

BLENDED OR TOSSED? WHICH IS YOUR PARENTING STYLE?

The foundation of our parenting is our “style.” An imbalanced foundation leads to long-term problems.

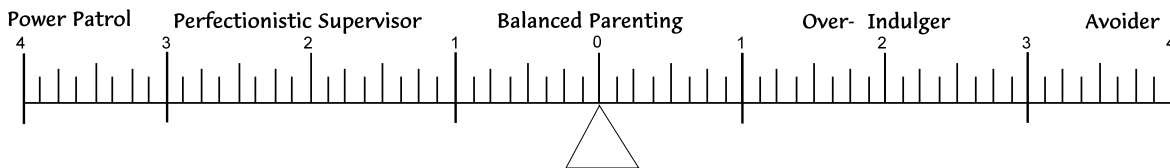
Conscious parenting is the process of choosing our parenting style and responses, based on the goals we want to achieve.

What are *your* parenting goals? What *skills* and *qualities* do your children need to succeed in life?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

After watching the Parenting Style Show:

- Circle your *current* parenting style on the scale below.
- Put a square around your *current work-relationship* style.
- Put a star (★) next to the style that will best meet *your* goals.



OVER-CONTROLLING

demands sole power

inflexible,
few choices

teaches obedience
to any authority

focuses on rules
and compliance

parents' rights and needs are most
important

rules apply to
children

uses punishment, children suffer for
mistakes

negative feelings
are not allowed

parent solves problems or
gives advice

rigid consistency

parent makes all decisions

BALANCED

shares power

flexible choices,
within limits

teaches respect for *all*
& the *value* of rules

focuses on respect
and earned privileges

all rights and needs are equally
important, but different

rules usually
apply to all

uses discipline,
children learn from mistakes

negative feelings are
expressed and resolved

parent teaches children how to
solve problems

consistent, based on
needs of situation

children learn to make decisions,
within limits

UNDER-CONTROLLING

gives up power

too flexible,
few limits

teaches self-
centeredness

focuses on freedom
and happiness

children's rights and needs are most
important

Rules aren't applied
or enforced

rescues from mistakes or denies
children are wrong

rescues children
from negative feelings

parent rescues from
or avoids problems

wishy-washy, inconsistent

children do what they
want, no "decisions"

* Take a “Parenting Styles Quiz” <http://parentstoolshop.org/resources/quiz/> and request a free guide with excerpts from *The Parents Toolshop* that offer detailed descriptions of these parenting styles.

Work as a TEAM with your Parenting Partners

- **Parenting partners include:** spouses, ex-spouses, room mates, teachers, day care workers, religious educators, relatives, and neighbors.
- **Overcompensation cycles**, where each partner tries to compensate for the imbalances of the other by being more extreme, damage parenting partnerships and teach children how to manipulate better.
- **Tips for Partner Teamwork:**
 - ▶ **Talk to your partner about the parenting approach you have *chosen*.** Explain that you want to work *cooperatively*.
 - ▶ **Agree on a plan for common problems that arise.** Decide what each of you wants to accomplish and find a way to meet both partners' concerns and needs.

If your differences persist or become a problem:

- ▶ **Agree not to sabotage each other.** Even if a partner's decision is imperfect, agree to either back up the partner or, at the least, not to interfere, even if you disagree.
- ▶ **If the other partner's style is not abusive or does not grossly violate the child's rights, you can back off and not interfere.** If the child's feelings are hurt, acknowledge their feelings without taking sides or criticizing the other parent. (If your partner *does* physically, emotionally, or sexually abuse your child, you must have the courage to contact someone who can help: a counselor, child abuse prevention hotline, or in emergencies, the police.)
- ▶ **Agree to disagree respectfully.** If you disagree or argue in front of the children, do so respectfully and fairly. Calmly work out disagreements and model healthy problem solving.
- ▶ **If you choose to get involved, back up your partner with your skills.** Figure out what the partner is trying to accomplish and model the effective skills you've learned. If it works, the partner feels supported, without feeling criticized.
- ▶ The best attitude to take is to **"Live the skills, don't preach about them."**

Encourage Yourself!

Accept the fact that you are *not* a perfect parent, will *never* be a perfect parent, and don't *want* to be a perfect parent. Perfect parents believe they have nothing new to learn. Children don't want perfect parents. They want human parents who are honest about their mistakes and can model what to do to correct them. What we do *after* a mistake often makes a greater impression on others than the mistake itself.

Declaration of Imperfection

I now allow myself to be an imperfect parent; one who makes mistakes and is sometimes wrong. I know I have made mistakes in the past and am sure to make more in the future. That's okay. While I am not happy about my mistakes, I am not afraid of them. Instead, I strive to learn what I can from the experience to improve myself in the future. When I catch a mistake, I correct myself respectfully. I pick myself up and don't put myself down. As I become a better and better parent, I won't make the same mistakes too often—but, I still won't be a perfect parent. That's okay, because my goal is continual improvement, not perfection.

*** If you are interested in learning the *tools* that are part of a balanced parenting/work-relationship style, attend a Parents Toolshop® training series.** Complete the interest survey provided at this workshop and/or contact Parents Toolshop® Consulting, Ltd. at 937-748-4541, Info@Parentstoolshop.com, <http://www.Parentstoolshop.ORG>