



PARENT COACHING

DISCIPLINE TIPS

4 Steps For Parents To A More Self Reliant and Responsible Child

1. Consequences v Punishment

Let's start with on a slight change in your vocabulary that is easy to make.

The use of the term **Punishment** puts the responsibility on you as the parent. The use of the term **Consequence** makes your child accountable for their own behavior and teaches self responsibility.

Remove the use of **punishment** from your vocabulary all together when it involves disciplining your child and always replace it with **Consequence**.

2. Realistic Consequences

When determining consequences you start with the basics. Figure out what matters most to your child. For example, teenagers are very different from younger children. Teenagers typically care about the computer, their cel phones, curfew and the car. Younger children tend to care more about TV, Nintendo, play dates and special treats. All consequences need to be reasonable and must fit with whatever undesirable behavior your child is exhibiting. For example, if your child continuously leaves their room unkempt and you have asked them about a billion times to clean it, you can take away TV or computer privileges for a day. The two reasons why you do this are as follows:

- Consequences need to be reasonable because if you are extreme in every circumstance your child they will not be able to distinguish the difference between being in trouble for something minor (talking back) and being in trouble for something major (shoplifting).
- Consequences need to be reasonable in order for you to enforce them and not give in. Don't take away a cel phone from your teenager if you know you will be giving it back to them for safety reasons and for the younger ones, don't take away their TV time for a month if you know that it will be impossible for you to follow through with.

3. Set Clear Expectations

Let your child know clearly what to expect. If you do this _____, than the consequence will be this _____. A good example for a teenager would be "if you get any D's on your report card than you will lose your car privileges with

the exception of school and work” or for the younger child “if I have to ask you to hang your towels up again than you will lose your Nintendo DS for a day” (wet towels on the floor is never a good thing).

4. FOLLOW THROUGH

This is by far the most integral part of effective discipline. You **MUST** follow through and that is why setting reasonable and realistic consequences and setting clear expectations sets the stage for you to be able to accomplish this. Your credibility is on the line here so take note. Following through shows you mean business as a parent and helps modify your child’s behavior so it is more desirable. My rule of thumb is this, if you cannot follow through don’t lay down a consequence in the first place. I would much rather your child view you as a lax parent than as a parent whose word means nothing. Giving in is a **BIG** no no.

You can do this.

Practice this new skill and you will achieve results.

HAPPY PARENTING!