



## Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk

By David Elkind

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### Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk By David Elkind

David Elkind's new book is designed to help parents avoid the miseducation of young children that is on the increase today.

Across the country—in schools and in homes—educational programs intended for school-age children are being misappropriated for the instruction of preschoolers. Books, lectures, and the media propagate the idea that only a “superkid” can grow up to compete successfully in the adult world—thereby encouraging parents to teach infants and young children academic and athletic skills. Yet, there is considerable evidence that early instruction can do lasting harm—that young children subjected to this kind of pressure are, in fact, at psychological and physical risk.

Dr. Elkind shows us the very real difference between the mind of a preschool child (how it works) and that of a school-age child. He makes clear how much young children can and do learn when they are presented with developmentally appropriate parenting practices and education. He shows us how healthy education supports and encourages the spontaneous learning process through which young children explore and understand their immediate world, and how miseducation ignores it, attempting to teach the wrong things at the wrong time. And, in turn, we see how early miseducation can cause permanent damage to a child's self-esteem, the loss of the positive attitude a child needs for learning the blocking of natural gifts and potential talents.

Finally, Dr. Elkind discusses what parents should look for when deciding upon the initial stages of their children's education and what preschool programs are the most considerate of the individual child. In a special section, he answers the most common questions he's heard from parents.

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## **Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk** By David Elkind Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Elkind, author of *The Hurried Child*, is a child-study specialist (at Tufts University) of eminent common sense who is critical of fads and whom parents would do well to heed, especially those intent on pre-educating their preschoolers to prepare them for formal study with the same frenzy with which they groom themselves for career success. Development in toddlers, he cautions, can be seriously damaged by parents' well-meaning rush to give them a head-start on education or in sports. Preschoolers ought to be encouraged in their spontaneous learning rather than given formal instruction that teaches them "the wrong things at the wrong time," he stresses, citing several popular baby institutes of learning to emphasize his criticism. Elkind quotes experts such as Jean Piaget and Erik Erikson, reviews child-development studies and the controversy surrounding preschool education and firmly advises parents not to miseducate their children, but allow them, even precocious ones, to excel at their own speed.

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From Library Journal

The author of *The Hurried Child* and *All Grown Up and No Place To Go* now turns his attention to the recent phenomenon of producing "superkid" preschoolers. Elkind protests the proliferation of all-day kindergarten programs, academic preschools, and programs and materials designed to teach young children how to read, compute, ski, etc. He contends that such early formal instruction "miseducates" children and often subjects them to stress and long-term personality damage. His arguments are compelling and well-substantiated. Written primarily for parents, the book will interest all concerned with the education of young children. While Elkind's message will be unpopular with many, his book should be in public libraries and education collections. Patricia Smith Butcher, Trenton State Coll. Lib., N.J.

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About the Author

David Elkind, who received his Ph.D. in psychology at UCLA, was a longtime professor of Child Study at Tufts University and Senior Resident Scholar at the Lincoln-Filene Center. He is also the author of numerous books, including *The Hurried Child* and *All Grown Up and No Place to Go*.

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

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**Joseph Davis:**

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