

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT FAMILY VLOGGERS

By

DaniXXGreen

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YouTube VIDEO TITLED: these family vlogs are HORRIBLE | The Sandwich Family - RECORDED: Jul 6, 2024 - PUBLISHED: Jul 9, 2024

DESCRIPTION OF VIDEO: I am so thankful for creators like Caroline Easom who use their platform to call out the dangers of family vlogs.

INTRODUCTION

DANI

If you're familiar with my content, you know that I am very against parents using their children for content. This family might be an exception to my rule.

DANI (CONT'D)

Hi, I'm Dani and you can normally find me on this channel diving into TLC shows, Christian fundamentalism, and exposing family vloggers. If this sounds like something you're into, I'm excited to have you around!

DANI (CONT'D)

So, I am absolutely kidding about making an exception, however, today we are taking a slight break from the depressing reality of these channels and diving into a fake family created by TikToker Caroline. Caroline makes amazing content all around and has over 3 million followers.

THE DANGERS

DANI (CONT'D)

Caroline, like me, is a massive hater of family vlogs and speaks to it in her TikTok from February 22nd.

CAROLINE

The public internet, much like the public world, is not an idyllic place that's only filled with people like you and me. Where we see a picture of a kid and we're like, "nice kid." It also has the worst of the worst. There are creeps on the internet and if you share videos or pictures of children to the public internet, you're not just sharing them to your kind hearted neighbor, you're also sharing them to your kind hearted neighbor's creepy uncle.

DANI

She goes on to say there is no reason anyone needs to post their kids to the public internet. By public, she means any account that is not set to private and its followers are unknown to the user. Ultimately, a person shares photos or videos of their children, their nieces and nephews, the kids they babysit, whatever the relationship may be, in the hopes of going viral: getting the comments, likes, and maybe some money. Does that have any benefit for the child? Or is it for the adult? She also makes a great point about consent.

CAROLINE

Kids cannot provide informed consent to being shared to millions of strangers... They cannot knowingly approve of being seen by millions of people; of being followed by millions of people. And, of course, what I discuss in many of my videos: The children of family vloggers are not given the privacy they deserve as human beings. And the adults in their life do not allow them to have boundaries in nearly anything.

LIL SANDWICH/SARAH GRACE

DANI

Caroline created a 40 part series where she creatively discussed the dangers and struggles of child influencers. She titled this series, "The Sandwich Family." The story begins in the Sandwich Mansion with Lil Sandwich in December of 2023. Sasha, the 25 year old oldest sister, has already escaped and went on 30 Minutes to explain her childhood. However, Lil Sandwich thinks that Sasha went sailing and got lost at sea.

BABYSITTER

So you make videos with your family?

LIL SANDWICH

(Speaking in a childish voice)
Yeah, all the time. Everyday.

BABYSITTER

And you have stalkers from that?

LIL SANDWICH

Uh huh. One of them even came to my school. That's why I'm not allowed to go to school anymore.

BABYSITTER

How did he know where you went to school?

LIL SANDWICH

It was probably from the "Tour of My School" video or maybe from the "Walk With Me to School" video.

(Switches to a more mature voice)
Do you mind if I use my regular voice or do I have to keep using my video voice?"

DANI

So, as we see, she's already commenting on the lack of privacy for these children and showing examples. We've all seen the luxurious house tour videos or the sponsored vacation tours. These families, in an attempt to be raw and real, put their children in danger constantly. Caroline then dives into how these families may even mold their kids into having personality traits that are completely fabricated, because it helps push views and the fans love it.

LIL SANDWICH

I'm the youngest person in the entire Sandwich family so I kind of have to stay looking like a baby for as long as possible. But my mom says that on my 14th birthday, I can do a video where I lose the hat! We can also do a video where we tell everyone that I'm a girl! There's a bunch of girls in this family already so my mom thought it would be best if we just let people think that I'm a boy.

DANI

Now, you may watch this and think it's a bit dramatic. A 13 year old being forced to act 6 years younger and pretend she's a boy because there's already enough girls in her family. She goes by Lil Sandwich but her real name is Sarah Grace. Yes, that is a little dramatic. But, realistically, influencers lie all the time. Their goal is not so much authenticity as it is clout.

INFLUENCERS LIE

DANI (CONT'D)

Here is an example from TikTok Victoria @/ToriYav. She has made a surplus of "How Much I Spend in a Day" videos, however, Youtuber Hannah Alonzo caught a flaw in one of her videos.

HANNAH

That's all good and dandy until you look at the receipts and you see they're all from different days. First they went to the diner for breakfast and their receipt shows that this happened on August 20th. Then, supposedly, they go grocery shopping at BJ's right afterwards, except the receipt shows August 21st at 6:47pm. Even if this was happening on the same days, things are not happening in the order that she's claiming they are.

DANI

Let's see how Lil Sandwich reacts to finding out the family is going to Universal for Christmas.

LIL SANDWICH

Do I get to meet Mario?

MAMA SANDWICH

You get to meet Mario!

LIL SANDWICH

Yay! I'm so excited! Thank you mommy!

MAMA SANDWICH

We're gonna have to do that again, you don't seem surprised at all.

LIL SANDWICH

I'm not surprised. We've done this 1,000 times.

MAMA SANDWICH

It's called acting, try it.

LIL SANDWICH

I am acting. How much more do you want me to do mom? I already seem insane. "I'm throwing up! I'm pissing! I'm shitting because I'm so excited to see Mario!"

MAMA SANDWICH

Language.

LIL SANDWICH

Sorry.

DANI

Again, this feels dramatic, right? Well, thankfully Jordan wasn't smart enough to clip this horrific moment out of one of her videos, so we have proof at least she treats her children like this.

JORDAN

I love you guys, bye. Come here, come closer for the video, come closer. CLOSER! Come closer. Put your head right here. Closer. Closer. Down. Put your head right here. Act like you're crying. Really quick.

SON

I am crying.

JORDAN

Go like this.

SON

No, mom, I'm actually, seriously crying

JORDAN

No, I know, but go like this. For the video. Go like this, put one hand up like this (fake cries). No, go like this (fake cries). Put your hand like this. But let them see your mouth. Let them see your mouth.

SON

No mom, I'm actually crying

JORDAN

Look at me. Look at me. Look at me. Look at me. Look at me.

SON
I'm actually crying.

JORDAN
I know. Look at me. Look at me.
Look at the camera. Look at the
camera (fake cries). Ok. It's ok.
It's ok. It's over. It's over.

DANI
Why was her son crying? Well,
because she decided to tell him on
camera that their new puppy was
diagnosed with Parvo and they're
unsure if she'll make it.

DANI (CONT'D)
Back to Lil Sandwich, she's
beginning to fight back.

MAMA SANDWICH
Stop being ridiculous and put on
the Pull-Up. We're burning
daylight.

LIL SANDWICH
No.

MAMA SANDWICH
Excuse me?

LIL SANDWICH
Get somebody else to do it. You
have five other daughters who
still talk to you. Get one of them
to do it.

MAMA SANDWICH
You would let one of your sisters
do this for you? You're not being
a very good little brother.

LIL SANDWICH
I'm not a little brother at all.

SILLY/ELIZA

DANI
The lore continues with Silly, who
is always doing medical videos.
Her real name is Eliza and she's
20 years old.

LIL SANDWICH

Silly, are the test results real
this time?

SILLY

I don't know. I never know.

NO MEDICAL PRIVACY

DANI

Now, I talked about this in my
Ballinger Family video, but
they're not even close to being
the only ones who do this. It's
become completely normal to these
families to vlog hospital stays
and surgeries.

SUNNY/EMILY

DANI

Then we meet Sunny. She does the
accounting and editing for the
family.

SUNNY

And the best part is we're gonna
be set for years when we turn 18
and get our portion of everything
we've made on the channel. And we
have made A LOT on this channel.

LIL SANDWICH

But you've been 18 for a while
now. You're 23, Emily.

SUNNY

Yeah, but Sunny Sandwich is 16.

DANI

Despite this being completely
fictional, that line sent shivers
down my spine.

NEW ILLINOIS LAW

DANI (CONT'D

And what's wild is that only the state of Illinois is actually protecting these child influencers' money. Technically, in every other state, that money is not theirs despite all the time and labor they put into these videos. And the law in Illinois is brand new as it was enacted on July 1. Let's learn about the law.

NEWSCASTER

The amendment specifically says children under the age of 16 should get 15% of an influencer's gross earnings if they appear in at least 30% of money-making online content.

DANI

Those earnings will then go into a trust fund that the child can access at 18. Hopefully this law continues to push other states to do the same. It seems, as of February, Maryland, California, Georgia, Missouri, Ohio, and Arizona may create laws that mirror Illinois. However, as I hope I've already made clear here: money isn't the major issue. It's the safety and lack of privacy. I would argue family vlogs should be illegal or extremely limited. No child deserves these extreme levels of invasion and mass spread content.

SKIPPY/ KATE

DANI (CONT'D

Going back to the Sandwich family, we meet Skippy, or Kate, the 17 year old prankster.

SKIPPY

Do you know how many pranks I did in 2023?

LIL SANDWICH

I don't know, like 20?

SKIPPY

I did 147 pranks in 2023. And I don't feel good about most of them.

PRANKING

DANI

Now, this one I think we all know about: the constant pranking.

AUSTIN MCBROOM

Who did this?

AUSTIN MCBROOM (CONT'D)

Merry early Christmas

DANI

I remember prank videos becoming a big thing while I was in high school, but I never found them entertaining. It wasn't until I began to babysit a family of three elementary age boys that I realized who this content was for. Those boys ate it up and even believed the content and reactions to be real. But, even if you're making the content for other children or for fellow parents, that is not your only audience. It is your duty as a guardian of children to protect them and making family vlogs is not protecting them.

SMILEY/ELLA

DANI (CONT'D)

Then we meet Smiley, the only Sandwich child who is allowed to act her age because she does pageants and the pageants check your birth certificate. She's 15 and is currently doing a series about first dates. Her real name is Ella.

LIL SANDWICH

Oh, who's the date with this time?

SMILEY

Grayson Bradley from "Bradley Knows Best."

LIL SANDWICH

Oh, him? He's really cute.

SMILEY

Yeah, I guess. If you like that kind of thing.

DANI

And here, we see Caroline continuing to show how despite these kids being on camera all the time and having no privacy, they probably hide pieces of their authentic self. For Smiley, that piece is her being gay.

SNAZZY/REBECCA

DANI (CONT'D)

And for the final sibling, we have Snazzy, or Rebecca. She's 14 and known for being an entertainer, but in this video, she's reading the comments for the first time. Something they are not allowed to do.

SNAZZY

These kids are definitely being exploited.

LIL SANDWICH

What does exploited mean?

SNAZZY

I don't know. Should we look it up?

LIL SANDWICH

Yeah, I think we have to.

SNAZZY

Benefit unfairly from the work of someone typically by overworking or under paying them. Do you think we're overworked?

LIL SANDWICH

Maybe. We do work a lot. I don't know how much work is too much work.

DANI

For a child? Any work is too much work. And I'm not talking about doing some chores or helping out with something.

CHILD ACTORS?

DANI (CONT'D)

Additionally, because I know someone will bring it up, I don't know how I feel about child actors. I mean, we have a surplus of examples of child actors struggling as adults, despite the child labor laws. Do I watch shows and movies that feature children? Yes, obviously. It's a nuanced and complicated issue that I don't know how to solve.

SASHA

DANI (CONT'D)

This next part in the lore is a flashback where we see young and naive Sasha make a huge mistake.

SASHA

Do we have the channel called TLC?

DAD

No, I think that's a rich person channel. Why do you ask?

SASHA

I wanted to watch a show called 19 Kids and Counting. Some of the kids at school are calling me "19 Kids and Counting" so I just wanted to watch it. Um, but it's a real family, they're not acting. We could be a TV show.

MAMA SANDWICH

No. Who would watch us? We're just a normal, boring family.

DAD

Actually Grace, I think Sasha's on to something. We could be a TV show.

THE DUGGARS

DANI

And while the Duggars, the family featured in 19 Kids and Counting, were by no means the first parents to exploit their children, they seemed to normalize this. And I'm guilty for obsessing over it. Many of us are. I used to literally WANT this for my future family. I also want to point out that Sarah made everyone's nicknames start with S in the same way all of the Duggar's names start with J. Sasha, Sunny, Silly, Skippy, Smiley, Snazzy, and Lil Sandwich. Also, their actually last name is Sandfish, but Sandwich was more catchy.

SASHA AND SARAH GRACE REUNITE

DANI (CONT'D)

The drama really heats up when Lil Sandwich, or Sarah Grace, gets taken to a public park by her babysitter. It turns out, this babysitter is friends with Sasha and is using this to reunite the two.

SARAH GRACE

Why did you leave? One day you were there and then you were never there again and that's not fair.

SASHA

I was 21 at that point and I had been talking to mom and dad about wanting to move out and get my own place. And I had been asking about the money that they had set aside for me. But, the night that I left I overheard them talking to their lawyer. They were making sure that, legally, that they didn't have to give any of us anything, ever.

DANI

And she's been trying to advocate for her siblings and people in their situation since. But, you might be wondering how the Sandwich family recovered from losing their oldest member. Well, the parents posted a video claiming they had to kick Sasha out for the safety of the others as she was addicted to drugs, stole from the family, and refuses to seek help.

COLLIN GOSSELIN

DANI (CONT'D)

This reminds me of Collin Gosselin's story a little bit. He went over five years being institutionalized and separated from his seven siblings. But I'll discuss all of that in a later video.

THE LORE CONTINUES

DANI (CONT'D)

The lore continues with Mama Sandwich telling Sarah Grace she can't quit the vlog because Emily messed something up and they're now broke. Obviously, this is a lie, but 13-year-old Sarah Grace doesn't know any better. I do genuinely wonder what family vloggers tell their children about the money. We also begin to learn that Eliza is actually sick. The issue is that her mom doesn't seem to actually care, but sees this as the perfect way to make money. She finally gets a diagnosis and it turns out she has Lupus. She decides to go live with Sasha and only tells Lil Sandwich about the diagnosis.

ADOPTION

DANI (CONT'D)

And now that they're missing another child, their views start tanking. But don't worry, Mama Sandwich has a plan!

MAMA SANDWICH

We're adopting!

SARAH GRACE

You want to raise more children?

MAMA SANDWICH

Not particularly, but you've really left us no choice. You're deviant and ungrateful. I bet these new kids will feel appreciative of this glamorous lifestyle that you take for granted.

DANI

Emily calls her mom out for being selfish and Caroline scripts this in the perfect way to call out the narrative that adoption is completely selfless.

MAMA SANDWICH

Adoption is the opposite of selfish.

EMILY

You're right mom. Adoption can never be selfish. Just because you're doing it for attention, validation, and money doesn't make it selfish, right? Like what do people expect you to do? Get a job?

MAMA SANDWICH

Exactly.

DANI

Another moment that feels insanely dramatic, but has happened.

NIKKI

Thailand has its own law that's unique to it that, um, after you are- you pick up your child and they're your child, you are not allowed to talk about them or share any images, photos, videos, anything about them online for a year.

DANI

They go on to discuss how Nikki has a channel where she shares everything and they could not fathom how this would ever work. Many people who saw this, including myself, came to the conclusion that they weren't adopting to have a child, but to make family content. And Myka and James who adopted a little boy from China and documented the entire process in 27 videos. They also acknowledged that this child had medical needs, but Myka made this statement

MYKA

If anything, my child is not returnable.

DANI

The following months after officially adopting their son, their 4th child, they shared his medical information nonstop and their channel skyrocketed. Myka then announced she was pregnant with their 5th child. It was later announced that they found a "different family" for him. Even more disgustingly, they didn't take down any videos featuring him and continued to greatly profit off of him. Thankfully, it is now known what family he lives with and he is safe and seems to be well loved. But yeah, the ever so fictional Sandwich Family isn't so fictional.

THE END?

DANI (CONT'D)

Speaking of them, Emily decides to go join Sasha and Eliza. This leaves Mama Sandwich with only the four underaged kids: Kate who's 17, Ella who's 15, Rebecca who's 14, and Sarah Grace who's 13. Now, this series is extremely popular on TikTok and gains well over a million views per video, but she hasn't shared anything since April 24th.

KATE

Now may I have the floor? Because I do have a plan to get us all out when I turn 18 and I'd love to share it.

DANI

In a comment on that video, she shares that, "It's hard to maintain something when it's as big as this series once was. I felt so scared to mess it up that I went weeks without posting anything. I have 5 episodes I filmed and abandoned." So, I'm not sure if she'll ever pick this series back up or give it a conclusion, but I appreciate her constant use of having a platform and speaking out towards the harmful side of family vlogging channels.

CONCLUSION

DANI

So, what are your thoughts? What laws can be put in place to protect these children? Should guardians be allowed to profit off of their children? Where do we draw the line? Anyways, have an amazing day, thanks for watching, byeeee!