

ROCK SOLID FOUNDATIONS

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Gavin Keller is a Father, Teacher, Principal and Education Consultant. He is passionate about encouraging parents to raise children to be successful.



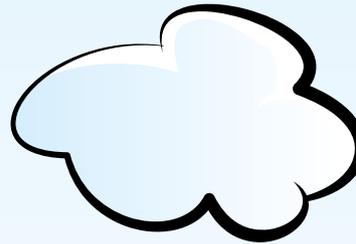
There is not a parent who does not want the very best for their child. The unknown future, like a mirage, stretches out ahead of their children and they agonise over each season, the right pre-school, friend choice, schools and behaviours.

So, what is the secret to making sure that our children survive this unknown future? Some adults specialize in being helicopter parents, hovering over each moment of their offsprings lives. Others throw up their hands in despair and immerse themselves in their careers or businesses. Still, others fluctuate depending on their own stress and annoyance levels.

Survey a group of parents and you will get the same answers. Everyone wants their children to be successful, entrepreneurial, happy, focused, driven

and passionate as adults. But how? Are there any baseline requirements?

The Rock Solid Foundation is the key to the success story. Let's imagine that life could be compared to climbing a mountain. The mountain has sheer cliffs that need to be climbed. When children reach these seasons in their life-climb, they need a solid rock foundation who acts like a belayer. In rock climbing lingo, the belayer is the experienced climber who positions himself at the foot of the mountain with the climber clearly in his sights. Carefully, the climber who is harnessed to the rope, feeds the rope through a chosen anchor point, while the belayer holds the end of the rope, giving enough slack for the climber to be fully



aware that he is climbing his own mountain, but supported by an experienced, wise and rock solid foundation.

Parents have to behave like the belayer. Experienced in climbing techniques, the role of the parent is to be focused on the climber, be able to give advice and encouragement, and guide them as to where the next finger grip may be. For the climber, this may require a huge stretch, while fingers and toes serve as the only grip.

Slipping is part of rock climbing. But there is no fear of falling when the rope is quickly pulled taut and the climber gently swings back into position while the belayers voice of guidance and reassurance focuses the climber's vision.

Without a rock solid foundation our children are destined to fail as adults. I call this rock solid foundation a CARE base.

We know the brain loves to feel a sense of belonging and worthiness. Worthiness is developed on the sheer face of the mountain. It is created when we have regulations and routines. These need to be reinforced by the belayer. When small victories are celebrated by the belayer, children build confidence and are energized.

When the foundation CARES, the climber DARES. The firmer the foundation, the more radical the risks.

Radical risk-takers make successful adults. Fear of failure cripples risk taking. When parents allow their children to fail in the knowledge that they will be there to tighten the rope and break the fall, we embed the essential principles for success.

Raising climbing children is belayer work. We have to play the part. Fully equipped with all the

gear and experience, we need to roll up our sleeves, rope firmly in our hands and slowly release it as our children climb further towards adulthood.

And as they reach the summit, we share that glorious moment in the knowledge that they did it – thanks to a rock solid foundation. 🧗

