

WHAT TYPE OF PARENT ARE YOU?

Take this assessment to identify your parenting style. Then take a look at some pro's and con's with each parenting style.



**I WANT YOUR FAMILY TO BE A SUCCESS.
LET ME SHOW YOU HOW!**

-Clinton McRae Jr.



Parent leadership



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Chapter 1

Parenting Styles

Before we can begin the journey into Parent Leadership, let's define the meaning of parent and establish a point of reference to determine your particular style of parenting. Knowing this will allow you to take inventory of your strengths and make adjustments as needed to maximize your potential as a parent. According to most experts, our parenting styles can be grouped into the following: (1) Participatory (2) Authoritative (3) Unengaged and (4) Permissive.

Webster defines parent as (1) One who begets, gives birth to, or raises a child (2) An ancestor; a progenitor (3) An organism that produces or generates offspring.¹ These definitions immediately raise a couple of concerns. First, giving birth to a child qualifies one as a parent. I would view this as being the biological parent. In my experience, this is the easiest part of parenting. Second, the process of nurturing and rearing a child is what makes parenting tough and meaningful. Being a parent requires insight, intuition and foresight.

Neuroscientists have shown that the first five years are critical in the development and nurturing of a child. Studies indicate that with the "proper environmental stimulation, the child's cognitive development can be developed early."² Parents, who read with their children, play mathematical games, and practice solving puzzles from the ages of 0-6 years, lay the foundation for intellectual growth.

Simply put, our approach to parenting can build our children's potential and establish a foundation that will cause them to excel in the classroom and life! Let's take a look at your parenting style. In order to do that, please complete the survey that follows.

WHAT IS YOUR PARENTING STYLE? ³

How would you describe your approach to parenting? From each of the following groups of statements, circle the number that best describes you:

Group 1

1. I believe children should be seen and not heard.
2. I enjoy the chaos of parenting.
3. I believe children can be children and also practice civility.
4. My children keep to themselves and don't bother me much.

Group 2

1. I think my children need a firm hand to direct them so they behave properly.
2. I believe my children need freedom to learn who they are.
3. I love watching my children discover things for themselves and I am there if they have questions.
4. My children learn how to behave in school or at child care.

Group 3

1. I don't have a problem saying "no" to my child.
2. I hate saying "no" to my child.
3. Sometimes I need to say "no" to my child, but I sometimes say "yes."
4. Mostly I just ignore my child's bad behavior.

Group 4

1. Every rule – big and little – must be followed.
2. I don't believe in lots of rules – when I am with my children want to enjoy them and have fun, not be a disciplinarian.
3. I have rules that are really important, and I expect them to be followed. But I am willing to be flexible about smaller issues.
4. Mostly I just ignore my child's bad behavior. Having lots of rules is too complicated – sometimes it's just easier to ignore some behavior.

Group 5

1. I think discipline is correcting your children when they misbehave.
2. I don't believe in lots of discipline my children need freedom.
3. I think discipline is an opportunity to teach your children.
4. The other parent takes care of most of the discipline.

Group 6

1. I am okay if my children are unhappy with me.
2. I want my children to like me.

3. Sometimes I need to be unpopular with my children to keep them safe and ensure they do what needs to be done.
4. I am not sure how to get my children to like me.

Group 7

1. Children must respect their parents.
2. I like it when my child is respectful, but I must admit, that's not often. It must be the age.
3. Parents need to model the respect they expect from their child.
4. I wish my child was more respectful, but since she's not, I try to ignore it.

Group 8

1. I know exactly what my children are doing, who they are with and where they are all the time.
2. I try to keep up with my children's comings and goings, but sometimes they won't tell me.
3. My children and I have an agreement. I will always let them know where I am, and they will do the same.
4. I don't keep track of what my children are up to – they seem fine and have teachers and child care providers to watch over them.

Group 9

1. I don't tolerate mistakes. I can see making a mistake once, but after that children need to be punished.
2. I think that if children don't feel successful, they will not have the confidence to do well in life.
3. Some of the greatest lessons for children come from their mistakes. I try to help my children learn from their mistakes.
4. Everyone makes mistakes – I don't get real upset over my children's mistakes. They will figure it out.

Group 10

1. I don't believe parents should be their children's friend. You will lose your authority over them.

2. My children are my best friends.
3. My children are friends with other children; I need to be their parent.
4. I really don't understand how parents and children could be friends we are so different from each other.

Group 11

1. I don't tell my children much – these are adult matters.
2. I can tell my child just about anything.
3. I let my children know what is going on, especially if it affects them, but some things I need to talk with another adult about.
4. My children don't need much information; they seem to be doing fine.

The Results

Add the number of times you circled the number "1". Place that number in the first column under "Authoritarian-1". Continue to do that for 2, 3 and 4. The highest number in the box determines your Parenting Style. If there is a tie, read the descriptions for both and determine which one better describes your style.

Parenting Style	Description	Pro's	Con's
Authoritarian -1	<p>You are a firm believer in rules and have high expectations for behavior. You show your love by expecting the best from your children, but rarely show affection. Communication is generally one way – from you to your child. Sometimes you can be rigid and harsh in correcting bad behavior.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards and expectation are known • Completing goals are common occurrences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes children don't feel loved • Explaining the "why" for certain actions are avoided
Permissive-2	<p>You show your children a lot of love, give them what they ask for, communicate openly and let them do what they want most of the time. You have trouble setting and enforcing rules. You prefer to be friendly rather than a disciplinarian. Sometimes you feel like your children walk all over you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children generally feel valued and loved • Independent thinking is encouraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents can feel disrespected and unappreciated • Children feel like "others" owe them something (entitlement)

Participatory-3	<p>You believe children need your love, but you also have high expectations and believe your children need rules and guidance in order to meet these expectations. You view parenting as your most important job, and serve as a role model for your children by modeling the respect you expect from them. You believe in listening to your children, but when it comes down to it, you have the final say regarding issues involving safety, values and health. Your children know what you expect and they know you will be consistent, fair and firm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children feel safe and know that they are loved • Children are generally seen as high performers with high self esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents could be seen as being helicopter parent • Parents try to live their lives through the child
Unengaged-4	<p>You may feel uncomfortable about parenting because you don't spend much time with your children. You may focus more on work or other interests. When you are with your children, you often are preoccupied and not focused on them.</p> <p>You assume the other parent is doing a pretty good job. You aren't sure what you can do that would be helpful anyway.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used if you are unavailable due to personal reasons and you have dependable help friends, family • However, this type of parenting is not encouraged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children feel disconnected from you as a Parent • Your ideas and values as a Parent are not voiced or observed

Great! Now that you have completed the survey, what Parenting Style do you possess?
 Write it here: _____

The Goal of Parenting

As a child born in the '60s, I am the product of a parenting style that was mostly "authoritarian." In the house where I grew up, it was not uncommon to hear an adult say, "Children should be seen and not heard" or "Do it this way because I said so!" My father rarely showed affection and it wasn't until I became an adult that he softened and began to use the phrase "I love you." However, I don't fault my father for this. I'm convinced that he did the best he could considering the culture and parental training he was exposed to as a child in the '40s. Fortunately, my mother was more of the nurturing type and engaged me in youthful discussions.

I share this with you because the preferred parenting style recommended by experts is Participatory. In the business world, this is called leadership through engagement. This type of leadership is people centered, and leaders genuinely care about the health and welfare of their people. I can't think of a better leadership style that correlates so strongly with participatory parenting than leadership through engagement.

This style of leadership makes a distinction between being assigned as "the leader" and being a leader. The assigned leader can be viewed as a person fulfilling a role or position through obligation or appointment. Under this style of leadership, the person is often unattached and has no vision or passion for the job. The correlation can be viewed as with a biological parent. Biological parents, men in general, are often seen as unattached, showing no commitment to the mother and possessing little to no passion in the development of the child.

However, a leader can be viewed as a person that is connected and participates in the growth and development of the workers. A leader doesn't need titles, designations, or special announcements. He/she demonstrates his/her leadership through actions. This type of leadership has foresight and understands balance. Let's use this type of leadership style as the goal of parenting! Parent leaders use the tools of foresight and insightfulness to help their children achieve greatness.

I hope you found the Parent Assessment survey revealing. If your Parenting Style is not participatory, let's roll up our sleeves and grab a shovel so we can begin to dig deep and lay the groundwork for Participatory Parenting. If your Parenting Style is participatory already, the succeeding chapters will provide additional tools to increase the effectiveness of your parenting style. Are you ready? Then let's go!