

Families, Lifestyles, and Parenting

Chapter 14- The Diversity of Adult Lifestyles



Adults today choose many lifestyles and form many types of families

Adults have a variety of options available:

- They live alone
- They cohabit
- They marry
- They divorce
- They remarry
- They live with someone of the same sex

You are Single?

Single adults are on the rise!

- In the year 2000, 25% of Americans lived alone. This is more than three times the percentage seen in 1970 (8%)
- Approximately 8% of all individuals 65 and older have never been married



Think on your own...

What are the benefits to being single?
Are single people treated unfairly because they are not married?





How about just living together?

Cohabitation...
Do you know any couples who live together?



Cohabitation is living together in a sexual relationship without being married

- There has been an increase in the number of U.S couples living together before marriage.
- The percentage of U.S couples who cohabit before marriage has increased from 11% in 1970 to almost 60% in the year 2000!
- A number of couples do not view this as a precursor to marriage, but rather a lifestyle

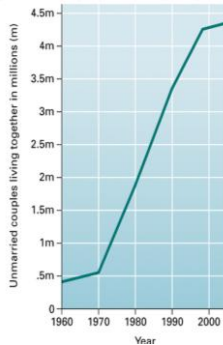
Think on your own...

Does living together before marriage help or harm the chances that a couple will have a stable and happy marriage?



Researchers have found:

- No differences in marital quality between individuals who cohabitated and those who did not
- They have not found that cohabitation is not good for a marriage



Marital Trends

- The changing norm of male-female equality in marriage has produced marital relationships that are more fragile and intense than they were earlier in the 20th century.
 - The average duration of a marriage in the U.S is just over 9 years
- In the United States, the median age for grooms is 27 and for brides is 25
 - This age is higher than any other point in U.S history

People are marrying at a later age because adults are taking time to pursue educational and career goals or to explore relationships.

The US is a marrying society
In 1998 - 118 million individuals were married
(about 60% of the total population)

The First Year Of Marriage

Husbands and wives gradually feel less "in love" and pleased with married life

Why?

- A sharp drop in time spent talking to one another
- A sharp drop in doing things that brought each other pleasure (saying "I love you" or doing things to make each other laugh)
- Leisure pursuits giving way to household tasks and chores

The impact of marriage...

Unhappy marriage increases risk of getting sick or shorten life by 4 years

- Happy married people live longer, healthier lives

Women in happy marriages have lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol level, lower levels of depression, lower levels of anxiety

People in happy marriages feel less physically and emotionally stressed

Marital Satisfaction

- ▣ More men than women report being happily married
 - Simply being married is associated with gains in men's mental and physical health
- ▣ For women, relationship quality has a greater impact on mental health
 - As a result, women suffer more than men when a marriage has problems
 - Women feel particularly dissatisfied when the demands of husband, children, housework, and career are overwhelming

Marriage in Middle Adulthood



- ▣ Even marriages that were reported as "rocky" during early adulthood turn out to be better adjusted during middle adulthood
- ▣ Most married individuals report considerable satisfaction with being married.
 - 72% of those married described their marriage as "excellent" or "very good"

Marriage in Late adulthood

- ▣ In 2000, older adult males were more likely to be married than older adult females
 - 74% of men and 43% of women
- ▣ Almost half of older adult women were widows
- ▣ Individuals who are married are usually happier than those who are single

Keeping Love Alive

1. Make time for your relationship
2. Tell your partner of your love
3. Be available to your partner in times of need
4. Communicate constructively and positively about relationship problems
5. Show an interest in important aspects of your partner's life
6. Confide in your partner
7. Forgive minor offenses, and try to understand major offenses

What Happens When the Marriage Doesn't Work?



Factors Related to Marital Satisfaction

Factor	Happy Marriage	Unhappy Marriage
Family backgrounds	Partners similar in SES, education, religion, and age	Partners very different in SES, education, religion, and age
Age at marriage	After age 23	Before age 23
Length of courtship	At least 6 months	Less than 6 months
Timing of first pregnancy	After first year of marriage	Before or within first year of marriage
Relationship to extended family	Warm and positive	Negative; wish to maintain distance
Marital patterns in extended family	Stable	Unstable; frequent separations and divorces
Financial and employment status	Secure	Insecure
Personality characteristics	Emotionally positive; good conflict-resolution skills	Emotionally negative and impulsive; poor conflict-resolution skills

Divorce Rates

- The United States has one of the highest rates in the world
 - In 2000 and 2001, there were about 4 divorces per 1000 people
- About 43% of first marriages end in separation or divorce within 15 years
- About 90% of separated couples go on to divorce within 5 years

What Couples are More Likely to End Their Marriage?

- Teenagers have high divorce rates
- Couples with less education and income
- Couples who live together prior to marriage
- Couples who have divorced parents
- Couples who become pregnant or bear a child before marriage
- Couples who have stepchildren in the home or have no children

Reasons for Divorce in Middle- and Late-Adulthood

- *For Women:*
 - Verbal, physical, or emotional abuse
 - Alcohol and drug abuse
 - Cheating
- *For Men:*
 - No obvious problems – just fell out of love
 - Cheating
 - Different values, lifestyles

How do parents influence their children?

Class Objectives:
Parenting styles
Discipline



Function of Families

- ☐ *Survival of offspring*
 - Families help to ensure that children survive to maturity by attending to their physical needs, health needs, and safety
- ☐ *Economic function*
 - Families provide the means for children to acquire the skills and other resources they need to be economically productive in adulthood
- ☐ *Cultural training*
 - Families teach children the basic values in their culture

Parental Socialization

- ☐ Parents as *direct instructors*
 - Parents may directly teach their children skills, rules, and strategies and explicitly inform or advise them on various issues
- ☐ Parents as *indirect socializers*
 - Parents provide indirect socialization in the course of their day-to-day interactions with their children
- ☐ Parents as *providers and controllers of opportunities*
 - Parents manage children's experiences and social lives, including their exposure to positive or negative experiences, their opportunities to play with certain toys and children, and their exposure to various kinds of information

Good Parenting Takes Time and Effort



Parenting Dimensions

- ☐ There are two general dimensions of parental behavior
 - The degree of warmth and responsiveness that parents show their children
 - The amount of control parents exert over their children

Warmth and Responsiveness

- ☐ At one of the spectrum are parents who are openly warm and affectionate with their children
- ☐ At the other end of the spectrum are parents who are relatively uninvolved with their children and sometimes even hostile toward them

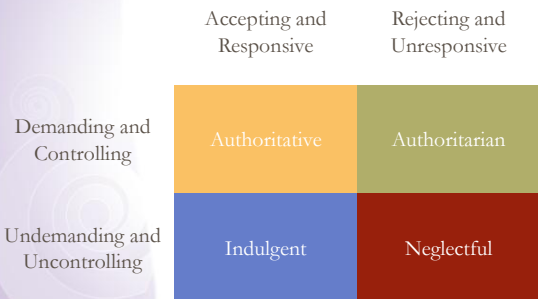
Parental Control

- ☐ Parents' efforts to supervise and monitor their children's behavior
- ☐ Effective control
 - Setting standards that are appropriate for the child's age
 - Showing the child how to meet the standards
 - Rewarding the child for complying to these standards
- ☐ Parents should enforce the standards consistently
 - Children and adolescents are more compliant when parents enforce the rules regularly
- ☐ Effective control is also based on good communication
 - Parents should explain why they've set standards and why they reward or punish as they do

Parental Styles (Baumrind)

- ☐ Authoritarian parenting
 - High parental control with little warmth
- ☐ Authoritative parenting
 - A fair degree of parental control with being warm and responsive to children
- ☐ Indulgent-permissive parenting
 - Warmth and caring but little parental control
- ☐ Indifferent-uninvolved parenting
 - Neither warmth nor control

Parenting Styles



Authoritarian Parenting

- A restrictive, punitive style in which parents exhort the child to follow their directions and to respect their work and effort
- Firm limits are placed on the child and little verbal exchange is allowed

Authoritative Parenting

- A style that encourages children to be independent but still places limits and controls on children's actions
- Extensive verbal give-and-take is allowed and parents are warm and nurturing toward the child

Indulgent-Permissive Parenting

- A style in which parents are very involved with their children but place few demands or controls on them

Neglectful Parenting

- A style in which the parent is very uninvolved in the child's life
- Children with indifferent-uninvolved parents develop a sense that their parents' lives are more important than they are

- Children with authoritarian parents typically have lower grades in school, lower self-esteem, and are less skilled socially
- Children with authoritative parents tend to have higher grades and be responsible, self-reliant, and friendly
- Children with indulgent-permissive parents have lower grades and are often impulsive and easily frustrated
- Children with indifferent-uninvolved parents have low self-esteem and are impulsive, aggressive, and moody

Punishment Works Best When:

- Administered directly after the undesired behavior occurs, rather than hours later
- An undesired behavior always leads to punishment, rather than usually or occasionally
- Accompanied by an explanation of why the child was punished and how punishment can be avoided in the future
- The child has a warm, affectionate relationship with the person administering the punishment



Drawbacks to punishment

- Punishment is primarily suppressive: if a new behavior isn't learned to replace it, the old response will come back.
- Punishment can have undesirable side effects:
 - Children become upset as they are being punished which makes it unlikely that they will understand the feedback that punishment is meant to convey.
 - When children are punished physically – they often imitate this behavior with peers and younger siblings.

What about Spanking?

- Use of corporal punishment is legal in every state in America and it is estimated that 70 to 90 percent of American parents have spanked their children
- Research suggests that being spanked is a salient and memorable experience for young children
 - Not because of the pain , but because of the emotions associated with the experience

Children who are spanked often use aggression to resolve their disputes with others and are more likely to have behavior problems



Why Should You Avoid Spanking?

- When adults yell, scream, or spank, they are presenting children with out-of-control models for handling stressful situations
- Punishment can instill fear, rage, or avoidance
- Punishment tells children what not to do rather than what to do
- Punishment can be abusive

Parenting can be especially tricky during adolescence...

Early adolescence is a time when conflicts with parents escalates, much to the everyday events of family life



Parents play very important roles in adolescent development and it is believed that adolescents need to stay connected to their families as they move towards independence

Parenting the Adolescent

Competent adolescent development is most likely when adolescents have parents who:

- Show them warmth and mutual respect
- Demonstrate sustained interest in their lives
- Recognize and adapt to their cognitive and socioemotional development
- Communicate expectations for high standards of conduct and achievement
- Display constructive ways of dealing with problems and conflict

On Your Own

Read about Other Family Relationships:

- Siblings
- Grandparents
- Intergenerational relationships

Next

Friendships
