

## Three Parenting Styles<sup>1</sup>

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Figure 1. Credits: <http://ecbt.org/>

What are parenting styles? Parenting styles are techniques that parents use to take care of their children. Some parenting styles are more effective than others are. The three different types of parenting styles are Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive—and any one of these can greatly affect the behavior(s) of children.

### Authoritative

Authoritative parent(s) allow their children to have options and choices in which they set rules that the children have to abide by. Parent(s) help children learn to be responsible for themselves and to think about the consequence of their behavior.



This parenting style promotes:

- healthy interactions between the parent and the child,
- appropriate responses to need and desire,
- consequence(s) are clear and will be enforced if the child does not comply, and a
- supportive environment with mutual understanding.

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The positive impact of this parenting style results from the encouragement of independent problem solving and critical thinking the parent instills in the child. For example, authoritative parents would aspire for their children to perform well in school and would therefore be involved in their children's activities, such as participating in school board meetings and parent organizations. Research indicates that the authoritative parenting style allows the child to make choices based on his or her ability. For a toddler, the choice may be "pants or shorts?" and for an older child, the choice may be "grapes, apple, or banana?" For a teenager, the choice may be "do your homework or you will not go to the mall with your friends."

### Authoritarian



Authoritarian parent(s) are in control all the time, and their children rarely have any choices. Children are always told how, what, and when to do something.

This parenting style:

- promotes fear in a child's heart,
- requires order to be kept at all times,
- causes child to think he must please the parent(s) in order to receive a reward, and
- results in a lack of inner discipline, but obedience to rote authority.

Authoritarian parent(s) often associate discipline with strictness or harshness that includes verbal and non-verbal language that degrades a child's self-image/self-esteem. An authoritarian parent(s) may say to the child something like "You better do well in school...because I said so." Research indicates that authoritarian parents do not explain why they want their children to do things; they simply insist that the child does it. Authoritarian parents tend to focus on negative reinforcement instead of positive reinforcement.

### Permissive



Permissive parents lack parental controls, encourage autonomy and independence to inappropriate degrees, and act more like friends to their children.

This parenting style promotes:

- giving a child a lot of freedom;
- bribery, gifts, and other motivators for child's obedience;
- a lack of conflict; and
- NO sense of discipline or connectedness.

Permissive parenting involves acting in an accepting and compassionate way towards children's impulses and actions, usually as long as the child's physical safety is not in jeopardy. For instance, a parent will complain about a child's behavior, but will not do anything to correct it. Permissive parents have a tendency to accept a child's behavior, good *or* bad, and make no attempts to change the child's inappropriate behavior. Researchers believe that those parenting teenagers use this parenting style more.

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They tend to be more lenient in return for the teen's not making too many demands of their time.

### Resources

- *Better Parents* <http://www.parents.com>
- *Types of Parenting Styles Using Effective Skills and Tips for Parents*  
<http://www.circlesoflight.com>
- *Your Parenting Style*  
<http://www.education.com/reference/parentingstyle/?cid=7838>

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