



CHILDREN'S EATING BEHAVIOUR, FACTORS INFLUENCING AND CONTROL MEASURES

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ABSTRACT

Food provides nutrients and gives energy. Nutrients are very essential for growth, development and good immunity. The relation between nutrients, foods, and dietary patterns has important effects, specially for control and development of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases such as asthma, bronchitis and diabetes.

INTRODUCTION

Food preferences continue changing throughout life, under the influence of many factors these preferences are determinants of food choices. Eating habits and preferences are shaped at a young age and maintained through out life. Effectively eating behaviours and child weight are difficult to change directly, parental behaviours or feeding peactices are very good interventions for preventing unhealthy eating behaviours and developing obesity or malnutrition in children.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

THE IMPORTANT FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE EATING BEHAVIOURS

Family Environment

The family is a place where the children are more exposed, and they learn by imitating the actions of the others and learning more by observation in particular from their parents' and caregivers, the food habits adopted by the family based on the culture are directly related to health behaviours, so the family members must adapt healthy eating habits based on the nutritional requirements.

Parenting styles

The 4 types of parenting

The four main parenting styles — permissive, authoritative, neglectful and authoritarian — used in child psychology today are based on the work of Diana Baumrind, a developmental psychologist

Each parenting style has different effects on children's behavior and can be known through childs daily activities and responses, as well as degrees of responsiveness and demandingness.

1. Permissive parenting style

Child driven

Rarely enforces rules

Overindulges child to avoid conflict

2. Authoritative parenting styles

High expectations

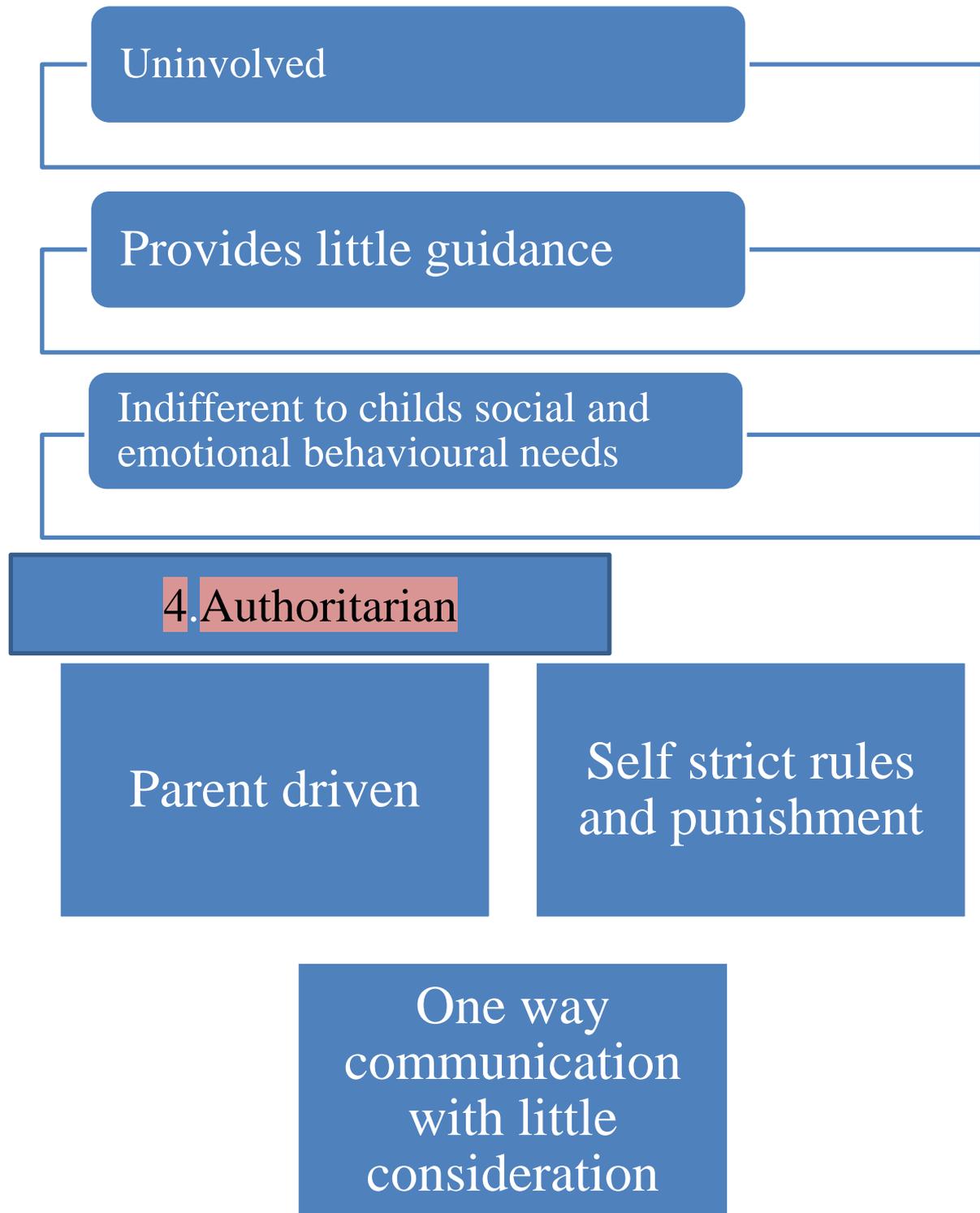
Democratic

Flexible

Clear standards

Assertive

3. Neglectfull



Using this method, children who are under authoritative parenting show the good levels of self-efficacy, self-discipline, emotional maturity and improved their eating behaviors and also associated with a lower risk for obesity

3. Family meals

Family meals help to improve dietary intakes and eating behaviors of children or adolescents. Family meals are known to have a positive effect on emotional, psychological and physical health.

4. Parental influence

Parents play a powerful role in children's eating behavior, providing both genes and environment for children. For example, they influence children's developing preferences and eating behaviors by making some foods available rather than others, and by acting as models of eating behavior

5. Early feeding practices

Breast feeding is started soon after birth and complimentary feeding by 6 months of age and Infant feeding practices are associated with later childhood dietary habits and their preferences

Strategies to improve children's eating behavior

- Purchasing only healthy foods at home
- Avoiding unhealthy foods at home
- Encouraging children to try new foods
- Parents should set an example to the children
- Childrens must be exposed to variety of new foods
- Family meals plays a vital role in improving eating behaviors
- Turn off tv at meals
- Early life experience with healthy tasties and flavours may promote healthy eating
- Reduce screen time and get adequate sleep

Control measures to prevent unhealthy eating behaviours

Healthy eating

It is a continuous process which takes time, the food should include more of vegetables, fruits and new flavours with balanced amount of all nutrients like carbohydrates ,proteins, vitamins and minerals

Slow changes:

Change needs time. specially in children so the parents must have good observation on children, their behaviours

Certain points to be kept in mind are

- Advice the children not to skip the meal..
- Drink enough amount of water
- Follow hygienic practices
- Follow proper time table for intake of food
- Make the child eat before 8 pm: After 12 pm So the later the food consumed slower will be the digestion process.

Breakfast:

After a good sleep, the body needs energy so the energy is provided by healthy breakfast and the body will absorb all nutrients. This is because the body has repaired itself while we sleep at night

Good Parenting

Parents have a difficult role: they are the example, they should model good habits, and pay attention to their own reaction towards food, so as to promote healthy eating and to bring only healthy food into the home. That is, the creation of a non-obesogenic child-rearing environment starts from sharing meals at home and creating a positive mealtime experience

Physical activity

WHO recognizes that regular physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development and encourages that all children and adolescents accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity every day and also encourages parents and schools to make physical activity a priority. Prolonged periods of physical inactivity should also be discouraged both at home and at school.

CONCLUSION

Dietary habits and eating behaviours are multiple factors while influence healthy weight and growth. The family system which is adopted in child's daily life, will have an active role in establishing and promoting behaviours that will persist throughout his or her life.. Early-life experiences with various foods, different tastes and flavours have a role in promoting healthy eating and favouring wider consumption of fruits and vegetables. Offering infants different foods beginning in the complementary feeding period and providing repeated exposure of disliked foods to stimulate their taste and help them to accept many foods later in life is a necessary strategy to develop good eating habits Accordingly, educational programmes should be incorporated in schools and communities to all children from different socioeconomic levels, with a goal of promoting physical activity, reducing television, video game, and computer time, and getting adequate sleep. Parents should receive advice on how to establish long-term healthy habits and to create pleasant eating patterns in their children, while becoming aware of behavioural determinants that leads to malnutrition and eating disorders.

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