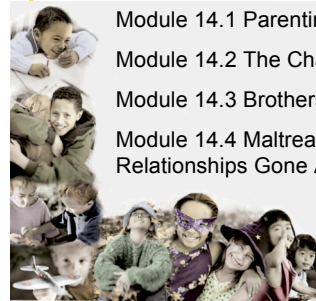


Family

IIE 366: Developmental
Psychology
Greg Francis
Lecture 32

Chapter 14: Family Relationships



Module 14.1 Parenting
Module 14.2 The Changing Family
Module 14.3 Brothers and Sisters
Module 14.4 Maltreatment: Parent-Child
Relationships Gone Awry

Children and Their Development, 4/e by Robert Kail

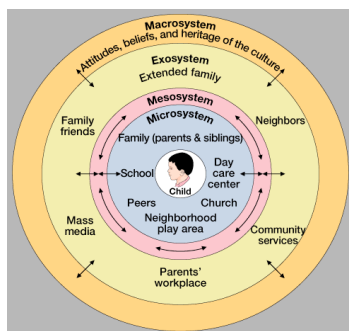
14.1 Parenting

The Family as a System
Styles of Parenting
Parental Behavior
Influences of the Marital System
Children's Contributions

14.1 The Family as a System

- Families form a system of interacting elements that mutually influence each other
 - Families are necessary because human children develop so slowly
- Families are part of a much larger system that includes extended family, friends, and teachers as well as institutions
- Systems view exemplified by Bronfenbrenner, who saw developing child embedded in a series of complex and interactive systems

Bronfenbrenner's Theory



14.1: The Family as a System

Bronfenbrenner's Theory

- Microsystem:** people and objects in the immediate environment. Usually parents and siblings
- Mesosystem:** connections of microsystems. What happens at school can influence what happens at home (and vice-versa)
- Exosystem:** social settings that influence development through indirect experience. A parent with a stressful job may not have patience to help a child with homework.
- Macrosystem:** the culture and subculture within the other systems are embedded. Heritage, common values.
- Chronosystem:** Changes in the systems over time. Members of immediate family may change, work responsibilities may change, children change over time

Bronfenbrenner's Theory

- The systems view suggest that lots of things contribute to parenting
 - Not just the parent
- For example, a child's temperament may resist discipline, which make parents reluctant to reason with the child and more likely to use force
 - Which leads to lots of other impacts in other systems (school, work)
- Friction between parents can leave parents unwilling or unable to help children resolve issues
- A decision to remove programs at school can influence a child's development
- Lots of interactions between the systems!

14.1 Styles of Parenting

- Characteristic style of parenting
 - Kind of like a person's personality
- Two primary dimensions:
 - Warmth and responsiveness
 - » involvement in children's lives
 - » responsiveness to children's needs
 - » affectionate versus hostile
 - Control
 - » Dictatorial: control ever facet of the child's life
 - » No control: children do whatever they want

14.1 Styles of Parenting

- High levels of warmth and responsiveness and moderate levels of control are the best
- Control involves setting age-appropriate standards, consistent enforcement of rules, and good communication
- One sees four prototypic styles of parenting
 - *authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved*

Dimensions and Styles of Parenting

		Parental Control	
		High	Low
Parental Involvement	High	Authoritative	Indulgent-Permissive
	Low	Authoritarian	Indifferent-Uninvolved

14.1: Styles of Parenting

14.1 Styles of Parenting

- **Authoritarian**
 - High control with little warmth
 - Rules are given and expected to be obeyed.
 - Hope to cultivate hard work, respect, and obedience.
 - Little give and take between parents and child
 - Child's wishes are not considered
- Effects on children
 - perform moderately well in school and are not involved in problem behaviors
 - have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression
 - Often aggressive

14.1 Styles of Parenting

- **Authoritative**
 - Some control and warm and responsive
 - Rules are explained and discussed
 - Parents are involved in child's life
- Effects on children
 - More socially and instrumentally competent than those whose parents are nonauthoritative
 - High self-esteem
- In general, authoritative parenting is associated with the best outcomes for children

14.1 Styles of Parenting

- *Permissive*
 - ♦ Warm and caring, but little control
 - ♦ Punishment is rare
- Effects on children
 - ♦ High self-esteem, good social skills, low levels of depression
 - ♦ More likely to be involved in problem behavior and perform less well in school

14.1 Styles of Parenting

- *Uninvolved*
 - ♦ Neither warmth nor control
 - ♦ Minimize amount of time spent with children
 - ♦ Avoid becoming emotionally involved with children
- Effects on children
 - ♦ Do poorly in school
 - ♦ Often aggressive

14.1 Styles of Parenting

- Views about the 'proper' amount of parental warmth and control vary by culture: Chinese parents are more likely to emphasize control and American parents are more likely to emphasize affection
 - ♦ Can be done within the framework of authoritative parenting
- Parental styles vary not only across cultures, but within cultures, depending on parents' socioeconomic status
 - ♦ Lower economic status parents in the US tend to be more authoritarian

14.1 Parental Behavior

- What specific parenting behaviors influence children?
- *Direct instruction*: telling children what to do, when, and why
 - ♦ Much better than giving a command
- Observing: children learn from watching others and from *counterimitation* (learning what should not be done)
- Feedback: reinforcement useful but parents often unknowingly reinforce behaviors they want to prevent (*negative reinforcement trap*)

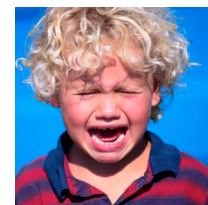
Negative reinforcement trap

- Often occurs when parent makes a request to their child and instead of following the request, the child negotiates or pleads their way out of fulfilling that request.
- Suppose a parent asks a child to pick up their toys
- The child does not do it, so the parent repeats the request and starts to nag the child
- The child responds emotionally, cries, calls the parent names, begs to not have to do it, tries to run away
- The parent decides it is easier to pick up the toys on their own



Negative reinforcement trap

- The child learns that fussing and making a scene leads to the removal of an unpleasant task
- Thus, the child is more likely to repeat this behavior in the future



14.1 Influences of the Marital System

- Extent of marital conflict and how it's resolved has an obvious effect on children both directly and indirectly
- Many parents work together in a coordinated and complementary fashion toward shared goals for child's development
- Lack of teamwork cause problems
 - ♦ competition for child's attention (to emphasize different goals for the child)
 - ♦ gatekeeping (limit the other parent's contributions, e.g. mother does all infant care; father may help with all homework)

14.1 Children's Contributions

- Parents' expressions of warmth and control change as children develop
- Warmth is good throughout development
 - ♦ But it is expressed in different ways: hugs and kisses are great for toddlers but embarrass adolescents
- Control is gradually released throughout development
 - ♦ But it depends on the child showing self-control
- Parents behave differently depending on a child's specific behavior and temperament
- Influence between parents and children is reciprocal

14.1 Children's Contributions

- Parents may find it easy to be authoritative for a child with an easy temperament
- The same attitude might not work for a difficult child
 - ♦ So the parents become more controlling and less affection
 - ♦ Which makes the child even less compliant
 - ♦ Which makes the parents adopt an authoritarian parenting style

14.1 Children's Contributions

- Without proper adjustments, these interactions between parents and children lead to
 - ♦ Lack of control
 - ♦ Defiant children
 - ♦ Angry and upset family



14.2 The Changing Family

Impact of Divorce on Children

Blended Families

The Role of Grandparents

Children of Gay and Lesbian Parents

14.2 Impact of Divorce on Children

- Divorce affects children's conduct, school achievement, adjustment, self-concept, and relationships with parents
 - ♦ Greater risk of these problems, not a certainty
- Effects of divorce
 - ♦ dropped from the 1970s to 1980s (more common and less frightening)
 - ♦ increased again in the 1990s (reflecting income differences between one-parent and two-parent families)
- Divorce may affect development because of loss of a parental role model, economic hardship, and conflict between parents
- Divorce more harmful when it occurs during childhood and adolescence or when children interpret events negatively

14.2 Blended Families

- Remarriage after a divorce is common
- Blended families consist of a biological parent, stepparent, and children
- Preadolescent boys tend to benefit from presence of stepfather, but preadolescent girls do not adjust as easily to mother's remarriage
- Best strategy for stepfathers is to be interested, but not to interfere with established routines
- Noncustodial mothers are more likely to maintain close and frequent contact with children
 - Good for children
 - But makes it difficult for a stepmother find a role

14.2 The Role of Grandparents

- Most American children see grandparents at least once a month or more
- Grandparents are especially active in the lives of immigrant and minority children, often taking on parental roles

14.2 Children of Gay and Lesbian Parents

- Gay and lesbian parents have similar parenting styles as heterosexual couples
 - May be somewhat more responsive to children's needs
- Children reared by gay and lesbian parents seem to develop much like children raised by heterosexual couples
- Having multiple adults involved in child rearing is important, but research suggests that who the adults are matters less than what they do

14.3 Brothers and Sisters

Firstborn, Laterborn, and Only Children
Qualities of Sibling Relationships

14.3 Firstborn, Laterborn, and Only Children

- Firstborns are more adult- and achievement-oriented; laterborns are more sociable and more innovative; only children have more academic success, higher levels of intelligence, leadership, autonomy, and maturity
- Adopted children are similar to non-adopted in terms of temperament, attachment, and cognitive development
 - Problems are more likely to occur if the child was older when adopted and his/her pre-adoption care was poor

14.3 Qualities of Sibling Relationships

- Older siblings may be a source of care and comfort and may be teachers
- Siblings get along best when (1) they are same sex, (2) neither is emotional, (3) younger enters adolescence, (4) parents don't show favoritism, and (5) parents have warm relationship with each other
- Parental intervention when siblings fight can lead to more positive interactions and better negotiating skills

Next time

- Parenting