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TALKING POINTS

Restaurants: No kids allowed

Mike Vuick, who recently banned children under the age of 6 from eating at his restaurant, has seen business increase by 20 percent.

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Maybe it was a romantic dinner at your wife's favorite restaurant, or a reunion with old friends at a casual bistro. But we all know the frustration of having a restaurant meal ruined by a tot throwing a tantrum at the next table. Well, one restaurateur has had enough, said Mark Roth in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. Mike Vuick, owner of McDain's Restaurant in Monroeville, Pa., has taken the drastic step of banning children under the age of 6 from his "upscale-casual" eatery. Vuick said he decided on the ban because today's rude, indulgent parents fail to shush or remove their unruly rugrats; in fact, when he's asked them to consider other diners, the parents respond by saying indignantly, "How dare you tell me what to do with my kid?" Vuick's ban quickly became a national talking point on radio and cable news, pitting outraged parents against diners venting pent-up fury against noisy toddlers. McDain's, meanwhile, has seen business surge by 20 percent.

Vuick deserves the growth in business—and the thanks of diners everywhere, said Eric Heyl in the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. No one wants to pay \$100 for a quiet night out that's interrupted by high-pitched squealing, crying, or fussing. Complaining about McDain's "ban-the-brat policy" is a bit like griping that "Chateaubriand isn't available at Chuck E. Cheese." Doesn't enough of our culture already "revolve around kids"? said KJ Dell'Antonia in *Slate.com*. There are playgrounds in malls, airports, and museums, not to mention entire "hotels and cruise ships catering to families." So what if McDain's won't cater to your kids? There are 10 restaurants down the road that will.

As a parent myself, said Mary Elizabeth Williams in *Salon.com*, I have to question whether it's really fair to sentence all moms and dads to a decade of eating at McDonald's. "Kids need to be in the world to learn how to function in it," and most parents are considerate enough to remove their kids promptly if they misbehave. Ah, but this is the age of bans, said Ruben Navarrette in the Contra Costa, Calif., *Times*. Today, people absolutely refuse to put up with anything that makes them uncomfortable—whether it be smoking, someone's perfume, or noisy children. If you ask me, the big problem our country faces isn't obnoxious, pampered kids. "What we should really worry about is whether we're pampering our adults."

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