This paper determines if in a sample of parents and guardians of felony adjudicated juveniles in Southwestern Ohio, a greater proportion of the juveniles live in homes with predominantly authoritarian parenting styles. The paper also determines if adjudicated juveniles in the sample who reside with mothers identifying with a authoritarian parenting style committed more serious felony offenses that those who live with permissive or equalitarian style parenting. The study involved parents and legal guardians of juveniles incarcerated for felony offenses and placed in a regional juvenile rehabilitation center. The parents were participants in a Court ordered parenting education program. The results of the study indicate two things: that the largest percentage (46%) of parents/guardians identified most closely with an authoritarian style of parenting; and there was not an association between an authoritarian parenting style and more serious felony offenses. Limitations of the study and future research implications are discussed.
EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTING STYLES AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

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Introduction

“Your Honor, if you grant me early release from DYS I promise not to re-offend in your county.” This is a statement made by a juvenile who had been adjudicated of rape and sentenced to a maximum term of incarceration, not to exceed his 21st birthday at an Ohio Department of Youth Services facility. He comes from a home where his parents had recently divorced. What would compel youth to place themselves and others in jeopardy while committing acts that could result in their incarceration? Is this dilemma a psychological one? Is this mind set a result of socialization? Could the answer be the overwhelming stress of peer pressure? Could this problem stem from the separation of parents through divorce or due to parenting styles in general?

Sociologists, psychologists and other professions have attempted to rectify juvenile crime for many years. In this thesis I will first present and explain the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency and the recognized causes. I will then present results from a sample of parents and guardians attending a required parenting program showing the association between juvenile delinquency and parenting styles. I anticipate that children raised in a household with an indulgent mother (permissive parenting style), regardless of one or two parents, are at more risk to engage in more serious criminal behaviors.

Juvenile delinquency is defined as any illegal actions committed by a juvenile in which there is an apprehension and Court proceeding. In most states a juvenile is defined as a person under the age of 18 (O’Connor, 2004). These actions can be as serious as murder (felony), yet as simple as stealing (misdemeanor). The basis for some juvenile court citations is due to age. These are status offense and include behaviors like smoking, while others are illegal with no age barrier, such as murder. The glossary of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) website (2005) explains the difference between status offenses and delinquent offenses. Status offenses are crimes that are illegal for minors to participate in, but are not illegal for adults. An example of this would be smoking cigarettes and consuming alcohol. Delinquent offenses are crimes that would be considered illegal for a person of any age. Offenses of this nature would include, but not be limited to, theft, murder, rape, disorderly conduct and domestic violence. In essence, any juvenile who is adjudicated or convicted of any offense is labeled delinquent by the Court system. The more serious crimes are labeled felonies and the lesser serious crimes are labeled misdemeanors. In the Juvenile Justice System, felony
adjudications can result in commitment to juvenile prison. Misdemeanor adjudications can result in time spent in the detention center, or juvenile jail.

Statement of Problem

Adolescence is a time in which youth seek autonomy and their own identity. Some adolescents engage in activities that are both criminal and a risk to their well-being. Every year millions of dollars and a plethora of efforts are directed at minimizing these risky and criminal actions. For many years, people have attempted to pinpoint the root of this plague which began centuries ago.

The purposes of my research are twofold. The first is to establish whether there is a relationship between certain parenting styles and delinquent behaviors resulting in incarceration. Parenting style in this case means the way a parent interacts with the child intellectually, emotionally, and physically, and conceptualized as Authoritarian, Equalitarian/Balanced, and Permissive. I will first attempt to identify any difference in the parenting style among a sample of parents/guardians of felony adjudicated youth. Second, the research seeks to examine the relationship between the parenting style of mothers and the severity of the juvenile offense (felony level).

Research indicates a strong relationship between a positive family environment and a successful transition into adulthood (Clark, 1970; Whitney-Thomas & Molony, 2001). Research also shows that family factors influence the choice to engage in criminal behavior as a juvenile (Bush & Horn, 1997). These family factors could include parenting styles. Thus the relationship between parenting styles and juvenile delinquency is important to investigate. The findings of this study should indicate how parenting style is related to seriousness of offence and lay groundwork for future research into parenting factors that influence the pathways leading to delinquent behavior.

Justification of Problem

Of the approximate 9.6 million arrests registered by the F.B.I. Uniform Crime Report of 2003, 16% were of people under the age of 18 years; 5% were under the age of 15. Of the approximate 1.4 million convictions registered by the Uniform Crime Report for violent crimes, nearly 12% of the crimes were committed by youth under the age of 18. In addition, just over 19% of the property crimes committed were by juveniles. Nationally, the lowest percentage of
juvenile involvement was murder, at nearly 5%. The highest violent crime percentage for 
juveniles was arson, at nearly 41%.

It is generally agreed that about 1.6 million persons under the age of 18 are arrested by 
police agencies on a yearly basis. The number of crimes that go unreported or unsolved could 
increase this number dramatically. Many crimes are brutal and gratuitous. According to 
O’Connor (2004), simple assaults among juveniles under the age of 15 increased 98%, 
aggravated assault increased 64%, murder increased 39%, and robbery increased 37%, indicating 
an increase in general violence over the last 15 years. However, according to the Uniform Crime 
Report of 2004, the crime rate overall for juveniles has decreased nearly 23% between 1995 and 
2004. This may be due to an aging population in which smaller proportions are adolescents.

Approximately 15 years ago the cost to incarcerate and treat a juvenile offender was 
estimated at $34,000 to $64,000 per year (Camp & Camp, 1990). According to the Juvenile 
Justice FYI website, those estimates are now between $23,000 and $64,000 per year, or 
approximately $115 per day. The average adult criminal will accumulate an estimated $1.1 
million in damages to their victims (Cohen, 1994). The cost to incarcerate an individual is less 
expensive than allowing the person to continue in a criminal manner.

The populated area used in this study is Southwestern Ohio: Adams, Butler, Clermont, 
Clinton, Miami and Warren Counties with specific attention given to Butler County, Ohio due to 
this being the location of the Juvenile Community Correction Facility. According to the Ohio 
State University Extension Data Center (2003), in 2000 the populations for these counties were: 
Adams, 27,330; Butler, 332,807; Clinton, 40,543; and Warren, 158,383. The population of youth 
between the ages of 10 and 19 residing within these counties in 2000 were: Adams, 4,099; 
Butler, 51,678; Clinton, 6,313; and Warren had 22,249. The average yearly incomes for 
individuals from these counties in 2003 were: Adams, $19,722; Butler, $29,864; Clinton, 
$26,505; and Warren, $32,075.

Recently the national juvenile offense rates have declined, but in the Southern Ohio area 
the rates have steadily increased. Within the last three years, Butler County (Ohio) Juvenile 
Court has observed an increase in crimes, along with an increase in the severity of these offenses. 
Butler County is included in the sample, and is illustrative of the crime increase. The Court 
system is no longer bombarded with simple complaints such as petty theft and runaways; it has 
seen an increase in more serious crimes of assault, vandalism, and rape (Butler County Court of
Common Pleas, 2001). In 2002, in Butler County, there were approximately 1021 offenses against persons, 1424 offenses against property, and 807 offenses involving alcohol and illegal drugs. These rates are higher in comparison to 2000. In 2000, the total offenses were 818 against persons, 1371 offenses against property, and 678 offenses involving alcohol and drugs. The total number of felonious assault, robbery, and rape cases increased steadily over three years. The grand total offenses, including multiple offenses increased from 2000 to 2002 (Butler County Court of Common Pleas, 2002).

In the year 2002, there were 2904 referrals by police departments in Butler County to the Juvenile Court concerning delinquency charges; 2051 of these alleged offenders were males. Of the 3412 total juveniles found to be delinquent in 2001, nearly one-third were 14 or younger. The majority of the juvenile offenders in Butler County were white males (Butler County Court of Common Pleas, 2001).

Working at the Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center has provided me a direct interest in the trends of this County. While nationwide, and more generally across Ohio, rates of juvenile criminal behavior have been declining, this is not so in Butler County. Consequently, it is important to explore possible causes for this trend. The next section of this paper reviews literature providing evidence of a correlation between juvenile delinquency and family environment, with particular attention given to the parenting style of the parent with whom the child lives.

**Literature Review**

*Theoretical Perspective: Differential Association*

There have been many theories put forth to explain criminality. However, only a few have been able to withstand time and critique. One is The Theory of Differential Association by Edwin H. Sutherland. This theory proposes that criminal behavior is a product of learned behavior acquired through interaction with other individuals. In his book *Principles of Criminology* (1947), Sutherland outlined his theory in nine assumptions. The first is that criminal behavior is learned. Sutherland did not believe that criminality was a biological or inherited behavior. There has to be a “training” process by which the individual “learns” how to be a criminal. The second assumption is that criminal behavior is learned through the process of communication. This assumption re-iterates that individuals cannot become criminal on their own. Sutherland believed that verbal and non-verbal communication was used as the teaching
tool. The third assumption is that the principle part of the learning of criminal behavior occurs within intimate personal groups. Sutherland believed that intimate personal groups provided the largest influence on the ability to learn criminal behavior. Furthermore, various other means of communication (non-human) were not an important factor in the development of the criminal mind.

The fourth assumption is when criminal behavior is learned, the learning includes (a) techniques of committing the crime, which are sometimes very complicated, sometimes very simple; and (b) the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalization, and attitudes. In essence, the individual must learn how to commit crimes, why to commit crimes, and how to emotionally detach one’s self from the commission of the offense. The fifth assumption is the specific direction of motives and drives is learned from definitions of the legal codes as favorable or unfavorable. Intimate relationships teach the drives and motivations required to commit a crime. The sixth assumption is that a person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of the law over definitions unfavorable to violation of the law. This is the substance of differential association. The individual becomes criminal because they have more interaction with criminality than they do with law-abiding individuals. The seventh assumption is differentiation association may vary in frequency, duration, priority, and intensity. Sutherland believed that criminal association may vary in frequency, duration, priority, and intensity. Sutherland believed that criminal behavior could be calculated in a mathematical equation and could be defined by such. The eighth assumption is the process of learning criminal behavior by association with criminal and anti-criminal patterns involves all of the mechanisms that are involved in any other learning. Sutherland believed that criminal behavior is learned like any other behavior. Criminal behavior did not have any “special” components or requirements. This aspect of his theory was in contrast to the biological theorists that believed that criminal behavior was innate. The ninth assumption is that, while criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values, it is not explained by those general needs and values, since non-criminal behavior is an expression of the same needs and values. Sutherland finalized his nine theoretical assumptions with the idea that criminals and law-abiding citizens are seeking the same gratification, but are using different means. In other words, needs and values do not explain the behaviors of a criminal because they equally explain the needs and values of the non-criminal.

The substance of the Theory of Differential Association lies in two main ideas: social deviance occurs when individuals define a situation as an acceptable time to violate norms or the
law and the definition used to determine the situation is based on an individual’s personal experiences (Pfohl, 1994). A juvenile may use the media, poverty, or their environment as definable situations or acceptable times to violate social norms. Social norms are come from being taught values and morals, a responsibility often delegated to parents or guardians at the time of birth. The learning process begins early and the more positive influence a child receives will instill a more responsible, productive and moral individual.

Differential Association utilizes a cost/benefit analysis. If the juvenile perceives it is more beneficial to break the law and less beneficial to follow the law, then the outcome will be delinquent behavior. Non-criminal youth may provide definitions favorable to breaking the law, however, association with other delinquent youth provide the strongest predictor of delinquency.

For example, Walker-Barnes and Mason (2001) showed that High School students’ gang involvement and gang associated delinquent behavior were most strongly predicted by their peer’s involvement and delinquency. Garnier and Stein (2002) indicated that the most powerful predictors of teen drug use and delinquent behaviors were similar behaviors by peers. This study provided evidence that association with a delinquent juvenile is a risk factor for a non-delinquent peer and the association is a strong indication of a youth’s probability of becoming delinquent.

Slomkowski, Rende, Conger, Simons, and Conger (2001) found that offenders in their study were highly concentrated in families: the greater the number of family members that had been associated with criminal behavior and that had been arrested, the greater the likelihood that the male juvenile would engage in criminal behavior. The significance of the father is best illustrated by this study. The arrests of the father predicted the delinquency of male juveniles independently from all of the arrested members of the family.

While Slomkowski et al. (2001) focused on the delinquency of the son within the family, Farrington, Jolliffe, Loeber, Southamer-Loeber, and Kalb (2001) focused on the sisters and the daughters of the family to determine if the daughters showed a notable similarity to sons in tendencies toward delinquent behavior. This study demonstrated that older siblings influenced the likelihood of engagement in criminal behaviors by younger siblings. Moreover, the study emphasized the role of social interaction between siblings as a risk factor for the development of delinquent behavior.

The focus of Differential Association Theory is social interaction and learning with a primary premise being that criminality is a learned behavior. The associations that are early in
life, long lasting, intimate, and frequent have more impact than those that are short term. A criminal mindset is more likely to develop when a child is exposed, through intimate social interaction, to attitudes favorable to crime. More involvement with a child, more supervision provided, and an increase in quality of the parent-child interaction can minimize the effects of negativity. In addition, the youth needs to be subjected to a non-criminal influence early on, a role typically given to parents.

Another possible source of delinquent behavior is poverty, with nearly 22% of children under the age of 18 living in poverty (O'Connor, 2004). Poverty is more common for children than for any other age group in the U.S. Juveniles from lower SES (socio-economic status) backgrounds are more prone to violence than their counterparts in the higher SES origins. Poverty undermines the importance of education and impedes the traditional route of upward social mobility. O’Connor (2004) indicated that poverty creates conditions that contribute to the choice of committing crimes due to the lack of finances needed to provide the basic needs or wants of the child. Many times divorce results in lower household incomes and socio-economic status for families. In fact, Clarke-Stewart, Vandell, McCartney, and Owen (2000) concluded that it is not divorce itself, but rather the mother's education, income, depressive symptoms, and her ability to provide sufficient support to children that are more likely to influence children's positive development.

However, during the 1950s, Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck published the results of their study conducted involving 500 delinquent youth and 500 non-delinquent youth. The Glueks (1950) found that low supervision of youth, frequently found in fatherless households, contributed to delinquency more than parental substance abuse, economic dependence, or numerous other variables (Sampson & Laub, 1994). Vander Ven, Cullen, Carrozza, and Wright (2001) found that maternal employment had relatively little or no influence on delinquency, but did indirectly influence delinquency through creating a lack of supervision. Moreover, maternal employment in single-parent households resulted in delinquent youth due to a lack of supervision and not necessarily a lack of financial support.

Divorce and Delinquency

U.S. society has evolved to the point that marriage is more of a social contract rather than a legal contract. It has been commonly stated that nearly 1 out of 2 marriages will end in divorce. In 1950, for example, there were 2.6 divorces per 1000 persons, which more than doubled by
1981 to 5.3 per 1000 population. Since the early 1980s, divorce rates have remained steady at a rate of approximately 4.0 divorces per 1000 population (U.S. Census, 2003). Moreover, when divorce occurs, the custody of children becomes an issue. In 1991, for example, there were 11,268,000 custodial mothers and 2,907,000 total custodial fathers (U.S. Census, 1991).

According to Clark (1970), the juveniles who are the greatest threat to the public are those who live in broken homes. In her book, It Takes a Village, former first Lady Hillary Clinton stated that children who reside with one parent or in step families are two-three times more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems than those children who live in two parent families (Clinton, 1996). Compared to children with married parents, children with divorced parents are more likely to have behavior problems, such as aggression or acting-out (Hilton & Desrochers, 2002). A study by Chapman (1986) indicated that 53% of the inmates at state correctional facilities had grown up without the benefits of a two-parent home. Typically, these were homes that had been broken due to divorce. Knight and Prentky (1987) surveyed 108 rapists and found that 60% had been raised in a female-headed home. Horn and Bush (1997) reported that 70% of long-term prison inmates grew up without fathers, as did 60% of the rapists and 75% of adolescents charged with murder. Nearly 70% of those labeled as “violent rapists” and 80% that claimed to be motivated by “displaced anger” came from female-headed homes. A study by the Bureau of Juvenile Statistics of 25,000 incarcerated juveniles indicated that 72% came from broken homes and a child living in a single-parent home is seven times more likely to be delinquent (Getlin, 1988; Smith & Jarjoura, 1988). In a study of 1600 juvenile sex offenders, 23% were living with their mother only, 3% lived with their fathers only, and 26% lived with a biological parent and a stepparent (Gail, Thomas, Metzner, Krugman & Fryer, 1996). A higher incidence of depression and delinquency is found among children whose parents had divorced (Simons, Lin, Gordon, Conger, & Lorenz, 1999). Young men whose parents divorce during their younger years are more likely to engage in criminal behavior (Mednick, Baker, & Carothers, 1990).

As commonly observed, the father’s role is important in the emotional and the social development of a child. Studies have shown that sons who lack a father in the home are more aggressive, seek immediate gratification, and lack social responsibilities. These youth also display a higher risk for delinquent behavior, low academic achievement, trust issues, and even sexual identity confusion (Biller, 1971, 1993; Cortes, 1972; Sameroff, 1993). Glueck and Glueck
(1950) showed that the lack of a father due to divorce reliably predicted a child’s involvement in delinquent behavior. The presence and interaction of a father was a protective factor for male adolescents in regard to delinquency, with lack of a father’s presence associated with delinquent behavior among male and female adolescents (Flouri & Buchanan, 2002).

The following facts were reported by Wilson (2002) in the book *Where's Daddy? The Mythologies Behind Custody-Access-Support*:

- 90% of homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes (U.S. D.H.H.S., Bureau of the Census).

- 80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes (*Criminal Justice & Behavior*, Vol 14, p. 403-26, 1978)


- 85% of children who exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes (Center for Disease Control).

- 90% of adolescent repeat arsonists live with only their mother (Wray Herbert, “Dousing the Kindlers,” *Psychology Today*, January, 1985, p. 28).

- 70% of juveniles in state operated institutions have no father (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Special Report, Sept. 1988).

- 85% of youths in prisons grew up in a fatherless home (Fulton Co. Georgia jail populations, Texas Dept. of Corrections, 1992).

• Fatherless boys and girls are: twice as likely to drop out of high school; twice as likely to end up in jail; four times more likely to need help for emotional or behavioral problems (U.S. D.H.H.S. news release, March 26, 1999).

Other causes to delinquency besides family structure or divorce, such as race, poverty, family neighborhoods, and gender have been suggested. Price and Kunz (2003) reported that black and younger children were found to be more delinquent than white and older children and that delinquency rates are higher in divorced homes than homes with intact marriages. McCluskey and Tovar (2003) suggested that both ethnicity and gender are important considerations when estimating the influence of the family on delinquent behavior. Smith and Jarjouna (1988) found that crime is equivalent in poor and rich neighborhoods, and among blacks, whites, and Hispanics when family structure is not taken into consideration. When family structure is taken into consideration, the rate of criminal behavior is positively related to the number of single-parent households with children aged 12 to 20. Herrera and McCloskey (2001) found that there is no difference in gender among referral rates to juvenile courts.

Likewise, a study by Coughlin and Vuchinich (1996) conducted with 192 Caucasian, urban boys, found that being a part of a stepfamily or living with a single mother at the age of 10 more than doubled the odds of that child being arrested. This was compared to children who live with both biological parents. Manning and Lamb (2003) assessed the well-being of adolescents in cohabitating parent stepfamilies and found that teens living with cohabitating stepparents often fare worse than those living with two biological married parents. The information also indicated teenagers living with single unmarried mothers are similar to teens living with cohabitating stepparents. The exceptions include greater delinquency and lower academic achievements among teens living with cohabitating stepparents.

**Stepfamilies and Delinquency**

The absence of a father in the home increases the likelihood for problematic and delinquent behavior among children. Is it the role of “father” that makes the difference or is it the bond between a child and his/her biological parent that creates the perfect atmosphere for optimal development? According to Daly and Wilson (1988), the greatest risk among stepparent families is violence between the stepparent and the stepchild. Their study indicated that children
under the age of 2 were 60–70 times more likely to be killed by their stepparents than by their biological parents. On the other side of the situation, stepparents are more likely to be killed by their stepchildren than by their biological children (Heide, 1993). Malkin and Lamb (1994) found that maltreatment increased when the caregiver involved a stepparent. These studies do not indicate that stepparents and stepchildren families create a hostile environment in every situation, however, there is an increased chance of domestic issues when stepparents are present.

**Parenting Styles and Delinquency**

Parenting styles impact the way a youth perceives the parent, and thus the way the juvenile reacts to the authority the parent displays. Good parenting and strong families are protective factors in regard to delinquent behavior. Glasglow, Dornbusch, Troyer, Steinberg, and Ritter (1997) conceptualized four parenting styles. The Authoritarian parenting style focuses on controlling the child and influencing them to comply with rules. The main focus is obedience, structure and respecting authority. The rules are clear and they do not negotiate with the child concerning the rules. At times they are unresponsive to the needs of the child. Authoritative or otherwise known as Equalitarian/Balanced is a type of parenting style focused on creating a middle ground for the child and the parent. The child is a part of the decision making process and their views are recognized. This parenting style is warm and supporting. The Indulgent or Permissive parenting style exercises little control over the child’s behavior. They are more accepting than the other parenting styles and allow the child to have more freedom. There are few demands, but they are extremely committed to the child. The Neglectful/Disengaged parenting style does not provide adequate supervision and does not support the child’s interests. These parents seem to focus more on their own lives and can appear to be detached from the child.

The authoritative parenting style appears to produce children who are less influenced by negative peer pressure (Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, & Bornstein, 2000). Parents who are more permissive and indulgent tend to raise children who are influenced more by their negative associates and delinquent peer groups, perhaps as indicated in the discussion of differential association. Low levels of parental supervision, often associated with neglectful or disengaged parenting, have been linked to higher rates of delinquent behavior (Jacobson & Crocket, 2000).
The authoritarian parenting style is often displayed as restrictive and punitive when directions are not followed (Baumrind, 1971, 1991). The child is confronted with firm limits in attempt to control the adolescent and minimize any verbal communication. If a juvenile is socially incompetent, this behavior is associated with the parent’s authoritarian style of parenting. According to Steinberg (1996), juveniles raised in authoritative households were more self-confident, more responsible, and less likely to engage in substance abuse and delinquent behavior. Juveniles from authoritarian households lacked the same level of self-confidence and responsibility, but were also less likely to engage in substance abuse and delinquent behavior. Juveniles from permissive households engaged in substance abuse and delinquent behavior more frequently, yet reported high levels of self-confidence. The juveniles from the disengaged or uninvolved households were most likely to engage in substance abuse and delinquent behavior and reported a higher frequency of psychological problems such as depression and anxiety.

Permissive and disengaged parenting styles may provide more opportunity for a child to engage in delinquent behavior due to the lack of supervision and interest in the behavior of the child. This is usually experimental delinquency rather than serious, recidivistic delinquency. Single mothers could be more permissive to make up for the loss the child may feel concerning the other parent, finances, and support. The single mother may make more allowances and monitor the activities and peers of the child less out of guilt for the divorce. This increases the opportunity to associate with delinquent peers and engage in delinquent behavior.

Thomas (2004) found that children of parents whose style was punitive (a characteristic of authoritarian parenting style) were more likely to score high on an aggression scale. Children living in less punitive households scored lower on the aggression scale. The study concluded that parenting styles that incorporate punitive techniques were more likely to promote aggression than those who chose not to utilize punitive measures regardless of the child’s sex or the household income level.

However, there is also evidence that these children engage in delinquent behavior as a result of rebellion (G. Peterson, personal communication, November 27, 2006). When a child enters puberty and begins to make the biological and cognitive changes that are inevitable, their perception of their parent and authority begins to change. Many researchers have documented the conflict that begins to appear in the relationship between the parent and the adolescent (Allison & Schultz, 2004; Laursen & Collins, 2004). There are a number of factors and changes that
could contribute to the conflict: biological changes of puberty, cognitive changes, social changes, development of autonomy and identity, and peer groups. The results of Laursen’s study (1995) state that adolescents reported having more disagreements with their mothers more than anyone else, including peers, siblings, fathers, and other adults. Approximately 20% of families, parents and adolescents repeatedly engage in prolonged, intense, unhealthy conflict (Montemayor, 1982).

**Statement of Hypotheses**

The research reviewed indicates a relationship between parenting style and juvenile delinquency. However, there are mixed finding with some studies indicating that an authoritarian style might be more strongly related, and other studies indicating a permissive style. Authoritarian style parenting was chosen because of it is related to aggressive behavior and the study is observing felony behaviors. The first hypothesis is as follows: *In a sample of parents and guardians of felony adjudicated juveniles in Southwestern Ohio, a greater proportion of felony adjudicated juveniles will live in homes with predominantly authoritarian parenting styles than in homes with other parenting styles.* If children living in homes with authoritarian parenting styles are disproportionately represented among adjudicated juveniles, then the widely believed assertion that children who reside in authoritarian parenting style homes are more likely to be involved in serious delinquent behavior will be supported.

A further relationship between the gender of the parent, parenting style, and the severity of the offenses committed by the juvenile is proposed. The literature reviewed indicates that criminality is a learned behavior and is done so through close interaction with those who commit crimes. Research leads to the belief that homes with permissive parents are less structured and thus allow more interaction with criminals unknowingly to the parent. Research also indicates a relationship between authoritarian parenting, aggressive behavior, and delinquency. The research reviewed leads to the belief that there is a relationship between the gender of the residential parent, parenting style, and the severity of the offenses committed by the juvenile. The second hypothesis is: *Adjudicated juveniles in the sample who reside with mothers identifying with a authoritarian parenting style committed more serious offenses that those who live with permissive or equalitarian style parenting.*

A lack of difference in seriousness of crime by parenting style would provide evidence that the parenting style does not relate to the seriousness of crimes committed. Conversely,
having one parenting style overly represented among serious offenses could indicate the parenting is related to seriousness of offenses. A difference in seriousness of offense being more associated with mothers’ authoritarian parenting style would indicate that an authoritarian parenting style is more of a risk factor for serious delinquency. Research (Getlin, 1988; Smith & Jarjoura, 1988; Coughlin and Vuchinich, 1996; Horn and Bush, 1997) indicates that households where the mother is the sole caregiver create greater risks for delinquent behavior. It has been my experience working within the juvenile criminal system that a majority of residents in placement at the Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center are from female-headed households. Research and my experience are the two factors that led me to focus on mothers and their parenting styles.

This research is empirical in nature and considers evidence that could be useful in assisting professions in making decisions that would be in the best interest of the child. This can be done through creating parenting education curriculum for families and creating and community support/educational services. This research specifically focuses on the question of whether or not delinquent behavior and its seriousness is associated with a specific parenting style and parent’s gender among children between the ages of 10 and 17 years. The lack of previously reported representative empirical data focused on the severity of the offense and parenting style make this research timely and vital to the process of building community and family resources that are more appropriate for the child’s needs and interests. These issues will be discussed in the final section of this paper.

Methodology

Juveniles are not like other individuals; society has made special allowances in regards to their anonymity and confidentiality of information. According to the standards and guidelines of the Court of Common Pleas in Butler County, juvenile records are confidential and are not accessible by the public. As an employee of the Court, I have access to the records and data with the approval of the Director of Court Services and Superintendent of Corrections. While the juveniles could have resided in other counties, the Juvenile Rehabilitation Program is conducted in Butler County. The Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center is a cognitive program with an expected completion period of 4-6 months. The resident must be a male, have a felony level adjudication prior to admission and reside in a county within the State of Ohio.
Due to the confidential nature of juvenile records, information that could or would divulge the name, social security number, or address of the juveniles or their families cannot be used. Thus the initials of the juvenile and the date of birth were used for identifying labels. In the case of duplicate initials and dates of birth, the second set was discarded to ensure no juvenile is counted more than once. The information collected from the Court records includes the juvenile’s initials and date of birth, their gender, who the juvenile resided with at the time of the offense, and level of the offense (misdemeanor or felony). The degree of the felony offense is listed as well.

**Sample and Limitations**

The sample consisted of 39 parents or other custodians of 24 juvenile male felons. The juveniles were court ordered by their respective Counties (4) to participate and reside in the Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Program. An obligation of the program is that the parents or legal guardians of the resident must participate in 6 weekly parenting education sessions. Juveniles who are in the permanent custody of a county’s Children Services Board do not have a corresponding adult included in this sample due to there being no “parental” figure. When a resident is admitted, a letter is sent to the parent or guardian indicating when the next parenting education sessions are scheduled. Parents and guardians must begin the sessions with the first Parenting Education Class (a part of the rehabilitation program) and may not be admitted into a group of sessions any point beyond the second week. Due to the fluctuating population, the total number of parents and guardians for a specific session will fluctuate as well. During the data collection period (June 14- October 11, 2006), there were 39 parents and guardians that represented 24 juveniles.

The information discussed in the sessions include the program, criminal personality, substance abuse, parenting style, and relapse prevention are the main topics of the 6-week sessions. During the 5th meeting of the parenting education sessions, parenting styles are discussed. During this meeting, the parents completed a questionnaire to identify the parenting style the individual identifies with the most and then results are documented. The parenting styles were defined after the questionnaire was completed and the parents then discussed their perceptions and techniques associated with their specific parenting style.

Court records of the juveniles, who have been adjudicated (found guilty) and ordered to participate in the Regional Juvenile Rehabilitation Center in Butler County Ohio over the last 12
months, were used to determine the level of felony, family background, and the corresponding adult attending the parenting program. A juvenile is an unmarried youth under the age of 18 years. A juvenile is considered delinquent if there is a finding of “true” by a Judicial Authority, within the Court System, to a criminal offense committed by a juvenile. The finding of “true” means that the allegations in the complaint are accurate and could result in the sanctioning and/or incarceration of the juvenile.

Table 1 shows the number and percentage of the adults and their relationship to the adjudicated juveniles during the time frame used to collect data for this study.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Adults Completing Parenting Questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother       Step-Mother       Father       Step-Father       Aunt       Uncle       Grandmother       Grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18(46%)      1(3%)             11(28%)      2(5%)             1(3%)       2(5%)       3(8%)            1(3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample characteristics are shown in Table 2. In several cases, more than one parent/guardian of the adjudicated adolescent attended the program. Due to the focus of the research on the relationship of the parenting style of mothers to juvenile delinquency, if more than one parent/guardian attended, the mother or mother surrogate (i.e., mother, aunt, step-mother, grandmother) if she attended was included in the sample. Otherwise, the father or father surrogate who attended was included. This procedure resulted in a final sample size of 24.

This sample was not chosen due to race, or level of felony offense, allowing the results to be generalized. However, the sample is not a representation of juveniles within Southwest Ohio or more general society due to the files being chosen on the basis of adjudication and placement in the Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center. There is no inclusion of parents of juveniles who have not been placed in the rehab center. Consequently, the study is one of association between parenting styles and adjudicated, placed juveniles rather than one of parenting styles and all possible forms of delinquency.
Table 2

Sample Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent/ Guardian</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
<th>Felony level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>18 (75)</td>
<td>1 = 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 = 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 = 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 = 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 = 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step-mother</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>2 = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>3 (12)</td>
<td>4 = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 = 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
<td>4 = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24 (99)</td>
<td>1 = 3 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 = 4 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 = 4 (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 = 7 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 = 6 (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24 (101)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Felony level varies from 1–5, with 1 being the most serious.

Operationalization of Variables

The dependant variable is the adjudicated criminal offense of a felony, and the level of the felony. The criminal charge and the level of the offense are determined by information in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Ohio Revised Code and cited by the arresting agency. The different level of felony offenses includes one through felony five. The greater the
number associated with a level of offense, the less serious the charge. The arresting agency
provides the Court with a copy of the citation for the offense and this information is transcribed
into the family file. If more than one category of criminal charge is present, then the most serious
category of offense was recorded for this study.

The levels of the felony were divided based on the time suspended for each offense. The
more serious offenses, felony one and two, were grouped together due to their commitments to
juvenile prison being a minimum of 12 months for each offense. The lesser felonies (three, four
and five) were grouped together due to their commitments being a minimum of 6 months.

The independent variable is the parenting style of the parent or guardian. The parenting
style is measured using a questionnaire divided into three sections representing three parenting
styles. The questions do not reveal the specific parenting style being asked about. A number
scale is associated with the specific questions in each of the sections. Each question is assigned a
numeric value based on the response. When the individual has completed the questionnaire, the
total numeric value of each section is added and the section with the highest total is the parenting
style the individual most closely identifies with. Each parent/guardian was classified as
identifying most closely with one parenting style based on her/his responses to the 30 parenting
items. The totals for each of the three scales (possible range = 10–40 with higher score indicting
greater identification with the parenting style) were compared for each parent/guardian, and then
each person was classified based on which scale had the highest score.

For this sample the Cronbach’s alpha levels for the parent style scales indicated high
reliability: authoritarian = .989; equalitarian = .973; permissive = .979. The scales also appear to
discriminate among the 3 parenting styles, as indicated by the Pearson correlations among the
scales as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Equalitarian</th>
<th>Permissive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>–.483*</td>
<td>–.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equalitarian</td>
<td></td>
<td>–.540**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * = p = .05; ** = p = .01; 2-tailed test.
Results

A contingency table was used for testing Hypothesis 1, indicating the frequency and percentage of adjudicated juveniles by parenting style (see table 4). Hypothesis one is that in a sample of parents and guardians of felony adjudicated juveniles in Southwestern Ohio, a greater proportion of felony adjudicated juveniles will live in homes with predominantly authoritarian parenting styles than in homes with other parenting styles.

Table 4 shows the mean scores for each of the three parenting style scales as well as the number and percentage of parents/guardians classified as identifying most closely with each style. As can be seen, the data indicate a pattern as hypothesized. The largest percentage (46%) of parents/guardians identified most closely with an authoritarian style of parenting, 6 (25%) of the parents/guardians identified with a permissive parenting style, while 7 (29%) identified with a different parenting style. Thus, hypothesis one is supported.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>( f ) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>24.79 (11.40)</td>
<td>11 (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equalitarian</td>
<td>23.08 (9.50)</td>
<td>7  (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>20.04 (10.19)</td>
<td>6  (25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 2, adjudicated juveniles in the sample who reside with mothers identifying with an authoritarian parenting style committed more serious offenses that those who live with permissive or equalitarian style parenting, was tested using contingency tables and Chi Square analysis with a .05 level of significance. Due to small cell sizes, data were collapsed (see Table 5).
Table 5

*Cross Tabulation of Parenting Style (Authoritarian) with Felony Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Felony Level</th>
<th>Parenting Style</th>
<th>More serious</th>
<th>Serious</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 (50%)</td>
<td>5 (50%)</td>
<td>10 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
<td>12 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 (32%)</td>
<td>15 (68%)</td>
<td>22 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Felony level can vary from 1 (the most serious offense) to 5. For purposes of data analysis, felony level was recoded into two categories: more serious (felonies 1 and 2) and serious (3, 4, and 5). Parenting style was also recoded into authoritarian and other (either permissive or equalitarian). For this analysis, only mothers and mother surrogates (e.g., step-mother) were included. Results are shown in Table 5. Two cells had expected frequencies less than 5. Fisher’s exact test was used. The Pearson Chi squared value was .873 with 1 degree of freedom. The significance level was .349. Consequently, hypothesis two was not supported.

Because the hypothesized relationship between an authoritarian parenting style of mothers with a more serious felony offense committed by their adolescent was not confirmed, an additional analysis was conducted. The literature review indicated that there is also evidence for permissive parenting being related to delinquency. Therefore, permissive parenting style was compared with other styles. The results are shown in Table 6. The Chi-square analysis indicates that there is no relationship between parenting styles and level of felony when the data are grouped in this manner (Chi-square = 2.794, df = 1, Fisher’s exact test = significance of .113 with two cells having expected frequencies of less than 5).

Table 6

*Cross Tabulation of Parenting Style (Permissive) with Felony Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Felony Level</th>
<th>Parenting Style</th>
<th>More serious</th>
<th>Serious</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (17%)</td>
<td>5 (83%)</td>
<td>6 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 (37%)</td>
<td>10 (63%)</td>
<td>16 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 (32%)</td>
<td>15 (68%)</td>
<td>22 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

Adolescence is a time in which youth seek autonomy and begin to develop their identity. Some adolescents engage in activities that are both criminal and a risk to their well-being. Every year millions of dollars and a plethora of efforts are directed at minimizing these risky and criminal actions. For many years, people have attempted to pinpoint the root of this plague that began centuries ago. Differential Association Theory attempts to explain the contributing factors to delinquent behavior by observing the interaction of the youth with their delinquent friends and acquaintances. The juvenile’s social group provides the major context in which their social learning develops, flourishes and reinforces behaviors. Research indicates a strong relationship between a positive family environment and a successful transition into adulthood (Clark, 1970; Whitney-Thomas & Molony, 2001). Research also shows that family factors influence the choice to engage in criminal behavior as a juvenile (Bush & Horn, 1997). There is evidence that both authoritarian and permissive parenting styles are possible risk factors as they are not conducive to positive family environments.

In this study, the first hypothesis, in a sample of parents and guardians of felony adjudicated juveniles in Southwestern Ohio, a greater proportion of felony adjudicated juveniles will live in homes with predominantly authoritarian parenting styles than in homes with other parenting styles was supported. The largest percentage (46%) of parents/guardians identified most closely with an authoritarian style of parenting. However, the second hypothesis, adjudicated juveniles in the sample who reside with mothers identifying with an authoritarian parenting style committed more serious offenses than those who live with permissive or equalitarian style parenting was not supported. Having an authoritarian parenting style was not associated with the juvenile having committed a more serious offence. Likewise, the majority of mother and mother surrogates who were identified as having a permissive parenting style were associated with the less serious felony offenses. There was thus not a finding of association between either authoritarian or permissive parenting style and more serious felony offenses. This second result could be due to a number of possible reasons. One of those reasons was the size of the sample. Due to the small sample size there was not a large variation among the parents completing the survey. Increasing the number of participants could have allowed for a larger variation in parenting styles and may have provided a different result. Another possibility is that there is no empirical association between parenting style and the level of felony offence.
The juvenile offenders represented by the parent participants varied in regard to their levels of offense, but all were felonies or the most serious of offences (the other being misdemeanor). The parent groups were fairly homogeneous in religious beliefs, socio-economic background, family size and the number of parents represented. This sample was not chosen due to race, or level of felony offense, allowing the results to be generalized. However, the sample is not a representation of juveniles within Southwest Ohio or more general society due to the files being chosen on the basis of adjudication and placement in the Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center. There is no inclusion of parents of juveniles who have not been placed in the rehab center or those who have not been adjudicated for a felony.

There were limitations represented by the parenting education program as well. The number of parents/guardians represented by the survey was not consistent in that one resident in the Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center may have a single parent and another resident may have four parents/guardians represented. It would have been more beneficial to the study to have only the biological parents complete the survey; however, this would have made the sample size even smaller.

The result of this study indicates that there is a relationship between a household with predominantly authoritarian parenting and the risk of being adjudicated for a felony offence. However, there is no relationship between the parenting style of mothers or mother surrogates and the seriousness of their child’s felony criminal offense. What does this mean for social workers, family therapists and the juvenile justice system? Social workers should provide family support and attempt to minimize any conflict within the home. The results of this study could provide a more focused family plan and intervention. The education provided to the families would be more intervention and prevention focused because there would not be a new learning process, but more of a modification to the family interaction. Parents would not have to completely change their parenting style, but make changes to increase the likelihood of success. Parents can be educated that an authoritative (or balanced) parenting style appears most likely to foster good childhood development and minimize the risk of juvenile delinquency (at least of the most serious nature). The focus of the change could be discipline and appropriate ways to set boundaries. This education should start early, before children reach the adolescent stage of development.
Practitioners and the juvenile system may want to determine how well their parent education is focused on the real issue and not obscured by ideologies that are not important contributing factors to delinquent behavior. This study will help in the identification of high risk factors associated with delinquency and minimize the guilt parents experience once their child enters the criminal system. By realizing that some risk factors are independent of the family, proper resources can be implemented to strengthen social interaction and individual relapse prevention. This would also create a greater quality of interaction between the parent and the child, thus creating a more successful family treatment atmosphere.

The results of this study can aid in the identification of contributing factors to delinquency and provide the Court system a better understanding so recommendations and appropriate referrals can be made to meet the family’s needs. For the juvenile system, this will also allow more focus to be placed on the child and alleviate the parents/guardians of the total blame. Once this is accomplished, the parents will see that the child’s thinking and behavior is what perpetuated the criminal behavior and not the parent’s lack of attention and interaction, even while understanding that certain parenting behaviors are better facilitators of a positive family environment that other behaviors. When the parent is no longer saddled with belief that she/he holds the responsibility for what the child decided to do relate to engagement in criminal behavior, then the child will be able to take full responsibility for their actions. The parent is no longer the rescuer, but has now become the voice of rationale and responsibility.
References


24


Steinberg, L. (1996). Beyond the classroom: Why school reform has failed and what parents
need to do. New York: Simon and Schuster.


http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/03cius.html

http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius_04/persons_arrested/table_32-33.html


# Your Parenting Style

For each question, please circle the number that is associated with the following answers:

4- Agree; 3- Mildly Agree; 2- Mildly Disagree; 1- Disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section A:</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I believe that I have clear expectations for how my children should</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behave, and I make sure they are rewarded or punished, according to that</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expectation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel that it is my responsibility to set goals for my family and</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serve as their guide.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I believe that my values should be taught to my family and if my</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children have different values, they can chose those for themselves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when they are old enough to make those choices.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel that one of my roles in the family is to determine the social</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>image that our family displays to the public.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I think that I need to serve as a controlling force until my children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can make their own decisions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I may not be smarter or stronger than anyone else in the family, but</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the role of setting and enforcing values.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. As long as my children live in my house or under my supervision, they</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will follow the rules.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. This family is not run by democratic vote. I take full responsibility.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Most times I have to make decisions about the family behavior and</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discipline by myself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I think that the most important attitude my family can have toward</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me is respect.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section E:  

11. I believe that it is more important for my family to learn how to accomplish goals than to actually accomplish goals.

12. My philosophy is to develop a team spirit with my family in dealing with our problems.

13. Accomplishing a common goal is more important than the personal achievement of any one member of the family.

14. I feel that one of a parent’s most important tasks is to teach a child how to set realistic goals for himself.

15. Learning how to trust one another in difficult times and relying on one another’s abilities are very important skills for all family members.

16. It is important for the parent to listen to the child and respect what the child wants and needs.

17. Although the parent has the responsibility for the child, it is important to share the decision-making.

18. Children’s behavior should always have consequences, good or bad.

19. A parent’s rewards are in seeing the child achieve his goals.

20. The parent-child relationship is the most important lasting legacy in a family.
### Section P:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. I feel responsible for my family’s success or failures and would probably do some of their work for them rather than let them fail.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I am too lenient with my child and allow him or her to get by when I should be more consistent.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. It is probably partly my fault if my child gets into trouble, because I did not do my job as a parent as well as I should have.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. My parents were too hard on me, so I try to give my children what I didn’t have in terms of freedom to be their true selves.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. My child sometime blames me for a problem and part of me agrees because I feel guilty.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I try to motivate my family by making them feel guilty if they don’t do the right thing.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I want my child to behave and be a good person because he wants me to be proud of him.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. My child often expresses the thought that I owe him a good life because I am the parent.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I would like my family to remember how much I sacrificed for them.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I try not to put too much pressure on my child because it is not fair to him.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scoring the Parenting Styles:

Add up your totals for each section separately and write them here:

A: _____
E: _____
P: _____

Circle the meaning of your score in each of the three categories below:

**Section A: Authoritarian**

33-40 High identification with the Authoritarian style
25-32 Dominant behaviors for the Authoritarian style
18-24 Average or moderate behaviors for the Authoritarian style
10-17 Low behaviors for the Authoritarian style

**Section E: Equalitarian**

33-40 High identification with the Equalitarian style
25-32 Dominant behaviors for the Equalitarian style
18-24 Average or moderate behaviors for the Equalitarian style
10-17 Low behaviors for the Equalitarian style

**Section P: Permissive**

33-40 High identification with the Permissive style
25-32 Dominant behaviors for the Permissive style
18-24 Average or moderate behaviors for the Permissive style
10-17 Low behaviors for the Permissive style

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