

Research-Based CONTENT Areas for Parenting Education

(in addition to those described in the NEPEM model)

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Authoritative Parenting = “Nurture” + “Guide” + Psychological Freedom¹

- Authoritative parenting has been shown by study after study to contribute to positive outcomes for children and youth, along with strong parent-child attachments.
- Children whose parents are primarily authoritative are more socially responsible and independent, more able to control aggressive impulses, have better peer relationships, and are more successful intellectually and academically.
- Authoritative parenting is characterized by three major factors: strong supportiveness, psychological freedom, and firm age-appropriate child guidance.
- Psychological freedom means parents treat children’s individuality, emotions and viewpoints respectfully, allowing their expression and taking them into account when making decisions.
- Psychological freedom has been shown to contribute independently and strongly to self-competence and self-confidence, and the emotional health and academic achievement of adolescents

“Effective parents make reasonable and firm demands that are accepted as legitimate by children. These parents encourage their children to make choices and regulate their own behavior.”

- NEPEM (1994), p. 29

Family Problem Solving & Interpersonal Problem Solving²

- Troubled families who are trained in using problem solving to resolve conflicts report significant reductions in overt conflict.
- Problem solving is a key component in a number of proven programs for parents of at risk youth.
- Programs to improve skills related to problem solving among children have shown improvements in children’s behaviors and peer relationships.

Culture Matters³

- Cultural norms and values affect parenting, and how children respond to parent approaches.
- Recommended strategies include:
 - ✓ Increasing access to existing programs to underserved audiences.
 - ✓ Replacing or adapting programs and resources to increase appropriateness for participants.
 - ✓ Considering the characteristics and needs of underserved groups and modifying or complementing existing services to match.
 - ✓ Creating programs that are specific to the characteristics and needs of underserved groups.

Media Limits and Literacy⁴

- Viewing of violent TV/video games contributes to increased aggression in children.
- TV/video games are powerful and often subtle teaching media.
- Time spent viewing TV/video games beyond 2 hours/day is linked with poorer reading ability, greater obesity, earlier onset of sexual activity, and increased alcohol and tobacco use.

Sibling Relationships⁵

- Sibling conflict can be highly problematic for parents, and quarrels between siblings a frequent reason for parent's interactions with young children.
- Children's social competence and antisocial behaviors are associated with characteristics of sibling relationships.
- Types of parental responses to sibling quarrels have been associated with qualities of the sibling relationship.
- Sibling perceptions of differential treatment on the part of parents are associated with negative outcomes for children.

Inter-parental Conflict, Separation, & Divorce⁶

- Inter-parental conflict and/or family dissolution is negatively related to a number of indicators of children's well-being.
- These negative consequences can be ameliorated significantly by maintaining effective parenting skills and close parent-child relationships, insulating children from further inter-parental conflict, maintaining economic support for the family, and avoiding additional negative life events.
- Children's adjustment is aided by the positive adjustment of the custodial parent, or both parents, support from families and friends, having active coping skills, and having access to therapy.
- In the case of highly conflicted families, separation is likely to be followed by improvements in children's well-being.

Endnotes

¹ Bogenschneider, K. (2002). Family policy matters: How policymaking affects families and what professionals can do. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. (p. 53); Gray, M., & Steinberg, L. (1999). Unpacking authoritative parenting: Reassessing a multidimensional construct. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 61, 574-587.

² Shure, M., (1997). Interpersonal cognitive problem solving: Primary prevention of early high-risk behaviors in the preschool and primary years. In G. Albee & T. Gullotta [Eds.], *Primary prevention works* (pp. 167-188). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.; Vuchinich, S., Angelelli, J., & Gatherum, A. (1996). Context and development in family problem solving. *Child Development*, 67, 1276-1288; Ozretich, R., Vuchinich, S., Pratt, C., & Bowman, S. (2000). Enriching foster family relationships through problem solving: Guidelines for foster parents. *Oregon State University Extension Service* (EC 1517). See: <http://eesc.orst.edu/agcomwebfile/edmat/ec1517.pdf>.

³ Cheng Gorman, J., & Balter, L. (1997). Culturally sensitive parent education: A critical review of quantitative research. *Review of Educational Research*, 67(3), 339-369; Garcia, E. (1994). Addressing the challenges of diversity. In S. Kagan & B. Weissbourd (Eds.), *Putting families first: America's family support movement and the challenge of change* (pp. 243-275); Wiley, A., & Ebata, A. (2004). Reaching American families: Making diversity real in family life education. *Family Relations*, 53(3), 273-281.

⁴Huston, A., & Wright, J. (1998). Mass media and children's development. In W. Damon (Series Ed.), and I. Sigel, & K. Renninger (Vol. Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 4. Child psychology in practice* (5th ed., pp. 999-1058). New York: Wiley & Sons; Rosenkoetter, L., Rosenkoetter, S., & Ozretich, R. (2003). Mitigating the harmful effects of violent television. *Applied Developmental Psychology*, 25, 25-47.

⁵ Dunn, J. (2001). Lessons from the study of mothers and siblings in early childhood. In J. Gerris [Ed.], *Dynamics of parenting* (pp. 103-113). Leuven-Apeldoorn: Garant; Ozretich, R., & Sugawara, A. (1999). Children's perceptions of parental responses to sibling quarrels and characteristics of sibling relationships. In F. M. Berardo (Series Ed.) & C. L. Shehan (Vol. Ed.), *Contemporary perspectives on family research: Vol. 1. Through the eyes of the child: Revisioning children as active agents of family life* (pp. 353-372). Stanford, CT: JAI Press Inc.

⁶ Amato, P. (2000). The consequences of divorce for adults and children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62 001 1269-1287.