Session Eight (Optional)

LIST OF RESOURCES

1. Optional Session Trainer’s Guide
2. Handouts
   • The Four Main Types of Parenting

RECOMMENDED READING


Optional: Positive Parenting

OBJECTIVES
Participants will:
• Define positive parenting and provide two reasons why it is important.
• Define and explain the variables of demandedness and responsiveness.
• Define and explain the difference between authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative.
• Determine which parenting style they have and provide 1-2 strategies for becoming an authoritative parent.

OVERVIEW
Positive parenting is a technique to help parents foster a positive parent-child relationship. It involves an authoritative parenting style which emphasizes high responsiveness and demandedness, clear and reasonable expectations of the child, and maintains an open dialogue. This technique has been shown to be more effective than physical punishment or other coercive behavior management strategies. Parents who use this technique tend to have children who are better adjusted and perform better in school.

KEY CONCEPTS
• There are three main styles of parenting: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative, which differ in degrees of demandedness and responsiveness.
• According to current research, parents who use an authoritative style have children who are better adjusted and have fewer behavior management concerns.
• Positive parenting is a technique that aims to teach parents authoritative style strategies they can use with their children.

SESSION OUTLINE
This session should last approximately two hours in a group setting or one hour in an individual setting. Topics to cover with the parents include:

1. Who is a caregiver? What is a caregiver’s role?
2. Demandedness and responsiveness variables
3. Three types of parenting styles: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative
4. What is positive parenting?
5. Why is positive parenting effective?
6. Overview of parenting course and next seven sessions

MATERIALS NEEDED
• Introduction to Positive Parenting PowerPoint
• Projector
• Nametags or cardstock paper
• Flipchart paper
• Markers
TO BE HANDED OUT:
• The Four Main Types of Parenting Handout
• Home Assignment

ACTIVITY TO ENGAGE PARENTS
• Home Assignment — This activity asks participants to consider when they use high/low responsiveness and demandedness when interacting with their child as well as documenting their attempts to improve their interactions.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
1. Why can’t I spank or hit my child?
   • Studies show that corporal punishment is ineffective in the long run at changing challenging behaviors. Positive parenting techniques are more likely to improve behavior.
2. Won’t my child be spoiled if I always respond to my child’s needs?
   • Parents who always respond to an infant’s cries to be held promote attachment responsive parenting of young children does not spoil a child, rather it builds a child’s trust that the parent will respond.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES/READINGS FOR FACILITATORS
INTRODUCTION TO POSITIVE PARENTING (40 MINUTES)

Unless otherwise noted, read information from the slide out loud to participants before reading the prompts provided in the sidebar and below. For this session, each slide presented corresponds to Optional Session: Positive Parenting PowerPoint.

**Trainer Action:** Ask parents who they would consider a parent/caregiver. Write down responses on the board or a piece of paper to display in the room.

**Trainer Action:** Read information on slide to participants.

### Who is considered a parent or caregiver?

Any person – biological, not related, legally or non-legally in the role of caring for and raising a child

Caregiving is used interchangeably with parenting, although parenting is the preferred term when describing the long-term care of a child (Richter & Naicker, 2013).

“There may be a certain image that we have in our mind when we picture a family such as parents/caregivers- but these images differ with every individual. Anyone can become a parent/caregiver, therefore it is vital to understand what children need in order to develop and grow into healthy adults.”
How do people become good parents? How do you know? Take two minutes to discuss with the person to your left.

**Trainer Action:** After two minutes, ask pairs to share their response with the rest of the class.

**Brief Reflection**

- Reflect for a few minutes on ways that you think people become good parents:
  - Do they read a book?
  - Is it offered as a course in school?
  - Do parents/caregivers teach their children to be good parents?

**Trainer Action:** Read this slide to participants. Ask participants if they agree and what they would add or remove from the list and why.

Common responses may include: their children are well-behaved, their parents/grandparents are/were respected in the community, they show their children they care by doing things for them, etc.

**Trainer Action:** Have participants discuss how they came up with their responses.

“Everyone grows up in different home environments and cultures. How well does the society that you have grown up in teach or support a parent/caregiver to properly raise a child?” (Responses will vary)

**Trainer Action:** Read this slide to participants.

**What is the role of a parent or caregiver?**

- Providing a positive environment that allows for a child to develop and grow.
- This includes:
  - Physical Support
  - Emotional Support
  - Psychological Support
  - Protection

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**Parenting Around The World**

- Parenting practices vary among societies, governments and cultures.
- These practices have three major goals:
  - To ensure the health and safety of the child
  - To prepare the child for a life that is productive when they reach adulthood
  - To encourage the transmission of cultural values and practices
- A healthy parent-child relationship is critical for encouraging healthy development.

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“Providing parents with proven strategies readily adaptable to any region becomes even more important when one considers the many variations and types of parents and caregivers that exist.”

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**Requirements**

Parents and caregivers need **clear information, experience, support, education and guidance** in order to provide a safe, nurturing and positive learning environment for their child to develop and grow.

Trainer Action: Ask the following question before reading answers on the slide:

What types of things do children need to survive?

What do children need?

Of course, children require food and water, sanitation, and access to health services to survive. BUT THEY ALSO NEED...

Affection, loving attention, mental stimulation, guidance and support in order to develop and grow in a secure and positive environment.

Trainer Action: Read slide to participants first. Then say the following:

Providing education for parents can help them in turn offer guidance and support to their children. Sometimes parents are busy or caregivers may be taking care of children they are not familiar with. Parenting education classes help parents/caregivers determine what skills they need to improve or gain.

Parenting Education

- Parenting Education includes the knowledge and skills that parents/caregivers need for child-rearing with the objective of improving a child’s health and development.
- Strengthen the knowledge and skills of parents and caregivers in order to enhance positive parenting practices.


Not a universally accepted term (e.g. it is sometimes called ‘parent training’ or ‘parent education’ (can be considered inclusive of those individuals who are not biological or legal parent but who nonetheless carry the primary responsibility of raising a child.) For the purpose of this presentation, when discussing and using the term ‘parent’, include all caregivers, legal and non-legal who are raising/rearing children.
What this means is that what parents believe and how they act affects how a child thinks and acts. How a child thinks and acts can then affect what a parent does. By working to help parents change how they act or what they believe about parenting, we can positively influence a child and improve behavior and relationships.

Parenting/Caregiver Programs

“Parenting support programs aim to change parental beliefs and actions with the goal of changing child behavior which, in turn, is likely to lead to changes in parental well-being including the couple and family relationships”

(Richter & Naicker, 2013)

“Most parenting support programs operate within a transactional model of parent-child relations (Sameroff, 2009). They assume that parental beliefs and actions affect children and that children’s beliefs and actions will affect parents. These transactional processes are therefore capable of producing virtuous and vicious cycles of interaction that become embedded with short- and long-term positive or negative outcomes for children, parents and their families.” (Richter & Naicker, 2013).

Trainer Action: Ask for a few participants to share how they were raised.

What type of environment was it? Is there anything you wish you had that you didn’t? How do you think this affected your development?

Brief Reflection Exercise

• Reflect on how you were raised?
  • Was it a healthy and stable environment?
  • Did you get what you needed?
  • Can you think of culturally specific practices that affected your development?
  • What (if any) parenting education or support do you think your parents needed?
“One important factor that influenced the way you were raised was the parenting style of your parents. Today we will learn what these different styles as well as determine what your style is.”

**Trainer Action:** Read this slide to participants.

**Parenting Styles**

- There are two recognized major variables when considering parenting styles and child outcomes.
- These variables help us to better understand differing parenting styles.


**Variable 1**

- **Responsiveness** of the parent/caregiver to the child
  - This type of parent/caregiver usually behaves
    - Reasonably
    - Is nurturing
    - Provides encouraging or supportive feedback to the child


Photo: parent appears responsive to child
The second variable is called demandedness.

Demandedness means that a parent has high expectations and expects his/her child to follow them.

Variable 2

- **Demandedness** of the parent/caregiver seeks for the child to comply with established rules and expectations.
  - This type of parent/caregiver usually
    - Has expectations or demands of the child
    - Wants behavior to be in control
    - Monitors the child closely for adherence to these expectations.


“Can you think of a time when it is important to responsive? When may it be important to have high demandedness?”

**Model Response:** When a child is in a dangerous or unsafe situation and action needs to be taken immediately. In this situation, always talk with your child after in order to demonstrate responsiveness and explain why you did or said what you did.

These parenting styles differ by the degree of level of the variables in practice.

**Parenting Styles**

- The two major characteristics or variables, Responsiveness and Demandedness, contribute to the main PARENTING STYLES:
  - AUTHORITARIAN
  - PERMISSIVE
  - AUTHORITATIVE
Trainer Action: Read the sidebar first before reading the slides. Pick 2-3 bulleted points from each style to provide to parents in order to explain each one. Provide participants with The Four Types of Parenting Handout to look at while you explain the following slides. Make sure to orient participants to the handout if necessary.

The first type of parenting style is called authoritarian. These parents are high in demandedness but low in responsiveness. They are often seen as strict and unloving/uncaring.

**Authoritarian Style**

- “You don’t need to understand, you only need to comply” – A motto of a strict authoritarian parent.
- High on demandedness and low on responsiveness.
- Rely heavy on “coercion” to force the child to comply.
- Coercion includes using threats, intimidation, physical punishment, fear, and love withdrawal.
- Children from these parents/caregivers are usually more anxious, withdrawn, and unhappy. They also can have more difficulty with peer relationships.
- With the lack of parental support and responsive interaction, children tend to perform lower academically.

The second type of parenting style is called permissive. These parents are usually seen as more fun since they are high in responsiveness but low in demandedness.

**Permissive Style**

- Permissive parents and caregivers are usually not specific in expectations and direction. There is miscommunication with rules for compliance.
- Usually warm and nurturing and reasonably responsive to the physical and emotional needs of the child, they tend not to provide sufficient support or guidance that the child needs.
- Low on demandedness and range low to high on responsiveness.
- Often children from this type of parenting style are less mature when compared to other children from other parenting styles.
- Children can be disobedient, rebellious, more self-centered and impulsive.
The third type of parenting style is called authoritative. These parents are high in both demandedness and responsiveness. They are able to balance high expectations with showing their child they care about them and love them. For this reason, this is usually considered the most effective parenting style.

**Authoritative Style**

- High in demandedness and high in responsiveness.
- Reasonable with their expectations.
- Provide warmth and nurturance in their response to their child.
- Encourage the child to understand expectations of the parent.
- Open discussion/dialogue that allows for feedback and collaboration on what the parent would like from the child.
- Children of these parents/caregivers tend to be more well adjusted in life and more successful in school.

“On your handout, you will notice a fourth type of parenting style called neglecting. These are parents who are low in both responsiveness and demandedness. For our session today we will only focus on the first three types.”

**What type of parent are you?**

**Trainer Action:** Have participants take 3-5 minutes to discuss with a partner what type of parent they think they are and to provide examples to support their choice. Call on several volunteers to share with the rest of the group.

Prompt participants to use the words “responsiveness” and “demandedness” when answering the question.
Now that we know the three main types of parenting, we will focus on positive parenting which will help us develop the skills necessary to be an authoritative parent. Positive parenting is...

**Positive Parenting**

- Parenting that supports a healthy parent-child relationship
- Sometimes called positive discipline, gentle guidance, or loving guidance
- Guidance that keeps children on the right path, offered in a positive way that resists any temptation to be punitive.

There are several reasons why we should focus on positive parenting to improve our relationships and communication skills rather than simply disciplining our children.

**Why is it important?**

- Physical discipline is not only less effective than other non-coercive methods, it is more harmful than has often been understood.
- Corporal punishment is associated with antisocial behavior and aggression in children, and later in life is linked to depression, unhappiness, anxiety, drug and alcohol use and psychological maladjustment.
- Beyond beating, parents can also hurt children by humiliating them, labeling them in harmful ways (“Why are you so stupid?”), or continually criticizing their behavior.
Taken from a review on the physical punishment of children by Durrant and Ensom (2012):

- This study indicated that corporal punishment is associated with antisocial behavior and aggression in children, and later in life is linked to depression, unhappiness, anxiety, drug and alcohol use and psychological maladjustment. Beyond beating, parents can also hurt children by humiliating them, labeling them in harmful ways (“Why are you so stupid?”), or continually criticizing their behavior.

- Results suggest that physical punishment has a direct causal effect on externalizing behaviour, whether through a reflexive response to pain, modeling or coercive family processes, (Durrant and Ensom 2012).

- Physical punishment is also associated with a variety of mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety and use of drugs and alcohol. Physical punishment may change areas in the brain linked to performance on IQ tests and increase vulnerability to drug or alcohol dependence, as recent neuroimaging studies suggest. Attitudes toward the use of physical punishment have changed, and many countries have shifted focus to positive discipline of children and have legally abolished physical punishment.

Do any laws exist here on the use of physical punishment of children? Why might these exist? (Responses will vary)

Why physical punishment isn’t good

- Results consistently suggest that physical punishment cause increased externalizing behaviors.

- Physical punishment is associated with a variety of mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety and use of drugs and alcohol.

- Physical punishment may change areas in the brain linked to performance on IQ tests and increase vulnerability to drug or alcohol dependence.

- Attitudes toward the use of physical punishment have changed, and many countries have shifted focus to positive discipline of children and have legally abolished physical punishment.

- What are the laws on physical punishment where you live?
Results of Positive Parenting Interventions

• Child-Parent Centers provided comprehensive educational and family support to economically disadvantaged children and their parents. In a matched control trial, children participating in these centers had a **52 percent reduction in child maltreatment** (Reynolds & Robertson, 2003).

• Nurse-Family Partnership is a nurse home visitation program for low-income, first-time parents and their children beginning prenatally and continuing up to the child’s second birthday.
  – The program encourages healthy behaviors during and after pregnancy, teaches appropriate parenting skills, and links parents to community services.
  – A randomized controlled trial documented a **48 percent reduction in child maltreatment at the 15-year follow-up** (Olds et al., 1997).

Rather than read/share this information with participants, emphasize key points:

1) Several studies using positive parenting techniques indicate that parents were able to replace more coercive discipline measures with proactive praise and structured behavior management leading to improved communication and fewer behavior concerns.

Put more simply:

2) Positive parenting interventions can reduce conduct problems in children and increase compliance to parental commands.

Results of Positive Parenting Interventions

• Triple P is a multi-level system of parenting interventions based on need usually delivered through health care.
  – In the U.S. Triple P System Trial, researchers found a **28% reduction in substantiated abuse cases**, an **44% reduction in child out-of-home placements**, and an **35% reduction in hospitalizations** and emergency room visits for child injuries in nine study counties in South Carolina where parenting interventions were implemented (Prinz et al., 2009).

• Incredible Years parenting program has shown marked results:
  – Increases in parent **positive affect such as praise** and reduced use of criticism and negative commands
  – Increases in parent **use of effective limit-setting** by replacing spanking and harsh discipline with non-violent discipline techniques and increased monitoring of children.
  – Reductions in parental depression and increases in parental self-confidence.
  – Increases in positive family communication and problem-solving.
  – Reduced conduct problems in children’s interactions with parents and increases in their positive affect and compliance to parental commands.
“Positive parenting is actually the focus of all of our sessions. We will now briefly discuss each component of positive parenting so you will know what to expect to cover in the rest of our sessions.”

**Trainer Action:** There is no single positive parenting program, rather there are key components. Explain that these will all be different topics focused on throughout the course.

Which topic do you feel you know the most about/are the most comfortable with/the least? Why? *(Responses will vary)*

Probe participants to explain why they feel or think this way/provide relevant experiences.

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### Key Components of Positive Parenting

Positive Parenting education and support generally cover components of the following:

- Developmental norms and milestones
- A safe, interesting environment
- A positive learning environment
- Behavior management & assertive discipline
- Realistic expectations
- Self care for parents
Trainer Action: Remind parents that they will discuss developmental milestones in more detail in Session Three. Stress the importance of the first two bullet points. *(Responses will vary)*

### Developmental Norms and Milestones

- Children are not “little adults”
- Parents require knowledge of developmental norms and milestones of their children, so they can understand how to interact appropriately with their children throughout their development
- Parents should understand the key developmental norms associated with different age groups and the various domains of child development

### What things does your child typically do at home? What is one thing you can do to either make it safer or more interesting?

### Create a safe, interesting environment

- When children play and explore it helps them develop skills.
- A home that is safe is essential. Parents should be supported to create such a safe environment.
  - Parenting education discusses possible safety hazards and how these can be mitigated.
- Children also need interesting things to do. Parents require the education, skills, and support to create such interesting environments.
  - No need for expensive toys. There are lots of low/no cost options. Parents should be supported to identify these options.
Positive Learning Environment

- Children need their parents’ attention. But that doesn’t mean parents have to play with them every minute of the day.
- Quality is more important than quantity.
- Parents need to be positive about things their children are doing.
  - Skills building on how to pay attention to children’s positive behaviors including praise. When children are rewarded for good behavior by their parents with just a bit of attention or recognition, they become more likely to engage in the good behavior again.
- Additional parenting education and tips on positive learning environments:
  - Speak nicely.
  - Use “Incidental Teaching.”
  - Share experiences. Children need practice at listening too.
  - Be affectionate. Show children they are loved.

Why is assertive discipline important in managing child behavior?

Behavior Management & Assertive Discipline

- Children need boundaries and consistency, which helps them feel safe and secure and know what to expect.
- Parents should have the skills to manage behavior and respond accordingly, including when to ignore and when to discipline.
- Assertive discipline helps children understand that their behavior always has consequences and that those consequences are carried out in a predictable, loving environment.
- Assertive discipline means parents are prepared. They set clear ground rules and tell their child what to do rather than what not to do. They give clear, calm instructions and are consistent from one day to the next.
- If set rules are broken, parents act quickly, stay calm and follow up with fair, age-appropriate consequences, such as taking away a play thing for a short period.
- Parents should remember to praise behavior they like.
  - Catch them doing something good!
Trainer Action: Read this slide to participants. If short on time, summarize the slide rather than discussing each bullet point.

**Realistic Expectations**

- Children aren't all the same. They're individuals with their own personalities. Even kids of the same age develop at different rates.
- It's important that parents don't expect more - or less - of their child than he or she is capable of providing.
- Nobody's perfect.
- If parents expect their child will always be polite, happy or cooperative, they will be disappointed.
- Children make mistakes, but most mistakes aren't intentional. It's okay to let children try and fail.

**Self Care for Parents**

- Parenting is much easier when parents also take care of themselves!
- Of course, raising children is a time-consuming job. When parents also have other jobs, multiple children, and many other demands, they tend to decrease their own self-care.
- Parents need support from friends or family.
- Parents should take time to things they enjoy.
- When parents look after themselves, they feel more patient and calm when their child needs them.
- They also feel more confident in their own parenting abilities.
Based on how much time is left, consider discussing the following points with participants.

- Use “Incidental Teaching.” This means teach them when you can. For example, don’t just give your child an answer to a question. Prompt your child to talk about it or give them a clue to find the answer themselves. They’ll learn more that way.
- Share your own experiences. Children need practice at listening too. Tell them something about your day or something they may be interested in.
- Be affectionate. Show your child you love them. Kisses, cuddles and hugs will make your child feel wanted and secure.

**EXPLANATION OF HOME ASSIGNMENT (5 MINUTES)**

**Trainer Action:** Hand out the home assignment. This can either be as a packet or week by week.

“At home, we ask that you think about what you are already doing at home and the skills you are learning in class. This week, I would like you to consider when you use high/low responsiveness and demandedness when interacting with your child and document your attempts to be more authoritative.”

**CLOSING: SUMMARIZATION OF KEY POINTS AND CLOSING (10 MINUTES)**

**Trainer Action:** Ask participants the following questions. Try to ask a variety of participants to share their responses. If any responses are not correct, ask other participants to offer support, or ask probing questions to help participant answer the question correctly.

**Take the next five minutes to think about the following question.**

1. **How has your parenting style affected your interactions with your child?**
   - (Responses will vary)

**Trainer Action:** Spend the next five minutes selecting participants at random to respond to the following questions.

“Now we will review what we have discussed today.”

1. **What is demandedness? How is it different from responsiveness?**
   - Demandedness refers to the expectations a parent has for his/her child and how he/she enforces them. Responsiveness is how quickly and effectively a parent responds to his/her child’s needs.

2. **How many types of parenting styles are there?**
   - Four total, although we will only focus on four of them: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritarian. (The fourth parenting style is neglect which is a form of child abuse and never a valid parenting style.)

3. **How are they different from each other?**
   - Authoritarian parents are high in demandedness but low in responsiveness. Permissive parents are high in responsiveness but low in demandedness. Authoritative parents are high in both demandedness and responsiveness.

4. **Who can tell me what positive parenting is?**
   - Positive parenting is a set of strategies to help strengthen our relationships and improve our communication with our children by offering guidance and support.

5. **Who can explain two reasons why it’s important?**
   - It can improve a child’s behavior, perform better in school, improves our relationship, etc.

“Does anyone have any questions about what we covered today?”

**Trainer Action:** Thank parents for attending and remind them of the time/date for the next session. Answer any lingering questions not answered in class.
Session Eight Handouts

• The Four Main Types of Parenting
The Four Main Types of Parenting

Permissive
- Encouraging
- Low Standards
- Low Power Assertive

Lax
- High Standards
- High Power Assertive

Authoritative
- Strict Standards
- High Standards
- Low Power Assertive

Authoritarian
- High Standards
- Low Power Assertive

Things to Consider:

- What type of parent are you?
- What are two things you typically do that make you this type of parent?
- What type of parent would you like to be?
- What are 1-2 changes you can make to become this type of parent?