

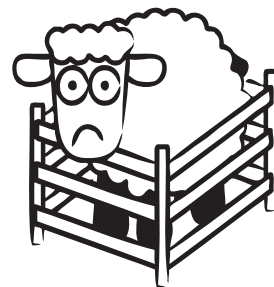
## HANDOUT

# Parenting styles

Experts talk about three main styles of parenting:

### Authoritarian

Parents who are authoritarian know how to put their foot down. Typical comments to the children are, "Just do it!" or "Never mind 'why?' It's because I said so." If the family were the Army, these parents would be the sergeant majors. They expect their orders to be obeyed instantly and don't encourage discussion. They focus on looking out for and punishing bad behaviour rather than praising and rewarding good behaviour.



### Permissive

These parents don't like setting and enforcing boundaries, and they back away from confrontation rather than risk upsetting their child. They are often warm and accepting of their children, but rarely demand high standards in behaviour. If the child of authoritarian parents argued about their bedtime they might expect to be yelled at; but the child of permissive parents would expect their parents to let them stay up as long as they like.



### Assertive

These parents believe that boundaries are important, but they are careful not to back themselves into a corner over things that don't really matter. They are unlikely to hit the roof over minor issues, but on the other hand they will be very firm over things they think are important. They take time to explain why the rules are set and are prepared to listen to an opposing view. Their children know they are accepted and loved, but equally know that their parents are not an easy touch. The children are encouraged to be independent. In the home there are as few rules as possible, but the child knows that the ones that are in place matter, and that breaking them will have consequences.

