

Helicopter parenting laws enforced in South Carolina

The backlash against the [North August city government](#) has been nothing less than severe as [news outlets](#) accuse them of enforcing helicopter parenting laws. From the state where conservative politics once meant *mind-your-own-damn-business*, southern police departments have started targeting anti-helicopter parents – those who let their kids run free and learn independence by playing alone.

The irony is great, but the tragedy is real. Just ask Debra Lynn Harrell, 46, who was arrested and charged with unlawful neglect toward a child.

The criminal act? Letting her 9-year old play in a public park without supervision. The girl told arresting police officers she sometimes walks over to visit McDonald's – where her mother works – or to the Wal-mart to buy lunch. The Department of Social Services took custody of the child.

A lot of parents thought the [festival of stupid](#) was limited to blowhards blogging on the Internet about the perils of [sleep training](#) – the practice of abandoning children in beds to learn to sleep on their own. Now, police in South Carolina have sent the message loud and clear that hands-off parenting strategies meant to teach independence are going to be prosecuted.

Watching the story develop with outrage and despair are the anti-helicopter moms and dads who think parenting is best done by allowing children to explore their independence.

The [circumstances](#) of the mother's absence make the law enforcement's decision to arrest the woman and take her child away from her all the more disturbing. The 9-year old had a mobile phone with her and was keenly aware her mother was working at the McDonald's. The cops clearly made a decision based on unfounded paranoia about child abduction or some other invented dangers clearly not present in the bucolic southern town of North Augusta.

One angry [blogger](#) clearly stated his case against these new helicopter parenting standards:

We need to understand that kids need to learn manners, and outside behavior, but also responsibility like walking to and from the park by themselves ... and be ok. We need to give our children the tools for success, so that they can build upon the feeling of independence and trust.

The enforcement of helicopter parenting has a record in other parts of the South, including La Porte, Texas where a police officer arrested a mother for letting her children ride scooters unsupervised in her neighborhood.

Sadly, it's the good parents who also suffer the results of these arrests, good parents who hesitate to send their children out to ride their bicycles in the park or fear asking their children to walk home from school. Our politically correct world has long been a product birthed in those "liberal cities" in the northeastern states; now, the conservative states have decided to force their morals upon citizens. Helicopter parenting is now being enforced by threat of criminal prosecution in South Carolina.