

DISCIPLINE FOR CHILDREN

Are Discipline and Punishment the Same thing?

Some people think that *discipline* means *punishment*. Discipline and punishment are *not* the same thing. Many of us grew up with parents who used rewards and punishment to control our behaviour. Rewards and punishment teach children:

- Rewards teach children to get something – not to cooperate.
- Punishment teaches children to resent and fear us. This can lower self-esteem. It can hurt the relationship we want to have.

What is Punishment?

Threats, yelling, and put-downs. Sometimes the threats are carried out, sometimes not. Sometimes yelling makes things worse.

Taking things away. Often parents take things away from children as a punishment. Many times what is taken away has nothing to do with what the child did. The child does not learn.

Spanking and Hitting. Spanking shows children that hitting is a way to solve a problem. It hurts. Children may become afraid. Often, a parent hits a child out of anger. Later on, the parent may feel guilty. Spanking children also teaches them that if you're bigger, you can get your way by hitting. Bullies often believe this.

What is Discipline?

Discipline is not a single act. It is a process. Learning *to* discipline and learning *from* it takes time. The goal of discipline is to teach children *self-discipline*. It is to guide children to be responsible and to cooperate.

Discipline and Punishment are NOT the same thing.

How Can I Discipline My Child?

- Distract the child.
- Ignore misbehaviour.
- Involve the child.
- Let go.
- Increase your consistency.
- Time-out.

Some methods will work better for you than others.

Source: The Centre for Effective Discipline