
DISCIPLINE

1. Discipline is about teaching healthy behaviour to successfully manage difficult situations.
2. Healthy behaviour promotes personal growth.
3. healthy/adaptive behaviour facilitates successful interaction with the world around us.
4. Behaviour can shape values.

Help your child have healthy behaviour:

- Have realistic expectations, based on what your child is able to understand.
- Desirable behaviour is difficult for a toddler (or adult!) if excessively hungry, fatigued or sleepy.
- Distraction is a time-honoured, universal, effective method to steer children away from undesired behaviours.

Be realistic and patient:

- Consistency is ideal but “micro” consistency is great!
- No technique works all the time.
- Need to experiment and adapt.
- Celebrate every behavioral change that goes in the right direction (“baby steps”).

Behaviour is often shaped by the presence or absence of reinforcement:

The presence of reinforcement is a response or consequence that encourages your child to repeat the behaviour. Examples:

- Praising your child for showing kindness.
- Rewarding your child with a sticker for not waking you up at 05:00 a.m.
- Your child receiving good grades in school as a result of studying.

The absence of a reinforcing response provides no incentive for the child to persist in the undesired behaviour. Example:

- Not responding to a whining child (once you have acknowledged your child’s feelings).

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Consequences of undesirable behaviours (older children):

1. Use a “natural” consequence (example: teen that does not put dirty clothes in hamper does not get his/her clothes washed).
2. The consequence should be reasonable. “The punishment should fit the crime” (example: child forgetting to put away toys should not lead to all toys getting thrown away!)
3. Make sure you can live with the consequence.
4. Make sure others can live with the consequence (example: don’t threaten to cancel the family camping trip).
5. Make the consequence as immediate as possible.
6. And remember to remain tranquil and calm. Do not give a reaction that is fun to watch!

Behaviour can shape values:

- Over time, the repetition of a behaviour often leads to incorporating the values it endorses.
- We cannot change the fundamental developmental stage of a toddler whose world view is “I want, what I want, when I want it”. That is normal! It will change as they mature 😊
- The most profound impact on shaping your child’s value system is the role modeling they are exposed to.