

YSS4231 Parenting and Child Development
AY2021-22, Semester 2
Dr. Cheung Hoi Shan

Throughout this course, we will critically evaluate the conceptual and functional meaning of parenting styles and practices across cultures, and look at how these may influence children's development. Examples of theoretical approaches covered include attachment theory and transactional models of parenting. Maladaptive parenting practices and their effects on children will also be examined. The course concludes with a discussion of whether parents are the most important source of influence, considering the many other domains of influence in children's lives, such as peers.

Learning outcomes

1. Knowledge & Comprehension: Gain an in-depth understanding of the different theories of parenting and the research methods employed in testing these theories.
2. Application: Apply parenting theories in real-life situations.
3. Analysis: Appreciate the cross-cultural relevance of parenting theories in accounting for differences in children's development.
4. Evaluation: Critically evaluate empirical articles, and the efficacy of parenting advice as found in popular literature.
5. Synthesis: Formulation of research questions and design of measures.

Schedule and Venue:

Wednesdays, 9.30am – 12.30pm; Elm Common Lounge (next to Elm dining hall)

Office Hours:

Tuesdays 10 – 11am; Fridays 10.30 – 11.30am.

By appointment only at this link: [TBA](#)

Format:

Interactive seminar, class discussions, hands-on activities, student-led presentations.

Required text:

There is no required text for this course. Essential readings are listed in e-reserves.

Assessments:

- Empirical article presentation & seminar lead – 20%
- Mid-term quiz: Individual and group testing – 15% (Individual response: 10%; group response: 5%), on date [TBA](#)
- Response paper on a newspaper article on parenting – 10%, due [TBA](#)
- Annotated references and research paper outline – 5%, due [TBA](#)
- Individual research paper – 25%, due [TBA](#)
- Final quiz – 25%, on [TBA](#)

Empirical article presentation and seminar lead

Prepare a presentation of the assigned empirical article. The presentation should include a brief and critical summary of the research questions, methods, results and conclusions. There is no need to provide excessive details, as all students are expected to have read the article. Rather, focus on a critique of the method and conclusions, and suggest concrete directions for future research (e.g. include specific research questions or hypotheses that can be tested). The presenting group is also required to design discussion questions or class activities that would facilitate learning after the presentation.

Students may arrange for an optional consultation session in preparation for this presentation. The consultation session, if needed, must be arranged at least one week before the presentation. The presenting group must come prepared, with at least a rough plan for the seminar. Presentation slides (in pdf format) must be uploaded onto Canvas by the end of the day, as a learning resource for the class.

Mid-term quiz

A quiz consisting of two short-answer questions will be administered in class on **TBA**. The quiz covers topics up to **Week 5** (including the topic on attachment theory).

The quiz will consist of two components. First, students will be given 30 minutes to complete the questions individually. After the individual responses are turned in, students are given another 30 minutes to discuss their answers with peers in pre-assigned groups, and each group then turns in another set of response to the questions. The group response can be written in point form, whereas the individual response must be written in prose. Each component (individual and group responses) will be graded separately.

Individual response paper on a newspaper article related to parenting

Select a recent newspaper article on parenting, and write a 800-word response paper that includes your opinion on the issue addressed in the news article. The article must be published in English, but it need not be from the local papers.

Students are encouraged to make use of class time on **TBA** to work on this exercise, either individually or in pairs. If working in pairs, you may collectively discuss and generate ideas, but each student must submit his/her individual response paper on Canvas (i.e. each dyad cannot submit an identical paper). The purpose of this exercise is to assess the degree to which you can read critically (we would have had ample practices in class before that), and to provide an opportunity to sharpen your writing skills (a valuable tool to have for College and beyond!) The response paper, along with a scanned copy of the news article, are due on **TBA**. Submissions are to be made on Canvas.

Individual research paper

Students may choose one of the following options:

1. Debunk at least one parenting myth (you may discuss more than one if you wish), drawing on findings from empirical studies. Describe what this myth is, and why you

think it persists and gets propagated. You should then focus on analysing the empirical evidence that leads you to the conclusion that it is a myth, and offer suggestions as to how parents can be better informed.

2. Design a study that addresses a novel and important question about parenting and child development in Singapore. This paper should be written in the form of a research proposal, as though you are planning for a capstone project, short of actually collecting data. The paper should include an introduction outlining the importance of this study (how it contributes to existing literature) and the hypotheses to be tested. It should also contain a detailed methodology section, specifying the measures to be used. The paper should conclude with an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of this study, as well as feasibility.

Papers should not exceed 3,000 words (excluding any tables, reference lists, etc.), and should observe the APA styles and conventions. **All assignments will be checked for plagiarism.** The research paper is due on **TBA**. Please submit your assignment through Canvas as a word document (not pdf), and label the file name with your matriculation number. Do not include your name in any graded assignment, particularly in the final exam, as grading is done anonymously.

An annotated reference list and a general outline of your research paper (in bullet points) are due the week after recess, on **date TBA**, **constituting 5% of the total grade**. The purpose of this assignment is to provide you with individualised and timely guidance for your research paper. Submissions are to be made on Canvas.

A peer review of your research paper will be conducted during class time on **TBA**. The class does not meet on that day, but students should work in pairs and review each other's research paper, providing constructive feedback using the form that will be given out in class closer to the date. This means that your research paper should be in a somewhat readable form by this date, in order to benefit maximally from the peer review process. This exercise enables students to practise reading critically, and for classmates to receive feedback that would help improve their research paper. **The peer reviewer must submit the feedback form on Canvas by the end of day on TBA, and send a copy of the feedback to the student whose paper has been reviewed.** The instructor may provide further comments on the peer feedback form if necessary.

The use of secondary sources in any research paper is strongly discouraged. As far as possible, students should read primary sources and interpret the findings for themselves. Excessive reliance on secondary sources is not ideal because the information is subject to the biases of the (secondary) author. However, in some cases the use of secondary sources may be inevitable, such as when the primary source is a classic piece that was written a long time ago and is no longer available, or is not accessible to students (e.g. dissertation). In any case, if books or articles that you need are not available in our library, please get in touch with the College librarian. They may be able to help you acquire those materials.

If you are not familiar with how to conduct literature searches using academic search portals such as PsycINFO (not just Google Scholar!), please approach the librarian for a training session as soon as possible.

Final examination

There is no final examination for this class. Instead, there will be an online quiz in Week 13.

College policy on late assignment:

Your assignment will be considered late if it misses the deadline without a VR note or Medical Certificate from a physician. For every late assignment, your grade will go down by 3 percentage points (or 1/3 of a letter grade) per 24-hour block past the deadline. As such, please manage your time wisely.

Please note the following from the Academic Regulations (p.19): “Students are expected to plan and manage their workloads, and to ensure they do not lose work through IT malfunction. Students are expected to submit work on or before the deadlines specified in the syllabi or as advised in class. Faculty members may penalise students for work submitted after a deadline in accord with their policy, which will be clearly stated on the course syllabus.”

College policy on attendance:

Academic Regulations on Absence (Page 19):

1. Students are expected to attend all classes. Students must request the permission of the faculty member to be absent from classes.
2. Students are generally entitled to miss one class meeting of a course for the purposes of required fieldwork for another course. Students must nevertheless still request and agree this absence with the faculty member teaching the course they will be absent from.
3. Permission to be absent from class for reason of extra-curricular activities is not automatic and is at the discretion of the faculty member.
4. Faculty members may penalise students for unauthorized absence.
5. Penalties for both authorised and unauthorised absence will normally be on a sliding scale of severity.

College policy on academic integrity:

Yale-NUS College expects its students to abide by the highest standards of academic integrity as a matter of personal honesty and communal responsibility. Acting with academic integrity requires that (a) students do their own work, (b) students not interfere with the work of others, (c) students accurately and honestly represent the content of their work, and (d) students properly attribute others’ work. Violations of the College’s academic integrity standards undermine both the community and the individual growth of students. Accordingly, they will be addressed with the utmost seriousness and sanctions ranging from grade penalties to expulsion. Examples of violations of academic integrity include plagiarism, copying or sharing homework answers, submitting work completed for one course as ‘new’ work for another course, or fabricating or falsifying research data.

For more information please visit the Student Services website, Policies and Procedures section: <https://studentlife.yale-nus.edu.sg/policies/academic-integrity/>

The Yale-NUS Library provides resources on citations and plagiarism here: <http://library.yale-nus.edu.sg/plagiarism/>

2022 Schedule (subject to change)

Assigned readings for each week are found in the e-reserves. Readings marked with an asterisk on the e-reserves page will be presented by students.

Week	Topic	Readings
1 12 Jan	Overview & research methodologies	<p>Bornstein, M. H. (2015). Children's parents. In M. H. Bornstein, T. Leventhal and R. M. Lerner (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Child Psychology and Developmental Science, Vol. 4, Ecological settings and processes</i> (7th ed.) (pp. 55-79). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.</p> <p><u>Please note that I am only assigning a part of this chapter as an essential reading, from pp. 55-79.</u></p> <p>+ Chapter on methodology (TBA)</p>
2 19 Jan	Parenting styles and practices Parenting advice in the mass media	<p>Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting style as context: An integrative model. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 113, 487–496. https://doi.org/10.1037//0033-2909.113.3.487</p> <p>Steinberg, L. (2001). We know some things: Parent-adolescent relationships in retrospect and prospect. <i>Journal of Research on Adolescence</i>, 11(1), 1–19.</p>
3 26 Jan	Cross-cultural differences in parenting styles and practices Description of an ideal Singaporean parent Student-led discussion 1	<p>*Chao, R. K. (2001). Extending research on the consequences of parenting style for Chinese Americans and European Americans. <i>Child Development</i>, 72(6), 1832–1843. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00381</p> <p>Cheung, H. S., & Lim, E. (2021). Revised article. (To be uploaded on Canvas by Hoi Shan after R&R)</p>
4 2 Feb	Lunar New Year – No class Homework: Maternal Behaviour Q-sort: Develop a class criterion sort	<p>Ainsworth, M. D. S., & Marvin, R. S. (1995). On the shaping of attachment theory and research: An interview with Mary D.S. Ainsworth (Fall 1994). <i>Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development</i>, 60(2–3), 3–21.</p>

5 9 Feb	<p>Attachment theory and parental sensitivity - Is attachment theory universal?</p> <p>Maternal Behaviour Q-sort: Analysis and discussion of culturally-sensitive items</p> <p>Student-led discussion 2</p>	<p>*Mesman, J., van IJzendoorn, M. H., & Sagi-Schwartz, A. (2016). Cross-cultural patterns of attachment: Universal and contextual dimensions. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), <i>Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications</i> (3rd ed., pp. 852–877). The Guilford Press.</p> <p>Mesman, J. (2021). Attachment theory's universality claims: Asking different questions. In R. A. Thompson, J. A. Simpson, & L. J. Berlin (Eds.), <i>Attachment: The Fundamental Questions</i> (pp. 245–251). The Guilford Press.</p>
6 16 Feb	<p>The notion of parental warmth, care and concern</p> <p>Student-led discussion 3</p> <p>Mid-term quiz</p>	<p>*Cheah, C. S. L., Li, J., Zhou, N., Yamamoto, Y., & Leung, C. Y. Y. (2015). Understanding Chinese immigrant and European American mothers' expressions of warmth. <i>Developmental Psychology</i>, 51(12), 1802–1811. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039855</p> <p>Stright, A. D., & Yeo, K. L. (2014). Maternal parenting styles, school involvement, and children's school achievement and conduct in Singapore. <i>Journal of Educational Psychology</i>, 106(1), 301–314. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0033821</p>
7 2 Mar	No class	
8 9 Mar	<p>Parental discipline, child abuse & neglect</p> <p>Should physical punishment be banned in Singapore?</p> <p>Student-led discussion 4</p>	<p>Gershoff, E. T. (2002). Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 128(4), 539–579. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.128.4.539</p> <p>* Lansford, J. E., Sharma, C., Malone, P. S., Woodlief, D., Dodge, K. A., Oburu, P. et al. (2014). Corporal punishment, maternal</p>

		<p>warmth, and child adjustment: A longitudinal study in eight countries. <i>Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology</i>, 43(4), 670–685.</p> <p>https://doi.org/10.1080/15374416.2014.893518</p>
9 16 Mar	<p>Fatherhood in cultural context</p> <p>Fatherhood policy discussion</p> <p>Student-led discussion 5</p>	<p>Li, X. (2020). Fathers' involvement in Chinese societies: Increasing presence, uneven progress. <i>Child Development Perspectives</i>, 14(3), 150–156.</p> <p>https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12375</p> <p>*Ang, R. P. (2006). Fathers Do Matter: Evidence from an Asian School-Based Aggressive Sample. <i>American Journal of Family Therapy</i>, 34(1), 79–93.</p> <p>https://doi.org/10.1080/01926180500301485</p>
10 23 Mar	<p>Good enough parents</p> <p>Perfect parents, perfect children</p> <p>Student-led discussion 6</p>	<p>Scarr, S. (1992). Developmental theories for the 1990s: Development and individual differences. <i>Child Development</i>, 63, 1–19.</p> <p>https://doi.org/10.2307/1130897</p> <p>*Baumrind, D. (1993). The average expectable environment is not good enough: Response. <i>Child Development</i>, 64, 1299–1317. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.1993.tb02954.x</p>
11 30 Mar	<p>Transactional approaches in parenting</p> <p>Student-led discussion 7</p>	<p>Kuczynski, L., Parkin, C. M., & Pitman, T. (2015). Socialization as dynamic process. A dialectical, transactional perspective. In J. E. Grusec and P. D. Hastings (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Socialization. Theory and Research</i> (2nd ed., pp. 135-157). New York: The Guilford Press.</p> <p>*Lee, E. H., Zhou, Q., Eisenberg, N., & Wang, Y. (2013). Bidirectional relations between temperament and parenting styles in Chinese children. <i>International Journal of Behavioral Development</i>, 37(1), 57–67.</p>

		https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025412460795
12 6 Apr	Are parents important at all? Student-led discussion 8 Course review	Harris, J. R. (1995). Where is the child's environment? A group socialization theory of development. <i>Psychological Review</i> , 102(3), 458–489. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.102.3.458 *Ellis, W. E., & Zarbatany, L. (2007). Peer group status as a moderator of group influence on children's deviant, aggressive, and prosocial behavior. <i>Child Development</i> , 78(4), 1240–1254. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2007.01063.x
13 13 Apr	Final quiz	