just, you know, if you're worried about video games and some video games, I think not somebody who goes, I think video games can be great for kids to play because they are strategizing, they're playing together. They're making teams, they're learning a lot of the stuff that I think they would learn on the playground just on a pixelated ground, but then just have some time.

That is non non video, you know, like there's the two hours, there's the sunshine time, 12 to two every day. You just, you know, you can do anything you want, but you can't be on a video game or a four to five or whatever it is. So you can, you can schedule in some time. That's not like, are you on your stupid video game again?

You know, your brain is gonna run. It's not that it's like, oh, it's 12 it's it's sunshine time. And that's that. And what I want people to recognize, and I think you can do it by looking into your own past, like you just did is. What looks like downtime or a stupid waste of time. I cannot tell you how much time I spent as

a kid making stuff out of things I'd find in the garbage, for some reason that [00:57:00] interested me and reading and riding my bike and making brownies. I mean, I don't think that this was, you know, there's so much that goes into making a person and it's not all classes and tests and trophies. So I'll tell you my favorite story about, , so I did an article, , and I wish I could remember the name of it, but maybe we'll put it in the show notes where I asked people, if they could see a link between what they love doing as kids and what they're doing now as adults and one guy, I had like three seconds to interview him.

He was in a line at a Ted talk and I said, oh, he was a business guy. It's like, can you tell me anything you did as a kid that you're still sort of doing today? You know, you did for fun. No, like, okay, let's try this again. Is there anything you did as a child that you still sort of see yourself doing like a straight line?

He's like, well, you know, I played. Okay. Anything specific that you did and, and he got this like faraway look or at [00:58:00] least I remember him getting this. , and he said, well, yeah, you know, as a kid, you grew up in Miami and you know, there's fruit trees in people's yards, but they, , th th the tree goes over the sidewalk too.

And the flood, the fruit that falls onto the sidewalk is public. Right. So he would pick up the, you know, the lemons and the oranges or whatever from the sidewalk. And he put them in his little cart, and then he went around selling. And I think he still does the same thing. Cause that's Jeff Bezos who takes other people's stuff.

And puts it on a cart, literally a cart, your cart is full and sells it to us. So, and for me, I have to say that my biggest desire as a kid, aside from making stuff from junk was, , I wanted to start a fad or a phrase. And I was always making pins that like would have phrases that I wish people would use my phrase and, you know, and free range kids is just another one of those interests that just kept coming with me because, and there's no class phrase.

All right. You know, fad, fad, suffocation. So sometimes you just got to trust that your [00:59:00] kid's weird, quirky interests or interested, bore you to tears. You know, they want to talk about dinosaurs 24 7. There's something that's turning your kid on. And what you want is a kid who's turned on. You know, that gives them a reason to get up in the morning.

That gives them a reason to be interested in life and excited. And so. You need to give them some free time. And the only way to give them free time is once

again to renormalize the idea that sometime is not going to be structured and it's not going to be supervised.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I love it. So we're, we're out of time and I just wanted to say, thank you so much for all the work you do. And, I know that your impact has been. Uh, goes far beyond me, but, but certainly I just wanted to share that, that you've definitely changed how I parent and I think, I think my kids are better off for it. I'm

**Lenore Skenazy:** yeah. You know? Yeah. Like, like, like we said, there's not a recipe, but, , so all I'm asking is that people check out the, you know, the let grow project and the let grow play club because they have to spread. They're so [01:00:00] simple. , and everything's free, so why not get that revolution going

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah, I get the revolution going and I really can't recommend the book enough. It was. I, it was one of the few parenting books, probably the only parenting book where I've actually been snorting as with laughter as I'm reading. So thank you so much. So let grow.com. Are there other places that people should go to find more at Lenore?

**Lenore Skenazy:** growth. Um, so let grow.org. Um, although I think let grow.com comes to us too. I'm not sure. So we're on Twitter, um, as let grow org and also free range kids. And, you know, the book is free range kids. And that's it. I mean, I'm sure they can, you can always write me a letter. I'm just lenore@letgrow.org.

You can drop me a line and I want to hear a success stories. I actually want to get more pictures. You know, I think people are really, , moved by a picture of a kid, you know, with the, with the brownie that they made or with the puppy that they'd be friended. So if you have pictures and a little story, we're trying to figure out how to, [01:01:00] how to showcase them more.

And I feel like that's something I've been bad. So, so send me stuff and we'll figure it out.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Thank you so much for making the time Linder. I really appreciate it.

**Lenore Skenazy:** Oh, this was fun. And I really appreciate your getting the word out too. And now I know what therapy I'm in its acceptance and commitment therapy. I just knew it was act. I didn't know what it wasn't very cool.

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