

# Have American Parents Got It All Backwards?

*Editor's Pick. Written by Christine Gross-Loh.*

Imagine my surprise when I came across a kindergartener in the German forest whittling away on a stick with a penknife. His teacher, Wolfgang, lightheartedly dismissed my concern: “No one’s ever lost a finger!”

Similarly, Brittany, an American mom, was stunned when she moved her young family to Sweden and saw 3- and 4-year-olds with no adult supervision bicycling down the street, climbing the roofs of playhouses and scaling tall trees with no adult supervision. The first time she saw a 3-year-old high up in a tree at preschool, she started searching for the teacher to let her know. Then she saw another parent stop and chat with one of the little tree occupants, completely unfazed. It was clear that no one but Brittany was concerned.

“I think of myself as an open-minded parent,” she confided to me, “and yet here I was, wanting to tell a child to come down from a tree.”

Read the full thing at [HuffingtonPost.com](http://HuffingtonPost.com) »