CHAPTER 1

Parenting Science and Emotion Regulation: Principles, Effects, Determinants, and Supports

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1.1 Parenting Science

Parenting is a vital status in the life course with consequences for parents themselves, but parenting is also a job whose primary object of attention and action is the child. Human children do not and cannot grow up as solitary individuals. Parenting exerts direct effects on offspring through genetic endowment as well as the experiences parents afford their offspring. Those experiences are instantiated in parents' cognitions and practices. Parenting also exerts indirect influences on offspring through parents' relationships with each other and their connections to community and culture. Parenting is fundamental to the survival and success of the human species. Everyone who has ever lived has had parents, and the vast majority of adults in the world become parents. Indeed, each day approximately three quarters of a million adults around the world experience the joys and rewards as well as the challenges and heartaches of becoming a new parent. Emotions constitute an essential constituent of parenting (Dix, 1991; Rutherford et al., 2015). A flourishing science of parenting is enjoying special popularity today in the academy and in popular culture. In consequence, a surprising amount of solid science (contra untethered opinion) is accumulating about parenting and associated emotions and emotion regulation.

Emotions and emotion regulation are vital to parenting, and this chapter assesses central features of parenting through the lens of emotions and emotion regulation. In doing so, the chapter pursues the following course. Substantive topics include principles of parenting and emotion regulation, parenting effects in emotion regulation, determinants of emotion regulation in parents (and children), and supports for parent and child emotion regulation. First, however, the chapter deconstructs relations between emotions and emotion regulation in parenting. Reasons of

space constrain a full accounting of parenting, and emotions and emotion regulation in parenting, and so the following exposition is illustrative rather than exhaustive (see Bornstein, 2015, 2016, 2019a, for more detailed and comprehensive treatments).

1.2 Emotions and Emotion Regulation in Parenting

The intersection of parenting science and emotions encompasses parents' emotionality, emotional expressiveness, emotion regulation, and emotion socialization that mold affective family patterns vital to children's wholesome development. Emotions and emotion regulation in family life manifest in three ways: first in parents' own emotions and emotion regulation as adults, second in parents' emotions and emotion regulation in their parenting, and third in parents' parenting children's emotions and emotion regulation. These three topics guide the informational structure of this chapter. As to the first, for example, positive emotions buoy well-being and are associated with adjustment, serenity, meaningfulness, and satisfaction, whereas negative emotions undermine well-being and are associated with anxiety, stress, frustration, and anger (Leerkes et al., 2015; Schiffrin et al., 2010). As to the second, for example, people may become parents because of the expectation that parenting will be emotionally rewarding (Langdridge et al., 2005), and parental global emotion regulation is associated with adaptive parenting (Crandall et al., 2015; Shaffer & Obradović, 2017). As to the third, children reared by parents with good emotion regulation skills are better able to cope with their own emotions, develop more secure attachments, and fare better in many domains of development (Buckholdt et al., 2014; Han et al., 2015; Sarıtaş et al., 2013).

These three main issues – parenting, emotion regulation, and emotion regulation in children – are related to one another. The barebones version of a "standard model" of mediation in parenting science asserts that parenting cognitions generate, prompt, or direct parenting practices that ultimately affect child development (Figure 1.1; Bornstein et al., 2017). A modified standard model as applied to emotion regulation in parenting would contend that parenting emotion regulation generates parenting

Figure 1.1 Generic mediation model of parenting

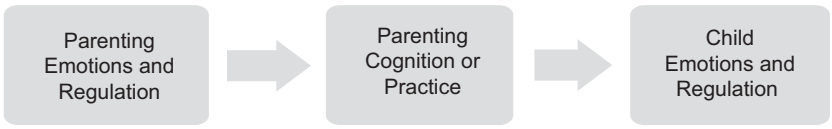

Figure 1.2 Parenting and emotions mediation

cognitions/practices which in turn influence child emotional regulation (Figure 1.2; Bariola et al., 2011; Crandall et al., 2015; Peris & Miklowitz, 2015; Rueger et al., 2011).

Pairwise components of this mediational model involving parenting, parenting emotion regulation, and emotion regulation in children have been submitted to cumulative meta-analyses. Zimmer-Gembeck et al. (2022) reviewed 53 studies published between 2000 and 2020 to quantify associations of parents' emotion regulation skills (e.g. ability to regulate negative mood or rely on cognitive reappraisal to regulate emotions) with positive and negative parenting practices (e.g. warmth versus hostility) and children's emotion regulation skills (e.g. difficulties with emotion regulation, internalizing symptoms, and externalizing behaviors). Several pertinent results emerged between parents' emotion regulation skills and their parenting practices. First, parents with more emotion regulation skills express more positive parenting practices. Second, parents with more emotion regulation skills express fewer negative parenting practices. Third, parents with more emotion regulation difficulties express fewer positive parenting practices. Fourth, parents with more emotion regulation difficulties express more negative parenting practices. In brief, parents with better emotion regulation skills or fewer difficulties express more positive parenting practices. Likewise, several pertinent results emerged between parents' emotion regulation skills and their children's adjustment. First, parents with more emotion regulation skills have children with fewer internalizing symptoms. Second, parents with more emotion regulation skills have children with more emotion regulation skills. Third, parents with more emotion regulation difficulties have children with more internalizing symptoms. Fourth, parents with more emotion regulation difficulties have children with more externalizing behaviors. Fifth, parents with more emotion regulation difficulties have children with poorer emotion regulation skills. In brief, parents who report more emotion regulation skills have children with more emotion regulation skills, fewer conduct problems, more prosocial behaviors with peers, and fewer internalizing symptoms.

Notably, this meta-analysis supports several significant associations among constituents of the mediation model, but many were small in effect size and not all possible associations were found (e.g. no significant associations emerged between parents' emotion regulation skills with children's externalizing behaviors). Furthermore, only cross-sectional correlations were meta-analyzed (i.e. parents' influence on and socialization of their children is assumed when children could promote parents' emotions and emotion regulation).

In practice, a more realistic picture of mediation in parenting and emotions would be complexified by several factors:

1. Likely valid mediation is a multi-step process so that child emotions/behavior → parent physiology/cognition → parent emotion → parent emotion regulation → parent cognition and/or practice → child emotion regulation or adjustment.
2. Associations between parental beliefs and behaviors have generated a mixed literature (Cote & Bornstein, 2000; Okagaki & Bingham, 2005): less evidence exists for relations between very general beliefs and behaviors, and stronger associations have been documented between conceptually corresponding specific beliefs and specific behaviors (Huang et al., 2005).
3. Individual differences in parenting are pervasive. Variation in mothers' subjective emotions across occasions (sampled throughout several days) predict motivation to engage or disengage with their infants as well as actual engagement or disengagement (Hajal et al., 2019).
4. Moderators may change the relation between elements in the mediation chain in so-called moderated mediation (Figure 1.3). Of a raft of potential moderators in Zimmer-Gembeck et al. (2022), measurement,

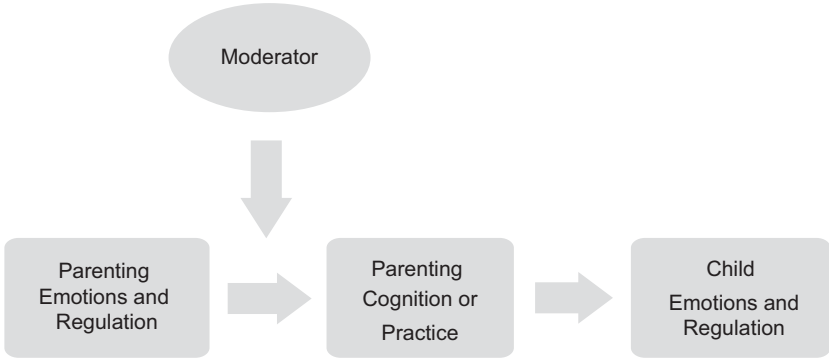

Figure 1.3 Moderated mediation in parenting and emotions

child age, and participant risk status moderated effect sizes of associations of parents' emotions with their positive or negative parenting and children's emotions.

1.3 Principles of Parenting and Emotion Regulation

Parenting is instantiated in a plethora of cognitions and practices. Despite this diversity, classical authorities, including psychoanalysts, personality theorists, ethologists, and attachment theorists, historically conceptualized caregiving as trait-like and unidimensional, often denoted as "good," "sensitive," or the like (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Brody & Axelrad, 1978; Mahler et al., 1975; Winnicott, 1948/1975). Alternatively, child-rearing (including emotions and emotion regulation) reflects multiple constituents and interactions of parent, child, and context, and parents naturally hold a range of diverse emotion regulation cognitions and engage in a range of diverse emotion regulation practices and so do not only or necessarily believe or behave in uniform trait-like ways. Rather than employing a uniform style, parents flexibly change in parenting cognitions and practices as children age and with children of different temperaments, vary their approaches to emotion regulation depending on children's happy or sad or angry demeanor, and differ in their emotion regulation responses to varying situational constraints such as whether they are in public or in private. On this view, the contents of parent–child emotion regulation cognitions and practices are dynamic and varied (Bornstein, 2002, 2006). In essence, parenting generally, and emotions and emotion regulation in parenting particularly, are multidimensional, modular, and specific. This perspective has two significant implications: first, it supports identification and empirical focus on independent emotions and emotion regulation cognitions and practices, and second, it implies that specific emotion and emotion regulation parenting cognitions and practices link to the expression of specific domains of children's emotion regulation (see Section 1.4).

1.3.1 Parenting Cognitions and Emotion Regulation

Multidimensional, modular, and specific parenting cognitions may be classified by functions, types, and substantive topics. First, parenting cognitions serve many functions: They affect parents' sense of self, help to organize parenting, and mediate the effectiveness of parenting. With respect to emotion regulation, cognitions contribute to how and how much time, effort, and energy parents expend in emotion regulation for themselves and their children and help to form the framework in which

parents perceive, interpret, and guide their children's emotion regulation. Next, parenting cognitions come in a wide variety of types, prominently goals, attitudes, expectations, perceptions, attributions, and actual knowledge of child-rearing and child development, all of which have instantiations in emotion regulation. For example, some parents' goals for their own parenting and for their children may be universal; after all parents everywhere presumably want physical health, academic achievement, social adjustment, economic security, as well as mature and stable emotion regulation for their children (however those goals are instantiated in different cultures, discussed later). African American, Dominican immigrant, and Mexican immigrant mothers in the United States all deem a common set of emotion regulation qualities (e.g. proper demeanor) desirable in young children (Ng et al., 2012). Other goals may be unique to specific groups. For example, some societies stress the development of emotion regulation through independence, self-reliance, and individual achievement in children, whereas other societies emphasize deriving emotion regulation through interdependence, cooperation, and collaboration in the group or society (Chen, 2023). Last, substantive topics in parenting cognitions include cognitions about parenthood generally, about parents' own parenting, about childhood generally, and about parents' own child(ren). All can refer to emotions and emotion regulation.

1.3.2 Parenting Practices and Emotion Regulation

Parents' practices constitute the largest measure of children's worldly experience. Like cognitions, parenting practices are multidimensional, modular, and specific, and parenting practices themselves may be classified into types, characteristics, and functions. First, a common core of types of parenting practices includes nurturant, physical, social, didactic, language, and material (Bornstein, 2015, 2019a; for other componential systems, see Bradley & Caldwell, 1995; Skinner et al., 2005). For example, language use in parenting is fundamental to child development and to the parent–child bond, and language is a principal mechanism used by parents to help regulate their children's emotions (Morris et al., 2017); language also helps children regulate their own emotions (Cole et al., 2010; Day & Smith, 2013). Second, prominent characteristics of parenting practices include differentiating obligatory versus discretionary, active versus passive forms of interaction, and the prominence of different parenting practices. Last, there is initial asymmetry in parent and child contributions to emotion regulation practices in that responsibility for emotion regulation early in development appears to lie unambiguously with parents, but children play more anticipatory roles as they develop. Functions of parenting practices are elaborated in Section 1.4.

1.3.3 Emotion Regulation Cognitions and Practices: Common Features

Meaningful parenting cognitions and practices meet several psychometric criteria. One has to do with variation. Parents vary in terms of how they express cognitions, how often and long they engage in practices, and how they interpret and invest meaning in both (Calkins, 1994; Diaz & Eisenberg, 2015). For example, considerable individual variability characterizes developmental trajectories of emotion regulation in children across the ages of 4–7 years (Blandon et al., 2008). A second psychometric criterion has to do with developmental stability (consistency in individual parents over time) and a third with continuity (consistency in group mean level over time; Bornstein et al., 2017). For example, the development of emotion regulation is dynamic on three levels: rapid changes in spatial and temporal dynamics across multimodal systems underlying emotion regulation, slowly emerging changes in emotion regulation over periods of time and development, and changes in emotion regulation across contexts (Dennis-Tiwary, 2019). A fourth psychometric characteristic of parenting concerns covariation among parenting cognitions and among parenting practices. Particular cognitions and particular practices are free to vary with different children, at different times, in different situations, and so forth (Bornstein, 2015).

1.4 Parenting Effects in Emotion Regulation

Parenting has twofold significance: parenting is a salient phase of adult life, and parenting is an instrumental activity with respect to offspring. In brief, parenting is for parents, and parenting is for children. In consequence, effects of parenting on children and child development constitute critical desiderata. Here the distinction between direct and indirect effects of parenting is meaningful as are several operational principles in parenting effects, notably specificity, timing, thematicity, moderation, meaning, transaction, and attunement. Each is addressed briefly with examples from emotions and emotion regulation.

1.4.1 Direct and Indirect Effects of Parenting and Emotion Regulation

Direct influences of parent cognitions and practices reflect, for example, scaffolding, conditioning, reinforcement, and modeling; indirect effects include, for example, opportunity structures parents provide (Bornstein, 2013a) and relationships parents or family members have with one another that spill over to children (McHale & Sirotkin, 2019). The validity of parenting effects is supported with correlational and experimental evidence. Children reared by parents with good emotion regulation skills

regulate their own emotions better (Leerkes et al., 2017), and parents' positive emotional expressions toward their children relate to children's later more positive peer relationships (Paley et al., 2000). Several pathways by which parenting-related emotions and their regulation likely shape child development have been hypothesized (Leerkes & Augustine, 2019). First, parenting-related emotions and regulation could relate to children's emotions or emotion regulation through synchronization of mutual biological rhythms (Feldman, 2007; Moore, 2009). Second, as spelled out in the mediation model, parenting-related emotions and regulation could link to child outcomes through parenting cognitions or practices. Well-regulated or child-oriented parent emotions could engender more positive parenting, which in turn shapes adaptive emotions and emotion regulation in children. Third, as spelled out in the moderated-mediation model, different parenting-related emotion or regulation skills could alter how parenting practices relate to child emotions and emotion regulation (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Grusec & Goodnow, 1994). Parenting practices embedded in positive, contra negative, parental emotions render children more open to parental socialization.

Most studies of parent–child relationships have employed correlational designs: put simply, in such study designs parents who do more (or less) of something (emotion regulation) have children who do more (or less) of a related something (emotion regulation). For example, mother–child interactions involving positive emotions correlate with greater effortful control and compliance to parental requests (Kochanska & Aksan, 1995), greater social competence (Denham et al., 1997), and fewer behavior problems (McCoy & Raver, 2011) in children. However, the sizes and directions of zero-order correlations between parent cognitions or practices and child characteristics vary depending on which parent and child variables are measured (echoing the cognition-practice issue), the way the two are measured, the length of time between parent predictive and child outcome measurements, what kind of analyses are conducted, which types of children or families living in which circumstances are studied, and whether potential confounders are controlled (Bornstein, 2013b). It may be true that parents influence children, but correlation does not prove causation, the arrows of influence in a simple association may run in either or both directions (viz., that parents influence children and children influence parents), and associations between parents' child-rearing practices and child characteristics could arise from shared third familial (parents and their children share genes) or extrafamilial factors (parents and their children share ethnic group or socioeconomic status membership). To obviate these critiques of parenting effects as mere epiphenomena, some more determinative correlational designs have included biological-adoptive comparisons (which separate the effects of environment and genetics, discussed later).

Experimental designs attempt to confirm causal relations between parenting and child development. Experiments in which parents are assigned randomly to treatment versus control groups with resulting changes in the beliefs or behaviors (e.g. emotion regulation) of the parents (and their otherwise untreated children) in the treatment relative to the control group make stronger statements about parenting effects. This literature in emotion regulation boasts natural, designed, and intervention experiments. Studies of children whose genetics differ from those of their parents provide naturally occurring means of evaluating the impacts of parenting experiences vis-à-vis hereditary endowment on child development. In adoption experiments, one group of children might share genes and environment with biological parents, another genes but not environment with biological parents, and still another environment but not genes with adoptive parents (Asbury et al., 2003; Muller et al., 2013). Designed experiments that randomly assign human families to treatment versus control groups and intervene with the parents but do not simultaneously treat the children have shown that, when the treatment alters parental practices toward children in specified ways, children change correspondingly (Weisman et al., 2012). Finally, interventions with parents have two interpretations. Interventions are practical guides to improve parenting clinically and to inform more effective policy (see Section 1.6). However, intervention trials are also readily interpreted as experimental manipulations that test parenting effects (Bornstein et al., 2022a; Lunkenheimer et al., 2008).

1.4.2 Specificity, Timing, Thematicity, Moderation, Meaning, Transaction, and Attunement

A common assumption in parenting study is that the overall level of parenting (involvement, stimulation, what have you) affects the child's overall level of development. By contrast, increasing evidence suggests that more sophisticated and differentiated processes govern parenting effects. The specificity principle states that specific cognitions and practices on the part of specific parents at specific times exert specific effects in specific children in specific ways (Bornstein, 2002, 2015, 2019b). For example, mothers' emotional happiness during interactions with their children predicts fewer behavior problems in children over time but only in children already low in behavior problems (Denham et al., 2000). Parents' self-reported expressions of negative emotions are associated with their preschoolers' use of more maladaptive emotion regulation behaviors, higher negative emotionality, and higher externalizing symptoms, but are unrelated to a physiological measure of children's adaptive

emotion regulation or observed measures of children's emotion knowledge (Hu et al., 2017; Nelson et al., 2012; Wu et al., 2017), and meta-analysis of studies focused on parents' negative emotional expressions found that sadness and crying, but not anger and hostility, are associated with deficits in emotion understanding particularly among adolescents and young adults (Halberstadt & Eaton, 2002). Of course, specificity also obtains in the first phases of mediation: parent-oriented anger may promote parent–child conflict, whereas parent-oriented sadness may promote parental withdrawal from the child (Dix et al., 2004). In brief, to detect regular relations between antecedents in parenting on the one hand and outcomes in child characteristics on the other calls for specificity in the combinations of independent and dependent variables.

Related to specificity and a key consideration in parenting effects is timing. A contemporary effects model spotlights the part played by experiences that occur only at a specific time in the life cycle. For example, some early experiences are thought to persist despite later experiences, and some later experiences are thought to replace effects of earlier experiences. Still other developmental effects reflect consistency in experiences that recur. A cumulative effects model asserts that meaningful enduring effects are structured by experiences that repeat or aggregate. Related to such cumulative effects, the same parenting effect may be conveyed consistently in different contexts via different channels. Through such thematicity, seemingly diverse parenting messages work in concert. For example, mothers and fathers may model a given emotion, teach children about that emotion, and place children in contexts that elicit that same emotion (Coltrane, 2000; Schuette & Killen, 2009). In brief, a given experience (say an emotion) may exert an effect on development early or late in life or it may need to persist to be meaningful and lasting.

Further related to specificity and as demonstrated in moderated mediation, parenting effects may be moderated by multiple factors. For example, mothers exhibit more supportive parenting behaviors in interactions with their children when they experience relatively higher levels of positive emotions and lower levels of negative emotions (Dix et al., 2004). Maternal emotional stability is strongly associated with overprotective parenting with shier children (Coplan et al., 2009). Higher levels of paternal emotional stability are associated with more positive parenting when adolescents are high in emotional stability (Prinzie et al., 2012).

The same parenting cognition or practice can have the same or different meaning, just as different parenting cognitions or practices can have the same or different meanings (Bornstein, 1995, 2013b; Lau et al., 2006). For example, the same discrete emotion can mean different things depending on the nature of the underlying concern (Dix et al., 2004). In turn, meaning can moderate linkages between emotions and behaviors. In an

example in Leerkes and Augustine (2019), a parent might be angry with a child for acting out and so provoke discipline, or a parent might be angry in the interests of a child and so evoke comforting. Likewise, a parent's intensifying positive emotions to continue engaging positively with a child may be adaptive, whereas a parent's intensifying positive emotions to eschew a developing problem with a child may be maladaptive (Martini & Busseri, 2012).

It is easy to assume that parents are responsible for child development, and in many ways they are (Vygotsky, 1978); however, it is also the case that children elicit as well as interpret parenting (Bell, 1968). Children influence which experiences they are exposed to, and they appraise those experiences and so (in some degree) determine how their experiences affect them (Lansford et al., 2011). On elicitation, a parent's displaying sensitivity in response to a child's emotional signals provides external regulation and supports development of the child's emotion regulation skills (Bernier et al., 2010; Ispa et al., 2017). On interpretation, a given child may feel frightened by a parent's emotional outburst, which over time undermines the child's confidence in that parent's capacity to keep the child safe (Lyons-Ruth & Jacobvitz, 2016). Together, parent and child effects lead to transactions which acknowledge that characteristics of the individual shape their experiences, whereas, reciprocally, experiences shape characteristics of the individual through time (Bornstein, 2009; Lerner, 2018). Child effects on parent are in play and coexist with parent effects on child.

Attunement expresses the dynamic mutual adaptation of partners in a dyad. Attunement is a multilevel phenomenon with correspondences in hormones, the autonomic and central nervous systems, as well as in affective, cognitive, and behavioral domains (Bornstein, 2013c). For example, positive emotional expressiveness in parents correlates robustly with positive emotional expressiveness in children (Halberstadt & Eaton, 2002), and correspondingly maternal negative affect co-occurs with child negative affect (attunement in which attachment insecurity is associated with toddlers' elevated externalizing symptoms; Lindsey & Caldera, 2015; Martin et al., 2011). Notably, emotional attunement has consequences of its own. For example, shared emotions are linked with mothers' and adolescents' perceptions of better relationship quality (Lougheed & Hollenstein, 2016).

1.5 Determinants of Emotion Regulation in Parents (and Children)

With parenting effects so demonstratively significant for child development generally, and emotion regulation in parents and children

specifically, it is important to ask what factors contribute to emotions and emotion regulation in parenting. To fully understand and appreciate parenting and its effects it is desirable to evaluate the many determinants that shape it. Consistent with a relational developmental systems bioecological orientation (Lerner, 2018), the vast potential array of causes can be grouped in three domains: the parent, the child, and the context. Not all constituents of each domain can be discussed, of course, but a representative sampling will suffice to convey that the origins of individual variation in caregiving emotion cognitions or practices are complex and multiply determined.

1.5.1 Parent

Parenting blends intuition and tuition, the biological and the psychological. Certain characteristics of parenting may be wired into our biological makeup (Broderick & Neiderhiser, 2019; Feldman, 2019; Stark et al., 2019). For example, positive emotionality is influenced by genetics (Avinun & Knafo, 2014; Broderick & Neiderhiser, 2019; Klahr & Burt, 2014), and more responsive/sensitive parents demonstrate distinct patterns of emotion-related hormonal and neural activation (Feldman, 2019; Rutherford et al., 2015; Stark et al., 2019). Additionally, human beings appear to possess some intuitive knowledge about parenting (Papoušek & Papoušek, 2002). Other sociodemographic characteristics of parents likewise shape emotion regulation. For example, the age of the parent is a factor: on the one hand, delayed parenthood is associated with emotional benefits, as parents who are relatively older report relatively greater well-being (Luhmann et al., 2012); feeling more competent and less stressed, depressed, and lonely (Cowan & Cowan, 1992; Frankel & Wise, 1982; Garrison et al., 1997; Mirowsky & Ross, 2002); and experience fewer negatives in parenting (particularly negative emotions, financial strain, and tense partner relationships). On the other hand, adolescent mothers are more likely to parent in poverty, parent solo, have lower educational attainment, and lack resources compared to adult mothers (Easterbrooks et al., 2019). These risk factors increase the likelihood of parenting difficulties that can lead to compromised developmental outcomes in children, including difficulties in emotional regulation (Hans & Thullen, 2009; Lengua et al., 2007; Schatz et al., 2008). Gender is another instrumental sociodemographic factor. Stereotypically, femininity is characterized by emotionality and nurturance, whereas masculinity is characterized by independence and aggressiveness (Eagly et al., 2000). Maternal emotional stability is linked to more positive, responsive, and sensitive parenting of infants relative to paternal emotional stability (Kochanska et al., 2004). Yet, emotionally stable mothers and fathers alike are more

affectively positive and sensitive with their infants (Belsky et al., 1995). Parity is a third sociodemographic factor. Primiparous mothers demonstrate elevated general worry and cortisol response, reflecting stress reactivity, during interactions with their toddlers relative to multiparous mothers (Kalomiris & Kiel, 2016).

Perceptual and cognitive processes also play central roles in the activation of parenting-related emotions. Mothers' accurate cue detection and feelings of efficacy are associated with greater sensitivity in response to infant distress especially among mothers who also report high empathy (Leerkes et al., 2004). Parents who lack awareness of their emotions or struggle to regulate their emotions likely find it difficult to prioritize child-oriented goals in the moment and to engage in effortful behaviors that are well matched to their parenting goals. Poorly regulated emotions also may bias how parents appraise their child's behaviors or their own parent–child interactions. In this connection, parents' own developmental history, particularly the nature of parenting they experienced in childhood and so formulated their internal working model of relationships, relates to many forms of parenting-related emotions. For example, mothers' secure attachment representations predict greater parenting-related joy and pleasure with toddlers (Slade et al., 1999) as well as empathy with infants and school-age children (Leerkes et al., 2015; Stern et al., 2015); insecure representations predict observed angry/intrusive parenting with toddlers (Adam et al., 2004), presumably reflecting parent-oriented negative affect; and parents high in attachment avoidance report lower levels of positive emotions during caregiving compared to their other daily activities (Nelson-Coffey et al., 2017). Generally, negative experiences in parents' family of origin consistently predict parents' negative parent-oriented affect and poorer emotion regulation during emotionally evocative parent–child interactions. Mothers with a history of family abuse or violence display greater hostility during interactions with their 4- to 6-year-olds (Bailey et al., 2012).

Among all personological factors potentially associated with emotional regulation in parents and children, personality may enjoy the longest history and most robust relations. Theorizing in this domain derives from psychoanalytic scholars who originally focused on pathological aspects of parental character and the ways in which they might contribute to child psychopathology (Freud, 1955/1970; Spitz, 1965/1970; Winnicott, 1948/1975) on the hypothesis that, if parents' emotional needs had not been met during their own childhoods, their unmet needs would be reflected in parents' own problematic parenting (Cohler & Paul, 2019).

Psychologically, emotion regulation is affected by several characteristics, personality and mental functions prominent among them. Emotion is central to personality, and specifically the Big Five personality factors

(Caspi & Shiner, 2006), which traditionally include extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience, relate to emotion regulation in parents and have multiple implications for child development. On the positive emotional side, extraversion qua positive affectivity is associated with emotionally engaged, responsive, sensitive, and stimulating parenting. Israeli men scoring high on extraversion manifest more positive affect and are more involved in father-child play and teaching when interacting with their 9-month-olds than men scoring low on extraversion (Levy-Shiff & Israelashvilli, 1988). Agreeableness reflects an individual's motives to maintain positive social relationships and is related to the regulation of emotions during social interactions (Tobin et al., 2000). More agreeable parents are less likely to attribute negative intentions to their young children when they misbehave (Bugental & Corpuz, 2019). On the negative emotional side, neuroticism, which is characterized by heightened negative affect and mood disorders, such as depression, predicts low parental sensitivity and warmth and high discipline and (even) child maltreatment (Dix & Moed, 2019; Prinzie et al., 2019). Parents high in neuroticism tend to be reactive to emotional stress and easily emotionally distressed, prone to experience irritability and hostility (Caspi et al., 2005; Goldberg, 1993), provide lower levels of support to their children, and lack organization, consistency, and predictability. For example, parents' high neuroticism is associated with more negative emotional interactions and lower sensitivity to toddlers (Belsky et al., 1995). Depression consistently relates to less-positive emotional quality in parent–child interactions (Lovejoy et al., 2000).

Emotional stability is a pervasive personality characteristic with a double-barreled meaning. Emotional stability is linked to positive maternal affect with children (Kochanska et al., 2003). More emotionally stable parents are less prone to frustration, distress, irritation, and anger, which often result in harsh discipline, and approach children in ways that are less likely to initiate or escalate conflictual interactions. More emotionally stable parents are more sensitive, provide more structure, and are more inclined to support their children's striving toward autonomy than less emotionally stable parents (Ellenbogen & Hodgins, 2004; Mangelsdorf et al., 2000; McCabe, 2014). More emotionally stable mothers follow their baby's signals in ways that facilitate the baby's self-regulation (Fish & Stifter, 1993).

Emotional instability, by contrast, is associated with unpredictable, inconsistent parenting. Emotionally unstable parents attribute negative intentions to their children when they misbehave, which can engender harsh parenting (Bornstein et al., 2011), and they distance themselves from their children, thereby failing to provide structure and guidance (Belsky & Jaffee, 2006; Clark et al., 2000). Negative emotionality tends to

undermine parents' ability to initiate and maintain positive affective, sensitive, and supportive interactions with their children and limits parents' ability and willingness to respond adequately to their children's signals. In a Dutch sample with 17-month-old boys paternal and maternal emotional instability was associated with lack of structure in parenting (Verhoeven et al., 2007).

The barebones mediation analysis of parenting cognitions → practices → child outcomes was introduced previously and complicating conditions hinted at. One such complication is that emotions mediate the effect of personality on parenting. A longitudinal study revealed that mothers' personality characteristics were associated with their positive emotional expressions, which in turn related to more maternal positive emotionality observed during interactions with toddlers (Smith et al., 2007). With respect to practices, warm parenting gives children the sense that they are respected and loved and strengthens their motivation to obey and cooperate with their parents (Grusec et al., 2000). Meta-analysis reveals a significant association between emotional stability and warmth (McCabe, 2014; Prinzie et al., 2009). Parents who manifest higher levels of emotional stability engage in more warm parenting; however, moderator analyses reveal that the personality-warmth relation varies by parent and child age. The younger the parent and child, the stronger the relation between emotional stability and warmth.

1.5.2 Child

Actual or perceived characteristics of children also contribute to emotions in parents and parenting emotion regulation. Children's characteristics as well as their behaviors regularly elicit positive emotions of pride, joy, and love but also negative emotions of embarrassment, anger, and sadness. For example, parents report positive child-oriented emotions if their children are well regulated and high in positive emotionality (Cole et al., 2013; Kochanska et al., 2004). However, children's misbehavior or crying generates authoritarian parenting, anger, and in some cases mistreatment (Chen et al., 2011; Lorber et al., 2011). Children's own emotion regulation varies with their development, and parents' emotions and emotion regulation can vary with their child's because certain stages of development, such as the "terrible twos" and parent–child conflicts that sometimes accompany adolescence, are emotionally challenging for parents. In infancy, children rely on caregivers for emotion regulation (Bernier et al., 2010; Cole et al., 2004), but toddlers seek increased autonomy and start to develop internal emotion-regulation skills to appropriately modulate the intensity and duration of emotion expressions to function effectively in an environment (Cole et al., 2004; Eisenberg et al.,

2018; Hoffman et al., 2006). Other child characteristics likewise moderate parent and child emotion regulation and the parent–child relationship as, for example, temperament (especially difficulty), disability, and developmental disorders (Kiff et al., 2011). So-called difficult child behaviors (including crying and misbehavior) are linked with parents' reports of negative, parent-oriented emotions and physiological arousal (Del Vecchio et al., 2016; Leerkes et al., 2016; Lorber & O'Leary, 2005).

1.5.3 Context

Finally, both acute event-specific and chronic trait-like contextual characteristics moderate emotion regulation in parenting. Regarding the first, situational parenting-related emotions, such as those experienced while interacting with one's child (e.g. irritation during a discipline encounter), when exposed to parenting-relevant stimuli (e.g. empathy when listening to audio recordings of infant crying), or in response to prior child behavior or parent–child interaction (e.g. embarrassment when reflecting on an earlier encounter) shape emotional arousal and regulation (e.g. Nelson et al., 2013; Nelson-Coffey et al., 2017). More generally, parents report more positive emotions throughout the day compared to nonparents (Nelson et al., 2013) and specifically when they spend time with their children compared to their other daily activities (Musick et al., 2016; Nelson et al., 2013; Nelson-Coffey et al., 2017). Relational assets like positive marital relationship experiences and social and material supports can boost parents' positive emotions (putatively by reducing stress and strain; Leerkes & Crockenberg, 2006), in contrast to ecological and life stresses associated with economic, marital, social, and mental health domains, which tend to undermine parental emotional well-being (Newland, 2014). For example, low-socioeconomic status parents likely experience reduced emotional well-being in part due to financial hardship and associated elevated stress. Human beings acquire important knowledge of what it means to parent children through generational, social, and cultural images of parenting, children, and family life, knowledge that plays a significant role in helping people formulate their parenting cognitions and guide their parenting practices. On a larger contextual scale, ethnicities and cultures differ in their acceptability and expression of positive and negative emotions related to emotion socialization goals, and so vary in how and when parents display or encourage emotion regulation (Dunbar et al., 2017).

Overall, the sizes of reported parenting effects reflect the fact that parenting is a complex multivariate system. Parenting effects are also conditional and not absolute (i.e. true for all parents and for all children under all conditions). In probabilistic relational developmental systems

(like that between parent and child), it is unlikely that any single factor accounts for substantial amounts of variation in parenting effects. More complex conceptualizations that incorporate larger numbers of influential variables tend to explain parenting effects better than simpler ones with fewer variables. These considerations also play into the design, implementation, and scaling of parenting supports (Bornstein et al., 2022b).

1.6 Supports for Parent and Child Emotion Regulation

Society at large is witnessing the emergence of striking permutations in parenthood and in constellations of family structures that have plunged the family generally, and parenthood specifically, into a flux of novel emotions (Ganong et al., 2015). Because many society-wide developments exert debilitative influences on parenthood, on parenting, and, consequently, on children and their development, many parents need assistance to identify and implement effective strategies to optimize emotion regulation in child-rearing. Parenting conjures many positive emotions, such as intimacy, nurturance, and rewards, to be embraced and enriched, but parenting is also encumbered with negative emotions, such as frustration, anger, and harshness, to be eschewed and overcome. Upregulation of positive emotions can be promoted through openness to new knowledge, skills, and relationships, and downregulation of negative emotions can be achieved through physiological processes, behavioral strategies, and cognitive reframing (Fredrickson, 2013). Parents are usually the most invested, consistent, and caring people in the lives of their children, so providing parents with knowledge, skills, and supports will help them parent in the emotion realm more positively generally and promote their own and their children's emotion regulation specifically.

It is a sad fact of everyday life that parenting children does not always go well or right. Many parents are overcome with negative emotions and resort to neglect or abuse (Bornstein et al., 2022b). Every year, child-protection agencies in the United States receive 3 million referrals for neglect and abuse involving about 6 million children younger than age 5. About 80% of perpetrators are parents. Meta-analyses confirm that parents' poor emotion regulation contributes to their children's internalizing and externalizing problems, physical injuries, and even death (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2022). However, only a fraction of parents who need support services receive them. Thus, organizations at all levels of society are motivated to intercede in child-rearing and right social ills through preventions, supports, and interventions, known collectively as parenting programs (Bornstein et al., 2022a). Happily, advances in

parenting science have revealed that the determinants and expressions of many parenting cognitions and practices are plastic and educable. Competencies are defined to include knowledge, skills, abilities, personal characteristics, and attitudes; moreover, competencies to adequately perform a task, duty, or role are (usually) learned (Roe, 2002). So, competent emotionally regulated parenting can be learned (even if, alas!, children do not come with an operating manual). Some core ingredients to the syllabus of emotionally regulated parenting include knowledge of how children develop; how to effectively observe children and how to interpret and use what is observed; how to manage children's behaviors; understanding the impact parents have on children; how to take advantage of everyday settings, routines, and activities to create learning and problem-solving opportunities that enhance emotion regulation in parenting and children; and how to be patient, flexible, and goal oriented as well as extract pleasure from encounters with children.

Programs designed for parents come in a variety of venues (psychotherapy, classes, media), settings (homes, schools, clinics, houses of worship), and formats (individual, family, group), and with a variety of goals (some universal, some specific). Some programs succeed, such as the mindfulness-enhanced Strengthening Families Program (Coatsworth et al., 2010), Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-Up (Bick & Dozier, 2013), the Circle of Security (Cassidy et al., 2010), the Video-Feedback Intervention to Promote Positive Parenting (Juffer et al., 2008), Minding the Baby (Slade et al., 2005), and Enhanced Triple P (Sanders et al., 2000) as well as many emotion coaching interventions (Havighurst et al., 2013). Unhappily, however, most programs fail and do so for a wide variety of reasons, often as failures of fidelity on the part of staff to adhere to program specifics and failures of adherence on the part of parents (Bornstein et al., 2022a; Pinquart & Teubert, 2010). By critically deconstructing reasons for failures, it is possible to learn ways that future programs might succeed. Furthermore, no single program fits all parents or problems (Barrera et al., 2011). However, solid and timely guidance on central aspects of designing, implementing, and scaling parenting programs is now available (Bornstein et al., 2022a).

Responsibilities for determining children's best interests, including their all-important emotion regulation, rest first and foremost with parents. Parents are children's primary advocates and the corps available in the greatest numbers to lobby and labor for children. Few ethical or sentient parents want to abrogate their child-rearing responsibilities (Thompson & Baumrind, 2019). Insofar as parents can be enlisted and empowered to provide children with experiences and environments that promote positive emotions and emotional regulation, society can be spared the effort and expense of after-the-fact remediation.

1.7 Conclusions

Successful parenthood ultimately means, among other things, having facilitated a child's mature emotional regulation. To date, however, parenting theory and research in general and in emotion regulation specifically have focused too narrowly on mother and child rather than multiple family system relationships; on selected topics such as attachment to the near exclusion of others such as spirituality; on normative nuclear families when the modern world is populated with a dizzying diversity of family compositions; and on parenting in the minority Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic developed world to the proportionate exclusion of the majority developing world. Parenting is a multilevel phenomenon and will be better understood eventually by integrating evolutionary, genetic, biological, comparative, behavioral, and cultural perspectives.

As judged by psychoanalysis, ethology, psychology, and neuroscience, parents engage in a peculiar kind of life's work: parenting is a nuanced blend of empathy, altruism, and prosociality as well as blind devotion and selflessness, and it is marked by constantly challenging demands, changing and ambiguous criteria, and all-too-frequent evaluations. Direct and indirect effects of parenting, combined with defining its principles, such specificity, timing, thematicity, moderation, meaning, transaction, and attunement render parenting less than straightforward. Parenting also entails both affective constituents (i.e. emotional commitment, empathy, and positive regard for children), and cognitive constituents (i.e. the how, what, and why of caring for children emotionally). Moreover, different child-rearing tasks are more or less salient at different points over the life course. Thus, the path to achieving satisfaction and successes in parenting is not linear, but meandering, and is not immediate and digital, but incremental and analog.

Parenthood is a signal phase of mature adulthood engaged in (if not embraced) by perhaps 80% of people around the globe. Adults in the United States (Aguiar & Hurst, 2007) and elsewhere in the world (Gauthier et al., 2004) spend more time with their children today than parents did in the past. Still, nearly one half of a US national sample of parents regrets that they spend too little time with their children. Parenthood is central to childhood and child development as well as to society's long-term investment in successive generations and society itself. So, we are motivated to know more about the structure and sources as well as the sense and significance of parenthood and parenting as much for all of these reasons as out of the desire to improve the lives of children and the welfare of society.

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