Current research on parenting styles, dimensions, and beliefs
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For decades, parenting has been characterized in terms of broad global styles, with authoritative parenting seen as most beneficial for children's development. Concerns with greater sensitivity to cultural and contextual variations have led to greater specificity in defining parenting in terms of different parenting dimensions and greater consideration of the role of parenting beliefs in moderating links between parenting and adjustment. New research includes 'domain-specific' models that describe parents as flexibly deploying different practices depending on their goals, children's needs, and the types of behaviors towards which parenting is directed. These trends are described, and directions for future research are discussed.

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Introduction

Despite significant progress in understanding parenting and its effects for children's development, there are ongoing debates about how best to conceptualize and measure it. For decades, parenting was characterized in terms of global, consistent, and stable parenting styles. However, studies examining variations along different parenting dimensions now predominate, due to concerns about whether styles accurately capture contextual variations and have the same meaning in different groups. These concerns also have led to new, more granular and 'domain-specific' models that are more flexible and situational. These issues are discussed below, along with recommendations for future directions in studying parenting.

Parenting styles
Description

Baumrind's influential model of parenting styles describes parenting as a gestalt of integrated parenting practices, best studied using pattern-based approaches [1,2]. Her original description of the authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles has been reconceptualized in terms of two orthogonal dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness, leading to the addition of a fourth, rejecting-neglecting style [3]. Proponents claim that authoritative parenting, where parents are highly responsive to their children's needs but also set reasonable limits and demand mature behavior, is most beneficial for children's and adolescents' development across contexts and cultures [2,4,5]. This conclusion remains controversial, however [6]. In response to critiques, Baumrind and colleagues [7,8•] have refined the definition of authoritative parenting and clarified the distinction between detrimental (*e.g.*, coercive) and positive (*e.g.*, confrontive) forms of parental power assertion.

Parenting styles were originally conceptualized as transactionally associated with social competence, but studies have mostly focused on parent-to-child effects. Advances in statistically modeling have led more rigorous tests of bidirectionality. One recent study found that adolescent behavior had a much stronger effect on parenting styles than the reverse [9], whereas another [10•] found that effects varied by parenting style. Significant child effects were found for permissive-indulgent parenting, no bidirectional effects were found for authoritative parenting, and bidirectional effects were observed for mother but not child-rated authoritarian parenting.

Cultural influences

Authoritarian parenting is widespread in non-Western cultures and among lower socioeconomic status (SES) and ethnic/racial minority parents in the U.S. Moreover, these factors may converge, as immigrant and ethnic minority families often live in poor communities characterized by dangerous neighborhoods, where authoritarian parenting may have protective effects [11••]. This has led to questions about whether authoritarian parenting is necessarily maladaptive in some contexts and to the claim that parenting must be assessed in terms of particular cultural values and indigenous concepts [12].

For instance, although Chinese parenting is often described as authoritarian, punitive, and reflecting Confucian, child-centered, and beneficial concerns with strictness and child training [12]. Chinese mothers also have been popularly described as "tiger moms" [13] who

employ fierce discipline to facilitate achievement and development. Careful empirical research does not support this view, however [14•,15]. Person-centered analyses of Asian American parents' parenting dimensions revealed four profiles, one of which fit the description of 'tiger parenting.' However, this pattern was not common and was associated with poor adjustment, whereas the most typical and adaptive profile reflected supportive parenting.

Arab parents in the Middle East also are described as authoritarian [16], although research does suggest significant variability. Recent person-centered analyses of five parenting dimensions, assessed in a sample of Arab refugee youth living in Jordan, found that the most common profile for both mothers and fathers was consistent with authoritative parenting [17••] – that is, low levels of harsh, punitive parenting and psychological control and high levels of support, behavioral control, and parental knowledge of activities, and this profile was associated with better adjustment. These studies provide some support for the claim that components of authoritative parenting are beneficial for child and adolescent development.

Beliefs as moderators
Harsh or physical discipline, yelling or scolding, expressing disappointment, and shaming, all of which are hallmarks of authoritarian parenting, have detrimental effects on child adjustment in cultures around the world. For instance, parents who spank generally believe that it socializes positive behavior. However, large-scale studies in the U.S. [18••] and in cultures varying in their use of these practices [19••] show that spanking generally has negative effects for children's adjustment and social competence, although these practices are less harmful (although still negative) when they are more culturally normative [20]. A recent study found that parental shaming is more culturally normative in both rural and urban China than in an urban sample in Canada and that it was seen as less psychologically harmful among rural Chinese (where it was more normative) than Canadians, but there were also interesting developmental trends. Across groups, 10–11 and 13–14 year-olds evaluated shaming more negatively than 7–8 year-olds and viewed it as more negative for their psychological wellbeing [21••].

Beliefs about parental authority legitimacy also influence responses to parenting. Adolescents view parental authority as illegitimate when parents control personal issues (e. g., pertaining to privacy, bodily control, and personal preferences) [22], see also Kobak, in press (this issue). Across cultures, children develop a personal domain because it satisfies basic needs for autonomy, although there are cultural variations in its content and boundaries [22]. However, individual differences in legitimacy beliefs mediate or moderate links between parenting and adolescent adjustment. Studies have found that

parent supervision and monitoring leads to greater adolescent disclosure about their activities to parents, but only when legitimacy beliefs are strong [23••]. Furthermore, stronger authority legitimacy beliefs regarding free-time activities (which are generally considered personal issues) are associated with adolescents' greater compliance with parents' rules [24•]. Legitimacy beliefs also mediate the association between parenting styles and juvenile delinquency [25], with authoritative parenting associated with stronger legitimacy beliefs and in turn, less juvenile delinquency over time. The opposite was found for authoritarian parenting. These studies highlight adolescents' role as active agents in their development.

Dimensional approaches
In response to the cultural critiques of parenting styles, current research focuses on discrete dimensions of parenting, providing greater specificity in understanding parenting effects. For instance, behavioral control has been distinguished from psychological control and parental knowledge.

Psychological control
Psychological control, which is characteristic of authoritarian parenting, includes parental intrusiveness, guilt induction, and love withdrawal and is associated across cultures with internalizing and externalizing problems [26,27]. Barber and his colleagues [28] have identified *parental disrespect* as the specific mechanism causing these negative effects and have demonstrated that disrespect accounts for more of the variance in maladjustment than psychological control, broadly measured. Other than agreeableness, there is little evidence that personality variables moderate associations between psychological control and problem behavior [29•].

Drawing on self-determination theory (SDT), Soenens and Vansteenkiste [30] proposed a narrower conceptualization of psychological control as internally pressuring parenting, or conditional approval through manipulation of feelings of guilt, shame, and separation anxiety (rather than external pressure from punishment, rewards, or removing privileges). Controlling parenting was associated with more oppositional defiance, need frustration, and in turn, internalizing and externalizing problems than was autonomy-supportive parenting [31•,32]. Finally, others [33] have proposed that parental psychological control involves intrusions into adolescents' personal domain, leading to feelings of overcontrol and in turn, maladjustment [34].

Behavioral control
In contrast to psychological control, appropriate levels of behavioral control guide and regulate children's behavior by providing clear, consistent parental expectations and the structure to facilitate competent and responsible

behavior. Behavioral control includes setting high standards and making and enforcing rules through supervision and monitoring. However, at high levels, behavioral and psychological control become blurred, causing detrimental effects for development [34].

The "monitoring debate"

Parental monitoring has been viewed as preventing adolescent problem behavior (drug use, truancy, antisocial behavior), because it allows for some autonomy while permitting parents to keep track of their teens. However, these studies typically measured parental *knowledge* of adolescents' out-of-home activities, not monitoring [35,36]. Many studies in Western countries have confirmed that parental knowledge comes primarily from adolescent disclosure of their activities, not parents' solicitation of information or behavioral control. Among Palestinian refugee youth in Jordan, adolescent disclosure, maternal solicitation, and behavioral control all were associated with greater maternal knowledge, but as in Western societies, only child-driven processes (less disclosure, more secrecy) were associated with greater norm breaking and anxiety [37•].

This 'monitoring debate' [38] has led to much research examining how adolescents manage information with their parents and the parenting and parent-adolescent relationship qualities, such as trust and supportive relationships [39] that facilitate adolescents' willing disclosure to parents (see also Kobak, in press, this issue). More recent research has attempted to identify situations where parental monitoring is effective (or not). For example, although used infrequently, parental snooping provides parents with additional information about teens' activities, but violates adolescents' expectations for privacy and is thus associated with problematic family functioning [40•].

Parents' reactions to adolescent disclosure are important; negative reactions cause a cascade of ill effects, including teens' negative feelings about parents and feelings of being controlled, and in turn, increased secrecy and declines in disclosure [41]. Furthermore, although solicitation of information is seen as intrusive and controlling, it does reduce antisocial behavior over time among early adolescents who spend a lot of time unsupervised and challenge parents' legitimate authority [42]. Reactions to parental monitoring are also contextually sensitive. Negative reactions are greater when parent-adolescent relationships are lower in warmth and parental legitimacy beliefs are weaker [43•]. More generally, parental monitoring is often considered effective in keeping children out of trouble when they live in dangerous or violent neighborhoods. However, controlling for parental education and family income, recent large-scale research in nine countries found little evidence that parental

monitoring moderated the links between neighborhood danger and children's aggressive behavior [44].

Recent research also has examined the effects of parental monitoring of adolescents' use of different media. A longitudinal study [45] found that *active monitoring* (parental discussion to encourage a more critical stance) was most common in early adolescence and that it, as well as *restrictive* monitoring (how much and over what parents limit access), declined in middle adolescence, while actively choosing to do nothing increased. Active media monitoring had positive effects on adolescents' adjustment over time, whereas restrictive media monitoring did not [46]. A meta-analysis [47••] showed that active monitoring protected against aggression, sexual involvement, and substance use, but not media time use; thus, it may be effective in providing developmentally appropriate autonomy. Monitoring of media use is a timely and important topic, but future research should disaggregate adolescents' use of different types of media and focus on new, emerging forms of social media, some of which make parental monitoring increasingly challenging.

What do parents want to know about adolescents' activities? A mixed methods study [48•] found that U.S. mothers of middle adolescents 'always' wanted to know about teens' dangerous, illegal, or risky activities, academic performance and schoolwork, and interpersonal relationships. Mothers' desires to know about teens' activities declined over time, with psychological control and positive and negative relationship quality predicting initial levels as well as the trajectory of beliefs. Most mothers stated that there was nothing they did not *want* to know but that they did not necessarily *need* to know everything.

Domain-specific parenting

New 'domain-specific' models have begun to describe parenting as multifaceted and situationally determined. That is, parents are seen as flexibly deploying different practices or strategies in various situations. Importantly, children also interpret parenting behaviors, so similar practices may have different meanings depending on children's developmental status and cultural context. Proponents of these approaches claim that systematic consideration of these factors will lead to better precision both in describing parenting and in understanding its effects.

Adopting a behavioral systems approach, Grusec and Davidov [49••] described parenting in terms of the different childrearing goals and needs that are activated in different situations. They describe five domains of socialization: *protection* (security, protection against harm), *control* (acquiring societal expectations, avoiding threats to autonomy occurring through parental overcontrol), *guided learning* (mastery of specific skills), *group participation*

(being part of a social group), and *reciprocity* (reciprocating others' behavior). These different domains are seen as associated with different parenting skills and practices, resulting in the development of different competencies. This model is promising but will require more elaboration regarding how to identify the relevant domains operative in particular situations. Specific hypotheses about links between domain-specific parenting and developmental outcomes need to be tested.

Smetana and her colleagues have proposed a different domain-specific approach that focuses on the development of different types of social knowledge and behavior: *moral* (justice, fairness, others' welfare), *social-conventional* (contextually determined norms), and *prudential* (comfort, safety, harm to self), and *personal* issues [50**,51**]. Observational research has found that social interactions vary by domain and that mothers' (and peers') responses vary for different types of transgressions [52]. New research shows that mothers communicate norms to toddlers through emotional vocal signals [53,54*]; signals are more intense and angry in response to moral transgressions, more fearful in response to prudential violations, and more comforting and playful in response to prudential and pragmatic transgressions.

Domain-specific models have shown that links between parental behavioral control and adolescent adjustment vary by domain [55]. Further, family decision-making (whether parents or teens decide issues jointly, alone, or with input from others) changes with age and varies by domain [56]. Analyses also have examined within-family differences, including how links between family decision-making and autonomy vary for first- versus second-born offspring [57,58]. For instance, an 11-year longitudinal study of families with two children found that developmental trajectories differed by birth order [57]. Parents reported that first-borns had greater autonomy than second-borns, particularly when the first-born sibling reached age 10 and the second-born was younger. However, when siblings at the same age were compared, decision-making autonomy was greater among second- than first-borns, particularly in middle childhood and early adolescence. Second-borns may seek more autonomy to differentiate themselves from their older siblings, or perhaps to gain the autonomy they see their older siblings as enjoying.

Conclusions

Research on parenting is moving towards ever-greater specificity. This has led to a more refined understanding of parenting, particularly regarding different forms of control and their links with adjustment. Research has upended the common wisdom about the importance of parental monitoring for healthy adolescent development and has led to greater emphasis on child-driven processes such as adolescent disclosure. There has been increased emphasis on how the effects of parenting on children's development are mediated or moderated by different beliefs and on the different meanings behaviors have in different cultural contexts. And although not elaborated here, several new forms of parenting, such as helicopter parenting [59,60] have been described. Despite these advances, greater precision is needed in linking parenting dimensions or domains with specific child outcomes. In addition, research should focus more on developmental competencies and positive outcomes, not just maladjustment. Research also should consider how different social contexts interact (*e.g.*, the influence of parents versus peers).

Furthermore, research on parenting has been limited by its heavy reliance on questionnaires. Although parenting becomes more difficult to observe in naturalistic settings as children grow older, surveys should be supplemented by observations of family interactions in the lab and at home. Research on parenting also often relies on parent reports, especially of young children, or adolescents' (but not parents') reports, as teens are seen as acting on their perceptions of parenting. Although studies employing multiple reporters indicate that agreement between different family members is modest at best, new research shows that discrepancies between parents' and children's ratings are meaningful and deserving of study, particularly with new statistical methods designed to overcome problems associated with using difference scores [61**,62**]. Additionally, studying how parenting differs by children's birth order, gender, and personality facilitates our understanding of child-driven effects of parenting and challenge researchers to go beyond one-child-per-family research.

Finally, research on parenting styles, dimensions, and beliefs has successfully grappled with contextual variations due to culture, race/ethnicity, SES, and neighborhood conditions. Other important social and societal trends require further investigation. Migration and immigration are on the rise around the world [63**], and political conflict and war have led to huge numbers of refugees, many of whom are children [64]. These situations pose enormous challenges for parenting and must be addressed in future research.

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•• **adolescent discrepancies across family contexts**. *J Youth Adolesc* 2016, **45**:2064-2079.
This study used person-centered analyses to consider the patterning, consistency, and correlates of mother–adolescent discrepancies across three family constructs that vary in their objectivity.

63. Fuligni AJ, Tsai KM: **Developmental flexibility in the age of**
•• **globalization: autonomy and identity development among immigrant adolescents**. *Ann Rev Psychol* 2015, **66**:411-431.
This article provides an excellent review of current research on the effects of globalization on autonomy and identity development, particularly as it pertains to immigrant adolescents.

64. Barber BK: **Research on youth and political conflict: where is the politics? Where are the youth?**. *Child Dev Perspect* 2014, **8**:125-130.