
IV. Effects of Discipline on Young Children

Effects on Behavior

Children of permissive parents become selfish, disregard the rights of others, and are aggressive and unsocial. Those who are subjected to strict, authoritarian training are overly obedient in the presence of adults but aggressive in peer relationships. Children brought up under democratic discipline learn to restrain behavior they know is wrong, and they are more considerate of the rights of others.

Effects on Attitudes

Children whose parents are either authoritarian or permissive tend to resent those in authority. In the former case, they feel they have been treated unfairly; in the latter case, they feel their parents should have warned them that not all adults will accept their undisciplined behavior. Democratic discipline may lead to temporary anger, but not to resentment. The attitudes formed as a result of child-training methods tend to become generalized, to spread to all persons in authority, and to persist.

Effects on Personality

The more physical punishment is used, the more likely the child is to become sullen, obstinate, and negativistic. This results in poor personal and social adjustments, which are also characteristic of children brought up permissively. Those brought up with democratic discipline make the best personal and social adjustments.

V. Happiness *

Some Important Conditions Contributing to Happiness in Early Childhood

- Good health, which enables young children to enjoy whatever they undertake and to carry it out successfully.
- A stimulating environment in which children have opportunities to use their abilities to the maximum.
- Parental acceptance of annoying childish behavior and parental guidance in learning to behave in a socially more acceptable way.
- A disciplinary policy that is well-planned and consistently carried out. This lets young children know what is expected of them and prevents them from feeling that they are unfairly punished.
- Developmentally appropriate expressions of affection, such as showing pride in young children's achievements and spending time with them, doing things they want to do.