

Japanese and U.S. Mothers' Concerns and Experts' Advice: Content Analyses of
Mothers' Questions on Online Message Boards and
Experts' Advice in Parenting Magazines

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ABSTRACT

A total of 241 messages posted in 2007 by mothers of 0- to 2-year-olds on two U.S. and two Japanese parenting magazine websites were content analyzed. All messages pertained to one or more of six domains of childrearing: feeding/eating, toilet-training, sleep, development, discipline, and mother-child relationships. Every issue of the four U.S. and four Japanese best selling parenting magazines published in the years 2005 and 2006 were also content analyzed to examine advice given to parents in the six domains. The results suggested that mothers' childrearing concerns and the advice by experts in the two countries were similar in some areas but differed markedly in others, such as within the sleep domain. The similarities suggest some globalization of childrearing practices in that both countries are importing advice from other cultures. In particular, I found that in Japan, the promotion of autonomy is infused with Japanese traditional parenting ideologies and social circumstances