

THREE TO GET MARRIED

*Preparing to Be a Parent*

Overview:

Parenting styles are individual and debatable, but the characters of a mother and a father greatly influence the overall health of a family.

Parenting Styles

		Expectations	
		H I G H	LOW
Love & Bonding	H I G H	<p><b>Integral</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be warm, responsive, &amp; encouraging.</li> <li>• Understand child's emotional &amp; developmental needs.</li> <li>• Set clear rules, boundaries, and expectations.</li> <li>• Teach child how to meet your expectations.</li> <li>• Build in room for explaining age appropriate reasons for decisions made.</li> <li>• Encourage discussions.</li> <li>• Encourage age appropriate decision-making.</li> <li>• Be solution focused.</li> </ul> <p>• <b>Child becomes</b> assertive, self-confident, socially responsible, &amp; achievement oriented while also being interpersonally responsive &amp; empathic</p>	<p><i>Permissive</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent &amp; child become friends</li> <li>• Child sees his/her opinion counts all the time, even when not age appropriate</li> <li>• Child does not respect parent</li> <li>• Difficult to distinguish between the parent and the child</li> <li>• There is a confusion in boundaries, roles, and responsibility</li> </ul>
	LOW	<p><b>AUTHORITARIAN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mom &amp; Dad are the supreme power</li> <li>• The rules are clear and non-negotiable</li> <li>• Total obedience is expected</li> <li>• Misbehavior is strictly and often forcefully handled</li> <li>• Child's opinion is not valued</li> <li>• Child never has to think about why something is right or wrong</li> <li>• Love is experienced as conditional</li> </ul>	<p><i>Neglecting / Rejecting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent is absent and/or neglects child</li> <li>• When parent is present they reject child</li> <li>• When parent is around child feels confused or humiliated</li> <li>• There are no rules or love</li> <li>• There is no model for relationship</li> <li>• This can include vacillation between authoritarian ("grab me a beer") and permissive ("get one yourself") parenting styles</li> <li>• Parent competes with child and always wins.</li> </ul>

### **Help Kids Create Healthy Attachments!**

- ◆ *Play with kids—the way they want to play.*
- ◆ *Give them positive attention and affection. Children feel loved when they receive eye contact, physical affection and focused attention.*
- ◆ *Meet your child's needs, but not all of their desires — unconditional love does NOT mean spoiling/giving kids everything they want.*
- ◆ *Be responsive to your child's emotions, acknowledge and accept the child's emotions as they are expressed.*

### Things to Remember...

- ◆ *Your goal as parent: to form children so they can make good decisions in age appropriate ways.*
- ◆ *Your kids will imitate you. Decide what you want that to look like NOW!*
- ◆ *Your spouse is #1! Never put your kids before your spouse.*
- ◆ *Create a healthy balance between loving your kids and teaching them natural consequences. A common scenario: Mom worries that kids feel loved; Dad is concerned about teaching consequences. Both roles need to be accepted and lived out by both parents such that both parents love children and both set consequences*
- ◆ *Make sure you are always on the “same page” with your spouse.*
- ◆ *Be consistent with expectations and consequences.*
- ◆ *Don't react in the moment! Kids will do unexpected things.*
- ◆ *Continue learning about Parenting! Educate yourself on the process of parenting as your kids grow and mature. How: read books, attend conferences and workshops, build connections and friendships with other parents.*

## Keep Learning!

### Books:

**Boundaries with Kids: How Healthy Choices Grow Healthy Children** by Henry Cloud and John Townsend (Zondervan, 2001)

**Boundaries with Teens: When to Say Yes, How to Say No** by John Townsend (Zondervan, 2009)

**Boys Should Be Boys: 7 Secrets to Raising Healthy Sons** by Dr. Meg Meeker, M.D. (Ballantine Books, 2009)

**Discipline That Lasts a Lifetime: The Best Gift You Can Give Your Kids** by Ray Guarendi (Charis Books, 2003)

**The Father of the Family** by Clayton C. Barbeau (Sophia Institute Press, 2013)

**The Five Love Languages of Children** by Gary Chapman (Moody Publishers, 1997)

**Parenting with Grace: The Catholic Parents' Guide to Raising almost Perfect Kids** by Gregory and Lisa Popcak (Our Sunday Visitor; 2 edition, 2010)

**The Perfect World Inside My Minivan -- One Mom's Journey Through the Streets of Suburbia** by Marybeth Hicks (Faith Publishing Service, 2006)

**Raising Pure Teens** by Jason Evert and Chris Stefanick (Catholic Answers, 2010)

**Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters: 10 Secrets Every Father Should Know** by Meg Meeker, M.D. (Ballantine Books, 2007)

**Strong Mothers, Strong Sons: Lessons Mothers Need to Raise Extraordinary Men** by Meg Meeker M.D. (Ballantine Books, 2014)