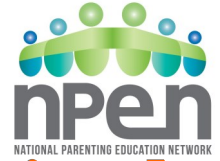




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## Research Update for Professionals: Positive and Negative Perfectionism

By: Hopkins, E., Bates, E., Farnsworth, M., & Stolz, H. E.

### Selected Research Article:

Greblo, Z., & Bratko, D. (2014). Parents' perfectionism and its relation to child rearing behaviors. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, *55*, 180-185. doi: 10.1111/sjop.12116

### What were they trying to find out?

- The main goal of this study was to investigate the relationship between parents' positive and negative perfectionism and their parenting behaviors.
- Positive perfectionism involves finding satisfaction in striving for excellence, but recognizing and accepting personal limitations in achieving high standards.
- Negative perfectionism sets unrealistically high standards, does not accept personal limitations, and is never satisfied with one's own performance.

### What did they do?

- 786 parents of Croatian high school students completed surveys that assessed acceptance, negative discipline (e.g., criticism), permissiveness, and positive and negative perfectionism.

### What did they find?

- Mothers' and fathers' positive and negative perfectionism were found to be related to adolescents' reports of parental acceptance, and criticism.
- Compared to mothers, fathers' negative perfectionism was more strongly related to self-perceived permissiveness.
- Positive perfectionism was positively related to self-reported parental acceptance, while negative perfectionism was negatively related to self-reported parental acceptance.
- Parents with higher levels of positive perfectionism are more prone to show their children unconditional love and acceptance.
- Parents with higher levels of negative perfectionism more frequently report using harsh criticism in order to discipline (or punish) their children when they fail to meet parental expectations.

### What does it mean for parenting educators?

- Parents' perfectionism appears to play a role in shaping parenting behaviors. Parental positive perfectionism is beneficial to adolescents and young adults, but negative perfectionism is detrimental. Parent educators can help shape parents' perfectionistic tendencies into positive forms of perfectionism.

What topic would you like to see featured in the next C4P research update? Email your ideas to: [center4parenting@utk.edu](mailto:center4parenting@utk.edu)

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