

To discipline a child means to guide him or her towards acceptable behaviour. The tactics we choose to do this should provide our children with life learning - showing them what they did wrong, giving them ownership of the problem, helping them come up with ways to solve/fix it - while at the same time leaving their dignity intact. It teaches children to be respectful, responsible and resilient - all necessary qualities to survive and thrive in our world.

*Discipline can rarely be done on a whim - it requires forethought, creativity and self control*

Good discipline ...

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|---|-----------------------|
| ➤ Is based on mutual respect                                      | ➤ Expects cooperation |
| ➤ Involves clear expectations                                     | ➤ Is consistent       |
| ➤ Provides choices whenever possible<br>(accepts person's choice) | ➤ Is enforceable      |

**Discipline tips to remember:**

1. Carefully choose behaviours to enforce. Make yourself come up with good answers as to why certain behaviours are unacceptable. You might be surprised at the 'extras' you can clean out.
2. Be fully in control of the only thing you can be - YOU! Kids learn more from what you model than what you say. Practice being who you want your children to be. Be aware of your stress times (i.e. morning before work; just before supper...) and learn techniques to help keep you on an even keel. Anger should never be your guide when choosing discipline.
3. Expect to be tested periodically for consistency and strength. Adopt lines like "This behaviour is unacceptable." Versus "You know better."
4. It is the certainty of a consequence that achieves results - not the severity. If a person feels they are being 'unjustly punished' for a behaviour, they stop learning and fall into retaliation or resentment.
5. Finally, remember discipline does not give immediate gratification. It takes time to grow a morally strong person, but it's worth the wait.

**10 questions to ask when disciplining:**

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| 1. Will it teach better decision making skills?                                   | 6. Am I seeing this as a positive opportunity?   |
| 2. Is it part of a planned approach?  | 7. Am I being consistent?                        |
| 3. Is it reasonable and fair?   | 8. Will I follow through?                        |
| 4. Will it humiliate or embarrass my child?<br>(am I getting even)                | 9. Have I explained why he/she needs discipline? |
| 5. Is it changing the behaviour?<br>(Will it reduce the need for more discipline) | 10. Am I staying calm when I use it?             |

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