

'Now' generation has real problems



Laura Flood, Zara Bell and Ryan Barnes learn life skills at The Kid Boss Academy. Picture: Justin Lloyd

Instant gratification a blight on patience and persistence

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LIFE skills such as persistence and patience are "dying out" among children who expect to master skills instantly or give up, say a growing number of concerned parenting experts and teachers.

An online "instant gratification" culture, along with overprotective parents who step in save their children from failures are leading to a generation of youngsters who simply "move on" when things don't work out to plan.

Northern beaches teacher and sports coach Jarrod

Dober says he says he often sees parents step in, whether unconsciously or not, if they feel their child is given a task they judge too hard.

Mr Dober, the founder of the Kid Boss Academy which teaches children living skills and the basic blocks of entrepreneurship, said children had become "used to getting everything instantly".

"Children want things now and therefore the life skills of patience and persistence are dying," he said. "But the real detrimental thought process is coming from parents who are now assessing tasks that

their child would or wouldn't do based on the amount of effort their child could handle."

He said children had become used to asking and being immediately given whether it was watching a movie or having dinner cooked. Even fundraising for school "mum will give them \$50 and it's all done".

Another common scenario these days was if the child had left their school assignment to the night before, the parent will quickly research and print out the answers, giving the child the task of sticking it down, he said.

"The vital skills of learning, persisting, failing and trying again from a different approach are falling by the wayside," Mr Dober said.

"Children are trying, failing and then simply moving on. If they don't get it straight away then it's all over."

"We are adapting to them, instead of pushing them beyond what they want."

The Kid Boss Academy has programs teaching children life skills and persistence, with one of the main projects teaching them how to set up their own charitable companies — from designing their

own business cards, setting up a company and baking and selling fundraising cookies.

Children's technology and development expert Dr Kristy Goodwin said teachers were increasingly finding it challenging to manage students' shorter attention spans, especially with digital devices "constantly pinging" with alerts and notifications.

"They are hankering for instant results and can't engage for a longer period."

Clinical psychologist Dr Judith Locke said: "Parents can step in too early to fix things for kids."