

Assessment of Children's Development of Self-Control and Parents' Role in it

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Abstract

Self-control is an ability that affects many areas of success in a person's life. Parental involvement in the development of their children's self-control is integral. A large part of the development of an ability to delay gratification to reach a greater goal comes largely from the involvement of parenting in a child's life. If parents provide proper attachment, monitoring, and nurture, and avoid dangerous or overbearing parenting techniques, they provide their children with the best chance to develop self-control.

Assessment of Children's Development of Self-Control and Parents' Role in it

Centrality of Self Control

Self-control is generally defined as the ability to restrain oneself over their impulses, emotions, and desires (Merriam Webster, n.d.). This trait seemingly has tremendous implications on a person's everyday life and chance at success. People hold self-control high on the list of important traits for success. Many books have been written about ways to improve self-control in many different areas. Children's books, self-help books, and business books are some of the few areas that are interested in the development of self-control. This thesis is meant to uncover the reasons why this trait is so sought after, and what is responsible for its development. Some people seem to have high levels of self-control from the womb, while others seem to have been able to work on themselves to the point that they reach a high level of self-control. This begs the question...Is it genetics? Willpower? Environment? This paper looks to investigate the origins of self-control and what the most important factors are to put oneself in the best position to succeed in developing self-control. Particularly, the influence of parenting in the development of self-control will be investigated, and what the best parenting skills are to successfully engender self-control in children.

Parenting is often a major part of a person's life, and it is every parent's dream that their children grow up to be successful. One definition for many parents of said success is their children's ability to be happy, be professionally independent, and live with good values. Much of that comes from the ability to exhibit self-control. It is therefore imperative to determine which aspects and skills in parenting are critical for the development of self-control for children. Self-control will first be defined through the use of different schools of psychological thought. Then, the importance of self-control in many areas of life will be stressed. Factors that influence self-

control will be delineated, stressing the importance of parenting in the development of self-control. Differences in genders and their development of self-control will be analyzed to indicate what parenting methods are lacking in the gender that typically possesses unsatisfactory self-control development. Factors include, but are not limited to, genetics, environmental factors, role models, positive social interaction, and parenting. After discussing other factors that lead to development of self-control, parenting and different parenting practices that are beneficial for development of self-control will be mentioned. Stages of childhood that are variably prone to influence of parenting on self-control development will be monitored. Finally, parenting techniques to better engender self-control in children will be suggested. The goal of this thesis is to provide an argument for the importance of self-control, the ways its development is influenced, the way parenting influences it, and how parenting can be improved to help children develop self-control most efficiently.

Defining Self Control

The “dictionary definition” of self-control is, “restraint exercised over one’s impulses, emotions, or desires.” (Merriam Webster, n.d.). Studies in the field of psychology have empirically proven that this is mostly accurate, with some nuance. Psychologists, particularly those with an emphasis on the area of personality, suggest that self-control is the ability to govern oneself in order to manipulate their own emotions, behaviors, and cognition (Li et al., 2019). Others in the personality field define self-control as the ability to restrain oneself for a larger goal (Mueller et al., 2011). In order to construct a more operationally sound definition, Mueller et al. (2023) defined self-control as the ability to exhibit a “delay of gratification and lower impulsivity” (p. 345).

Self-control includes in its definition the manipulation of emotions, behaviors, and cognition, which also means that it has an impact on all these areas (Li et al., 2019). Previous studies and meta-analyses have found significant convergence in the results of each of these categories. An example of one of these studies is that of Allan and Lonigan (2011), who measured tasks that subjects did that were meant to measure the level of effortful control and other tasks that were meant to measure the level of executive functioning. Effortful control is defined as “the ability to delay or inhibit a proponent response, often in favor of a subdominant response” (p. 905), and executive functioning is defined as “the ability to overcome automatic, proponent behavior despite the pull of previous experience” (p. 905). They found that each of these constructs displayed very convergent results. This indicated to them that both effortful control and executive functioning are constructs that are part of a larger definition of self-control (Allan and Lonigan). In another important study, Mueller, et al. (2023) found that self-control development plays an important role in the development of other personality traits, particularly conscientiousness.

Neurological studies indicate similar neural pathways in the process manipulating emotions, cognition, and behaviors (Li et al., 2019), which also indicates that these are all part of self-control, and that self-control therefore impacts all three of these areas.

In order to properly define self-control, it is also important to determine what it is not. Self-control is often correlated with other behaviors and emotions, such as empathy, but it is operationally different from them. Self-control relies more on social interaction for its development, and less on intelligence than other emotions and behaviors (Javakhishvili and Vazsonyi, 2022). Individuals can improve in their self-control despite intelligence deficits, which makes it more available than some other traits that may require intelligence (Javakhishvili and

Vazsonyi). Vazsonyi and Javakhishvili (2019) also found that although infant temperament did not negatively correlate with the extent of self-control developed by age 15, positive social interaction during infancy for those infants who had difficult temperament had a positive correlation with development of self-control by age 15.

Impact of Self Control on Success

As an introduction to the aspects of life that experience benefit from the development of self-control, investigation of the value of being able to set goals through life and strive to attain them will be conducted. Life-span theorists delineate the importance of setting goals and following through with them and suggest that it is this desire that best explains development through life (Schulz and Heckhausen, 1996). Life-span studies show that there are two parts of control that humans develop a desire to acquire very early on in their lives. There is primary control and secondary control (Schulz and Heckhausen). Primary control refers to the control a person has over his environment, and secondary control is the control one has over their cognitive abilities. People continuously try to achieve primary and secondary control throughout their lives. Infants already begin to develop a sense of desire for control, displaying disappointment when they do not reach goals of control (Schulz and Heckhausen). As children grow into adolescents, they begin to develop more of a drive to develop their secondary control and start to form self-goals and aspirations (Schulz and Heckhausen). As a person becomes older, they start to develop more realistic and specific goals both in terms of primary and secondary control (Schulz and Heckhausen).

This goal-directed mindset that life-span theorists show is a great example of why self-control is so imperative in and of itself. Self-control allows a person to take hold of the goals that they develop, both in terms of primary and secondary control, and push to achieve those goals.

Without the use of self-control, it's likely that the goals to achieve primary and secondary control would not be fruitful, thus resulting in a serious deficit in development throughout the lifespan.

Aside from the ability to control oneself to gain better results in life, self-control is also beneficial for other areas of success. Self-control has been found to affect the levels of conscientiousness, impulsivity, self-regulation, delay of gratification, inattention-hyperactivity, executive function, willpower, and intertemporal choice (Moffitt et al., 2011). Individuals who have properly developed self-control have also been shown to have a correlated ability to express empathy (Javakhishvili and Vazsonyi, 2022). Lack of self-control has also been shown to increase the likelihood for adolescents to engage in risk-taking behaviors (Tian et al., 2022). Low self-control is also associated with being more likely to have friends who are misbehaved, which could in turn lead to more risk-taking behaviors (Tian et al.). Some of these behaviors include drug usage and early sexual activity (Brody, et al., 2006). High levels of self-control can also improve the way one is perceived by others (Gennara et al., 2023). Self-control has also been shown to decrease the likelihood of infants to develop aggression from age 8.5 and above (Vazsonyi and Javakhishvili, 2019). Effortful control, a related personality trait to self-control, is negatively correlated with the number of disruptive behaviors in preschoolers (Allan and Lonigan, 2011). Allan and Lonigan used several tested measures to observe levels of effortful control and executive functioning in kindergarten children. Tests they used included seeing if children would rather take a smaller prize immediately or a larger prize later, and if children would be able to face away from someone wrapping a gift for them without peeking. They found that children who scored high on those tests (meaning they had high levels of self-control) were more literate and better behaved (did not have as many disruptive behaviors) (Allan and

Lonigan). Additionally, they found that children who were able to exhibit delayed gratification increased their academic performance, regardless of their cognitive abilities (Allan and Lonigan).

Factors of Self Control Development

Genetics and Environmental Factors

Twin studies have shown that monozygotic twins have almost double the inter-class correlation for self-control than dizygotic twins do, indicating that genetics plays a significant role in the development of self-control (Mueller et al., 2023). It has also been found that this inter-class correlation is stronger for monozygotic twins as they get older, which also indicates that heritability of self-control development becomes more influential as individuals increase in age (Mueller et al.).

Children who grow up with exposure to negative environmental factors may be prone to a lack of self-control development (Abulizi et al., 2017). Influence of the environment is an especially impactful mediator of self-control development during adolescence (Li, et al., 2019). It influences the development of their professional lives, keeps them healthier, and has a lasting effect on their development later in life (Li et al.). Common problems, including behavioral misconduct, that often arise in adolescents are combatted by a development of self-control, making factors that influence its development all the more crucial (Moffitt, et al., 2011).

Social Factors

Early positive socialization, which is represented by “high maternal sensitivity, secure attachment, and quality home environment”, are good predictors of positive production of self-control in children (Javakhishvili and Vazsonyi, 2022, p. 397). In another study looking at the discrepancies between male and female self-control development, Chapple et al. (2021) found that adverse childhood experiences have significant effects on the development of self-control.

The more frequent the adverse childhood experiences were, the lower the self-control development was (Chapple et al., 2021). In addition, positive social interaction during infancy was found to improve self-control abilities by the age of 15, despite difficult temperament during infancy (Javakhishvili and Vazsonyi, 2022). Teachers are also found to have significant impact on the development of self-control of their students (Moon et al., 2014). Finally, peers have been shown to have an important role in self-control development. Children who have peers that are delinquent are found to have less development of self-control (Moon et al.). The inverse also applies; children who associate with positive-behaving peers tend to develop more self-control.

Parental Influence on Self Control

Attachment theory

Most of the research on parental influence on the self-control of children stems from research of attachment theory. Attachment theorists, with John Bowlby in their lead, believe that parents, particularly mothers, create a strong attachment bond with their children from a very young age that allows them to develop properly. Bowlby (1982) describes that during his time, the prevailing theory of why children are attached to their parents is because the parent provides food to the child, one of the primary needs, and therefore drives, of a person. This would make the attachment to the mother both non-specific (meaning it could happen with anyone who provides the child with food) and a secondary drive (Bowlby, 1982).

Bowlby (1982) proved that this was not the case, borrowing first from a study of animals and then of humans. He quotes a study that showed that goslings that did not feed from their mother still had an attachment to them. This seemed to indicate that, at least for goslings, attachment was a primary drive separate from that of attaining food (Bowlby, 1982). Bowlby thought that this must also be applicable to humans. He proved it by showing that when a human

child is given the option to attach to a softer doll that does not provide food, or a harder doll that does provide food, they attach more to the softer doll that does not provide food (Bowlby).

Therefore it must be that the reason for attachment is inherent and can be explained as a motivation that people have to attach to someone distinct from themselves who at least seemingly has a better control on life than they do (Bowlby).

Although this attachment is more evident in situations of danger, it's really always present (Bowlby, 1982). What this theory suggests is that parenting (and children's attachment due to that parenting) allow the child to learn from the parent and survive and thrive in the world. Part of that development that the parent elicits is self-control (Hayslett-McCall & Bernard, 2002). Proper attachment will allow a child to develop generally, and also in the context of self-control. This means that the development of self-control is significantly influenced by the way that parents interact with their children. Parenting can have both positive and negative impacts on the development of self-control. Studies have shown that parenting in inefficient ways, especially detrimental ways, can decrease the level of self-control development in children. Children who have complications at home like maternal depression are likely to have low levels of self-control and high levels of behavior issues (Abulizi et al., 2017). CHAOS is a measure used to determine the level of discord in a household. It stands for Confusion, Hubbub, and Order Scale, and refers to the general amount of loudness, chaos, and confusion in a household. The level of CHAOS in a home was found to be associated with the level of self-control development in children (Mueller et al., 2023). This is obviously at least partially an influence of the parents. If parents allow for CHAOS levels in the home to be high, levels of self-control development will end up being challenged (Mueller et al.).

Crime theory

Other important research about the influence of parenting on self-control development can be found in the context of gender differences in self-control. The fact that there is a discrepancy between the genders may be a result of the different approaches parents typically take when addressing boys or girls. Females tend to have more self-control than males (Chapple et al., 2021, Chapple et al., 2010). Gottfredson and Hirschi, who are influential researchers in the field of crime, argue that the disproportionate number of males responsible for crime over females is due to a reduced level of overall development for males (as cited in Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002). Specifically, that's because they claim that males lack a consistent attachment to their mothers or other parental figures. Hayslett-McCall and Bernard (2002) summarize several theories that stem from the Psychoanalytic school of thought that describe what backs the lack of consistent attachment for males described by Gottfredson and Hirschi. One school of thought is that males feel the need to separate from their mothers in their developmental years in order to develop a sense of masculinity. This creates a gap in connection between mother and child, which in turn results in an improper and inefficient form of development, one that partially affects development of self-control. Others place the blame on the mother, claiming that maternal figures tend to push their sons away during their years of development, which is why they end up lacking in their overall development, including that of self-control (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002). The father is also unavailable to take the role of providing his son with a proper model to develop with. This is either because the father is physically unavailable, or is unwilling to take on the role as the caring parent for his son when he separates from the mother. Even if the father is physically available, he often will show his son that it is not 'masculine' to have such an emotional attachment to his father, and therefore will actively push his son away from attaching with him. This leaves the son to his own devices,

which not only results in an inadequate development with the absence of a proper parental figure to attach to, but it also encourages the child to learn male stereotypes from the only options left available to him. That's often the media, which encourages boys to ignore emotional relationships and become even more extreme in their deficit in having a parent or role model to develop properly with (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002). A final factor that results in the loss of self-control development is the lack of parental monitoring that comes with this lack of attachment with the parent (Hayslett McCall and Bernard, 2002). Other theories think that infant males require more caregiving attention than infant girls, and often do not receive it, which can lead to developmental problems that increase the likelihood of crime later in life (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002). Using these theories, Hayslett-McCall and Bernard suggest that the general skill of self-control is developed less efficiently by males than females for the same reasons that crime rates are higher. Females typically have a better attachment relationship to their mothers, and that lends itself to the ability to build better self-control (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2022). This research highlights the importance of a relationship of attachment between parent and child in the development of self-control.

Theories about male depression suggest that parental rejection, as opposed to ineffectiveness of creating a sufficient attachment and monitoring system, is to blame for the decrease seen in self-control of males. Hayslett-McCall and Bernard (2002) suggest that the common thread between these studies is that development of self-control is affected negatively by poor parenting practices. This adds to the picture of the influence of parenting on self-control by suggesting that rejection is often a direct cause of the inefficient development of self-control.

In slight contrast to crime theories mentioned above, attachment theorists maintain that attachment is a natural phenomenon. Children naturally attach to their parents in order to survive

in this world. What follows from this attachment theory is that lack of attachment is an unnatural phenomenon, which also means that children who have negative attachment relationships with their parents are naturally looking to repair that relationship (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002). If self-control is indeed reliant on the attachment that children have with their parents, then self-control is a natural phenomenon that should be repairable later in childhood if it is not developed initially (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002). On the other hand, crime researchers claim that self-control can not develop self-control later in life unless parental attachment and monitoring is repaired early in life. Once children reach age 8, repairing attachment will not affect development of the child (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002). This split between attachment theorists and crime theorists is a result of crime theorists' suggestion that self-control and the attachment that it results from is not a natural phenomenon, so if the child does not learn it early on, they will not be conditioned to have self-control and be accustomed to do the opposite (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002). The literature does not provide a reason why this makes it impossible for children to learn self-control, even though it certainly seems that it would be a harder challenge.

Aspects of parenting that influence self-control

It is clearly the case that parenting is integral to the development of self-control. As has been shown, the environment of the home as well as positive parenting is helpful for children in the attempt for them to learn and maintain self-control. Therefore it's important to determine what aspects of parenting can be considered "positive" in this context. That is, what parts of parenting can aid in the positive association with children's self-control development? The following section looks to answer these questions.

Parental discipline is positively associated with the development of self-control (Chapple et al., 2010). Parental monitoring is also positively associated with the development of self-control (Chapple et al., 2010). Data was collected by Davis et al. (2017) that showed that parental synchrony with their child was another important factor that allowed them to develop self-control more efficiently. Parental synchrony was defined by Davis et al (2017) by the extent to which parents allow their relationships and instructions to their children to be reciprocal and mutual. If parents explain the reasons behind their parental actions and create a sense of understanding and mutual respect, they raise the levels of ability for their children to develop self-control (Davis, et al., 2017). Chapple et al. (2010) note that maternal supervision is a significant antecedent to self-control development for both boys and girls. Whether a child has maternal supervision is determined by interviewing children and asking if their mother often knew where they were if they weren't home (Chapple et al., 2010).

Another important aspect to explore is the area of indulgent parenting. The loss of development of self-control in children whose parents can be labeled as indulgent parents can help us glean more insight about what's integral to develop self-control. In an interesting study about the concept of fear of missing out, Jiao and Cui (2023) provide cutting edge information about indulgent parenting. Indulgent parenting is one type of parenting that has become prevalent in current times in which parents are highly responsive to their children, but have low expectations of responsible behavior from their children (Jiao and Cui, 2023). Indulgent parenting encourages children, especially adolescents, to engage in all sorts of negative activities that include early sexual action, drug abuse, aggression, anxiety, withdrawal, and a negative impact on adolescent development (Jiao and Cui, 2023). One particular aspect that this inefficient style of parenting magnifies is the already existing problem that many adolescents

have, which is “fear of missing out”. Fear of missing out is essentially the colloquial expression termed for the idea of worrying that others might be having an enjoyable time without you (Jiao and Cui, 2023). Adolescents are particularly prone to this fear because they value themselves largely on the way they think their peers view them. Because of this extreme stress on peers, adolescents are prone to this issue of fear of missing out, because if they miss an event that is important to their peer group, it’s all the more impactful for them (Jiao and Cui, 2023). Jiao and Cui (2023) argue that indulgent parenting exacerbates this issue for adolescents. They tested their hypothesis that the reason indulgent parenting elicits risk for negative outcomes is due to these parents’ lack of ability to teach their children self-control (Jiao and Cui, 2023). They used a self-report scale of self-control to measure self-control in close to 300 adolescents and found that parents with indulgent parenting tendencies correlated with their children having low self-control. They suggested that the reason for this relationship is because when parents are very responsive to their children but do not have high expectations for their children’s sense of responsibility, children begin to think that they are incapable of doing things by themselves (Jiao and Cui, 2023).

Another important area to explore in the context of parental influence on self-control is that of ineffective parenting, particularly those that don’t allow enough autonomy to the child. Helicopter parenting is the term that has been used to describe parents who handle decisions for their child and do everything they can for them (Simsir-Gokalp, 2023). As delineated by the Self-Determination Theory, one of the three most important psychological necessities of humans is autonomy, so when parents take that ability to develop autonomy away from their children, it follows that their development will be crippled (Simsir-Gokalp). Being that part of the definition of autonomy in this context is the feeling of volition, self-control is closely related to autonomy

(Simsir-Gokalp). Therefore, it follows that when parents limit their children's ability to make autonomous decisions because they are helicopter parenting, they are removing the ability for their children to develop self-control and ability to use their own volition (Simsir-Gokalp). In a study testing the development of multi-screen addiction and its connection with helicopter parenting, Simsir-Gokalp (2023) found that helicopter parenting (particularly mothers' helicopter parenting) was a cause for a higher risk of becoming addicted to multi-screens. Part of that discovery was the reason for the high risk was due to the lack of development of self-control in helicopter parents' children (Simsir-Gokalp). Since children were not given their own volition to make decisions, they were not able to develop an ability to control their desires, and thus lacked the self-control needed to prevent addictions (Simsir-Gokalp).

Stages in which self-control develops

Children can be affected negatively by parental influence as early as age 4-5 (Hayslett-McCall & Bernard, 2002). Neurological tests have shown that self-control development continues through adolescence (Brody et al., 2006). Development of self-control typically increases curvilinearly from childhood to adolescence, and then sees a negative drop from around the age 13 until age 19. At that point, the development of self-control increases to a point that more than makes up for what was lost in those adolescent years (Mueller et al., 2023). The peak of self-control is typically met at around age 30 (Mueller et al.). Of all of these stages, proper parenting is particularly important for the development of self-control for adolescents (Simsir-Gokalp, 2023). Adolescence is a time that individuals typically develop a sense of autonomy, which needs to be facilitated by the parent (see above section for more information), and if developed, can allow the child to develop a proper ability to control themselves (Simsir-Gokalp).

Aspects of parenting effective on self-control

As shown above, several areas of study attribute a lot of development, specifically that of self-control, to parenting. These studies, in conjunction with other data, show that parenting is influential on self-control development, and improvement of certain parenting skills can in turn allow a child to develop self-control better.

Children who have a difficult temperament as infants can be indirectly affected by socialization, including improvement of parent-child bonds, to improve self-control later in life (Javakhishvili and Vazsonyi, 2022). Mutually responsive orientation between mother and child is also a factor that allows a child to develop self-control more effectively (Kochanska, 2002). Mutual responsive orientation between mother and child is defined by two different components. The first is the level of responsiveness between parent and child. That means that the parent and child share a sense of care about the way the other feels. They respond (as developmentally appropriate) to the needs and wants of the other (Kochanska). If one of the people in the relationship sends a signal of distress, the other responds to it. The other aspect of mutually responsive orientation is the level of shared positive affect. Essentially what that means is that the parent and child share fond memories with each other. Kochanska (2002) suggests that this construct is an important prerequisite to proper development of self-control. According to a larger meta-analysis by Li et al. (2019), the degree of positive parenting positively correlates with the level of development of self-control by the child from ages 10-22.

Parenting techniques helpful for children's development of self-control

Hayslett-McCall and Bernard (2002) suggest several techniques parents can use to affect the development of self-control in their children. One is that parents can monitor their children, notice when the child is misbehaving, and punish them when they misbehave. This can provide

the children with a sense of responsibility and consequence for their actions, while also allowing them to recognize that they gain when they delay gratification and control themselves from doing things that will produce immediate gratification. Another important factor is that parents should accept feelings of vulnerability from their children (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002).

Attachment theorists have a similar suggestion, which is that children who have adverse attachment experiences “wall themselves off” to attachment. If the child is provided with proper attachment, they will be nurtured well and develop healthily (Hayslett-McCall and Bernard, 2002).

Using results of a 15-year longitudinal study, Javakhishvli and Vazsonyi (2022) found that early intervention to assist the development of harmonization between parent and child can prevent negative results of early infant difficult temperament. In a study of the development of African American children living in rural areas of the U.S., Brody et al. (2006) suggests some important factors that can be improved in parenting that can prevent adverse outcomes that come with lack of self-control development. Brody et al. (2006) studied poor families in the rural south of the U.S. and tried to implement a program called SAAF (Strong African American Families program) to help parents prevent their children from falling into issues such as early sexual activity or drug use. Their program included sessions for parents and children separately, where they had interventions to try to improve different aspects of parenting, attitude, and cohesion of the family as a unit. Of interest to this topic, Brody et al. (2006) used an intervention on parents that was meant to help them instill self-control abilities in their children. They did so by teaching them how to constantly nurture their children by using high levels of monitoring and control. They also particularly taught them how they should communicate with their children about sex and alcohol use, which was particularly helpful for their population, but also helpful in general.

They also practiced communication skills and activities that promote family bonding. All these factors seem to be important for the proper development of child self-control (Brody et al., 2006). It's likely that these factors are important for every child's self-control, even those outside the rural south, in their development of self-control. If parents instruct their children with a constant (healthy) monitoring system, while also communicating clearly to them about things that are not allowed or dangerous, it will likely improve their ability to develop self-control. Parent's relationship with their child and with their family can also increase the ability for children to develop their self-control.

Aside from previously attempted procedures to improve parenting in the area of children's development of self-control, other improvements can be suggested from the various issues previously mentioned that may lead to deficits in the development of self-control in children. The following suggestions may be helpful to improve self-control development using the investigation of improper parenting.

As mentioned previously, another important aspect of improvement of parenting can come from research about indulgent parenting. Jiao and Cui (2023) suggest that research about the deficits in self-control that indulgent parenting can cause suggests that inverse behavior by parents could encourage self-control development in children. If parents are not overly responsive to their children and have high expectations of their children in terms of them taking responsibility, children will develop a sense that they can control themselves and develop better self-control. This particular improvement will likely be difficult for parents to endure, because indulgent parenting is a hard technique to overcome. Indulgent parenting is often a result of a parent trying to counteract a negative experience that they perceive their child to have experienced (Wolford et al., 2020). Parents often increase their indulgence on their children's

behavior after a large major event like a divorce (Wolford et al., 2020). They see that as a sort of compensation for the negative reverberations that the negative effect caused. Even parents whose children haven't experienced a particularly nuanced issue, but rather are just dealing with the bombardment of the many responsibilities of adolescence, tend to resort to indulgence (Wolford et al., 2020). Adolescents are perceived by their parents to have too many academic and social responsibilities, so parents tend to forgo forcing their children to take care of their other responsibilities and chores (Wolford et al., 2020). Being that indulgent parenting seems to stem from parents thinking that their children are handling too much, perhaps it would be a helpful response to teach parents that their actions are actually having adverse effects when they are indulgent to their children. Perhaps if they would be educated that pushing their children in place of indulging them would ultimately have a long-term benefit for their children would be an effective way to improve parenting as a whole and parental influence on self-control development specifically.

Additionally, research in other areas can provide insight on aspects in parenting that can be improved. Attachment theorists suggest that a lack of attachment is responsible for the ill-developed self-control in some children. What that would suggest is that parents who provide proper attachment to their children will create a situation where they can develop self-control better. Similarly, crime theorists suggest that males commit crimes because their parents do not provide enough attachment from their mothers and fathers, which again suggests that if parents provide more attachment for their children, they will improve their chances of developing self-control. Although crime theorists think that attachment is less natural than attachment theorists (Hayslett-McCall and Barnard, 2002), therefore making it more difficult to repair, it is still possible to repair such broken bonds, and certainly to prevent them in the first place.

It has been indicated earlier that helicopter parenting can be problematic for the development of self-control in children because it hinders their ability to feel a sense of volition and practice their control over their desires. As a result, another helpful tool for parents to keep in mind would be to provide their children with opportunities to make their own decisions. If parents adopt a system where they allow their children make their own decisions while they monitor them, it would seem that it would afford their children with the space to feel their own sense of responsibility and volition that is essential for development of self-control, while also making sure to monitor their decisions, which will also provide them with a sense that they can't do whatever they want and need to control their impulses.

Conclusion

The centrality of self-control in life applies to many areas. It is critical in the ability to be successful professionally and personally in life, and comes with many psychological benefits. Although the source of development of self-control is multifaceted, a large factor is the way parents act towards their children. As a result, it's important that parents are conducting themselves in a way that facilitates their children's ability to develop self-control, especially in their formative years. The significance of parenting can be seen in many areas of research, including, but not limited to, the areas of attachment theory and crime theory. The fact that parenting can be detrimental for child development overall, and specifically for self-control, shows how important it is. If parenting is conducted in an effective way, children can properly develop self-control. It is therefore important to determine the aspects of parenting that are helpful to allow children to develop self-control. That will allow parents to focus on such areas when they are trying to teach their children to control themselves to reach higher goals. It will also allow for suggestions to parents and potential for programs to educate parents to allow them

to give their children a better chance to develop self-control. It seems that if parents promote proper attachment with their child, despite stigmas like the masculinity and individualism of males, they give their children a better opportunity to develop self-control. Proper attachment along with monitoring and punishment encourages the child to come the realization that they can control themselves. Giving children space and allowing them to develop on their own will also allow them to develop a sense of autonomy that will give them the sense of volition they need to develop self-control properly. Parents can be taught that, although some of these actions seem harsh against their children, they are ultimately very beneficial for them.

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