

Martian child

[Life](#), [Childhood](#)



The movie "Martian Child" shows how a man struggles to raise a boy that he has adopted. Throughout this movie David uses two different parenting techniques to try and get Dennis to conform to some of the cultural norms of society. Dennis is not like the average child, he is in great need of developing a lasting relationship. He is in constant fear of people leaving him or not wanting him around. The viewer is able to see how both David and Dennis struggle to build bonds and become a family. At the beginning of the movie "Martian Child" David, the father of the strange boy, used permissive parenting. Permissive parenting is when a parent submits to a child's desires, uses little punishment. For instance, in the beginning of "Martian Child" David told Dennis that the only rule of the house is no sunglasses while inside. This demonstrates how David does not have any set rules that he expects Dennis to follow. David also allows Dennis to eat only Lucky Charms cereal and allows him to wear a weight belt everywhere he goes. Even though eating Luck Charms daily is not part of a good diet David gave in anyway allowing him to consume mostly, if not only, cereal. Permissive parents try to befriend their children and do not want to be viewed as mostly a disciplinary figure. Throughout this movie David demonstrates mostly a permissive parenting style. There is also a short period of time in the movie where David uses authoritative parenting. Authoritative parenting is when a parent is both responsive and demanding. The parent achieves control by setting and carrying out the rules. Authoritative parents also make sure to explain the reasons behind the rules. David illustrates authoritative parenting in the movie when he tells Dennis that he can no longer wear his weight belt and finally upgrades his wardrobe. He explains to Dennis that it

is not acceptable to wear his belt outside of the house and that includes school. During this part of the movie David is both setting a strict rule and explaining the reasoning behind the rule. This is one of the only times during the movie where authoritative parenting is actually used. In the "Martian Child" Dennis begins to form an attachment to David. Attachment occurs when someone forms an emotional tie to another person. When this occurs in children they often experience some type of distress when they are separated from the caregiver. This is shown in the movie when Dennis is dropped off at his second school. David has to reassure Dennis that he will be outside the whole time he is in school. While David is outside in his car waiting for Dennis to get out of school, Dennis goes to the window and watches him making sure that he has not left. This demonstrates how Dennis develops a relationship with David. Dennis is not comfortable being without his caregiver. Another example of this is when Dennis tries to portray himself as "normal" and tells the board at the adoption agency that he is only pretending to be a Martian, even though he believes he is a Martian. This illustrates how he has grown attached to David and is willing to lie in order to maintain their relationship. Throughout this movie we are able to see how David and Dennis form a lasting relationship. "Martian Child" illustrates the struggle a child and father go through in order to build a relationship and become a "traditional" family. This particular family struggles to conform to the norms of society. The viewer is able to see David find the parenting style that is best for both himself and David and is able to build a bond with each other. Dennis is able to finally form a lasting relationship and his behavior becomes more "normal".