

Conditional care requires the child to earn or pay for care in some way. The care the parent gives the child is based on the parent's needs and expectations, not on the child's needs.

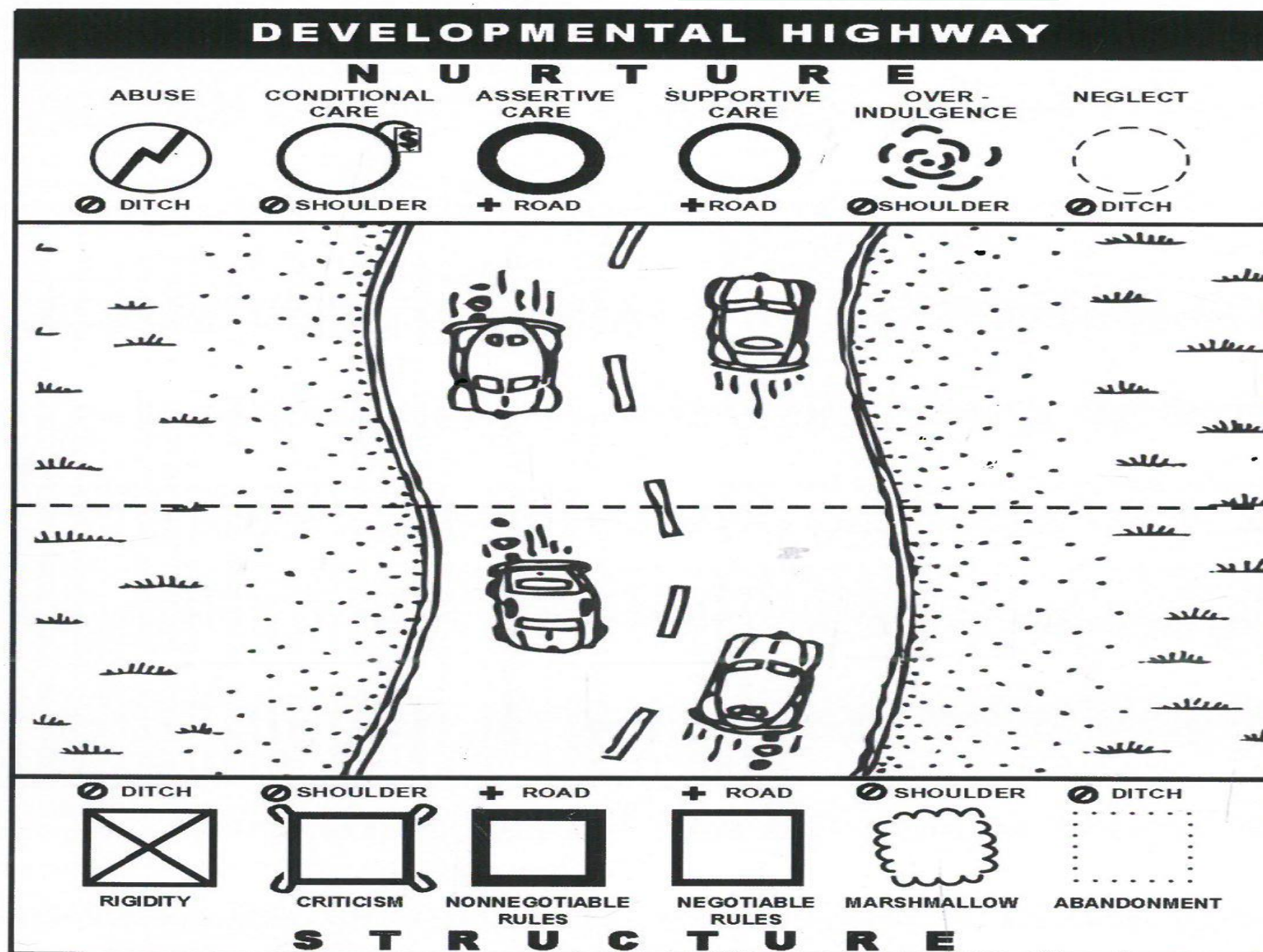
Assertive care recognises the child and the child's needs. The parent decides to nurture in this way because it is helpful to the child, responsive to the child's needs, and appropriate to the circumstance. It is comforting and loving. It is freely given.

Supportive care recognises the child and the child's needs. It is care the child is free to accept or reject. It offers help, comfort and love. It stimulates children to think and do what they are capable of doing for themselves.

Overindulgence is a sticky, patronising kind of care. It promotes continuing dependence on the parent and teaches the child not to think independently and not to be responsible for self or to others.

Abuse involves relating to a child by assault, physical or psychological invasion, direct or indirect 'don't be' messages. Abuse neglects the child's needs.

Neglect is passive abuse. It is lack of emotional or physical stimulation and recognition by parents who are unavailable or who ignore the needs of the child. These parents may be 'there, but not there'.



Rigidity consists of old rules 'written in concrete' sometime in the past, usually for someone else. These rules often ignore the developmental tasks of the child. Rigidity threatens abuse or withdrawal of love to enforce compliance.

Abandonment consists of lack of rules, protection and contact. It tells children that adults are not available for them. If teasing is used when a child needs structure or approval, that teasing constitutes abandonment.

Criticism labels the person with bad names rather than setting standards for acceptable behaviour. It negates children and tells them how to fail.

Non-negotiable rules are rules that must be followed. Children count on these rules to provide order, safety and security, to help them know who they are, to help them make decisions, and to build their self-esteem. Even though such rules are firmly enforced, they are not 'rigid' and can be rewritten for the welfare of the family.

Negotiable rules teach children how to think clearly and solve problems, raising their self-esteem. These rules are negotiated. The process of negotiating provides children with an opportunity to argue with parents, learn about the relevance of rules and learn to be responsible for themselves.

Marshmallow parenting grants freedom without demanding responsibility in return. It implies the child does not have to or is not capable of following rules. It discounts the child's ability and gives the child permission to be irresponsible and fail.