



**HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

Parenting Styles



What is Parenting Style?

- Right from birth, the way you parent your children is important.
- Parenting style is based on how a parent responds to the needs and interests of their children and how they supervise and discipline them
- Parents receive parenting advice from many places: family, friends, professionals, books and the internet.
- So much information can sometimes be confusing.



What Affects Parenting Style?

The way you parent your children may be affected by:

- how you were parented
- your culture and values
- your life experiences
- where you live
- your child's age and temperament

In a two parent family, both parents may not have exactly the same parenting style but it is important to agree on a general approach to parenting. This will help your children to know what is expected of them.



Types of Parenting Styles

- There are 3 main parenting styles
- They range from very strict to very relaxed
- Parents may lean more towards one style or use a combination of styles depending on the child and the situation



Finding Your Parenting Style.

- The key is to find your own balanced parenting style that suits your family's values and your children's needs.
- Most experts agree that a balanced, flexible style that combines warmth and firmness is the most effective and what parents should aim for.
- If you are not already using a balanced parenting style, read on to learn about the benefits of this style.



Strict Parenting Style

(also known as Authoritarian, Brick Wall or Rock)

- Although loving, these parents are very concerned with order, control and obedience
- They do not encourage give and take or discussion when it comes to the rules of behaviour
- When this style is taken to the extreme, parents may use harsh words or even physical punishment when their rules are not followed

Strict Parenting Style

Possible outcomes from using mostly this style:

- The children may have a hard time making their own decisions about right and wrong in the future.
- They learn only how to obey, often out of fear, rather than learning how to make good choices about their own behaviour.
- These children may lack self confidence and independence.
- The “because I said so” approach may lead to power struggles and rebellion in the teen years.

Physical punishment is never recommended and can cause emotional problems for the child and damage the parent/child relationship. Other methods of discipline are more positive and effective.



Relaxed Parenting Style

(also known as Lenient, Permissive, Jellyfish or Marshmallow)

- These parents are loving, accepting and warm.
- They have few rules about what their child should or should not do.
- They allow a lot of freedom and little supervision.
- They may be concerned that their child will not like them if they are too strict.
- When taken to the extreme, they tend to see themselves more as their child's friend rather than parents who need to teach and guide.

Relaxed Parenting Style

Possible outcomes of using mostly this style:

- These children are often creative and confident.
- However, to others, they may appear impulsive and childish.
- They often do not accept responsibility for their own actions and blame others.
- They may have problems getting along with others.
- They may have trouble following rules at school or work as they have not had to do that at home



Balanced Parenting Style

(also known as Authoritative, Moderate, the Backbone, Flexible)

- These parents are loving, supportive and affectionate.
- They set rules but change them as their children grow older and more responsible.
- Their children's ideas, wishes, age and temperament are considered when setting rules.
- They explain why rules are important and why they must be followed.
- Discipline is kind but firm and there are fair consequences for misbehaviour.
- Children are encouraged to explore, have fun and become independent.
- The children are included in decision making and are encouraged to find solutions to their own problems.
- Guidance and supervision are provided to ensure safety.



Balanced Parenting Style

Possible Outcomes of using mostly this style:

- For these children, self confidence, success in school and the ability to make friends are more likely.
- They are more able to solve their own problems and learn from their mistakes.
- They tend to be more caring to others and less likely to bully.
- The children feel safe because they've learned they can count on their parents to be there to help if things go wrong.
- As teens, they tend to have lower levels of drug misuse and other risky behaviour and are less likely to be depressed.



Overprotective Parenting Style

- The term “**helicopter parents**” is used to describe parents who monitor their child closely and do not give them opportunities to make their own choices.
- The child then misses the chance to learn from mistakes and may have a hard time coping with difficult situations. These children have been called “**bubble-wrapped kids**”.
- Part of being a positive parent is teaching your child how to deal with stress and disappointment, which will help them face life’s challenges.

Be a Positive Parent!

When you choose a balanced, middle of the road approach to parenting, you are helping your children to:

- feel loved and respected
- feel good about themselves
- think for themselves
- learn from their mistakes
- care about others
- enjoy a special parent/ child relationship



Balanced Parenting Style

The older children get, the more time they spend outside of a parent's supervision. As young adults, they will be in charge of their own lives and will need to learn to think and act responsibly on their own. A balanced parenting style helps lead to these positive behaviours.



Positive Parenting

- Using a balanced parenting style is part of being a positive parent.
- Check out the sections on this web site on child temperament , connecting with your child and positive discipline as these topics are also part of positive parenting.



For More Information

Visit these web sites for more information on parenting styles:

parentsmatter.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=600

parents2parents.ca/node/775

theyouthcentre.ca/parenting/ps/ps01.htm

[child-encyclopedia.com/
pages/PDF/Parenting_skillsANGmcP.pdf](http://child-encyclopedia.com/pages/PDF/Parenting_skillsANGmcP.pdf)

If you have questions or concerns about your parenting or your child's behaviour, you can call Durham Health Connection Line at 1-800-841- 2729 or Durham Behaviour Management 905-668-7711



What is Your Parenting Style?

Are you in the Zone?
The balanced parenting zone!



Relaxed ◀



Balanced



▶ Strict

[Click here to take the quiz!](#)



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**Durham Health Connection Line
1-800-841-2729 or 905-666-6241
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