

Contrasting Cultural Views

(The contrasting views represent tendencies of groups, not predicted views of individuals)

Individualistic Tendencies

Developmental Goal: Independence

Collectivistic Tendencies

Developmental Goal: Interdependence

FEEDING

<p>Adults encourage children to feed themselves from infancy on and give them a certain amount of choice about what to eat and how much.</p> <p>Independence is the goal, which is the reason adults teach self-help skills and allow personal choice.</p>	<p>Adults feed babies and don't push them to feed themselves, encouraging children to accept help. Obedience is emphasized over individual choice – the goal is interdependence. Helping others is modeled. When self-help skills are encouraged, they derive from the desire to make the feeding process (or the dressing process) smoother for everybody involved, thereby promoting group harmony.</p>
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SLEEPING

<p>Adults expect children to go to sleep on their own and stay in their own crib, cot, or bed. They offer an object to help them if they have trouble (a cuddly toy or special "blankie").</p>	<p>Adults don't expect children to put themselves to sleep or sleep alone. Children go to sleep by being in bodily contact with someone, a parent, grandparent, caregiver, or sibling.</p>
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TOILETING

<p>Toilet <i>learning</i> starts when the child shows signs of physical, intellectual, and emotional readiness by indicating he or she needs to use the potty, getting to the potty without help, pulling down pants, etc. The goal is independence and self-care in toileting.</p>	<p>Toilet <i>training</i> requires the adult to anticipate when the child needs to use the potty. The child's body can become conditioned to use the potty during the first year of life with the help of an empathetic and patient adult. Close physical proximity and a sensitivity to the baby helps adults know when to take the infant to the toilet.</p>
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SEPARATION

<p>Although adults may experience difficulty in separating, they expect that children can learn to separate at an early age and that new attachments to caregivers can readily occur.</p>	<p>Adults have difficulty separating and they don't perceive the ability to separate early in life as an important developmental goal. Care outside of the extended family may be emotionally difficult for the parents and the child.</p>
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LEARNING AND PLAY

Learning is child centered and involves play, exploration, and individual choice.	Learning is adult directed and depends more on observation than play, exploration, and child choice.
Playing with objects and materials is a good way to learn about the physical world as well as about personal possessions. Children must first choose whether to understand themselves as possessors of objects before they can learn to share them. They are often allowed to share.	Objects are less important than relationships. Objects used in play are seen as a means of helping social interactions or teaching children to share. Sharing is stressed from the beginning of life and little emphasis is place on personal ownership. Sharing is not a choice.
Play is enjoyed between adults and children.	Play most often occurs among siblings, cousins, or other children.

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Language development is emphasized through encouraging verbal skills. Adults initiate conversation with children and ask questions. They describe what children do and elaborate on what children say.	Much communication is nonverbal. Unspoken communication is valued and children learn language through observation and modeling, by being on the edge of adult conversations but not entering them, and from siblings.
Adults model honest and direct communication and encourage children’s self-expression. Adults acknowledge children’s feelings and give them words to express them.	Adults model indirect communication because it leaves room for “face saving.” They teach children that respect for elders is more important than individual self-expression. Social harmony is more important than expression of individual feelings.