

# expectations ns

The parenting style that works against teen drinking.

**A training guide for community partners.**

## Acknowledge the challenge

According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS), from 2007 to 2011, the prevalence of underage drinking among Nebraska youth rose 6% while the national rate fell 6%. Fortunately, recent findings suggest underage drinking among Nebraska youth is reflecting the national average. However, a problem still exists.

For example, according to a 2014 survey coordinated by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and NDHHS, 60% of Nebraska high school seniors reported drinking alcohol in their lifetime, and 30% admitted to drinking alcohol within the

past 30 days. Furthermore, 69% of respondents state it's easy for them to illegally obtain alcohol.

Even more troubling, when asked, 16% of Nebraska high school seniors admitted to riding in a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking within the past 30 days - this, despite the fact that 96% of those high school seniors agreed that driving after drinking alcohol is wrong.



Turns out, teens DO listen to their parents. Maybe not about music or clothes. But most definitely about alcohol. Studies reveal that parents have the strongest, most direct impact on whether or not their teens will engage in heavy drinking. In fact, 83% of teens consider parents the leading influence in their decision not to drink alcohol. But some parents are more effective than others at limiting alcohol use. Or, rather, a particular style of parenting is more effective.

For nearly 30 years, psychologists have agreed on segmenting parenting approaches into four major styles: authoritative, permissive, authoritarian and uninvolved. Of the four, only the authoritative style has been shown to significantly reduce the likelihood of teen drinking and other risky behaviors.



Teens with **authoritative** parents are **LEAST LIKELY** to participate in heavy drinking.

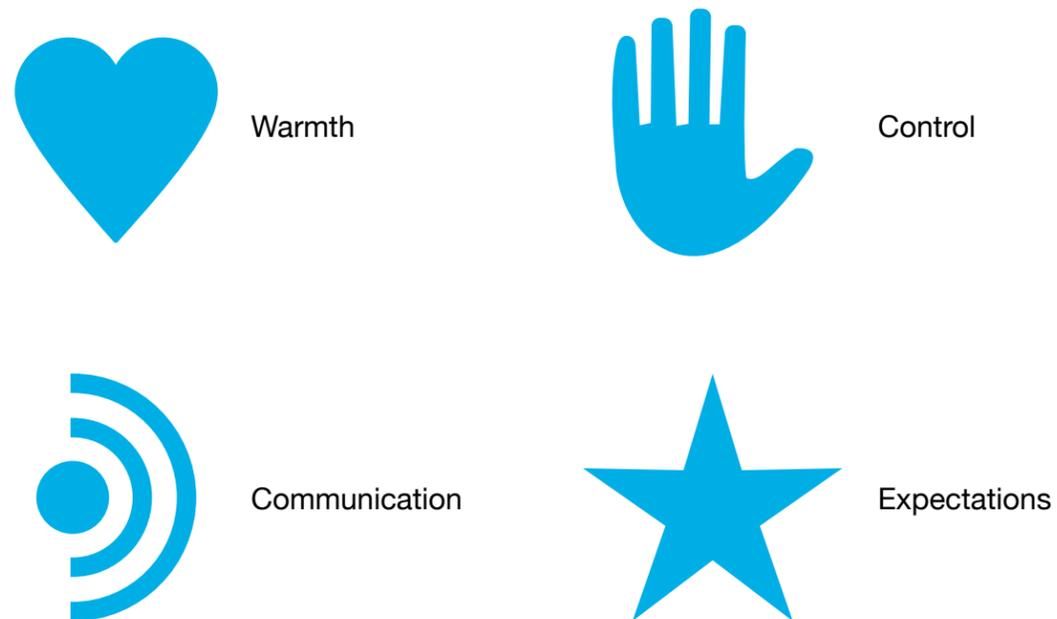
Teens with **authoritarian** parents are **2X MORE LIKELY** to participate in heavy drinking.

Teens with **permissive** parents are **3X MORE LIKELY** to participate in heavy drinking.

Teens with **uninvolved** parents are **4X MORE LIKELY** to participate in heavy drinking.

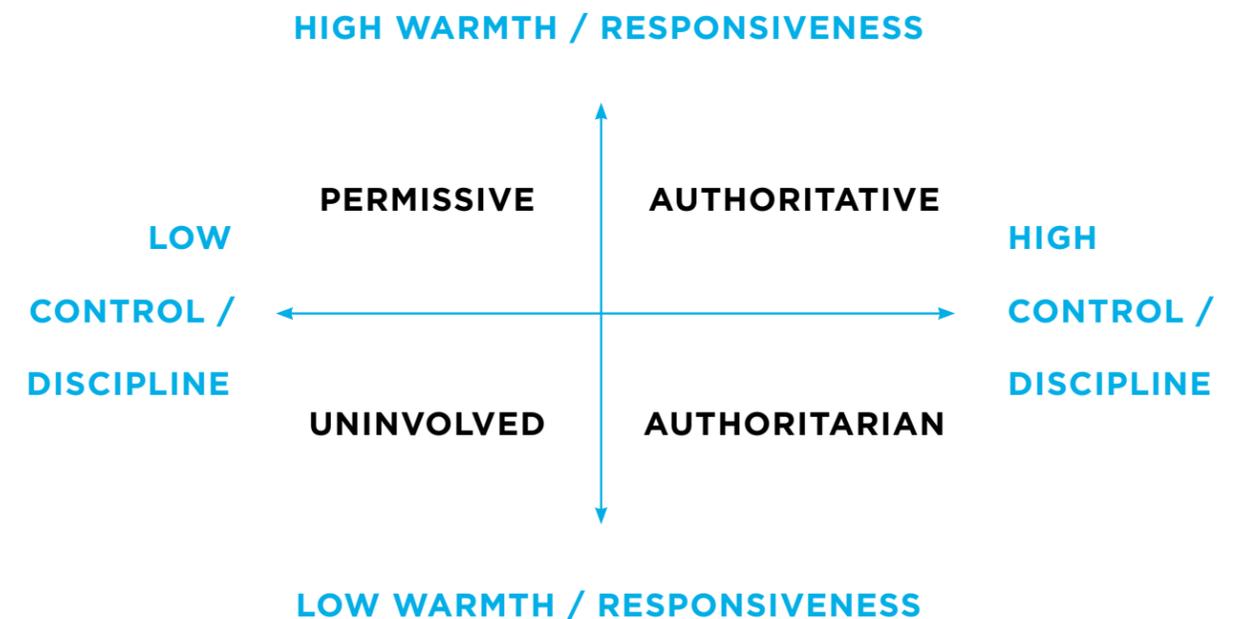
## Promote the power of a small change

There are no perfect answers when it comes to helping parents help their teens make good choices about drinking. However, a good start is helping parents understand that making just a few changes to their parenting style could have a big impact. Teens will still try alcohol. But the authoritative parenting style does indeed reduce the chances of binge drinking. And depending on the parent, the change required to implement this style may just be a matter of a few tweaks: exercising control by setting clearer expectations and boundaries, and being more consistent with consequences—but always from a standpoint of warmth, listening and love.



## Know the parenting styles

Each of the four parenting styles reflects a different way of relating and communicating to teens, and involves different combinations of emotional responsiveness or warmth on one side, and control or discipline on the other.

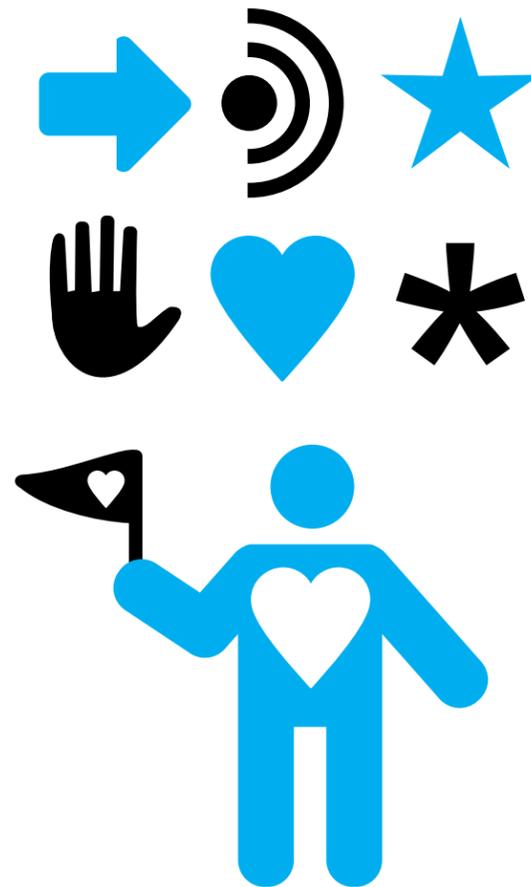


**AUTHORITATIVE**

The Authoritative parenting style can be best described as “demanding but responsive.” Authoritative parents encourage their teen’s independence while at the same time teaching them responsibility by consistently holding them accountable for their own decisions. Authoritative parents show high levels of warmth and engagement, encourage frequent and honest two-way communication, exercise control and fair discipline, and set clear expectations.

### Characteristics of Authoritative Parents:

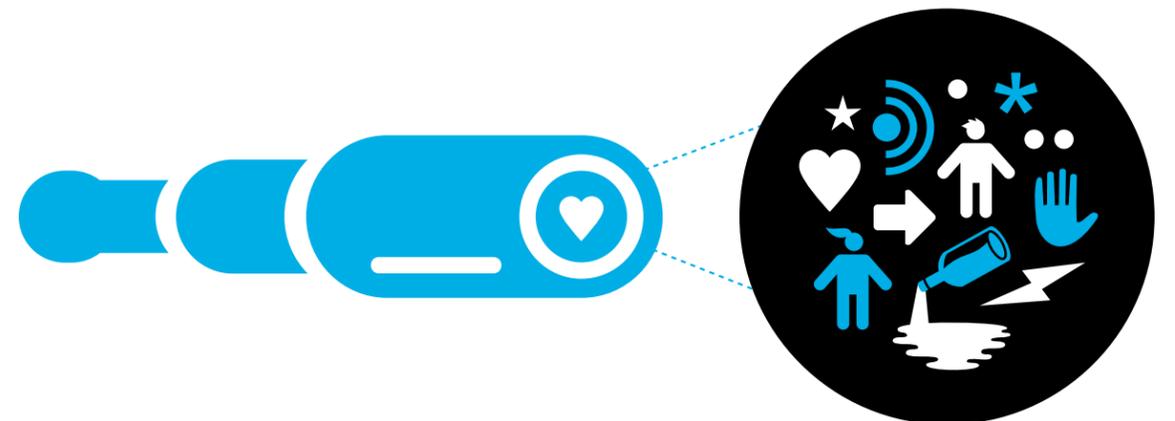
- Listen to their children.
- Encourage independence.
- Set limits, consequences and expectations on their children’s behavior.
- Express warmth and nurturance.
- Allow children to express opinions.
- Encourage children to discuss options.
- Administer fair and consistent discipline.



Once parents know the basic facts of parenting styles, you can direct them to our comprehensive website: [talkaboutalcohol.org](http://talkaboutalcohol.org). There, parents can learn more specifics about how to implement the authoritative style. In fact, to make it even more accessible to parents and their teens, the website refers to the authoritative style as “heart to heart” parenting, and offers a number of resources to help parents have more meaningful and effective interactions with their teens about alcohol use. Also, encourage parents to contact their local community partners for additional help and resources.

### TalkAboutAlcohol.org

- Interactive presentation about the authoritative (heart-to-heart) style
- In-depth information on parenting styles
- Videos and PDF downloads (to be updated throughout the year)
- Links to community partners and resources



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**TalkAboutAlcohol.org**  
Or call 402.441.3807.



[TalkAboutAlcohol.org](https://www.talkaboutalcohol.org)