



Use Consequences Wisely!

Consequences are one of the best tools for teaching children to make good choices and to be responsible for their actions.

DO...

- ❖ Choose consequences YOU can live with!
- ❖ Involve child in determining consequences. (5 and older)
- ❖ Let child know the consequences in advance.
- ❖ Always follow through consistently.
- ❖ Apply consequences with empathy. *"I know it is hard to have to miss out on a fun time with your friends."*
- ❖ Express belief that your child can make wise choices. *"I know you'll make a better choice next time."*

DON'T...

- ❖ Expect 100% success.
- ❖ Make the consequences too stiff.
- ❖ Show your anger.
- ❖ Talk too much.
- ❖ Forget to reevaluate consequences and their effectiveness as your child matures.

Power Struggles... No One Wins!



All children love to engage parents in power struggles at one time or another, but they commonly end up being no-win situations as parent and child each vie for power.

During power struggles, parents usually feel...

- ⊖ angry
- ⊖ drained
- ⊖ helpless
- ⊖ and wondering if they are the only parents who can't control their child.

Kids usually feel...

- ⊖ like they've succeeded in gaining attention
- ⊖ that they have manipulated the parent
- ⊖ that if they put up a big enough battle, they will wear the parent down
- ⊖ and that they have won even if they don't succeed in getting their way.

Parents can avoid power struggles by...

- ✎ not allowing themselves to get into an argument
- ✎ choosing battles carefully (avoid struggles over minor issues)
- ✎ responding calmly, but firmly
- ✎ being consistent with enforcing rules and consequences
- ✎ giving themselves time to make decisions ("I will think about this and let you know my decision.")
- ✎ not being concerned with proving you are right
- ✎ being firm, but empathetic ("I know you would like to go to the mall with your friends, but your science project has to be completed first.")



Discipline or Punishment? There IS a Difference!



These words are often thought to be interchangeable, but there are significant differences. . .differences that parents need to understand.



"Discipline" means "to teach." It...

- Is done in a calm, respectful manner.
- Addresses the child's behavior.
- Teaches responsibility for one's actions and choices.
- Encourages good decision-making.
- Is solution focused.
- Strengthens self-esteem.
- Has a long-term effect.

"Punishment" means "to inflict pain, to treat roughly, to hurt." It...



- Is done out of anger and hostility.
- Is about power and control.
- Focuses on the child, not the behavior. ("You're a bad boy/girl.")
- Robs the child of dignity.
- Creates resentment and distrust in the parent/child relationship.
- Destroys self-esteem.
- Has little lasting effect.
- May be illegal if excessive.