



Parenting Styles, a Reflection

Parenting is a journey filled with choices, and one of the most influential factors in your child's development is your parenting style. The first years of life are full of change, and how parents guide, comfort, and set boundaries shape a child's sense of security and confidence. While there is no right and wrong, it is always helpful for parents to reflect on their parenting style so that they can make intentional choices as they face everyday challenges with their children.

Below are descriptions of the three most common parenting styles; Permissive, Authoritarian, and Authoritative. We invite you to take a look and reflect on your own style. There are many parenting style quizzes on-line, if you would like to dive deeper into your own parenting style and consider your approach in a more detailed way.

Permissive Parenting

Permissive parenting often feels warm and nurturing, with parents eager to give their child freedom and responsibility to avoid conflict. Children in permissive homes may enjoy flexibility and independence early on, but without clear boundaries they can struggle with self-control and responsibility. If you find yourself saying 'yes' more often than setting limits, or setting a limit and then not following through with the stated consequence, remember that structure, consistency, and predictability provide comfort to children. Gentle guidance alongside warmth helps children feel secure while still feeling valued.

Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parenting emphasizes rules and obedience, often with little room for negotiation or flexibility. While this approach can create order, it may leave children feeling unheard or anxious. Children raised in highly strict environments often comply, but may struggle with confidence and decision-making later. If you lean towards firm discipline, consider pairing expectations with empathy; listening and explaining can turn rules into lessons, rather than demands. Try offering choices within the firm limits you have set.

Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parenting blends warmth with structure, offering clear boundaries while encouraging independence. This style fosters trust and mutual respect, helping children develop confidence and social skills. Parents who practice authoritative methods often communicate openly, guiding rather than controlling. This balanced approach is widely considered the most supportive for healthy emotional and behavioral development.

Every family is unique, and parenting styles are not fixed, they evolve as children grow and circumstances change. Reflecting on your approach and making small adjustments can create a nurturing environment where your child feels safe, loved, and ready to thrive.

A Simple Quiz

Here is a quick parenting style quiz you can easily look over to get started on your reflective journey:

1. When it comes to setting rules for my child, I:

- a) Enforce them strictly without exception.
- b) Set clear rules but allow for discussion and flexibility.
- c) Have a few loose rules and rarely enforce them.
- d) Rarely set rules or structure.

2. When my child makes a mistake, I usually:

- a) Punish them so they learn not to do it again.
- b) Explain why it was a mistake and discuss better choices.
- c) Console them and avoid bringing it up again.
- d) Let them figure it out on their own.

3. My child's opinion about decisions that affect them is:

- a) Not a priority, I know what's best.
- b) Considered and valued, even if I make the final decision.
- c) Taken very seriously, often shaping the decisions I make.
- d) Not usually something I seek out.

4. When my child misbehaves, I tend to:

- a) Discipline them immediately and strictly.
- b) Use the situation as a teaching moment to guide them.
- c) Let it go because I don't want to upset them.
- d) Ignore it unless it becomes a big problem.

5. When it comes to showing affection, I:

- a) Show affection occasionally but prioritize discipline.
- b) Regularly express love and warmth while maintaining boundaries.
- c) Shower my child with affection and avoid being strict.
- d) Rarely express affection—it's not my style.

6. My approach to my child's independence is:

- a) I make most decisions for them, they're not ready yet.
- b) I encourage them to make decisions while providing guidance.
- c) I let them make their own decisions, even if they're not ready.
- d) I don't get involved unless they specifically ask for help.

Scoring the Parenting Style Quiz:

Mostly **A's**: Authoritarian Parenting Style

Mostly **B's**: Authoritative Parenting Style

Mostly **C's**: Permissive Parenting Style

Mostly **D's**: Uninvolved Parenting Style