

GENERAL PARENTING INFORMATION

The quality of parenting is emerging as a good predictor of outcomes for children. Some of the key components of quality parenting are:

Emotional Intelligent Parenting

- Engages in positive emotional attachment (warmth and nurturance)
- Practices perspective taking
- Teaches children positive self concept
- Promotes emotional self-regulation
- Engages in positive and sensitive communication

Discipline and Structure

- Practices appropriate limit setting and discipline
- Appropriate expectations of maturity and self-control

Positive Parenting Practices

- Models positive behavior for children
- Practices child focused parenting versus parent focused parenting
- Can differentiate themselves from the children
- Minimizes conflict with other parent
- Supports children's need for other parent
- Dutiful as a parent
- Protects children from harm
- Parental availability and involvement
- Involved in extracurricular activities
- Parent is informed of the circumstances of the child
- Teaches children positive life habits
- Knowledgeable of developmental stages

The Four Parenting Styles¹:

Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parents are very strict and have extremely high expectations. These types of parents are demanding but not responsive. Authoritarian Parenting is also referred to as Strict Parenting; it can become Totalitarian Parenting.

¹ Baumrind, Diana, The Influence of Parenting Style on Adolescent Competence and Substance Use, *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, **February 1991** vol. 11 no. 1, 56-95.

Children are expected to follow the rules without question and are generally punished if they do not follow the rules established by the parents. Authoritarian parents do not explain their reasoning behind the rules and boundaries. These parents have high expectations for conformity and compliance to their rules and directions. They allow little open dialogue between them and their children. Although authoritarian parents have high demands for their children they are usually less responsive to them. These parents are generally not emotionally in sync with their children. It is difficult for them to recognize their children's perspectives.

Children who are reared by parents using an Authoritarian parenting style generally are obedient and proficient, however; they rank lower in happiness, social competence and self-esteem. These children are more likely to engage in oppositional and defiant behavior than their peers.

Authoritative Parenting

Parents who practice authoritative parenting have rules and guidelines that are expected to be followed, however; they are much more child-focused. Authoritative parents understand their children's feelings, help them regulate their feelings, teach them how to regulate their feelings, and help them make good choices in a collaborative fashion. They are willing to listen to questions and be responsive to their children's needs. Extensive verbal give-and-take is allowed. Parents practicing authoritative parenting are more nurturing and forgiving. When disciplining, they explain their reasoning and punishments are measured and consistent rather than harsh or arbitrary. They are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. These parents encourage their children to be independent and assertive while maintaining appropriate limits and controls on their actions. They are in sync and attuned to their children's feelings and emotions as well as able to understand their perspective.

Children raised by authoritative parents tend to be happy, capable, and successful. They have high self esteem and are independent because of the democratic give-and- take nature of the authoritative parenting style. These children are usually compliant because the back and forth rupture and repair experiences with their parents have produced a strong emotional attachment style that enables them to self-regulate their emotions and behaviors. Children of authoritative parents usually comply with parenting standards happen with less effort because a child enjoys being in sync and emotional resonance with their parents.

Child-rearing experts recommend this style of parenting the most.

Permissive Parenting

Permissive parents are actively involved in their children's lives, however they have few expectations, are lenient, and rarely discipline their children. These parents are so attuned to their children's feelings that they often make parenting decisions that prioritize the short term desires of the child versus what is in the child's best interest overall. Permissive parents are nurturing and accepting of their children as well as highly responsive to their needs and wishes. These parents are quite indulgent, generally spoil their children, and do not require them to regulate themselves or behave appropriately.

Children raised by permissive parents tend to be more impulsive and may engage in more misconduct such as drug and alcohol use. These children expect to get their way and often have tantrums if they don't.

Uninvolved Parenting

The uninvolved parenting style is also referred to as neglectful parenting. These parents are disengaged and generally not active in their child's life. Uninvolved parents demonstrate very little warmth and are not responsive to their children. They do not set limits or have expectations for their children. Uninvolved parents may dismiss their children's opinions and feelings. These parents are not in sync with their children's emotions and feelings nor are they willing to consider their

perspectives. These parents generally provide the basic needs for the children such as housing and food but will be emotionally unsupportive.

Children of uninvolved parents often feel that other things in their parents' lives are more important than them. They may attempt to provide for themselves, withdraw socially, and act much older than they are. This style of dealing with uninvolved parenting will impact the children's adult relationships later in life.