



Empowering Parents To Raise Their Children To Be Substance-Free

Talk early and often about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Even when it gets tough.



Click here to print a PDF of this article so you can start a conversation with your child

Talking regularly with youth about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs reduces their risk of using in the first place.

Know! encourages you to share this Parent Tip with friends and family.

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Know! How Your Parenting Style Measures Up for Success

In the previous parent tip, [Know! – What Kind Of Parent Are You?](#) we broke down the four basic parenting styles. Based on the descriptions, you were hopefully able to determine your overall parenting style. Now is your chance to see how your parenting style measures up for your child's success.

To review, the four basic parenting styles are: **Authoritarian**, **Authoritative**, **Permissive** and **Uninvolved**.

Now let's take a look at how significantly and uniquely each style affects a child's healthy growth and development, including their decision-making and risk-taking.

The **Authoritarian** Parent: Children of Authoritarian parents tend to be rule-followers amongst adults of authority, however, researchers say these children may become hostile or aggressive toward other youth; they are known to be fearful and shy, associate obedience with love, have lower self-esteem, lack spontaneity, and many times become accustomed to lying in order to avoid punishments. These youth are at increased risk for substance use.

The **Authoritative** Parent: In general, children of Authoritative parents tend to fare the best. They are usually better at recognizing safety risks and tend to make better choices; they know they can turn to their parents for non-judgmental advice and guidance; they are typically happier kids and more successful in school. These children are the least likely to engage in risky behaviors, including drinking, smoking and using other drugs, and are the most likely to grow into responsible, confident adults who feel comfortable sharing their opinion.

The **Permissive** Parent: Though unlikely to admit it, children actually crave structure, because knowing what is expected of them and being held to it actually creates a sense of safety. Permissive parenting does not provide that. In fact, it creates the opposite effect. Research published in the scientific *Journal of Early Adolescence* showed that these teens are three times more likely to engage in heavy underage alcohol consumption - likely due to their lack of consequences. These youth tend to be insecure and self-centered, lacking self-discipline and self-control; they are more likely to clash with authority and typically do not perform well in school.

The **Uninvolved** Parent: This type of parenting is dangerous and damaging, but not always intentional. Many times, this parent has mental health issues or substance misuse problems, or they may be overwhelmed in other areas of their lives, like work, paying bills and managing the household. Sadly however, there are some moms and dads who simply do not care about being a good parent. Regardless of the reason, these children typically struggle academically and socially, have low self-esteem, and a high risk for substance misuse and other problem behaviors.



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Experts agree that the **Authoritative** parenting style creates the healthiest environment for a child to grow and develop. Many parents have a blend of styles, but the key is for the parent-child relationship to be one high on warmth, communication and expectations. If you find your parenting style to be lacking in one area or another, take the opportunity to tweak it. If you feel overwhelmed, do not know where to begin or could just use some support, do not be ashamed to seek professional help.

Sources: [Gwen DeWar PH.D. - ParentingScience.com](http://ParentingScience.com): [The Authoritative Parenting Style](#). [John Lee - ChooseHelp.com](http://ChooseHelp.com): [Parenting Styles that Prevent Drug and Alcohol Experimentation](#). [Bianca Mgbemere and Rachel Telles - Vanderbilt.edu](http://Vanderbilt.edu): [Types of Parenting Styles and How to Identify Yours](#), Dec. 2013. [Amy Morin, LCSW - VeryWell.com](http://VeryWell.com): [4 Types of Parenting Styles and Their Effects on Kids](#), May 2017. [The Right Step: Four Families, Four Parenting Styles: Which Lead to Adolescent Drug Abuse?](#) Aug. 2014. [Dr. Maryann Rosenthal - TheAttachedFamily.com](http://TheAttachedFamily.com): [Four Parenting Styles - What Works and What Doesn't](#), Aug. 2009. [Shreyas Tirumala: Yale News](http://YaleNews.com) - [Parenting style linked to alcohol use](#), Oct. 2014

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