

Student Sample 1 With Commentary

Score Row	Total number of points earned: 25 (out of 30 possible points)	Scoring Commentary
Understanding and Analyzing Content	<p><b>4:</b> The report poses a problem, question or issue with reasonable complexity, places it in a clear context, and provides a rationale for the inquiry process.</p>	<p>Issue is relevant to an ongoing local/national controversy that affected teachers and students. Vague reference to “branch of research” and “multitude of questions” to be answered but no evidence of those in essay. Limited rationale for inquiry process, i.e., “the impacts” and “typical local cultural practices.”</p>
Understanding and Analyzing Perspective	<p><b>4:</b> The report identifies relevant perspectives, provides limited evaluation of the validity of arguments and reflects a limited understanding of how the reasoning is logically aligned with the conclusions of those arguments.</p>	<p>Perspectives are identified as “the impacts of this phenomenon” including Academic Achievement, Relationships, and Cultural Influences. Arguments are included on both sides of the unconditional praise question, but the validity of the arguments or the reasoning is non-existent.</p>
Selecting and Using Evidence	<p><b>6:</b> The report effectively synthesizes evidence from multiple perspectives to build its argument.</p>	<p>Multiple sources including information from a student-developed interview component synthesized to build argument.</p>
Building and Communicating an Argument	<p><b>6:</b> The report offers one or more well-reasoned resolutions, solutions, or conclusions that acknowledge consequences or implications.</p>	<p>Conclusion seems to have been reached in introduction. Evidence does support conclusion and implications are addressed, i.e., unconditional praise altering a child’s ability.</p>
Selecting and Using Evidence  Grammar and Style	<p><b>2:</b> The report attributes and cites sources used with a reasonable amount of accuracy and thoroughness. The bibliography includes all or most referenced sources, but it fails to utilize consistent style and formatting.</p> <p><b>3:</b> The report contains few flaws in grammar and style and clearly communicates to the reader.</p>	<p>Chang entry is flawed. Closest style guide is APA but some errors in alignment. Entries are consistent. All sources are referenced.</p> <p>No errors in grammar or style were noted. Report communicates clearly.</p>

## Student Sample 1 With Commentary

### The Impacts of Unconditional Praise on Children

Our group decided to research the effects of unconditional praise as children enter the global community. This branch of research provided a multitude of questions regarding the effects of this particular practice. We focused our individual research on answering these questions.

The Edmonton Public School Board recently placed the No-Zero Policy into effect. This is a local example of the phenomenon of unconditional praise in an academic environment. The policy was in place throughout Canada and stated that a student could not receive a zero on any assignment despite the quality or lack of work provided. Many students began to abuse the policy, which resulted in inaccurate grading. Some teachers refused to participate in this policy due to its unfortunate consequences on everyone involved. This policy fostered an attitude of entitlement within the students' behavior, as it removed their responsibility to be held accountable for task completion. This controversy inspired our research project and we expanded our perspectives on the issue to encompass global ramifications.

Every case is unique; however, the majority of individuals raised in an environment of unconditional praise do not develop effective skills to support their transition into mature citizens within the global community. The impacts of this phenomenon can be seen in the results of academic achievement, the workplace, relationships, and the development of neurochemical association between action and reward. These effects differ on a global scale dependent on the typical local cultural practices of child rearing.

#### Academic Achievement

A child's achievement in school is often a function of the way in which they were raised. Traditional cultural practices associated with parenting in particular locations affect children in different ways. For instance, the difference in parenting styles between Caucasian American and Asian American parents leads to a variation in results on standardized tests and in-school success. While Caucasian Americans often remind their child of positive past experiences in order to protect their child's self-esteem and encourage a positive attitude towards learning, Asian American parents place a strong emphasis on obedience, reliability, and proper behavior, often reminding their children of past academic failures in an effort to inspire better test results (Chang, 2007). In the same vein, a child's success on standardized tests is negatively correlated with the use of unconditional praise, which is more common in the Caucasian American style of parenting. In a study by Barton, Dielmann, and Cattell (2010), multiple junior high students were examined using standardized tests. Those who had parents that completed child-rearing practice questionnaires indicating the use of lavish praise at home tended to underachieve in comparison to classmates raised under alternate child-rearing methods.

#### Relationships

Shown to temporarily alleviate the negative feelings of the receiver, praise can be used to instill self-confidence and positive emotions. High school students were examined using a personality questionnaire. Those with parents that indicated a higher use of praise were more likely to be outgoing in their social interactions. This suggests that using copious amounts of praise increases a child's confidence levels, making them more inclined to interact with others outside of their comfort zone (Barton, K., Dielmann, T.E., Cattell, R.B., 2010). Looking at the positive effects of boosting a child's self-esteem, Glen Waddell, a professor at the University of Oregon, states that children who have a poor attitude and self-esteem are less likely to succeed in the global community. Additionally, it is theorized that the maintaining of long-term relationships becomes a struggle for these adolescents due to their lesser efforts regarding work ethic. Waddell suggests that these factors are often indicators of how well these people perform in other aspects of their lives (Mocan, N. & Tekin, E., 2011). On the other hand, Joanne Wood of the University of Waterloo has suggested that unconditional praise can cause negative moods in people with low self-esteem because they conflict with those people's personal views of themselves (2011). People are motivated by self-evaluation when it comes to their performance in domains they find important. If they perceive a compliment received as an obligated or untruthful evaluation, it will have a greater negative impact than not receiving a compliment at all (Cole, S.L., 2009). The primary motive behind the parenting strategy of unconditional praise is to raise a child's self-esteem; unfortunately, it has been proven to bring about the opposite of the desired outcome in many individuals.

#### Cultural Influences

Dwayne Donald, a Native Studies professor at the University of Alberta, suggests that the past traumas of residential schooling may have an effect on how First Nations families raise their children in the modern world. Residential schooling was a very real issue that began in the 19th century, involving frightening and degrading treatment of First

**Comment [Reader1]:** Rubric Row 1: Issue is relevant to an ongoing local/national controversy that affected teachers and students. Vague reference to "branch of research" and "multitude of questions" to be answered but no evidence of those in essay. Limited rationale for inquiry process, i.e., "the impacts" and "typical local cultural practices."

**Comment [Reader2]:** Rubric Row 1: Limited rationale for inquiry process, i.e., "the impacts" and "typical local cultural practices."

Rubric Row 2: Perspectives are identified as "the impacts of this phenomenon" including Academic Achievement, Relationships, and Cultural Influences.

Rubric Row 4: Conclusion seems to have been reached in introduction. Evidence does support conclusion and implications are addressed, i.e., unconditional praise altering a child's ability.

**Comment [Reader3]:** Rubric Row 3: Multiple sources including information from a student-developed interview component synthesized to build argument. There are multiple examples of this throughout the paper.

**Comment [Reader4]:** Rubric Row 5: Closest style guide is APA but some errors in alignment. All sources are referenced.

**Comment [Reader5]:** Rubric Row 4: Evidence does support conclusion and implications are addressed, i.e., unconditional praise altering a child's ability.

**Comment [Reader6]:** Rubric Row 3: Multiple sources including information from a student-developed interview component synthesized to build argument. There are multiple examples of this throughout the paper.

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Nations children in an effort to assimilate them into a more westernized culture. Despite the last residential school being closed in 1996, these traumatic events continue to have lasting effects on First Nations people today. Donald suggests that First Nations parents' only reference point for parenting is the treatment they received in the residential schooling systems (Personal Communication, 2012). Due to their mistreatment in residential schools, these parents strive to protect their children from the negative experiences they had. These parents may "confuse unconditional love with unconditional praise" (Samarasekera, I., 2013), leading to this particular parenting style.

How does this response portray key elements of westernized culture? Speech patterns and the internalized cultural attitude towards aspects such as compliments have an effect on a person's development into an adult. For instance, there is a vast difference between American and Chinese responses to compliments. As seen in a study conducted by Chen (1993), the most common response for Americans was accepting the compliment; only 12% of the American students showed any attempted rejection of it. On the other hand, 95% of Chinese students in this study rejected the compliments given. This study suggests that a westernized society such as America's may in fact have imposed on members of the community the expectation of being complimented for "their appearance, [obtaining] a new possession, or [having] performed well on a particular task" (Chen, 1993). The American cultural attitude that compliments must be given in response to even very minor improvements may suggest that this is the reason for such excessive praise in modern westernized society. The giving and receiving of praise has been internalized to such an extent that the people of this culture expect the reception of compliments on a daily basis.

### Workplace

The long term effects of unconditional praise are starting to emerge in the workforce. Employers are facing new challenges daily, often leading to monetary losses for the company. These employers are increasingly finding that employees entering the workforce do not come equipped with the necessary work ethic needed to complete the tasks assigned to them. Furthermore, youth entering the workforce have a strong sense of entitlement that may lead to them feeling justified to question their superiors. Employees who have been raised with an abundance of praise often question whether or not the reward for completing a task is good enough before they begin; this attitude affects the quality of work that the employee produces, which in turn affects the company's bottom line (Allan, G., 2013; Kohn, A., 1994; Zoms, K., 2013). It has been proven in over a dozen studies that people who expect praise for completing a task do not perform as well as those who do not expect any (Kohn, A., 1994). These attitudes and the resulting inadequate work forces the employers to fire the ineffective workers and to train another person for the position. Training multiple employees for the same position is costing many companies not only large amounts of money, but also the time and resources used during the training.

Additionally, many of the employees that do remain on staff continue to cost the company excess amounts of money because of the amount of stress-related leaves they take. Employees that have grown up with parents and teachers that unconditionally praise them often struggle in the workforce due their poor work ethic and have an inability to multi-task. These factors accumulatively lead to a higher stress level, causing them to require a larger amount of stress breaks than the average employee. During that time, the company loses money (Howard, L., 2010).

### Economic Losses

When a person that has grown up with regular exposure to unconditional praise leaves the environment they have grown so accustomed to, the drastic changes they experience as they enter the global community can lead to an inability to function efficiently. This often happens when these adolescents enter post-secondary. The rate of post-secondary dropouts has been increasing over the past years, partially due to the aforementioned issues relating to unconditional praise. It was determined that, in Canada, 15% of students have dropped out of post-secondary education since 2005 - furthermore, "students who dropped out were already struggling in their first year with deadlines, academic performance, and study patterns" (Millar, E., 2007). When students drop out of a post-secondary institution, they are not reimbursed for the cost of tuition or any associated educational costs. Additionally, dropping out of post-secondary causes expenses to not only the student and their families - taxpayers are also affected. Post-secondary education in Canada is subsidized; this means that any lost money tied to a student who drops out before achieving their degree can be traced back to the taxpayers and government budgets.

If a student is unable to find work due to their uncompleted post-secondary endeavors, or has been fired due to poor work habits, they generally cannot support themselves. This can result in an increased expense for their parents. Parents typically step in and continue to provide for their children. This previously unnecessary investment can delay the parents' retirement due to monetary losses (Marr, G., 2012).

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**Comment [Reader8]:** Rubric Row 4: Evidence does support conclusion and implications are addressed, i.e., unconditional praise altering a child's ability.

**Comment [Reader9]:** Rubric Row 3: Multiple sources including information from a student-developed interview component synthesized to build argument. There are multiple examples of this throughout the paper.

**Comment [Reader10]:** Rubric Row 4: Evidence does support conclusion and implications are addressed, i.e., unconditional praise altering a child's ability.

**Comment [Reader11]:** Rubric Row 3: Multiple sources including information from a student-developed interview component synthesized to build argument. There are multiple examples of this throughout the paper.

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### Biological Structure of Rewards

In the human brain, praise is registered within the structures commonly known as the human reward system. Dopamine, a neurotransmitter in the brain, is responsible for promoting feelings of joy, reinforcement, and motivation (Reece, J.B., Urry, L.A., Cain, M.L., Wasserman, S.A., Minorsky, P.V., Jackson, R.B., 2010). It is released as a result of receiving praise. Over time, the results of dopamine pathways created by praise can lead to learned behaviors and the association of reward and the completion of tasks becomes ingrained in the brain. This neurochemical association between action and reward is further reflected in the motivation and individual experiences when completing a goal-directed task (Bear, M.F., Connors, B.W., Paradiso, M.A., 2001). Believed to be largely motivated by anticipated reward, the human reward system becomes activated in the response to potential praise. This activates and creates dopaminergic pathways. As a result, people develop increased cognitive control or the ability to suppress rival behaviors in favor of goal-directed responses. This results in increased motivation to not only complete a task when potential praise is present, but to perform the task with accuracy (Kohls, G., Peltzer, J., Herpertz-Dahlmann, B., Konrad, K., 2009).

Over time, recipients of higher than average amount of praise can become habituated to the compliments coming from frequent sources (Cole, S.L., 2009). According to Kelley's Attribution Theory and the Discounting Principle (Kelley, H.H., 1972), people are "sense-makers" and will never accept praise at face value. Instead, we try to explain the praise or search for alternate reasons as to why it was given. If praise is received from a common source, such as a parent, it results in a decreased emotional impact associated with the praise. This effect is exponentially increased if the domain in which the praise is given, such as in school or athletics, is important to the receiver (Cole, S.L., 2009). Therefore, in times when praise may matter most, its hedonic impact may be muted as the receiver of the praise becomes numb to its emotional effects. This may result in unconditional praise becoming thoroughly ineffective as a parenting strategy.

### Conclusion

The No-Zero Policy was created according to the westernized mindset of unconditional praise, attempting to aid children in an academic environment. This policy was ineffective and strengthened the issue of entitlement in adolescents. It wasted valuable resources, time, and energy to instate and to then abolish. The failure of the No-Zero Policy demonstrates how blanket policies are not effective in fostering positive, constructive mindsets and behaviors as children enter the global community.

On the positive side of this issue, unconditional praise appears to be beneficial for the child's mood, can increase their confidence, and fosters an outgoing personality. However, other evidence exists, indicating that children and adolescents may not benefit from unconditional praise. They are not developing the neural pathways and behavioral patterns associated with self-motivated effort, and, as a result, they move into the competitive environments of post-secondary education and the workplace ill-equipped to manage those challenges. Furthermore, the lavish use of praise results in habituation of the emotional effects of the praise, rendering it useless over time. The westernized cultural mindset that praise is to be expected for very minor accomplishments fosters an unhealthy attitude towards work ethic in children and adolescents, further inhibiting their ability to be constructive members of the global community. These inhibitions result in an ineffective workforce and excessive economic expenses. Clearly, the negative effects of the child-rearing strategy of unconditional praise outweigh the positive effects by a large margin. As a result, it can be concluded that the child-rearing practice of unconditional praise does not bring about optimal results for either the child or society as a whole.

What must be taken into account is the fact that every person is an individual, and that blanket solutions do not apply to every child's needs. As we have mentioned, many factors must be taken into account when determining how best to educate and raise a child. Schools need to remove policies that constrict the teachers. This gives them the freedom to work with each student in the most effective way at the teacher's discretion. We must focus our efforts on tailoring our approach to each child in accordance to their needs; this can be achieved through the creation of a warm home environment void of excess praise. The child needs to feel comfortable enough to express themselves and make mistakes without feeling self conscious, yet not be unconditionally praised.

This approach does have limitations, as it is impossible to create a perfectly optimal environment for a child in every aspect of their life. Additionally, the margin of human error factors into the equation, as there is no such thing as a perfect parent or child. Furthermore, in an academic environment, teachers are limited in their freedom to adapt their teaching style to every child's needs, as they are vastly outnumbered by the students.

However, one blanket statement that *does* apply is that unconditional love benefits every child, while unconditional

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#### Comment [Reader13]: Rubric Row 2:

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praise does not. When parents confuse unconditional praise as a means of expressing unconditional love, it alters the child's ability to be an effective member of the local and global community.

**Comment [Reader14]:** Rubric Row 6: No errors in grammar or style were noted. Report communicates clearly.

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**Comment [Reader15]:** Rubric Row 5: Chang entry is flawed. Closest style guide is APA but some errors in alignment. Entries are consistent. All sources are referenced.

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Reece, J.B., Urry, L.A., Cain, M.L., Wasserman, S.A., Minorsky, P.V., Jackson, R.B., (2010). *Campbell Biology* (9th ed.) San Francisco, California: Benjamin-Cummings Publishing Company

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Samarasekera, I. (2013, February 4). Personal Communication. See Appendix A.3

Zons, K. (2013, February 26). Personal Communication. See Appendix A.4

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### Appendix A.1

#### 1. Can you state your: Name, occupation, and qualifications?

He has asked for this to remain anonymous, and to not share his company's name

**Comment [Reader16]:** Rubric Row 3: Multiple sources including information from a student-developed interview component synthesized to build argument.

#### 2. What are your thoughts as not only an employer, but a parent on practices such as schools 'no-zero policy' and athletics participation awards?

Well I guess I can combine, if that's okay, a number of different perspectives as an employer, as a parent for the last 16 years, and as a teacher as well. But I am not a proponent of the no zero policy. I mean I do believe that, as put in my response to your first question that, everyone should succeed, and everyone can be a winner, but that's a privilege it's not a right. It's your reward for doing your part, for showing up, for giving an authentic effort, for giving more sometimes than you take away. If on the other hand you maybe don't show up or you don't put in the effort then frankly you deserve a zero. And if that means athletically you don't make the team, if it means in the workplace you lose your job, or if in school it means you fail a math class because you didn't do what's required then I guess that's a learning experience that you have to accept and then move on from, and I know this is a controversial question but I think that would be my best response to the issue.

#### 3. Have you personally been affected, witnessed, or maybe heard of the effects of these practices? Can you give an example?

Um, yes I see it in the workplace, maybe not so much here, but perhaps more in the clients that I serve. Within my team there are very senior, accomplished, well-paid young executives who have earned their stripes, have experienced ups and downs, gotten zeros, and are in a better place because of that. But I have employers amongst my customer base that share with me that younger workers, for lack of a better word, are coming to work with this **sense of entitlement** because they think and are conquering that maybe they've just been promoted along without frankly having to earn their position. So that's um something that my customers, who are employers, are telling me. What we do in an effort to consciously get around this floating through your career and not putting in an effort in the workplace attitude is we are very rigorous in our recruiting process. We recruit by references, through evidence that good work and hard work and results are something you're known for. These are critical to earning an opportunity to work for a company like [He has asked for his company's name to remain anonymous]. It's just today's youth in there can add contributions to their communities, to leadership, to sports and they're going to stand out. The task is upon me and other potential employers to validate whether it is the case that they are good workers. I'm sorry I don't know if I really answered that question all that directly.

#### 4. How do you believe this mindset is going to affect young people as they enter the global community as adults? Why do you think that?

Yah this 'no zero policy' mindset well if you're moving to adulthood and into the community I think young people today are aware that success is dependent upon the quality of their

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relationships. The relationships that you have not only with family members, and community members, and colleagues, but relationships are hard work. And if in your formative years you maybe didn't learn how to work very hard, you may find it very difficult to maintain these relationships. I think we see that in today's society through our divorce rates and stuff, I suggest that it is in part because of the hard work they are higher now than they have been in the past because the consequences of inaction, or not caring, or not putting as much work as you should into the relationship is them dissolving. I also think that because 'no zero policies' and similar practices have been in place for quite some time we are seeing in the workplace more colleagues having to tap into stress days, having challenges with multi-tasking, which honestly is a part of what we do at work. We're on a conference call, while preparing for the next meeting, while deciding how to deal with customer x. Being able to handle multiple jobs at once is part of the job and the stress on those that can't manage this is increasing. We've also seen an uptake in mental health issues, and I'm very proud to work for a company that invests very heavily in helping us practice, and maintain good mental health. And my personal feeling is that it is in part because of this no zero policy attitude that a lot of people just don't have that ability to deal properly with stress. And I also think that as they enter into the workplace if you have the ability to bounce back from failure, from zeros, that would be essential. And if you can bounce back and persevere that's is in my view really a true measure of one's ability to demonstrate leadership, commitment, and ultimately be successful.

## Appendix A.2

### A: Dwayne Donald's Email

Hi XXX,

Just want to note before I answer the questions that the perspective you are getting from me on this issue is the perspective of a First Nations man and father but it is not THE First Nations Perspectives. Perspectives on these issues would be as diverse among First Nations peoples as it would in the general population.

1. Dwayne Donald, Professor, Faculty of Education University of Alberta
2. You may quote me. Hopefully I share something worth quoting.
3. This question of 'undeserved praise' is an interesting one. My view is that Canadian society in general has shifted in its child raising practices in the past few generations. This is a result of general affluence. Children are given much more than they have been in the past and parents are doing much more for their children than they did in the past. Whereas my parents expected me to contribute to the household chores (without receiving allowance as 'payment') and expected me to get myself to places on my own (either walking or taking the bus) many children today are chauffeured around. The general trend seems to be to shield children from hardship or struggle by doing things for them - in a strange expression of parental love. One general consequence of this trend is that children today seem less able to problem solve on their own and seem less able to take on responsibilities that their parents or grandparents were expected to do when they were children. The case of First Nations communities is unique on this issue though. It is important to

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remember that First Nations families were under attack for 80-100 years. Residential school policy and practice has destroyed many families. For multiple generations, First Nations children were not raised by their parents or grandparents. Their 'parents' were nuns, clergy and teachers at the schools. The children were abused by these supposed caregivers and learned dysfunctional understandings of family. First Nations children did not learn to be good loving parents because they were not raised by their parents. When the children grew up and became parents themselves, their reference point for caring for their kids was often the treatment they had received in the schools. Although things have changed for First nations people today, the scars of those traumas remains deep in the communities and families. Today, First Nations parents may give 'undeserved praise' because they want to love their children and are unsure how best to do it because of the intergenerational traumas of residential schooling. They want to encourage their children to do well and be strong because they recognize that there are so many barriers in their way.

### 4. Against

5. If all we hear is praise, we may get a sense that everything we do is okay and that any problems that arise are someone else's fault and problem. There are many important life lessons that come from making mistakes, admitting them, suffering the consequences of them, and correcting ourselves to avoid making the same mistake. If I am given the impression that I am flawless via unconditional praise, I will miss these life lessons and suffer as a result.

6. I was raised to do my part in the family with the expectation that I would do it without praise. It was considered a necessary part of being a part of the family. I was also raised to make my own decisions from an early age and be responsible for what happened as a result of those decisions. For example, my parents did not badger me to do homework. They let me decide from an early age. But they did hold me accountable for my marks and the consequences were real.

## Appendix A.3

### T: Can you state your name, occupation, and qualifications?

Indira: Indira Samarasekera. President, University of Alberta. PhD in engineering.

### T: And may we quote you in our paper? And if so, are there any limitations to how you would be comfortable with us quoting you?

I: No problem. You can quote me however you like. As long as it's based on the information that I've given you.

### T: Ok what is your opinion on the growing popularity of the mindset "everyone's a winner" that children are being exposed to and why?

I: Yeah I mean I think that that notion of calling everyone a winner is actually not helpful and not healthy for children. I think children try best when they're challenged and they're sometimes allowed to fall short or fail and then encouraged to identify why they didn't need a stretch goal so that they can improve the next time. It proves important that people understand that telling everybody's a winner doesn't build self-esteem which is one of the reasons people say that oh we shouldn't tell people that they've not done well because that affects their self-esteem and that's not true. Children's self-esteem is built by in my opinion everybody's self-esteem is built by achieving, real achievement, where you actually know that you achieved something as opposed to people saying oh you've done well when you actually know you haven't and I think that that's a danger of calling everybody a winner and not encouraging children to take on difficult challenges in which they may not succeed and try to build resilience so that they can meet life

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challenges because in life you don't always succeed and you're not always a winner.

**T: Have you personally been affected, witnessed, or maybe heard of the effects of these practices and can you give an example?**

I: I actually, the only thing that I can say is that when my children were growing up, certainly I had a sense that this was the case. That the schools would not you know they would not give report cards in which in any way a child had to sometimes face when they were not performing. So I think there was a tendency to mark easy, to give higher grades than the children deserved for a certain level of competence. I certainly experienced that when my children were growing up and I thought that was a bit of an issue and I remember clearly when one year my son came home with a certain grade in math and I remember being very surprised because I didn't think that quite reflected his performance on that particular test.

**T: How do believe this mindset is going to affect young people as they enter the global community as adult and what makes you believe that?**

I: Well I think a bit young people will be in equipped to succeed because in order to succeed you have to be resilient, and in order to develop resilience and character kids need to take on more and more difficult challenges and sometimes to stretch beyond what they might be completely capable of in order so they can understand how they need to improve themselves to reach a stretch goal. And when you've got hundreds of millions, i mean billions, of young people around the world competing for jobs, for opportunities, for careers, those societies in which children are encouraged to accurately assess their own performance and strive for self-control, are going to be happier because they'll feel more fulfilled when they achieve something, they will also be more capable because they will build up skills in order to stretch themselves and therefore they will ultimately have a better quality of life. So I believe it will do a huge disservice to those societies that have this culture in which they are unable to assist children in self-assessment; accurate and honest self-assessment. I think one of the things that parents do is that they confuse unconditional love with unconditional praise. It is really important that children are loved unconditionally but that does not mean that with it should come unconditional praise each of the which you should have honest appraisal and a discussion with your child as they grow up about how to set goals, how to work hard, how to persevere, how to deal with failure, how to deal with success. And when there is true success, then you do praise them, you do reward them, you do celebrate that, but it has to be true success and the children should be able to distinguish between true success and cases where they may have fallen short.

**T: So how do you think it will affect other aspects of their life like relationships and ability to deal with stress and mental health?**

I: Yeah I mean I think this is when you have to be careful, you should not you should understand that children develop at different stages. So there is, there, you have to be, when children are very little I think you have to obviously understand that they need tremendous amounts of emotional support when they're very little and at that stage I think you have to love and nurture them and encourage them to develop their capabilities without exercising stress. But as they get older you need to add to their you know repertoire if you will or their lives, the ability to talk about stress, to understand where it's coming from and to also discover that when they strive and achieve success they are actually happier and therefore are less likely to be stressed if they understand what it takes to succeed. So I think some of the mental health challenges that we see today are partly because children have not set clear expectations of themselves and therefore find that they're not achieving what they thought they should be achieving and they don't understand the relationship between the work that they need to put in to achieve that success and they have.

## Student Sample 1 With Commentary

And when they find that they have to put in far more work than they had expected, then they feel under stressed because they never really learned how to manage work load incrementally throughout their lives. So for example in high school, if you've never really had to work very hard and you've got very, very high grades, when you come to university, and you discover you work the same amount which is not very hard and you don't get high grades, then you get, you feel stressed out.....Phone cuts off.....next question

**T: How were you yourself raised, and do you think this affects your outlook on the issue?**

I: Yes so I was raised in a school system in which we had very clear understanding of the relationship between effort and performance and success. And so I knew exactly when I had done well and I was I felt very good about it and so I found satisfaction in and I knew exactly when I didn't do well and nobody tried to cushion me from those occasions in which my either I wasn't working hard enough or I hadn't even the skills or I hadn't made the effort to understand what it took to be successful. So I think once you have that ability to do that self-assessment, then when you take on life's challenges you know when to celebrate, when you've done well and you figure out how to cope with adversity and difficulties because you experiences it. And so for me certainly when I've when I had challenges that I don't complete and things don't quite go the way I want, I have built a sort of reservoir of resilience that I can draw from and say I know I can if I do this again differently, if I spent some time on it, I do more work, I get some assistance, that I'm sure I can do better and that gives me something to strive for. So I think that's how it's helped me personally.

T: K that's it. Thank you

## Appendix A.4

Further to your inquiry, please see my responses below in **Blue**.

I hope that you find my answers useful, and feel free to contact me for any clarification required. Good luck with your studies!

1.What is your name and occupation?

My name is Kristine Zons and I am the Manager of IT Education at Miller Thomson. The firm is a national law firm with eleven offices across Canada which has approximately 450 lawyers and 770 support staff members.

2.May we quote you in our paper? (To be read by Cambridge University)

Yes.

3. Have you noticed a change in productivity, work ethic or accountability in young employees?

Yes, unfortunately I have seen a decrease in work ethic and accountability in young employees arriving at the firm. For many of them, this is their first experience in the work force following high school or a one or two year college program. As a national law firm we work with a number of colleges that offer programs for individuals wanting to begin a career as a Legal Assistant or Paralegal and we accept students for an 8 week practicum study. Unfortunately, there are a few trends that seem to be emerging in the young adults coming to the firm.

1. Not adhering to the work hours and break policies set out by the firm. In addition, presuming that continually being 10 minutes late is "not a big deal" and should have no negative impact on their future with the firm.

## Student Sample 1 With Commentary

2. Close is good enough attitude. Attention to detail, exact and precise work product is of utmost importance in the legal industry and to Miller Thomson. Sloppy and careless work product is not acceptable or tolerated on any task that is required. The disbelief that they must re-do or correct the work is evident by their physical and sometime vocal reaction.
4. Have you received any indication that these behaviors are due to children being raised in an environment of unconditional praise? Yes. During their training and probation period with the Firm, new users are closely monitored and I have heard comments such as "this is way harder than it was in school", "what do they expect, it to be perfect", and "they are document nazi's here".
5. How has your company suffered?

There have been a number of consequences the firm has felt as a result:

1. Loss of Financial and Time Investment. The cost of recruiting, on boarding and training a new employee is significant and when a position needs to be re-filled the cost is amplified.
2. Finding suitable candidates has become much more difficult and as a result, lawyers may need to share or operate without assistance for a longer period of time.
3. Succession planning as the work force ages and the experienced and senior staff members begin to plan for reduced work hours or retirement the younger generations must gain the "hands on" work experience which only comes from working in the industry for a number of years.