

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Island Parenting: What Is Your Parenting Style?

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How familiar are you with the four different parenting styles also known as Baumrind's Parenting Typology? The clinical and developmental psychologist Diana Baumrind; first classified them as authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. A fourth neglectful parenting was later added. The authoritarian parent employs a military style approach to parenting. His or her parenting style is rigid and controlling. Did you know that the authoritative style is said to be the most balanced and healthiest style of parenting? The authoritative parent sets limits but also considers the child's point of view. The permissive parent is indulgent and lets the child do whatever he or she wants. The neglectful parent is simply neglectful or uninvolved.

Do you have a parenting style? Where do you fall on the parenting style spectrum? I have provided some additional characteristics of the aforementioned parenting styles so that you may do an assessment to see where you fall on the parenting style spectrum. Which parenting style did you think you were and what parenting style did you identify most with after reading the list? Do you employ different parenting styles with your children? For example do you think that you may be a more authoritarian parent with John because he requires it, while you are a more authoritative or permissive parent with Sue? Do you think that your style of parenting may affect your child or children's behavior, attitude, self-esteem, confidence and overall development? Believe it or not, our style of parenting may positively or negatively impact our child/children's behavior, attitude, social skills, self-esteem and even their academic performance. Please read on to find out how.

The Four Parenting Styles

Authoritarian Parenting – Parent is dictator. The parent does not provide the child with an explanation or reasoning for the action that the parent takes or the directive that the parent gives. It is a do as I say without questions relationship. Failure to follow rules leads to severe punishment. The relationship is rigid, controlling and power assertive. Parent demands and makes rules. The parent talks at child, communication is one-directional. There is little affection and praise. The parent has unreasonable expectations of the child. Parent withholds what child needs and wants. Child obeys. There is antipathy. The authoritarian parent views parenting as a battle.

Authoritative Parenting – Parent is the elder. The relationship is reciprocal and responsive. Parent guides and sets limits. Parent chooses how to talk to child. There is open communication between the parent and child. The child is directed. The parent is kind and accepting of the child. The parent has high expectations of the child. There is high warmth. There is empathy. The authoritative parent views parenting as a demanding but rewarding vocation. The child grows into an independent and well-adjusted adult.

Permissive Parenting – Parent is a buddy or servant to the child. The parent follows. The relationship is indulgent. There are no limits or boundaries set by the parent. The parent talks as if the child is an adult. The parent gives in to the child's demands and is very lenient. There is sympathy. The permissive parent views parenting as overwhelming. The parent expects little from the child. There is high warmth. The permissive parent rescues or makes excuses for the child. The children grow up thinking that they are the center of the Universe.

Neglectful Parenting - The parent is absent. The parent ignores. There are no limits or boundaries set for the child. The parent rarely talks to the child. The parent gives an excess of material things and experiences in order to compensate for his or her absence. The child is lost. There is apathy. The parent views parenting as a nuisance. The parent expects little from the child. There is little warmth.

Some Effects of Parenting Styles on the Child

Authoritarian- The child grows up with low self-esteem. He or she doesn't trust his or her feelings. The child may be timid and insecure. He or she exhibits signs of weakness and may succumb to peer pressure. The child may have poor social skills and find it hard to

focus or concentrate on academics. He or she performs at the median range.

Authoritative – The child grows up with a high self-esteem. The child is assertive. The child is able to regulate his or her behavior. He or she has self-control. The child is socially responsible. He or she is self-reliant. The child will succumb less to peer pressure. He or she is able to show empathy. The child performs well at school and has confidence in his or her abilities. He or she is a high achiever.

Permissive – The child has a high self-esteem and is confident however the child is less responsible and is more impulsive. The child is spoiled, may show signs of immaturity and be self-centered. The child is not afraid to voice his or her feelings. The child has trouble keeping friends and may have less interest in school or other activities. Neglectful- The child has low self-esteem and little confidence. The child hates him/herself and others. The child hides or avoids his or her feelings. The child is withdrawn, disrespectful or distrustful. The child performs poorly in school.

Recommended Reading for the Parent

Authoritative Parenting Synthesizing Nurturance and Discipline for Optimal Child Development Edited by Robert E. Larzelere, Amanda Sheffield Morris, and Amanda W. Harrist

The ABC's of Parenting and Stress Management

“Accept the things that you cannot change. Breathe. Count your blessings. Decompress. Eat good food. Focus on the big picture. Get active. Hang up the phone. Identify the kind of family you are striving for. Joke around. Kiss, hug and show affection. Listen. Make time for family fun. Negotiate couple time or time for yourself. Open your mind to the opposition. Play with friends. Quiet your mind. Recruit some outside support. Simplify. Teach lessons you want them to know. Utilize your resources. Value your time. eXplore, expand, and excite. Yearn to grow and learn. Zzz, don't forget to get some sleep.” Dr. Robyn Silverman **Sage Words to be whispered from the Parent to the Child**

“Silence and smile are two of the most powerful tools. Smiling is the way to solve many problems and silence is the way to avoid many problems.” Unknown

“Many of life's failures are experienced by people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” Thomas Edison

“Thank you. Two of the most powerful words we could ever say to another person.” Unknown

Recommended Reading for Children from the National Geographic Kids Book Series

Little Kids First Big Book of Who (National Geographic) written by Jill Esbaum Little Kids First Big Book of Why (National Geographic) written by Amy Shields. Little Kids First Big Book of the World (National Geographic) written by Elizabeth Carney Little Kids First Big Book of Animals (National Geographic) written by Catherine D. Hughes Little Kids First Big Book of How (National Geographic) by Jill Esbaum