

Parenting Styles

From the moment our children are born we begin influencing the person they will become. The most recent research shows us that we are a combination of both nature and nurture. One of the most formative pieces of that puzzle is the parenting style we are raised with.

There are essentially four parenting styles and each are influential on who we become as people. The four styles are Permissive, Authoritarian, Authoritative and Uninvolved. All four of these styles have varying levels of behavioral control and supportiveness.

Permissive parents are lenient with few expectations for behavior, but a lot of support for their children. This type allows the children to do most of their own self-regulation. In direct contrast, Authoritarian parents have high expectations for their children's behavior; rules are to be followed without question. This type of parenting tends to be low on parental warmth and support. The third parenting style is Authoritative. Authoritative parents are both high on parental warmth and support, yet have clear behavioral standards for their children. Finally, Uninvolved parents are those who are low on both support and direction for their children.

Nancy Darling, in an article written for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (March 1999), looks at the four parenting styles and how they impact children. She states, "Parenting style has been found to predict child well-being in the domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development and problem behavior." She points out that Children from Permissive homes (she refers to it as indulgent homes) have high self esteem and better social skills but are also more likely to have lower grades and be involved in problem behavior. Children from Authoritarian homes tend to do well in school and have little problem behavior, but have more trouble socially and suffer with lower self-esteem and depression. Children from Authoritative homes performed the best in all categories and children from homes with Uninvolved parents performed the worst in all categories.

Clearly parenting styles have a great impact on child rearing. What is necessary for children to thrive is a balance of love, empowerment and support, with rules, regulations, and expectations.

For more information on Parenting Styles and this article by Nancy Darling go to <http://www.athealth.com>.

Lakes Area Youth Service Bureau, 2010
www.ysblakesarea.org