

# Navigating Parenthood



## Counsellor's Newsletter

Welcoming a newborn is a happy moment and the beginning of new parenting! At this stage, as the quote suggests, we have experienced the parenting of our parents and now it is our turn to be parents.

While experiencing this phase of life, although we always try to prioritise our children we often make mistakes despite our genuine efforts and good intentions. Most parenting articles and experts advise us to be our child's "friend" as they grow older. But have you really thought about it? Do our children want us to be a parent or a friend? Do they really want a friend over a parent? Such questions lead to more confusion in our approach towards parenting. Maybe it is time to rethink parenting skills. Let's try and gain insight into holistic approaches for better child-parent relationships.

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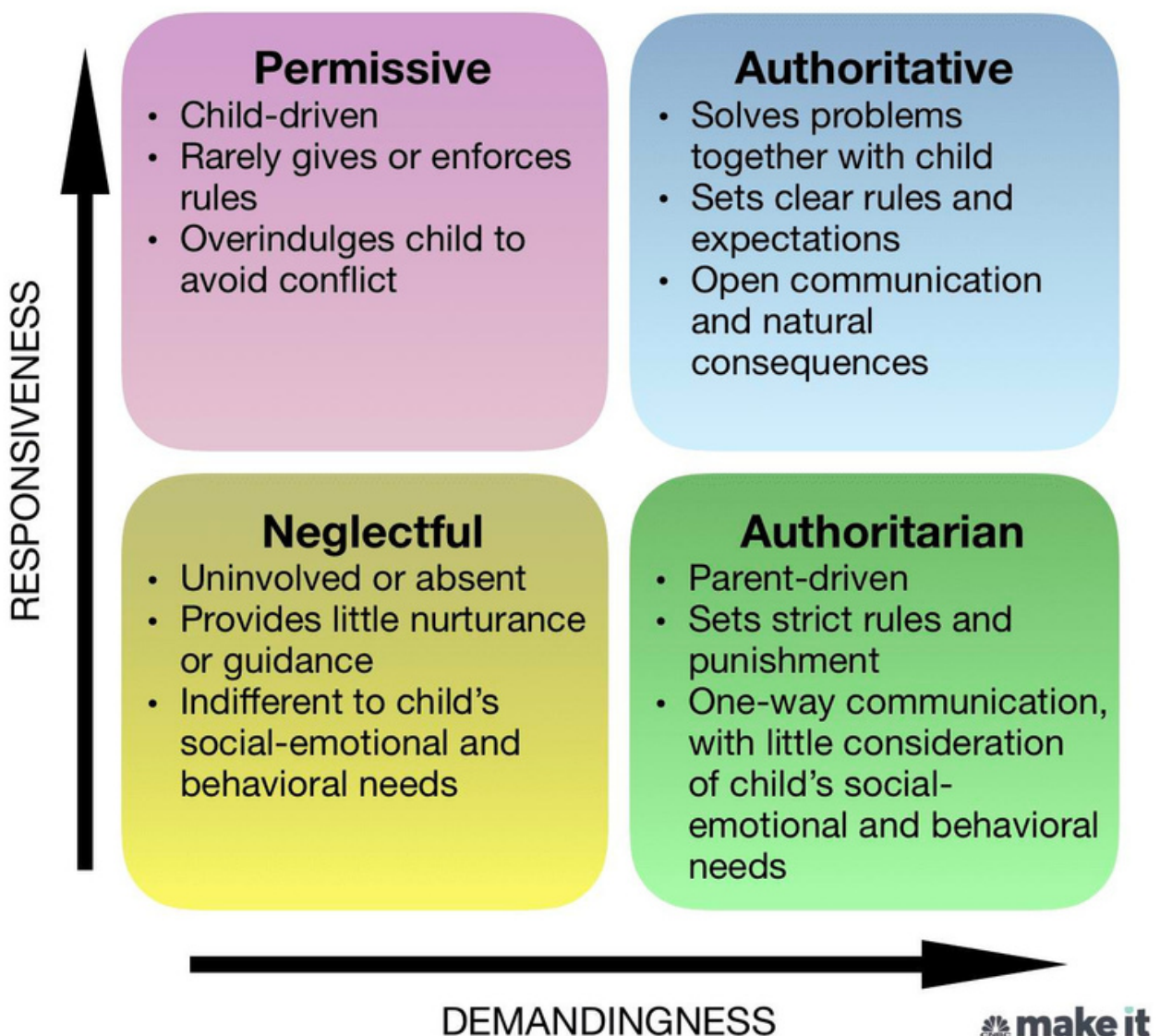
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# Parenting Styles

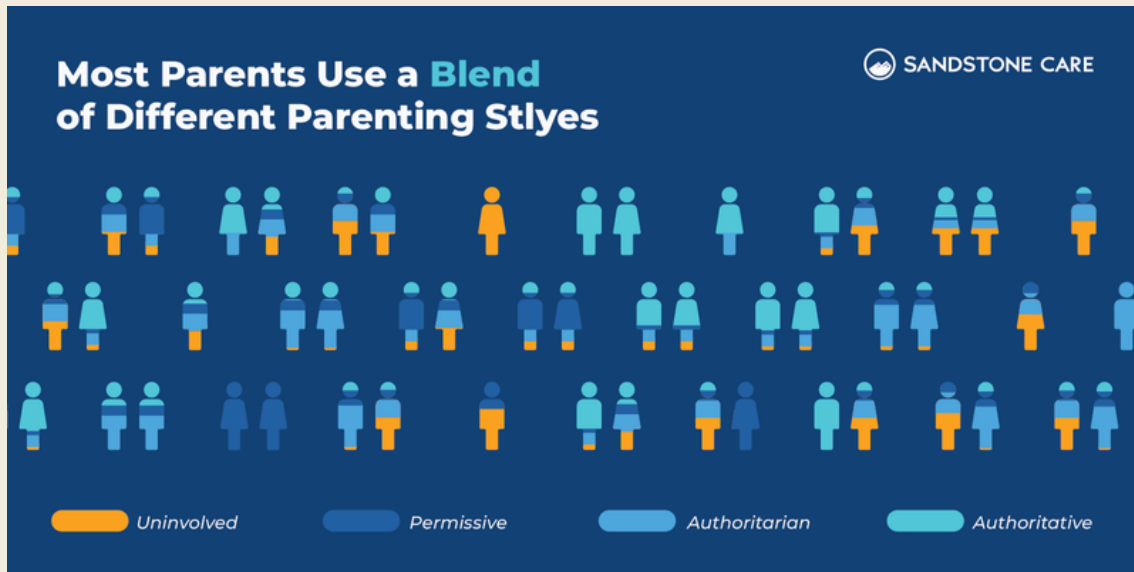
Parenting styles refer to a parent's attitudes and behaviour towards their children and how emotions are expressed through these behaviours. When it comes to parenting, many different factors and backgrounds contribute to how parents raise their children. Everyone uses different parenting approaches and practices in their unique ways, and these variations can significantly impact their child's personality, life and future. There are 4 main types of parenting styles:

- Authoritative
- Authoritarian
- Permissive
- Neglectful (uninvolved)

## The 4 Parenting Styles



Are we being overly possessive? Are we providing enough opportunities for our children to explore the world independently? Are we giving too much freedom or restricting them from everything? These styles are just some checkpoints for us to understand our parenting styles.



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As we can see in the above image, many parents attempt to maintain a balance of mixed parenting styles. Research has shown that authoritative parenting style takes into account the child's specific needs, talents and areas where they might benefit from higher levels of guidance. In this style of parenting, parents are approachable, maintain cordial relationships and provide opportunities for children to enhance their skills.

Characteristics of parents' upbringing styles may continue to be prevalent in the child's behaviour and actions as they grow up. As children grow older, they can be affected by other factors that further shape their personality or possibly change it entirely. Understanding family background, how rules are set and discipline styles allows other stakeholders to observe a child's mindset, dynamics of the family and work upon it. Let's discuss some real life experiences.

### Is parenting a challenge or are our expectations to blame?

Conscious parenting is a game-changer because it does not try to change the child, just ourselves as parents. Nowadays, both parents are so busy with their work and other responsibilities that it is difficult to understand our expectations of ourselves and of our child.

1. Giving the best or burdening our expectations – As parents, we want to provide everything to our children: we want to give them the best! Usually, the parent mindset is that “I need to provide everything that I did not get”. Somewhere all parents feel this.

But we need to pause here and reflect on whether what we are giving to our children is a “need or a want”. For example: buying a new remote car. Let’s say the child demands a new toy when he already has two and throws a tantrum at the shop. Ultimately, we fulfil their wish just to avoid societal pressure. Such scenarios are tricky to handle and that's the challenge of raising kids.

In such scenarios, take time and talk about it with them. Make them understand the difference between “need and want”. Keeping modelling expected behaviour as your child grows up. That's how children will learn to set boundaries for themselves, be empathetic to others and respect what they have.

2. Connection over correction – Connection develops when we understand our child and our child understands us. It can create pathways for them to value and respect themselves and others. We try to give more attention to the child but end up instructing them all the time. How often do we find ourselves saying: “Do this, do that?”, “This is not the way you do it”, “This is right”. Unknowingly, we are always correcting them. But sometimes, we need to let them experience failure, make mistakes and learn from that experience. Our focus shifts from handling the situation to limiting the child. It’s much more beneficial to emphasise teaching your child effective decision-making skills, develop their self-esteem and encourage independent problem-solving skills.

@southbaymommyandme

# Connect before you Correct

**Instead of:**

- Go to your room!
- No iPad for you!
- You lost dessert!
- Say you're sorry right now!



**Try this:**

**Parent:** You were curious what it would be like to throw the plant off the balcony.

**Child:** Oh yeah. Throw plant fun mommy.

**Parent:** I can see it felt fun. Plants need to stay safe in their planters. Let's go rescue the plant and find it a new home.

<https://i.pinimg.com>

Try to inculcate the followings, consciously when your child does something right –

- Appreciate their small achievements
- Encourage them with positivity and let them know that it's okay to make mistakes. Inspire them to learn from their mistakes and do better next time.
- Communicate with them about their routine
- Focus on how direct their thinking rather than suggesting what is to be done

Giving your children space to think, explore, manage their feelings can go a long way in connecting and bonding with them. We need to maintain the balance of boundaries and affection.

3. Comparison – Children come into the world with unique personalities, temperaments and backgrounds. As they navigate the journey of growth and development, it becomes increasingly apparent that no two children are alike.

It is overwhelming for today's children to survive in the world. Do we set the goals for them or provide opportunities to make decisions? Are we comparing our child with peers? Is it putting more pressure on children? Or are we as parents looking to fulfil our own dreams through our children?

As parents we need to understand the ability of our child and how much we can expect. Children learn by listening and witnessing. We need to provide such opportunities to “learn by themselves”. Modelling such resilient behaviour and setting the correct attitude from childhood sets an example for life.

4. Spending quality time – If one wants to live a good lifestyle and provide quality education it is sometimes a necessity for both the parents to work. However, it's equally important to spend quality time nurturing the child.

Given our busy schedule, how much quality time do we spend with our kids? Taking children outdoors, playing with them, reading, going on nature walks, and listening to them are such important elements to uplift their self esteem and teach them how to utilise their leisure time. Today children are easily bored because they restrict themselves to phones, tabs, and indoor games. Consciously taking out some time and engaging in physical activity creates new connections in the brain and helps children develop social skills in interacting with others. Hence, spending 10–15 minutes of quality time with them each day is vital.

Once children enter their teenage years, they may distance themselves and their friends take the position that parents once had. Although this is sometimes painful, making a mindful effort “to be there for children in any situation” and support them boosts their confidence. Teenagers become more complex, at times inflexible as they build their own values and morals. If our bonding is strong from the beginning, then it's a smooth transition for both parent and child.

5. Inculcating values – As the image depicts, children are the replica of their elders. They adapt what they see, listen and implement it in different environments such as home, school, trips, tutitions, parks, any family events etc. Developing a solid foundation of empathetic behaviour, basic mannerisms, appropriate physical gestures and polite language is essential. As adults, are we being watchful of our own language, our interaction at home and with people around us from different economic backgrounds, our personality traits? It's a question we need to ask ourselves.



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Parents are among the most important people in the lives of children. From birth, children are learning and relying on mothers and fathers, as well as other caregivers acting in the parenting role, to protect, care for them and to chart a trajectory that promotes their overall well-being. School is a second home for learners to enhance their skills, behaviour and overall personality. At DYPIS, we understand the need to empower our learners with their essential life skills.

## Initiatives at DYPIS, Worli

We at DYPIS organise sessions and workshops targeting some difficult issues that our student and parent community face. One such session was recently conducted on the topic – Understanding the effects of substance abuse. As our learners venture into the complex dealings of teenage and young adulthood, it is extremely important to equip them with the correct knowledge regarding such behaviours and how engaging in substance abuse will affect their entire life. Dr Avinash De Sousa, well known psychiatrist had a very informal yet informational discussion with our 9 to 12 graders regarding how engaging in any kind of substance abuse can cause long-term physical and psychological harmful consequences.



To set the expected behaviour for younger learners in school we conduct wellness sessions. We channelise their thinking skills and explicitly teach our young learners about kindness, being respectful, communication skills, how to overcome their fears and self worth to enhance their self awareness, self management skills and to develop their interpersonal relationships. These life skills are essential for each learner when they interact with people in the school and other surroundings. We are developing them to face real life challenges.



**IF PARENTHOOD  
CAME WITH A GPS  
IT WOULD MOSTLY  
JUST SAY...  
RECALCULATING.**

<https://i.pinimg.com>

Parenting is a lifetime job and does not stop when a child grows up. The foundation of responsibility, empathy, discipline, values, and principles are attributes of personality which need to be upgraded timely. Let's take mindful steps forward to be the approachable parents, adults for our children!



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