

**PSA: Please don't crack eggs on your toddler's head for the sake of social media trends**

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Social media trends can range from tame and entertaining, to uncomfortable or even dangerous. The latest trend, the “TikTok egg crack,” involves parents cracking eggs on their toddler's heads. It may sound **benign**, but when you watch the videos, it's anything but.

It's kind of like that trend where parents were slapping cheese slices on their babies' faces, except this one actually seems to cause pain and humiliation in a lot of the kids involved. Because they're self-aware enough to feel these emotions, it's painful to watch.

Last week, Sarah, the woman behind the **invaluable** account “mom.uncharted” on TikTok, offered her thoughts on the “trend.” “Yes, I've been tagged in a few of these videos, and I've seen it go two ways. One, the kid gets the egg on the head and they're kind of confused, thrown off, think it's a little funny. Then they move on. Or they get the egg cracked on the head and they're really upset about it, and they **freak out**,” Sarah explained.

Sarah's “mom.uncharted” page is dedicated to calling out child exploitation and abuse on social media, and mostly **consists of** explaining why “sharenting” (the oversharing of personal content about children on social media) is incredibly **problematic**.

“[Are we] needing to post on the internet so bad because it is so consuming to be a part of our world?” Sarah asks in her response video to the “TikTok egg crack” trend. “And the **dopamine hit**, and the likes and views, that we now in 2023 are cracking eggs on our children's heads in hopes that they have an entertaining reaction that we can post publicly online to entertain strangers? What are we doing? Why are we doing this?”

This parenting TikTok “trend” is similar to the “Meet Your Teacher” prank (where parents showed a scary picture of a person while lying that this was the child's teacher to see their reaction)—the only lesson taught with that trend was that it's OK to make fun of people over their looks and circumstances.

I could only stomach a few of the egg-cracking videos, because I don't find anything even remotely funny about a child, excited to help Mom in the kitchen, looking **bewildered**, then hurt, then embarrassed because the person they trust more than anyone in the world is cackling into their iPhone camera over the harm they just caused their young child.

“It's so great to laugh and joke around with our little ones and have fun and make memories. But we need to be mindful that we're not causing any physical or emotional discomfort,” Ms. Rachel says in a new video about the trend.

“Little ones feel safe and secure when they can trust their parents, and so we don't want to lose that trust,” she continues. “With the egg-cracking challenge, these little ones look so excited. Toddlers love helping to cook, they love helping in general. And then out of nowhere, they get hit with a hard egg. And then the little ones are like, ‘Oh, this was a safe and fun situation and now it's suddenly something else.’”

She also mentions that in a lot of the videos, the young kids speak up and mention that the egg-cracking hurt them, or they share how much they don't like it—but when the parents are laughing, the kids know their concerns and pain aren't taken seriously.

Please don't be your child's first bully. Because that's exactly what this is—bullying. For the sake of content. It's not only not funny (really, there are SO many ways to make funny and validating content for parents—this isn't it), but it's not at all OK.

**Vocabulary**

**benign** (adj.) = gentle and kindly; not harmful in effect

**invaluable** (adj.) = extremely useful; absolutely necessary (Note: The prefix in- means "not" but it doesn't cause this word to mean "not valuable", rather it means that the value is not able to be calculated)

monetarily. For example, family photos or heirlooms are invaluable because no sum of money could replace their loss.)

**freak out** (v.) = to behave wildly or irrationally due to a sudden surge of emotion

**consist (of)** (v.) = to be formed or made up of

**problematic** (adj.) = to be a part of or to present a problem

**dopamine hit** (n.) = to have a rush of the dopamine hormone which is connected to feelings of happiness and motivation

**bewildered** (adj.) = confused and uncertain

## **Discussion**

1. This article ends with the statement "Please don't be your child's first bully". Sometimes parents or other adult family members accidentally go too far when "teasing" or "joking" with children. What are your thoughts on this? What should be some limits adults who are around children have?

2. Some trends online can be fun to join but some can be quite problematic. Can you think of any examples of problematic trends that concerned you?