

MODULE 14

AGENDA

- I. Welcome
 - A. Vocabulary
- II. My Childhood Misbehavior
- III. Why Children Misbehave
- IV. Matching Prevention Techniques with Problem Behaviors
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MODULE 14

VOCABULARY

Responsive discipline: An act in which child guidance is done in a manner that is responsive to a child's needs and feelings.

Parenting styles: The variety of ways in which parents discipline children.

Punishment: Issuing negative consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Expectations: To consider reasonable, due, or necessary.

Self Esteem: The way in which one feels about one's self.

Age appropriate: Relates to the developmental needs of a child consistent with the child's age.

Misbehavior: That which is unacceptable according to norms.

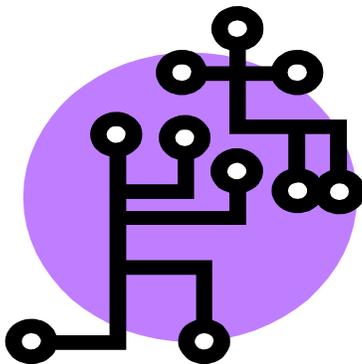
Parenting Styles

Everyone has a way of interacting with others. This includes resource parents and children. Sometimes those interactions are highly positive and affirming; at other times volatile and counterproductive. Your style — and whether it meshes or clashes with a child's — can influence how successful you'll be as a parent and a family in general.

What is your parenting style? Parenting style consists of two elements: responsiveness and demanding-ness. Another way to look at this is the balance between giving love and setting limits. All parents incorporate both love and limits in their style of parenting. It is the balance of love and limits that determines a parent's particular style. Each style has strengths and weaknesses, and is learned from the important parental figures in our lives. These figures are usually our own parents.

Four Parenting Styles

Characterizing parenting according to whether they are high or low on love-giving and limit setting creates a matrix of four parenting styles: Rejecting/Neglecting, Authoritarian, Permissive, and Democratic/Balanced.



Rejecting/Neglecting:	Low Love and Low Limits
Authoritarian:	Low Love and High Limits
Permissive:	High Love and Low Limits
Democratic or Balanced:	High Love and High Limits

The parenting style that works best for one child, may not work best for another, even other siblings. Finding a good balance is one of the MANY challenges of parenting -- but well worth the effort!

Food for thought: Do you get certain feedback and responses in these relationships that say you're too rigid or strict or too lenient or permissive? What style-related behaviors do you need to change in order to eliminate the confrontations, the conflict or the tug-of-wars that leave you drained and exhausted?

Prevention Card

**DEMONSTRATE THE DESIRABLE BEHAVIOR YOURSELF
(ALL AGES)**

Show child what you want him/her to do. For example, a father showed his child that talking about feelings is a good way to deal with anger and frustration. When his son went out to play without cleaning up the paints he was using at the kitchen table, the father said, "I feel frustrated when you leave your things on the table because I have to clean them up before we can have dinner." The father wanted to show his child how to express his own anger nonviolently.

Prevention Card

**PREPARE CHILD FOR A DIFFICULTY
(4 - 18 YEARS)**

When a child will have to face a problem that cannot be changed or avoided, give the child information to manage the situation. To use this approach effectively, parents must be able to anticipate a difficulty. For example, 10-year-old Nina has been having trouble with another child teasing her on the playground at school. Nina's father talks to her about the situation. He asks her what she might be able to do the next time. He suggests that she ask a teacher for help instead of fighting back.

Prevention Card

**CHANGE THE SURROUNDINGS
(ALL AGES)**

Children are sometimes seduced into misbehaving when they cannot resist the temptation to explore something that looks interesting. For example, a child may remove a hunting rifle from an unlocked cabinet to examine it more closely. Warnings will do little good. Remove dangerous objects or rearrange the environment to prevent the problem. The parent in this example can lock the hunting rifle in a secure cabinet.

Prevention Card

**PROVIDE REASSURING ROUTINES
(2 - 16 YEARS)**

Children sometimes misbehave because of stressful changes in their lives. When a child's routine is disturbed, provide the child with dependable, reassuring experiences. For example, a parent might take time to eat breakfast with a second grader before she leaves for school.

Prevention Card

**MOVE PHYSICALLY CLOSER
(ALL AGES)**

If you think your child may lose self-control and misbehave, move near him or her. This physical presence may reduce the temptation to misbehave. Your presence should be warm and friendly. For example, a father asks his daughter to do her homework at the kitchen table while he washes dishes.

Prevention Card

**PROVIDE REAL AFFECTION
(ALL AGES)**

Express unconditional positive feelings for children. Give them appropriate hugs and affectionate touches. For example, a mother gives her son a hug and says "I like you when you are happy, when you are sad, and even when you are angry." A father pats his son on the shoulder as he works on a tough math problem.

Prevention Card

**ENJOY EACH OTHER'S COMPANY
(ALL AGES)**

Become involved, as a partner, in your children's activities. Be responsive to their interests and avoid taking over. Participate in the child's play, as an equal. For example, a mother plays Frisbee with her son at the beach.

Prevention Card

**TELL STORIES TO MAKE A POINT
(ALL AGES)**

Read or tell stories to children to help them understand why something is important. Storytelling can be a powerful form of teaching. You cannot force a child to get the point of the story; moralizing is ineffective. Let your story make its point as you tell it. Remember that children may not always hear what you thought was important. Children love stories, but they also know a disguised lecture when they hear one. For example, a parent read her daughter a story about a 9-year-old girl who was worried about making new friends when she moved.

Prevention Card

CHANGE YOUR THINKING ABOUT THE MISBEHAVIOR (ALL AGES)

Allow children to do what comes naturally. Accept behavior that is expected for their ages, abilities, and temperaments. Allow children to be imperfect, to make mistakes, and to experience setbacks. Do not accept behavior that harms others. For example, one parent realized that her daughter's temperament made it hard for her to concentrate on her homework for a long period of time. Instead of becoming angry, the mother encouraged her daughter to stick with it, and praised her when she completed her work.

Guidance Card

**ASK FOR SOLUTIONS
(4 - 18 YEARS)**

When children are calm enough to think about a conflict or problem, ask them how they might solve the problem situation. Have them identify as many solutions as possible. Then ask them what they would like to do. For example say, "Leslie, what can you do when you think Steve is teasing you, rather than hit him?"

Guidance Card

**MAKE POLITE REQUEST
(ALL AGES)**

Appeal to a child's sense of fairness by asking him/her to change minor misbehaviors. Be specific and concise. Tell the child how you feel. If the child refuses to respond, then ask him/her to restate your point of view. Do not make a request if the child's behavior is absolutely unacceptable. For example, "Alexis, I have a terrible headache, and I'm very tired. It would really help me right now, if you could play quietly with your little brother."

Guidance Card

**USE HUMOR
(ALL AGES)**

When a lighthearted approach might work, use a humorous exaggeration to make a point or to remind children of what you expect of them. Avoid ridicule or sarcasm. For example, Pedro, age 9, has been leaving his dirty clothes in the bathroom after taking a shower. Once again, his father sees the mess and approaches Pedro. "Pedro, the Dirty Clothes Dwarf from down in the cellar crept up to our bathroom and put some of your dirty clothes in there. I know he's trying to get you into trouble, but I think you're going to have to pick up after him."

Guidance Card

**REDIRECT THINKING
(3 - 18 YEARS)**

When children seem determined to do something their way, try changing their thinking in a more positive direction. For example, when it's time to go home but your child wants to stay at the party and play, you may say, "I'm glad you had a good time, we can come back next Saturday."

Guidance Card

**HELP WITH FRUSTRATING TASKS
(ALL AGES)**

When children become frustrated to the point of losing control, provide just enough help to solve the problem, and a word of encouragement. For example, if your eight-year-old is having trouble with her new jigsaw puzzle, tell her she's done a good job. Ask her questions about the puzzle pieces to help her finish.

Guidance Card

**ASK FOR HELP TO UNDERSTAND
(4 - 18 YEARS)**

Ask children to give examples of what they believe is the problem. If they realize they are being taken seriously, they may calm down faster than if a parent lectures them. Talking about a problem may help children think of solutions. For example a 9-year-old complains that his mother is being unfair. Mother responds "OK, tell me what is unfair. Give me an example so I can better understand what you mean."

Guidance Card

**PROVIDE A HEARING
(ALL AGES)**

When you are uncertain about who holds the responsibility for a problem, ask the child to describe what happened. Give your full attention to the report, without criticism or accusation. Determine the extent of the child's responsibility for the problem. For example, Anna, 11 years old, breaks a neighbor's window while playing softball. Later that day her father says, "OK, Anna, tell me what happened."

Guidance Card

**AFFIRM FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS
(ALL AGES)**

When children are too emotional to think clearly, describe the feelings and ideas underlying their actions. Be sympathetic to the child's feelings and ideas, instead of telling him/her that what he/she thinks and feels is wrong. Use eye contact. Remember, acknowledging feelings does not mean you agree with the behavior. For example, say to your 7 year old, "Carla, I know you are upset with me for not letting you go to the party! You want to go because so many of your friends will be there, and you probably think that I am being unfair and mean." Follow up with a reason for the limit - "You are still running a fever. I don't want you to get sick again or give any of the other kids your flu."

Guidance Card

**CONTACT
(4 - 18 YEARS)**

Allow children to do what they want to do only after finishing what they have to do. The activity they want to do becomes a reason for completing a difficult or unpleasant task. For example, you might say, "You can go out to play as soon as you pick up your game."

Guidance Card

**OFFER SUBSTITUTES
(2 - 18 YEARS)**

When a child is in an activity that may be dangerous or cause damage, provide a similar but more acceptable replacement. Teach children to find acceptable ways to act on their interests. For example, if your 10-year-old wants to use the tools to build a fort, you can set up a time to allow the child to use the tools appropriately with close supervision. Remember that gaining a sense of industry is a developmental task of the school aged child. Allow your child to build skills in a safe environment.

Guidance Card

**COMPROMISE
(4 - 18YEARS)**

Look for an opportunity to give children a partial success when you have to say "No" to the overall request. Look for a solution in which you both "win." For example say, "Tara, you can't stay overnight at your friend Sue's house. But, let's call Sue and see if she would like to get ice cream with us after dinner."

Guidance Card

**SAY "NO" OR GIVE THE CHILD "THE LOOK"
(ALL AGES)**

When children are unsure about how serious you are about a limit, get their attention and give a calm, but firm, signal of your disapproval. For example, if your 12-year-old takes several cookies right before dinner, get her attention and either say "NO" or give her ***THE LOOK***.

Guidance Card

**HAVE THE CHILD REPEAT THE ACTION
(4 - 18 YEARS)**

If a child is careless or indifferent in his/her performance of a reasonable expectation, have the child repeat the action correctly. For example, when told to clean her room, a 9 year-old throws all her toys and dirty clothes into the closet. Her mother tells her to clean up again -- this time putting the toys away on her shelves and her clothes in the laundry basket.

Guidance Card

**IGNORE IRRELEVANT BEHAVIOR
(ALL AGES)**

Irrelevant behaviors are actions children use to distract adults from enforcing limits. Though often aggravating, they are not harmful. Ignore this behavior, if possible. Assume a neutral expression, and look or move away. Don't pay attention. Attention will increase the likelihood that your child will continue the behavior. However, never tolerate behavior that is harmful. For example, Jeff, age six, complains when he is told he can't have a snack at the mall because it is time to go home. His father ignores his whining and does not give in.