

Teen Assessment of Parenting Styles

The Teen Assessment of Parenting Styles (TAPS) is an assessment used to determine the extent to which a particular parenting style may be affecting a teen's attitude or behavior. Parents wishing to understand how their teen views their parenting style may choose to have their teen complete the 60-item assessment. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THIS BE DONE ON AN AVERAGE DAY. The third page of the assessment (WHICH SHOULD NOT BE SHOWN TO THE TEEN) contains validating questions for each of the seven parenting styles and some basic scoring information. It is written for a third party interviewer but can be modified so that a parent could ask clarifying questions to validate a particular parenting style by modifying the validating question. This can be very difficult to do; and perhaps even more difficult to hear; but it can be done if the atmosphere seems calm and safe to the teen whom may be quite apprehensive about being honest with their mother or father. However, if there is a significant level of dissatisfaction with the relationship to the parent the teen may be quite forthright about their views. The following are suggested modifications of the validating questions (shown on page 4) for parent use:

Authoritarian (A) <u>Validation questions</u> : “Do I seem strict about having you follow my rules? Do I make it seem like having you be respectful is the most important thing in our relationship? Do I seem concerned about your thoughts or feelings?”
Critical (C) <u>Validation questions</u> : “Does it seem like no matter how hard you try I am seldom satisfied or happy with you, the way you act, your choice, or what you've done?”
Overprotective (O) <u>Validation questions</u> : “Does it feel like I treat you like you are much younger than you really are? Do I do too many things for you that you can do yourself?”
Ineffectual (I) <u>Validation questions</u> : “Does it seem like I get stressed out way too easily? Are you worried about my health or mental health?”
Disengaged (D) <u>Validation questions</u> : “Does it seem like something else is always more important than you? Does it seem like I don't <i>want</i> to be around you?”
Permissive (P) <u>Validation questions</u> : “Do I give you more freedom than most of your friends get?”
Authoritative (V) <u>Validation questions</u> : “Do I show you that I love you? Do you feel important to me? Can you count on me to be helpful?”

TAPS

Name _____

Date _____

Mark statements that sound similar to what you have heard from your mom (M), dad (D), stepparent (S) one or more times in the past few months or that you heard once and often replay in your mind. For more accuracy, you may cross out some words or add some words to any of the statements.

Rate on a scale of 1-10 how happy or unhappy you feel about your mom and dad today. (1 means really happy, 5 means neutral, and 10 means really unhappy) _____ mom _____ dad

- _____ 1. (I) I'm too upset (tired) to talk to you right now. Please leave me alone.
- _____ 2. (V) I really like that you stuck with it, even though it was hard. Good job.
- _____ 3. (P) If it's okay with his/her parents its okay with me.
- _____ 4. (I) I don't know what to think about that. Ask your dad (mom).
- _____ 5. (C) Your brother (sister) would never have done that.
- _____ 6. (A) How many times do I have to tell you? Get over here and do it now.
- _____ 7. (D) I don't have time to talk now. Go ask ...
- _____ 8. (O) Wait, you'd better let me help you.
- _____ 9. (P) I'll let you do whatever, just don't get into trouble.
- _____ 10. (C) What don't you understand? (Are you stupid?)
- _____ 11. (O) It's not your business to worry or ask (me/us) about that.
- _____ 12. (I) I really hate you sometimes. Get out of my sight.
- _____ 13. (V) I'm impressed. I can tell you put a lot of work into it.
- _____ 14. (A) Don't argue with me. Do as you're told.
- _____ 15. (I) My life would have been a lot better if you didn't cause so much trouble.
- _____ 16. (D) I'm too busy... maybe later.
- _____ 17. (P) Okay. (If I let you do that will you calm down? Be nice?).
- _____ 18. (C) I can't believe you did that. (You embarrassed this family.)
- _____ 19. (O) Its just for your father (mother) and I to worry about.
- _____ 20. (V) I'm sorry; I know it must be disappointing, because I know you really tried.
- _____ 21. (A) Because I said so. You don't need an explanation.
- _____ 22. (D) I can't promise you. I don't know what I'll be doing.
- _____ 23. (I) I can't take this anymore from you. I am going to have a nervous breakdown.
- _____ 24. (O) That's too much for you to handle. I'll do it for you. I'll talk to... for you.
- _____ 25. (D) I have more important things to worry about (then to deal with you/that now).
- _____ 26. (V) I want to know what you think. Your opinion is important.
- _____ 27. (A) Don't you disrespect me. Look at me when I talk to you. Don't talk back.

- _____ 28. (C) Hey, just what do you think you are doing? (How could you!)
- _____ 29. (P) I don't care; just don't let your mother/father find out.
- _____ 30. (C) You look terrible. That makes you look too... Go change.
- _____ 31. (O) I don't care if all your friends are allowed to do it. You're not ready for that.
- _____ 32. (V) You've worked really hard at that. I'm so proud of you.
- _____ 33. (I) I can't talk to your father (mother). You do it.
- _____ 34. (D) Can't you see I'm busy? Just figure it out yourself.
- _____ 35. (A) I expect this to be done and I'm not going to tell you again.
- _____ 36. (O) You don't have to; stick with it (or) continue going, if it is too hard.
- _____ 37. (A) This is my house, if you don't like it you can leave (or) or go live with...
- _____ 38. (I) I'm sorry: I keep forgetting (or) I keep letting you down.
- _____ 39. (O) You almost got hurt. You'd better not do that again without asking me first.
- _____ 40. (A) Don't challenge me. That's the way it is and that's final.
- _____ 41. (C) That's terrible/bad/ugly. You didn't do it the right way.
- _____ 42. (P) I don't care where you're going, just be home at a decent hour.
- _____ 43. (A) Stop it this minute. Get over here right now and do what I tell you.
- _____ 44. (V) I'll always love you, but what you did/didn't do was unacceptable to me.
- _____ 45. (D) That's not that important... maybe tomorrow.
- _____ 46. (A) You never listen (or) you never do what I tell you.
- _____ 47. (P) I don't care what you do, just don't get into trouble.
- _____ 48. (C) I can't believe you. You are so lazy (or) you are so selfish.
- _____ 49. (I) I don't know what to do. What do you think I should do?
- _____ 50. (O) You are not allowed to ever do that... I'm afraid you are going to get hurt.
- _____ 51. (V) You really are a great help. Thanks.
- _____ 52. (D) I might get to it tomorrow. Now don't bother me again about it.
- _____ 53. (V) I know you tried to do the right thing but tell me how you would do it differently?
- _____ 54. (C) You should be ashamed of yourself.
- _____ 55. (P) You don't have to listen to your father (mother); he (she) doesn't ...
- _____ 56. (C) Don't you ever learn? (From your mistakes)
- _____ 57. (D) I don't feel well. Do you mind leaving me alone right now?
- _____ 58. (O) I was never allowed to do that when I was your age. You're too young for that.
- _____ 59. (P) I know I really yelled at you over there, don't worry, I didn't really mean it.
- _____ 60. (V) I love you. You're very important to me.

	# M	#D	#S
Authoritarian (A) <u>Validation questions:</u> “Does your mom/dad seem strict about following his/her rules? Demands your “respect”? Does not seem concerned about your thoughts or feelings?”			
Critical (C) <u>Validation questions:</u> “Does it seem like no matter how hard you try she/he is seldom satisfied or happy with you, the way you act, your choice, or what you’ve done?”			
Overprotective (O) <u>Validation questions:</u> “Does it feel like she/he treats you like you are much younger than you really are? Tries to do things for you that you can do yourself?”			
Ineffectual (I) <u>Validation questions:</u> “Does it seem like your mom/dad gets stressed out way too easily? Is not <i>able</i> to be helpful? Are you worried about her/his health or mental health?”			
Disengaged (D) <u>Validation questions:</u> “Does it seem like something else is always more important than you. Does it seem that she/he just doesn’t <i>want</i> to be around you?”			
Permissive (P) <u>Validation questions:</u> “Does your mom/dad give you more freedom than most of your friends get? Does she/he really know all the things you do when you’re out with friends?”			
Authoritative (V) <u>Validation questions:</u> “Does your mom/dad show you that she/he loves you? Do you feel important to her/him? Can you go to her/him and count on her/him to be helpful?”			

Note: According to local norms four or more responses within a category suggest that the category is a prominent parenting style. It is problematic if there are less than four responses within the Authoritative (V) category when there are four or more in one or more of the other categories. The negative effects of such problematic parenting styles accrue over time, and by the teen years, teens can become exasperated, quite sad or both. Teens often react strongly to a problematic parenting style, and when they do, they can react in all types of ways. It helps if at least one of the parents the teen lives with is Authoritative (V). When neither are being Authoritative the situation can become quite dire by this stage in a teen’s development. An interview with the teen should be conducted to confirm a particular parenting style by asking the validation questions shown above.

Developed by Jerry Ciffone, LCSW, Saint Charles, IL. Copyright © 2016-2020. Some of the statements used in this assessment were originally listed and described in the book *The Stress Proof Child*, by Antoinette Saunders and Bonnie Remsberg, Copyright © 1984. This assessment may be used for individual purposes only, however, permission to distribute this assessment must be obtained by contacting Jerry at jerry.ciffone.lcsw@gmail.com.