

Building Strong Families

How to Discipline



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What is Discipline?

Let's think about discipline. Remember young children are **not** small adults. Children have needs that must be kept in mind.

What do you think is the purpose of discipline? (Answer below)

Children have the ability to keep many things in mind when deciding what action is best. Many teachers of children believe that discipline helps children learn from experience.

Discipline is a way to correct and to teach a child. Discipline deals with a child's actions. It should not make him feel bad or like a worthless person. Discipline tells a child:

- X the thing you **do not want** the child to do.
- X **why** you do not want him to do it.
- X the thing you **do want him** to do.

Discipline tells a child how you feel about what she has done. If you are angry, tell the child, "*I feel angry about _____*" and always tell the child, "*I love you, just the way you are.*"

What is the Difference Between Discipline and Punishment?

Discipline teaches a child how to act. Discipline should make sense to a child. Discipline should be related to the child's misbehavior. Discipline helps a child feel good about himself.

Punishment only tells a child she is bad. It does not tell a child what she should do instead. So punishment may not make sense to the child. Punishment usually has nothing to do with what the child did wrong.

Example 1

A three-year-old throws his crayons on the floor.

Punishment

Tell him he is a bad boy and yell "no."

Discipline

Tell him not to throw crayons. Explain that they could get broken or mark up the floor. Tell him to pick up the crayons. Put them out of the child's reach until the next day.

Example 2

A ten-year-old spends all his or her time after school watching TV and forgets to do homework.

Punishment

Yell, scream and take away his or her allowance.

Discipline (Logical Consequence)

Explain the rule is only one TV show after school. Homework must be done. Take away TV watching for a few days or a week.

Identifying Your Parenting Style

Look over the following list and put an X in front of each statement with which you agree.

- ___1. It is better to have no rules than to worry about breaking them.
- ___2. Children can get along pretty well if you just leave them alone.
- ___3. My work and home responsibilities are too stressful to worry about what the children are doing.
- ___4. The children won't listen to me, so I have quit trying.
- ___5. Children should realize my work is stressful and I am tired at the end of the day.
- ___6. Children should obey their parents and not talk back.
- ___7. Children should do as I say until they are old enough to make their own decisions.
- ___8. I was spanked when I was a child and I turned out okay.
- ___9. When children don't behave, I yell at them and threaten them with a variety of punishments.
- ___10. I expect my children to conform to my decisions without discussion.
- ___11. Children should be given choices.
- ___12. Sometimes children have a point. I try to listen to them.
- ___13. Although it takes hard work, parents and children should try to talk about family decisions and each person share their feelings.
- ___14. Children should be allowed their own sense of individuality.
- ___15. I take care not to criticize my child or call names even when I cannot understand why they act as they do.

To get a clear look at how you score on the three styles, count the X's under each family type and place the number in the table below.

_____ Parenting Style # 1 (Permissive) - (Questions 1-5)

_____ Parenting Style # 2 (Authoritarian) - (Questions 6-10)

_____ Parenting Style # 3 (Democratic/Authoritative) - (Questions 11-15)

Which style did most of your X's fall under? All parents are some of each type. You can identify the type you "mostly" are.

PARENTING STYLE #1 Permissive

Parenting Style #1 makes few demands, does little punishing, sets no rules, and avoids showing authority. The parent is uninvolved and spends little time and effort with the child. The parent complains that stress and work keep them from spending time with their children; drugs can be a reason for their lack of attention.

CHILDREN FROM STYLE # 1

The children of this parent may lack self control, can be immature, and may be mean at home. These children tend to have low self-esteem and are easily frustrated. They may grow up to be school skippers and use drugs in their search for attention.

PARENTING STYLE #2 Authoritarian

Parenting Style #2 is demanding and strict, uses punishment and allows no choices. Parents value obedience, order, and discourage independence. These parents dislike having their orders questioned. They may use lots of physical punishment, yelling, and threats.

CHILDREN FROM STYLE # 2

What kind of child comes from this discipline? Parenting Style # 2 often produces a child who lacks curiosity and creativity and has limited independence. These children may have difficulty with decisions and only follow the rules when adults are present. They may have low self esteem and can be mean.

PARENTING STYLE #3 Authoritative

The Parenting Style #3 parent, although not the perfect parent, has a better balance in discipline style, setting high goals, expecting good behavior, enforcing rules, and encouraging independence. Children's rights are respected and choices given. There is good communication and listening and a more "give and take" arrangement.

CHILDREN FROM STYLE #3

The children can usually make responsible decisions, are independent, have higher self-esteem and confidence, and are better able to control aggression.

SOURCE; Baumrind, D., (1986) Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. *Child Development*, 37(4), 887-907

Activity

A “perfect” parent is:

“Good” things I do as a parent are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Punishments, threats, lectures, bribes and rewards might give quick results, but something is lost in the quick fix.

What could I do differently as a parent?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Age-Appropriate Discipline

Methods	Age			
	1 - 2 ½ Yrs.	2 - 5 Yrs.	5 - 12 Yrs.	12 - 18 Yrs.
Change Child's Direction				
Avoid Tempting Things				
Remove Child from Activity				
Encouragement				
Time Out				
Natural and Logical Consequences				
A.C.T.				
Give and Take				
Handshake On It!				

Look at the chart. Notice that a different discipline method is used for different age groups of children.

Explanation of Methods

CHANGE CHILD'S DIRECTION - Help children go to another activity or toy. This allows children to get away from what they should not be playing with and still gives them something to do.

AVOID TEMPTING THINGS - Move some things in your home so your child cannot reach them. This helps to keep your child safe and prevents breaking things.

REMOVE CHILD FROM ACTIVITY - When a child cannot follow rules of the game, is fighting or being mean to other children.

ENCOURAGEMENT - For all ages! Encouragement works better than praise.

PRAISE VS. ENCOURAGEMENT	
PRAISE	ENCOURAGEMENT
I'm proud of you.	I'll bet you feel good about that!
	You must be proud of yourself.
Good work!	It looks like you were working hard.
	You must have enjoyed doing that.

TIME OUT - This is used when children have lost self-control. The rule of thumb is one minute of time out for each year of age of the child. Time out can be very effective when used sparingly. Children who view time out as a punishment may not use the time out situation as the caregiver intends.

NATURAL AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

Natural consequences - Many times, real learning experiences are gained by natural consequences. For example, a child who refuses to eat supper during meal time will end up waiting until breakfast to eat again.

Logical consequences - When natural consequences are not appropriate, often logical consequences must be implemented. Children often can assist in determining these (and are often stricter on themselves than a parent would have been). The consequences of behavior should relate somehow to the behavior. Referred to as logical consequences, the child can see how the behavior and the consequence relate. For example, if the child comes home late when riding a bike, taking away the bike for an amount of time may be the consequence. Or if toys are not put away, a reasonable consequence may be to collect the toys for charity or at least put them out of the child's reach for a while.

A.C.T.

Acknowledge Feelings - I can see that you are angry about something.
Communicate Limits - The rule is that we do not hurt animals or people.
Target two choices - If a child kicks the puppy, we can offer the child two choices: Kicking dogs hurts. Would you like to kick a ball or play with the puppy? We should give children choices only when we feel either choice is acceptable.

GIVE AND TAKE

Parents and children need to really listen to each other. When you listen to your children, it makes it a lot easier for them to listen to you even when they don't want to. Listening helps children give in a little and understand.

HANDSHAKE ON IT

This is when a child and a parent make an agreement or contract. Write down what you can agree on and then seal it with signing the notes and a hand shake.

Problem: Dirty Room

Agreement: Room will be cleaned on Saturday.

Rewards/consequences: Go to movies on Saturday and failure to clean room, means no movie.

Activity

List all the methods you use to discipline children.

Child's Misbehavior

Discipline Method

A.

B.

C.

D.

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