4 Types Of Parenting Styles

Parenting Styles Definition and Their Effects on Children’s Behavior

Parenting styles are categorized based on two dimensions of parenting behavior and styles:

**Demandingness** refers to the extent parents control their children’s behavior or demand their maturity.

**Responsiveness** refers to the degree parents are accepting and sensitive to their children’s emotional and developmental needs.
1. Authoritative Parenting

HIGH DEMANDINGNESS. HIGH RESPONSIVENESS.

Authoritative parents have high expectations for achievement and maturity, but they are also warm and responsive.

These parents set rules and enforce boundaries by having open discussion, providing guidance and using reasoning.

These parents provide their kids with reasoning and explanation for their action. Explanations allow children to have a sense of awareness and teach kids about values, morals, and goals.

Their disciplinary methods are confrontive, i.e. reasoned, negotiable, outcome-oriented, and concerning with regulating behaviors.

Authoritative parents are affectionate and supportive. They provide their children with autonomy and encourage independence.

They also allow bidirectional communication. This parenting style is also known as the democratic parenting style.

Children of authoritative parents are cherished.

Based on Baumrind’s research on parenting styles, children of authoritative parents tend to:
- Appear happy and content.
- Are more independent
- Are more active.
- Achieve higher academic success.
- Develop good self-esteem.
- Interact with peers using competent social skills.
- Have better mental health — less depression, anxiety, suicide attempts, delinquency, alcohol and drug use.
- Exhibit less violent tendencies.
- Are securely attached.

2. Authoritarian Parenting

HIGH DEMANDINGNESS. LOW RESPONSIVENESS.

High levels of parental control and low levels of responsiveness are the two characteristics of authoritarian parents.

Although authoritarian parenting and authoritative parenting styles have similar names, they have several important differences in parenting belief, demand and approach.

While both parental styles demand high standards, authoritarian parents demand blind obedience using reasons such as "because I said so". They only allow one way communication through rules and orders. Any attempts to reason with them are seen as backtalk.

These parents use stern discipline and often employ harsh punishment, such as corporal punishment, as a way to control
children's behavior. Their disciplinary methods are coercive, i.e. arbitrary, peremptory, domineering, and concerned with marking status distinctions.

Authoritarian parents are unresponsive to their children’s needs and are generally not nurturing. They usually justify their mean treatment of their kids as tough love.

Children whose parents have an authoritarian parenting style tend to:

- Have an unhappy disposition.
- Be less independent.
- Appear insecure.
- Possess low self-esteem.
- Exhibit more behavioral problems.
- Perform worse academically.
- Have poorer social skills.
- Be more prone to mental issues.
- Be more likely to have drug use problems.
- Have worse coping skills.

3. **Permissive Parenting (Indulgent)**

**LOW DEMANDINGNESS. HIGH RESPONSIVENESS**

Permissive parents set very few rules and boundaries and they are reluctant to enforce rules.
These indulgent parents are warm and indulgent but they do not like to say no or disappoint their children.

Children of permissive parenting tend to have the worst outcomes:

- Cannot follow rules.
- Have worse self-control.
- Possess egocentric tendencies.
- Encounter more problems in relationships and social interactions.

4. Neglectful Parenting (Uninvolved)
LOW DEMANDINGNESS. LOW RESPONSIVENESS.

Neglectful parents do not set firm boundaries or high standards.

They are indifferent to their children's needs and uninvolved in their lives.

These uninvolved parents may have mental issues themselves such as depression, or physical abuse or child neglect when they were kids.

Children raised by neglectful parents:

- Are more impulsive.
- Cannot self-regulate emotion.
- Encounter more delinquency and addictions problems.
- Have more mental issues — e.g. suicidal behavior in adolescents.

**Which Parenting Style Is The Most Effective?**

From decades of studies, researchers found that authoritative parenting is consistently linked to the best outcomes in kids.

Authoritative parenting style is considered the best parenting style by psychologists and psychiatrists.

This classification of child rearing styles has been studied for over 25 years in different countries.

Results are generally found to be as expected for each parenting style.

However, inconsistencies and exceptions in some areas remain.

Here are some factors that may also play a part in determining how a child turns out.

**CULTURAL AND ETHNICS DIFFERENCES**

Some studies found that the authoritative style isn’t always linked to the best school achievement across families from *diverse ethnic* (e.g. Asian, Black, Hispanic)
and socioeconomic backgrounds (e.g. income level, parental education, number of active parents).

For example, in one study, researchers found that African-American students with authoritative parents but without peer support did not perform the best academically.

As for Asian-American students, in some studies, they performed the best in school when they had authoritarian parents and peer support.

In Spain, a study showed that both indulgent and authoritative parenting styles were associated with good outcomes\textsuperscript{22}.

**CHILD TEMPERAMENT**

Children’s own behavior can affect the parent’s choice and the outcomes, too.

For example, kids with a more sensitive temperament may be perceived as difficult causing the parents to change their parenting style towards more authoritarian.

In a study, it was also found that some aspect of child behavior such as sociable and aggressive behaviors are better correlated to the child’s temperament than to the parenting style of their parents.

It seems like parenting style is not the only determining factor in the child’s outcomes.
Differences in social context and in child temperaments can make a difference, too.

But it is worth noting that, despite being widely publicized, not all of these study results have been successfully reproduced by other researchers.

In addition, these results are also not consistent across other types of outcomes, such as behavior or mental health.

For example, while some studies found the use of authoritarian parenting in the Chinese American population was associated with the best academic outcomes, others found the authoritative parenting to be the best in predicting school performance.

To this date, no study has conclusively disproved the benefits of authoritative parenting, while many others have consistently shown its advantages.

Authoritative parenting is still the parenting style of choice recommended by experts.
Parenting Style Is Important

50 years of research on 14.5 million pairs of twins reveal that genetics and environment have roughly equal influence on human traits.

Parenting style determines largely the kind of environment a child is raised in.

Psychologists categorize parenting styles into 4 major groups.

Human Traits

- Genetics (49%)
- Environment (51%)

Authoritative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting Style</th>
<th>Associated Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warm and Responsive</td>
<td>Higher Academic Performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear Rules</td>
<td>More Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Expectation</td>
<td>Better Social Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Less Mental Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Independence</td>
<td>Lower Delinquency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Authoritarian
Parenting Style | Associated Outcome
---|---
Unresponsive | Lower Academic Performance
Strict Rules | Less Self-Esteem
High Expectation | Poorer Social Skills
Expect Blind Obedience | Mental Illness

Permissive

Parenting Style | Associated Outcome
---|---
Warm and Responsive | Impulsive Behavior
Few or No Rules | Egocentric
Indulgent | Poorer Social Skills
Lenient | Problematic Relationship

Neglectful

Parenting Style | Associated Outcome
---|---
Cold and Unresponsive | Impulsive Behavior
No Rules | Delinquency
Uninvolved | Drug or Alcohol Abuse
Indifferent | Suicides

One Size Fits All?
For over 25 years, authoritative parenting has been consistently linked to the most positive outcomes in many studies.

**Aren't all kids different?**

Yes, different kids need different parenting practices, not a different parenting style.

It's a spectrum. You can be more warm or less warm, but still warm. You can be more demanding or less demanding but still demanding.

Being warm and having high standards is authoritative. It is the best parenting style recommended by psychologists.

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