

The Management of Simple Behavioural Problems

Linda L. Chard

Senior Clinical Psychologist

Consult Liaison Team

Starship Children's Hospital

Lecturer Dept. Of Psychological Medicine, University of Auckland

-
- General Principles of behavioural management
 - Importance of parents
 - Assessment procedures
 - Simple strategies
 - Problem areas



Why?

- Knowledge
- General practice -
paediatrics
- Compliance with treatment



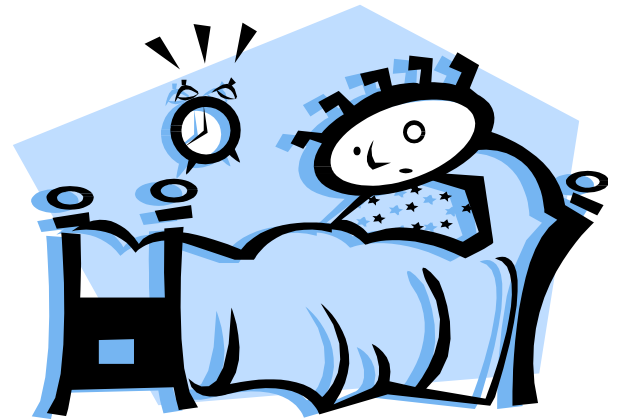
- A-Antecedent
- B-the Behaviour
- C-Consequence
- O-Organism
- C-Context



© 1988, Skinner © 1988, Skinner © 1988, Skinner

Bed wetting

- Kerry
- Toilet trained at 2 ½ years during day
- Parents have tried everything-rewards, 'lifting', not allowing drinks



Behavioural Assessment

- Problem identification
- Maintaining factors
- Select target behaviour-objective, observable, measurable, lay terms
- Evaluate resources

Observation

- Most important aspect!
 - Think about relationships
 - Think about the behaviours
 - Think about child's strengths/interests
 - Can child actually do what they are being asked to do?

Parents

- Engagement
- Collaboration
- 'Money in the Bank'



Temperament

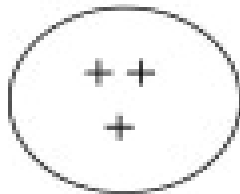
Medscape®

www.medscape.com

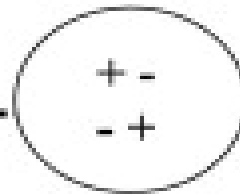
Easy Child

Slow-To-Warm-Up

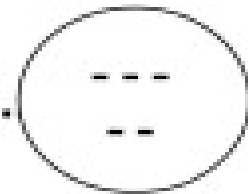
Difficult Child



40%



15%



10%

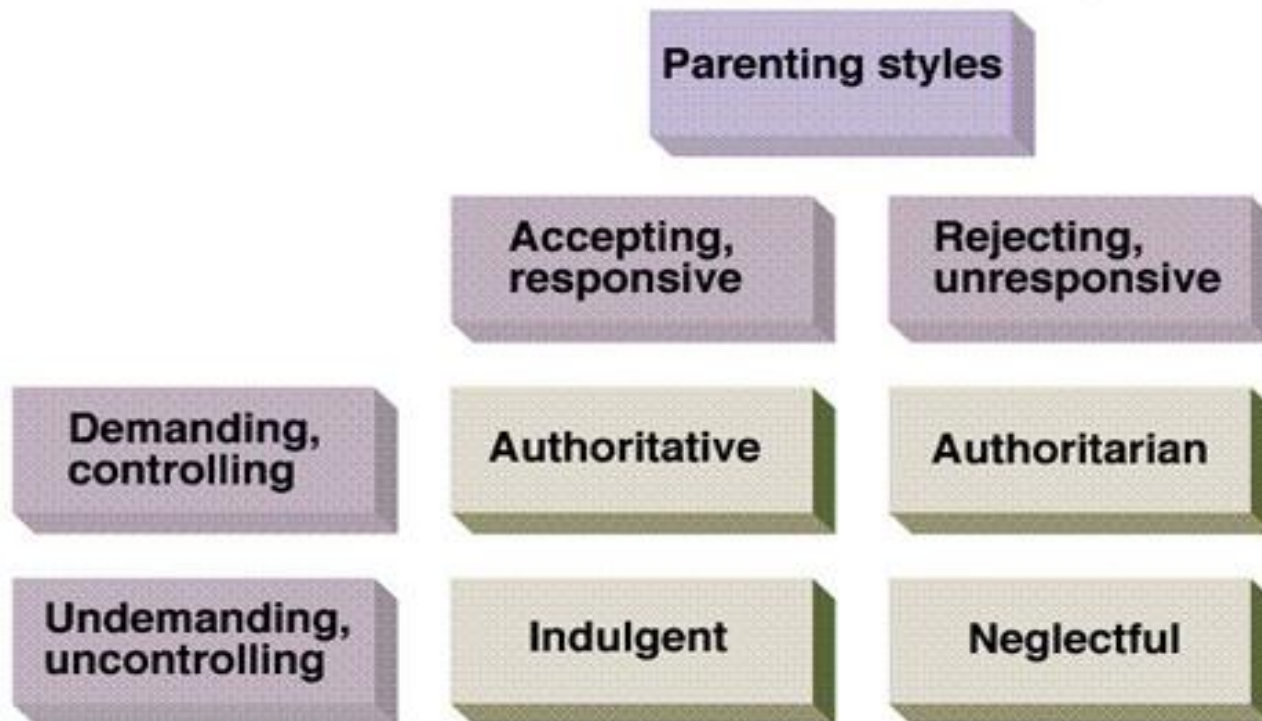
Source: Pain Manag Nurs © 2007 W.B. Saunders

Parenting styles

(Darling and Steinberg, 1993)

Santrock, Child Development, 8e. Copyright © 1998. McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Classification of Parenting Styles



-
- Has sometimes been seen as a one way process-
 - however now more acknowledgement of transactional process -*impact of the child on parent*
 - *'differential susceptibility hypothesis'*

Grusec and Davidov 2010

Domain	Required of parents	How helps to socialize
Protection	<i>Reduce child's distress</i>	<i>Child confident in parental protection</i>
Reciprocity	<i>Comply with child's reasonable requests</i>	<i>Wants to reciprocate</i>
Control	<i>Use appropriate discipline method</i>	<i>Acquires self-control</i>
Guided learning	<i>Match teaching to child's understanding</i>	<i>Internalize language and practices from teacher</i>
Group Participation	<i>Enable child to observe and take part in culture</i>	<i>Firm sense of social identity</i>

Essentials: Reinforcement

	Reinforcement	Punishment
Positive (something added)	Positive reinforcement	Positive punishment
Negative (something removed)	Negative reinforcement	Negative punishment

Intervention

- Plan treatment program
- Work out practicalities
- Evaluate
- Initiate and monitor
- Phase out



Practical Strategies

- Star charts
- Planned ignoring
- Looking for good behaviour
- Time out/quiet time
- Ground rules
- Contracts

Positive reinforcement

- Reward follows desired behaviour
- Does the young person understand?
- Do the parents interpret-
 - Clearly?
 - Fairly?
 - Consistently?



Star charts

- Useful in pre-school, school age children
- Short bursts, to help form new habits
- Must be developmentally appropriate



Planned ignoring

- Good for pre-school age children
- Very difficult for parents to implement
- Useful for whinging, swearing

Looking for good behaviour

- Useful for all ages!
- Parents-negative mindset
- Reinforce behaviours already in place



Changing the Context

- Enrichment
- Rescheduling
- Preceding with another request
- Exercise



Differential Reinforcement

- Of incompatible or alternative behaviour
- Use of shaping
- Keystoning



Modelling

- Give the child a chance to observe the new behaviour
- Changing learned fears
- Learning complex behaviours

Punishment

- Withdrawal of positive reinforcement
- Response cost
- Overcorrection
- Aversive stimuli
- Concerns about physical punishment





Time out/Quiet time

- Quiet, boring safe place
- Practice first
- One warning
- Calmly and firmly placed in time-out
- Pretend to ignore
- When time is over, fresh start

Older children:

Ground rules:

- Consistency
- Collaborative effort
- Clearly written and agreed on
- Time to review/revise set in place

Contracts:

- Useful for older children, teenage
- 'Businesslike'
- Can be a longer term arrangement

Basic Assumptions of Behaviour Modification

- Same principles
- Focus on current determinants
- Specificity
- Tailored treatment
- Applied science to clinical problems

When to refer on...

- **Contextual complexity**
 - Are there a number of problem behaviours?
 - Are there problems in the child's environment/family system that will impair the implementation of a programme? e.g. parental depression, no supports, limited resources
 - Are there problems in different settings? e.g. home; school; caregiver

Resources

- Parenting programs:

- PPP
- Incredible Years
- Tool box

- NZ Books:

- Glen Stenhouse
- Diane Levy
- Nigel Latte
- SKIP

- Websites

- www.parenting.com
- www.parenting.org
- www.kiwifamilies.co.nz
- www.zerotothree.org

Further reading:

- **Barkley, R (2000) Commentary: Issues in Training Parents to Manage Children with Behavior Problems. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, Vol 39(8), 1004-1007.**
- **Grusec, J and Davidov, M. (2010) Integrating different perspectives on socialization theory and research: A Domain-Specific Approach. *Child Development*, 81 (3), 687-709.**
- **Manassis, K and Young, A (2001) Adapting Positive Reinforcement Systems to Suit Child Temperament. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. Vol 40(5), 603-605.**
- **Morawska A and Sanders M (2006) Self-administered Behavioural Family Intervention for Parents of Toddlers. *Journal of Counselling and Clinical Psychology*, 74 (1), 10-19.**