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## Effective Parenting – Essential for Best Child Development

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### Introduction

Parents have the most important role in the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and academic development of children. Parenting is the process of promoting the development of children from infancy to adulthood. It is a time consuming and effortful task with rewards and challenges. Each child is unique and parents should understand the strengths and vulnerabilities of their children. Every child has basic needs and it is the responsibility of the parent to give them what they need in the proper way. Effective parenting has direct link with academic performance and personality development of children.

### Impact of Parenting Styles on Children

Parenting styles represent strategies that parents use in rearing their children. The parenting style will significantly affect the personality development of children. The way in which the parents interact with their children and how parents discipline them, will influence the children throughout their life. There is strong relationship between family processes and the development of behavior disorders in children [1].

The parent-adolescent relationship has a significant role in the development of risk behaviors among adolescents. Parenting styles have great influence on the scholastic performance and psychosocial adjustment of children[2]. Hence it is important to ensure that the parenting style is supporting the healthy growth and development of children.

Researchers have basically identified four different types of parenting styles. Each style takes a different approach to raising children.

### Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parents believe that kids should follow all the rules made by parents. They do not give any regard for the child's opinion. They use punishments instead of proper discipline. Children growing up with authoritarian parents, follow the rules most of the time. But these children are at a higher risk of developing self-esteem problems because their opinions are not valued. They may also

become hostile and aggressive in future.

### **Authoritative Parenting**

Authoritative parents take great effort to create and maintain positive relationship with children. Such parents make rules for children, but they also take the children's feelings into consideration before taking decisions. They use positive discipline strategies to reinforce the good behavior of kids.

Children having authoritative parents become responsible individuals capable of making proper decisions in life. These kids become self-confident. Authoritative parenting can be protective against obesity in children [3]. The children of authoritative parents usually do well in school and are more likely to become successful in life.

### **Permissive Parenting**

Permissive parents set rules for children, but rarely enforce them. They often interfere only when a serious problem occurs to the child. They usually do not discourage the problem behavior or unscientific choices of children. Kids who grow up with permissive parents usually have lots of behavioral problems.

Studies have reported significant correlations between parental attitudes and child's food intake as well as eating behaviour [4]. Parents have the most important role in the development of children's food preferences. Children of permissive parents are at greater risk for health problems, like obesity, because permissive parents do not limit junk food intake.

### **Uninvolved Parenting**

Uninvolved parents do not spend time with children. Sometimes they do not meet even the basic needs of children. They expect children to raise themselves. Children do not get any guidance from them. Children of uninvolved parents usually have low self-esteem. They tend to have poor scholastic performance. They also exhibit frequent emotional and behavioral problems.

### **Importance of Parent Training Interventions in Child Development**

Parent training interventions are very effective in improving child development. Developmental disorders in children lead to significant morbidity in future, if not intervened at the earliest. Developmental disorders globally cause significant health burden. Parent training interventions are the key interventions in the management of developmental disorders of children. Parent mediated interventions will improve the self help skills of pre-school children [5]. Infants and toddlers have specific developmental abilities, which require interventions that are tailored to each child.

Parent training interventions are effective to support the learning capacities of toddlers with autism spectrum disorders [6]. Parent-implemented early intervention lead to improvement in communicative behaviour of young children with autism spectrum disorder [7]. Social skills, communication skills and the socio-emotional functioning of toddlers with autism spectrum disorder improve with parent training interventions. Specific skills for improving the reciprocal social interaction and communication, can be taught effectively through parent implemented early intervention for young children with autism spectrum disorders [7]. Parent-implemented imitation intervention is effective for development of imitation skills in young children with autism [8].

Parental attitudes and parental commitment have significant impact in the outcomes of children and adolescents with learning disorders [9]. Quality of parental involvement determines the academic success of children.

Parent training interventions are found to be effective in improving the intellectual abilities of children with intellectual developmental disorders. Since brain plasticity is better during infancy and toddler age, early intervention involving parents, is the best treatment to prevent the children from becoming permanently disabled [10]. Early interventions to improve all the self help skills, during the first 3 years of age will definitely improve the intelligence of children [11].

Parenting interventions are useful to reduce behavioural problems of young children and are found to be the best treatments for young children with disruptive behavioral disorders [12]. Parenting programmes improve the emotional and behavioural adjustment of children.

### **Significance of Effective Parenting in Today’s Electronic World**

Parenting is indeed a challenging job in this age of television, mobile phones, social networks and electronic games. The new technological advancements have created new challenges in parenting. Lack of effective parenting is a major reason for the increase in developmental and behavioral disorders in children and adolescents in this technological world. Inadequate monitoring and improper disciplining can lead to conduct disorders and emotional disorders in adolescents. Parents should monitor the media use of children and protect the children from the negative impact of social media.

The parents should have the skill of listening and should be role models for their children. The quality and quantity of time the parents spend with children is very important in effective parenting. Parents should become part of children's everyday world and enjoy spending time with them. Parents should maintain very good communication with their kids and appreciate all achievements of children. Parent child connectedness should be present every day cognitively and physically. Compassion and connection are necessary to have good parent child relationship.

Parents should be empathetic with children. Improve the life skills of children using professional help from experts in child guidance. Never take the frustrations and stress out on children. Help children to take on responsibilities. Make the child understand the consequences of misbehaviors. Try to improve the self-esteem of the child. Avoid comparing children with siblings or peer group and also avoid unnecessary criticisms. Always make sure that children are safe.

### **Conclusion**

Parenting styles significantly influence the behaviour and well being of children and hence effective parenting is the need of the hour. Good parenting requires persistence, patience and knowledge. Effective parenting is crucial in the academic success of children. Professional guidance in parenting, from experts in child guidance, is very important in today’s world to raise brilliant, confident, compassionate, disciplined, responsible, resilient, self-reliant and socially skilled children.

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