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The Impact of Parental Parenting Styles on High School Students' Coping Strategies

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Abstract: Modern high school students experience a variety of developmental pressures, and normative psychological responses to stressors are strongly influenced by parental rearing approaches and styles. Authoritative parenting generally helps a student develop proactive behaviours as a coping mechanism while authoritarian parenting generally elicits either avoidance or confrontation and permissive families may limit adolescents' reserves of coping resources. Studies have highlighted how parenting behaviour relates to high school students' appraisal of stress and coping strategy use through three main pathways: emotional modelling, cognitive shaping, and relational style. Adolescent individual attributes and contextual factors represent more complex moderating variables. Educators should consider the parental style as an important basis for psychological resilience that provides a theoretical base for collaborative home-school interventions. From an educational standpoint there is an acute need to incorporate family variables within the mental health educational space and steer a shift in understanding parenting philosophy as being process orientated, as opposed to outcome based.

Keywords: parenting styles; coping styles; high school students; mental health

1. Introduction

Psychological development during adolescence, particularly in high school, has unique vulnerabilities and opportunities for change. Given the attributes that drive adolescents in their quest for independence but also render them dependent upon family for social and emotional support, parental rearing behavior is an important factor for predicting their effectiveness at coping. Parents can influence adolescent coping in several ways and studies have only revealed the effects of negative parenting behavior, such as authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. Little research has explored the context of positive parenting being transformed through everyday behaviors into specific coping skills and abilities. This article examines the parenting style - coping strategy transmission chain with specific attention to the shaping ability of micro-processes within parent-child interactions, particularly nonverbal communication signals and attributional guidance, on stress coping. Understanding micro-processes can necessitate a break-through the challenges of traditional mental health education and advance toward a more operational practical framework for family education and school-based counseling.

2. Theoretical Connections of Core Concepts

2.1. Typical Classification Dimensions of Parenting Styles

The main differences in parental rearing styles are based on two major dimensions: rule making and emotional responsiveness. Researchers typically distinguish parental rearing styles based on behavior guidance and emotional support. Authoritative parenting is characterized by parents making rule set down with the flexibility inherent

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in the standards being reasonable and parents expressing high acceptance of children's emotionality. Authoritarian parenting is characterized by parental strictness regarding children's behavior, and less warm emotional support. Permissive parents are characterized by having weaker controls regarding children's behavior but embrace children's emotionality. Neglectful parents are characterized by dramatically insufficient behavior guidance, or emotional care from parents. The basic conceptualizations of parenting styles depicted above account for four typical rearing styles, and create the essential framework for analyzing family interactions (see Table 1). Parenting styles offered by parents affect the adolescent's behavioral boundary information and levels of emotional support. The way emotionality and rules combine to provide the overall atmosphere allows adolescents to incorporate and integrate strategies and attitudes towards the external world [1].

Table 1. Core Dimensions of Parenting Styles.

Parenting styles	Behavioral guidance dimension characteristics	Emotional response dimension characteristics
Authoritative	Set reasonable rules and explain the reasons	Highly responsive, warmly accepting, encouraging communication
Authoritarian	Set strict rules and require unconditional obedience	Lowly responsive, emphasizing authority, lacking negotiation
Permissive	Set very few rules or requirements, or provide vague guidance	Highly responsive, overly tolerant, avoiding conflict
Neglectful	Set very few rules or provide very little guidance	Lowly responsive, emotionally distant, lacking attention

2.2. Core Types of Coping Styles among High School Students

There are several typical patterns of strategies that high school students employ to cope with academic and interpersonal pressures. Problem-focused coping involves individuals actively analyzing the root causes of stress and developing steps to address them. Emotion-focused coping reflects individuals prioritizing the handling of internal emotional reactions triggered by stress. Avoidant coping, on the other hand, indicates an individual's tendency to delay facing or shifting the focus of attention away from the source of stress (specific characteristics are shown in Table 2). Problem-focused coping often accompanies specific behaviors such as seeking informational support or developing action plans. Emotion-focused coping may involve emotional regulation methods such as expressing feelings or trying relaxation techniques. Avoidant coping strategies sometimes manifest as procrastination or engaging in other activities to divert attention. These types of coping are not completely separate, and adolescents may combine and use multiple strategies in different situations. The tendency to choose each strategy reflects an individual's assessment habits and available psychological resources in stressful situations [2]. Understanding these core types helps identify typical response patterns of high school students when facing challenges.

Table 2. Characteristics of the main coping strategies used by high school students.

Types of coping strategies	Core Strategy Directions	Typical behavioral characteristics	Common applicable situations
Problem-focused coping	Directly address the source of stress.	Analyzing problems, making plans, seeking solutions	Academic difficulties, obstacles to achieving goals

Emotion-focused coping	Manage emotions triggered by stress.	Expressing feelings, seeking comfort, relaxation exercises	Interpersonal conflicts, feelings of frustration, anxiety
Avoidance coping	Temporarily avoid the source of stress or feelings	Procrastination, distraction, denial of seriousness	Difficulty controlling events, high expected failure rate

2.3. *Transmission Mechanisms through Which Parenting Styles Influence Coping Abilities*

The core pathways through which parental rearing behaviors profoundly shape children's coping abilities are manifested in several key aspects. The emotional response patterns in daily family interactions lay the foundation for shaping children's emotional regulation abilities. Parental behavioral demonstrations in the face of their own stress provide adolescents with intuitive templates for strategy selection. Authoritative parents' explanation of reasons when setting rules promotes the development of children's cognitive evaluation abilities. The experience of problem-solving through parent-child negotiation directly trains adolescents' practical skills in applying strategies. The stability of the family atmosphere influences children's tendency to predict the threat level of stressful events. The sense of trust cultivated in a long-term accepting environment increases adolescents' willingness to actively seek support. Authoritarian family high-pressure control may weaken children's practical opportunities for autonomous decision-making. The blurred sense of boundaries in a permissive environment may delay the time point for adolescents to establish effective coping strategies. These dynamic interactive processes collectively encode the internal procedures for adolescents to cope with challenges, and their effects are particularly prominent during the high-stress high school stage.

2.4. *Moderating Variables in Developmental Psychology*

The temperament type of individual adolescents significantly affects their reception of parental rearing behaviors. The quality of support from peer groups constitutes an important buffering or reinforcing system beyond family influence. The overall psychological atmosphere of the school environment provides external support space for adolescents to practice coping strategies. The gradually developing cognitive maturity of high school students regulates their depth of understanding of the intentions behind parental behaviors. The accessibility of community resources supplements the coping resource supply channels for adolescents from different family backgrounds. The accumulation of past successful coping experiences shapes individuals' tendency towards strategy selection in new stressful situations. The value system under a specific cultural background influences adolescents' framework for interpreting the meaning of stressors. These moderating variables change the specific path and intensity of the transformation from rearing patterns to coping abilities, much like a prism refracts light. Understanding these dynamic factors helps to avoid making overly simplistic and linear judgments on the impact of rearing, providing a more refined perspective for designing personalized support programs [3].

3. Key Influences of Parenting Styles on Coping Abilities

3.1. *Authoritative Parenting as a Positive Driver of Positive Coping*

Authoritative parents always show their children that they have a serious understanding and acceptance of their children's emotional requirements when establishing specific behavioral expectations. The warmth and strictness of authoritative parenting provides a strong foundation of psychological safety for high school adolescents. When teens feel respected in the family, it only serves to motivate them to examine the underlying causes of problems actively. Establishing the habit of parents

clearly communicating the reasoning behind rules effectively teaches children good cognitive habits about how to reasonably weigh sources of stress. The ongoing teamwork that family members conduct in negotiating and working together to solve everyday problems serves as an authentic learning space for high school students to practice using solutions strategies. The continued support children are given when they try to solve problems with increasing independence positively builds their confidence levels in dealing with complicated circumstances. In authoritative families, the more frequent and immediate emotional responses provided to relieve adolescents' levels of dissatisfaction and anxiety. Adolescents' collective mental successes from repeated experiences of coping begin to settle into their core competencies for responding when they encounter academic or social stressors. In this type of parenting environment, the self-efficacy being built within the proactive adolescent will encourage them to adopt more problem-focused positive strategies.

3.2. Authoritarian Parenting Leading to Maladaptive Coping

In authoritarian parenting environments, parents typically emphasize the strict enforcement of rules and the absolute obedience of their children, providing less explanation behind behaviors or understanding at the emotional level. This high-demand, low-response interaction pattern makes it difficult for adolescents to form a foundation of confidence for autonomous decision-making under stressful situations. Children who are long-term in a state of passively accepting instructions significantly reduce their opportunities to actively analyze the root causes of problems. When facing challenges, adolescents may prefer to avoid or delay strategies due to fear of making decision errors that could lead to criticism. The lack of emotional communication channels among family members limits the development of effective skills for managing negative emotions in adolescents. The punitive reactions commonly seen in authoritarian families reinforce children's cognitive assessment tendencies towards the threat level of stressful events. The coping experiences accumulated by adolescents in this environment are often limited to mechanically executing instructions or passively waiting for rescue. The tense atmosphere formed under high-pressure control may induce impulsive reactions as an emotional outlet, and the coping behaviors associated with this parenting model often exhibit characteristics of insufficient flexibility in strategic adjustment and limited efficiency in resource mobilization [4].

3.3. Permissive/Neglectful Parenting Resulting in Lack of Coping Strategies

In types of parenting where there are permissive or neglectful environments, parents are likely providing less clear behavioral restrictions or required behavioral guidance. When parents take a less structured approach, it leaves adolescents without a very clear frame of reference for rules. It is uncommon for children to have the opportunity to experience the guiding process of parents rationally thinking or strategically selecting the appropriate consequences following their behaviors. The continued lack of emotional responsiveness deprives adolescents of any practical opportunities to cope with their own emotional variability. For these parents and for adolescents, when stressful circumstances arise and adolescents need to employ a systematic process to evaluate the event and plan the appropriate steps, they will be uncertain about the process. In permissive families, the parents' low engagement and attention to their children's emotional states undermines the ability of adolescents to identify and appreciate their internal feelings. The neglecting parenting styles often become dialects for children so that they will adopt a series of habitual, temporary coping behaviors (e.g. instant gratification and distracted attention when under pressure). The lack of collaboration and experience with their parents has long-term implications for adolescents' comprehensiveness in building their strategy library [5]. The combination of vague rules and emotional alienation makes it difficult for adolescents to form a stable and predictable coping pattern. Such coping behaviors

associated with parenting backgrounds often exhibit characteristics of limited strategic reserves and limited emotional regulation efficacy.

3.4. Moderation of Stress Perception by Parent-Child Interaction Quality

When parents listen attentively, their nods and gentle tones convey a signal that challenges are understandable, and this accepting gesture subtly loosens the defensive mindset of high school students facing stressful events. On this basis, family members develop the habit of engaging in equal dialogue around issues, effectively cultivating in adolescents the habit of distinguishing between objective difficulties and subjective catastrophic imaginations. It is particularly crucial that a family environment where emotional expression is unobstructed allows children to accurately label complex feelings such as "exam anxiety" or "social phobia" when stress first emerges, thereby preventing emotional buildup from distorting their cognition of the event itself. Furthermore, parents share real-life adjustment cases of dealing with workplace setbacks in a timely manner (rather than preaching), providing children with a multi-angle reference for evaluating the consequences of stress. It is particularly noteworthy that parents' proactive attitude towards repairing relationships after conflicts clearly demonstrates a feasible path for rebuilding psychological balance after setbacks, significantly reducing adolescents' excessive concerns about the lasting harm of stress. These daily interactions accumulated over time continuously calibrate the internal scale for adolescents to judge the severity of stress, ultimately guiding their decision-making tendency from avoidance and retreat to facing challenges head-on. Over time, the psychological security accumulated from warm responses naturally pushes adolescents to reposition stress as an opportunity for growth that can be dealt with, rather than an unbearable threat to survival [6].

4. Educational Intervention Pathways to Optimize High School Students' Coping Abilities

4.1. Parent Parenting Skills Enhancement Program

The core of enhancing parental upbringing skills lies in awakening parents' awareness of their own emotional signals and behavioral patterns. Professional mentors assist parents in identifying how their anxiety or anger triggers their habitual responses of high-pressure control or passive avoidance. Systematic emotional regulation training helps parents establish a pause and buffer mechanism during parent-child conflicts, avoiding the immediate emotional venting that squeezes their children's psychological space. Communication skills workshops focus on parents practicing the non-violent expression structure of "describing observations - expressing feelings - setting expectations", replacing accusatory or commanding language. Role-playing exercises enable parents to personally experience their children's defensive mentality and barriers to seeking help under high-pressure communication. Practical guidance on the family meeting mechanism provides parents with structured tools to build an equal dialogue platform, promoting the initiative of adolescents to participate in rule-making. Community mutual aid groups provide a safe and supportive environment for parents to continuously practice new strategies, consolidating the crucial steps from cognitive understanding to behavioral transformation. This in-depth capacity building focuses on the adjustment of parents' internal states and the renewal of interaction patterns, creating a constant source of vitality for the development of children's coping abilities [7].

4.2. School Resilience Curriculum Development

The development of school psychological resilience courses needs to be rooted in the real challenges faced by high school students on a daily basis. It is essential to understand their frequent feelings of inadequacy when facing academic pressure, interpersonal conflicts, or future choices. Course designers should strive to transform the abstract concept of resilience into tangible life skills that students can easily access. This means

that the course content must go beyond mere knowledge impartation and focus on providing practical tools for dealing with challenges. The course construction can follow a gradual logic, with the initial stage focusing on guiding students to identify their own emotional response patterns and learn basic calming techniques, helping them establish awareness of their inner experiences rather than simply suppressing feelings. Subsequent teaching units naturally transition to cognitive adjustment training, where teachers use cases or situational simulations close to students' lives to demonstrate how to shift perspectives on difficult situations and practice more constructive self-talk. Once students have mastered basic emotional management and cognitive adjustment skills, the focus of the course shifts to practical application. Structured practical activities are designed to encourage students to practice new strategies in a relatively safe classroom environment, such as handling peer conflicts through role-playing or simulating scenarios to deal with exam anxiety. This deliberate practice helps students internalize skills as natural responses. Resilience cultivation cannot be separated from the strengthening of social support networks. The course must include specific modules to guide students on how to identify and actively seek help from trusted teachers or peers around them. At the same time, course developers need to proactively design parent communication sessions to provide parents with a window into understanding the course objectives and core methods, promoting coherence between family environment and school education [8].

4.3. Home-School Collaboration Support Mechanism Construction

The school needs to establish a keen and non-labeling observation system to identify students who require additional support. Experienced class advisors and psychological teachers closely monitor subtle changes in students' behavior, such as significant fluctuations in academic engagement, persistent feelings of helplessness expressed in weekly journals or daily conversations, and abnormal avoidance tendencies in social interactions. Upon discovering these signs, trusted teachers or counselors initiate a warm and natural dialogue channel. This process may begin with an informal exchange after class or a sincere affirmation of a student's particular talent. The goal of establishing an initial connection is to create a safe and non-judgmental environment for students. This trust relationship forms the cornerstone for subsequent effective support [9]. When the trust relationship is solid, professionals can introduce psychological assessment tools that students are comfortable with or conduct in-depth conversations. Together, both parties explore the unique root causes of the student's difficulties, which may be long-term accumulated frustration, stressors from specific family interaction patterns, or a lack of key coping skills. After clarifying the nature of the problem, support measures can be precisely tailored to the student's needs. This may involve collaborating with parents to adjust family communication methods, organizing small group counseling for students to learn to manage negative thinking, or leveraging community resources to compensate for deficiencies in family support networks. The core of the entire intervention process lies in continuously paying attention to and discovering students' inherent strengths and existing advantages. Educators should promptly reinforce every small progress made by students, helping them gradually regain confidence in their own abilities. This coherent path, integrating early observation, relationship building, precise assessment, multi-level support, and advantage cultivation, aims to help students master adaptive methods for coping with stress and support them in gradually returning to an active campus life and personal development trajectory [10].

4.4. Early Identification and Intervention for High-Risk Groups

The early identification and intervention of high-risk groups constitute an important part of optimizing high school students' coping abilities. This requires educators to cultivate keen observation skills in their daily work, focusing on individual students who repeatedly exhibit excessive avoidance, emotional outbursts, or extremely negative

reactions in academic pressure, interpersonal interactions, or family upheavals. Class advisors and psychological teachers can jointly establish a normalized communication mechanism to meticulously track changes in students' behavioral patterns and emotional expression characteristics. For example, long-term low learning performance, abnormal social withdrawal, or frequent physical discomfort signals all merit in-depth investigation. Specific intervention strategies need to go beyond simple psychological counseling. Schools can integrate resources to provide structured support programs for these students, including continuous individual psychological counseling to help them understand their emotions and learn basic regulation skills, while designing small-scale group activities to promote their ability to safely practice social interaction and seek peer support [11]. Parental involvement is essential, and schools should guide parents to adjust their parenting styles, paying special attention to overly strict or permissive families. Through parent classes, schools can impart gentle yet firm communication skills and reasonable expectation setting methods, thereby forming a stable support network both inside and outside the school. The entire identification and intervention process must emphasize continuity and dynamic evaluation. Professionals should regularly review the effectiveness of support measures and flexibly adjust the focus of the program based on student feedback, ensuring that intervention resources truly contribute to enhancing high-risk students' proactive coping strategies and inherent resilience in the face of adversity [12].

5. Conclusion

The evidence of the roles of parental rearing styles as predictors of coping abilities in high school students proves that the basic value of family education is in offering tactical demonstrations with a base of emotional safety. Successful experiences of authoritative parenting show that the interactive combination of rules with warmth promotes the mindful internalization of adaptive responses. This means parents need to adjust their orientation from the role of behavior regulator to being a growth scaffold builder. Educational interventions will need to happen along two tracks: first to establish a parenting ability improvement support system at the family end to help parents learn emotional-counseling techniques, and secondly, to develop a psychological-resilience curriculum at the school end to address the absence of strategies related to single-parenting, negative parenting or negative adolescent development. In the future, research needs to focus on investigating specific interfaces for home-school collaboration. For example, developing a transformation channel of parenting philosophy through parent-child communication logs or family project-based learning in schools, so that the cultivation of coping abilities becomes authentically integrated into the daily life practices of adolescents.

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