

# Parents should be cautious when taking risks that thesis

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## **Introduction**

The lives of parents and their children are intricately intertwined. Almost every decision a parent makes has an impact on the life of their child.

Parents often have to take risks that might make their life better but they need to consider what this might cost their children. If the risk is too high, then it would be gross negligence on the part of the parent if they go ahead anyway and they should be held solely responsible for the loss suffered by their children.

The myth of Daedalus and the Fall of Icarus is a good example on how the acts of a parent influences their child. Daedalus was imprisoned along with his young son, Icarus, by the Minotaur, the king of Crete. Desperate to escape, Daedalus created wings that were attached to their shoulders by molten wax. Daedalus warned Icarus not to fly too close to the sun or the wax would melt and he would fall. Icarus did not follow his father's instructions and fell to his death. The myth can be used to highlight how, despite taking precautionary measures, a parent still puts their child in danger if the risks of an endeavor are too high.

## **Foresight and Endeavor**

‘Forethought we may have, undoubtedly, but not foresight’ – Napoleon Bonaparte

Desperate times call for desperate measures. Although this proverb has been handed down to generations upon generations, the risk involved in such desperate measures needs to be justified, especially when it involves

parents and their children. Planning for the future requires forethought, i. e. what one thinks or expects will happen on in the future. Daedalus had forethought and anticipated the problems he and his son might encounter while trying to escape.

I warn you, Icarus, fly a middle course:

Don't go too low, or water will weigh the wings down;

Don't go too high, or the sun's fire will burn them.

Keep to the middle way. And one more thing,

No fancy steering by star or constellation,

Follow my lead!" That was the flying lesson.

Ovid, The Metamorphoses

Daedalus knew well the terms on which his contraption would work. He was also aware of the possibility that the small boy might lose his way or make the mistake of flying too high. He tried to safeguard his son by clearly warning him about flying too high and following his lead. However, these are the only precautionary measures he took although he knew what could happen if his plan was not followed to perfection. Despite the risk to his son, he decided to go ahead with his escape plan.

No matter how hopeless their situation may be, parents do not have the right to risk the lives of their children. Whether it is due to negligence or

desperation, parents are fully and solely responsible for putting placing their children in danger.

### Poor Judgement and Failure

And Icarus, his son, stood by and watched him,

Not knowing he was dealing with his downfall,

Stood by and watched and raised his shiny face

To let a feather, light as down, fall on it,

Or stuck his thumb in the yellow wax,

Fooling around, the way a boy will, always,

Whenever a father tries to get some work done.

### Ovid, The Metamorphoses

The painting by Paul depicts an impatient Daedalus pushing an unsteady Icarus into flight. Icarus was a small boy who did not understand the dangers of not heeding his father's warning. Children need constant guidance and do not always follow the instructions that are handed out to them. This is why responsible parents keep a close eye on their kids so that they can stop them when they are going to do something that might harm them.

Delos and Paros toward the left, Lebinthus

Visible to the right, and another island,

Calymne, rich in honey. And the boy

Thought This is wonderful! And left his father,

Soared higher, higher, drawn to the vast heaven,

Nearer the sun,

Ovid, The Metamorphoses

Icarus was enraptured by the experience of flying. The open sky and the brightness of the sun were too alluring for a little boy to resist. What Icarus did is what many children in his place would have done. It is irrational to give a child something as exciting as the ability to fly and then expect him to behave himself.

Bird's feather fastened with wax

Melted in a flash and scattered

Taken wings away, and Icarus

Fell off and lost his life

Anonymous

Daedalus failed to understand the risk involved in trusting a little boy's will to follow. He understood the dire consequences of the failure of his plans and what could happen to Icarus if he fell. He was impatient to return to his homeland and so took the risk of attempting an escape when his son was too

young and he paid a heavy price. Had he waited and remained a prisoner for a few more years till Icarus was mature enough to understand, his plan might have succeeded.