

Different Parenting Methods



Highlights

Your parenting style can have a major impact on what your child will be like as an adult.

Your parenting style may be influenced by your upbringing, culture and values, how much support you have, and the examples you see around you.

The four main styles of parenting are authoritarian, authoritative (or supportive), permissive, and disengaged.

The authoritative approach works best for children, with parents who are loving yet set firm limits.

You can become an authoritative parent by showing love for your child and interest in their life, listening to them, encouraging them to try new things, while setting clear rules and modeling positive behavior.

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Why is my parenting style important?

The way you parent your children can have a major impact on the type of adult they become. Parents might use a mix of parenting styles, but most tend to lean toward one style. Each style of parenting may lead to different outcomes for children.

Factors influencing parenting styles

There are many influences on the way you interact with your child, such as:

how you were raised

your experiences

how you see other parents act

your health and financial situation

how much support you have

your culture and values

what you read or see in the media

You might want to parent the same way your own parents did, or you might want to take a different approach. It's your decision.

What are the types of parenting styles?

Research has identified four main styles of parenting:

Authoritarian

Parents set strict rules with little input from their child and expect obedience.

Authoritative \or supportive

Parents have firm expectations but also listen to their child and allow age-appropriate independence and responsibility.

Permissive

Parents are warm and loving but do not set or enforce boundaries or limits.

Disengaged

Parents provide their child with basic needs but do not show interest in them or set rules.

What are the limitations and benefits of different parenting styles?

Authoritarian

Children of authoritarian parents may be obedient and follow rules, but they may develop low self-esteem and poor social skills. They may be less proactive and wait for others to tell them what to do.

Authoritative (or supportive)

Children of authoritative parents are likely to grow up to be assertive, happy, and socially responsible. They are often motivated to try their best.

Permissive

Children of permissive parents often have good self-esteem, but a lack of limits can make them feel insecure. They are more likely to have poor social skills and self-control.

Disengaged

Children of disengaged parents may feel unloved and anxious. They may have behavioral problems, poor social skills, and a lack of motivation.

What parenting style is right for you and your child?

As a parent, it's your responsibility to care for your child and give them the best start in life that you can. It's up to you which parenting style or mix of styles you choose. Providing your child with love and guidance will help them

develop into a confident, resilient, and socially responsible adult.

Research shows that the authoritative (or supportive) style of parenting works best for children because it combines warmth, love, clear guidance, and support. This parenting style helps children develop secure relationships and independence. They are encouraged to explore their world and try new things while knowing that limits are set and parents will take charge when needed. Having limits helps children feel secure.

It's your role as a parent to set limits - for example, "It's okay to play with the water in the bath, but it's not okay to splash it all over the floor" - and establish safety rules - "If you don't hold my hand when we cross the road, you can't come with me to the shops."

Using an authoritative (or supportive) approach, you can set limits that are appropriate for your child, explain your reasons, and allow for discussion. This way, your child will learn appropriate behavior, rather than simply following rules.

How to be an authoritative (supportive) parent

Here are some practical tips for using the authoritative (supportive) style of parenting:

Build your connection with your child - spend individual time with them and try to see things from their perspective. Show interest in their hobbies, attend their activities, and get to know their friends.

Express love and affection - tell your child you love them and show physical affection through hugs and cuddles.

Encourage communication - talk to your child about different topics, listen to their views, and give them your full attention.

Support their interests and development - encourage your child to try different activities and practice their skills. Praise them for their efforts and perseverance.

Set clear rules and expectations - establish clear guidelines about what behavior is acceptable and look for opportunities to praise positive behavior.

Be a role model - behave the way you expect your children to behave. Treat others with respect and live according to your values.

Tools and Assistance

For more information on parenting styles and strategies, check out parenting guides and programs that focus on positive parenting techniques. Many resources are available to help parents build strong relationships with their children and create a supportive family environment.