

# Do your children push the boundaries? It may be a sign of future leadership abilities study shows

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Children whose parents use a firm parenting style that still allows them to test the rules and learn from it are more likely to assume leadership roles as adults according to a new study published in a recent edition of *The Leadership Quarterly*.

Researchers used data from a long-term Minnesota study of twins. They found that [children](#) raised with an "authoritative" parenting style - where parents set clear limits and expectations while also being supportive of their children - assumed more leadership roles at work and in their communities later in life. While these children were also less likely to engage in serious rule-breaking, children who did engage in serious rule-breaking were less likely to assume leadership roles.

Good parenting may better prepare children for future leadership roles if the children happen to challenge the boundaries set out by their parents. This gives the children an opportunity to learn why the rules are in place and then learn from their parents how to achieve their goals without breaking the rules.

"Some of these early examples of rule-breaking behaviour, more the modest type, don't necessarily produce negative outcomes later in life - that was fairly intriguing," says Maria Rotundo, a professor at the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management. "It doesn't mean all children of authoritative [parents](#) are going to become leaders,

but they are more likely to."

The study adds more weight to the idea that leaders are raised more than they are born. Behavioural genetics has shown that innate factors account for only 30% of who will end up in leadership positions and people's leadership styles.

More information: The complete study is available at:  
[www.rotman.utoronto.ca/newthin ... otundoleadership.pdf](http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/newthin...otundoleadership.pdf)

Source: University of Toronto ([news](#) : [web](#))

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