

Children's Center

A place where healing begins

Examples of Positive/Safe Discipline Techniques

- Giving choices (Which is empowering to children)
- Explaining calmly/giving a directive (Setting a limit)
- Distracting, redirecting (Works well with young children)
- Modeling (Showing by your example)
- Time-out (Avoid using the corner, which can be shaming; place the child where you can see him/her)
- Time-in (A quiet time between you and the child when the child is having a hard time being compliant or quiet. The caregiver sits in a comfortable chair and can be reading. The child sits on the floor next to the chair with his/her forehead touching the caregiver's leg. The caregiver gently and quietly rubs the child's back. No words or lecture, just quiet, calm, back rubbing. It is difficult for the child to maintain his/her angry feelings while s/he is being cared for in this manner)
- Natural consequences (Example: if the child plays during a meal, then meal time is over and s/he will need to wait for the next regularly scheduled meal)
- Logical consequences (Example: if the child leaves his/her bike out, s/he can't ride the next day)
- Charts to track behavior ("Star" charts for positive behaviors)
- Contract agreements (Works best with older children and teens)
- Reward positively/give praise for positive behavior (Make sure reward is one child will appreciate)
- Remove privileges (Example: the child loses television time if s/he doesn't do homework)
- Change surroundings/prevent problems (Like putting up a baby gate, getting a bucket for all the toys, removing items that cause problems)
- Ignore self-indulgent behaviors (Like whining and pouting; but do not ignore the child's basic needs)
- Restitution (Such as requiring child to do yard work after damaging the flowerbed)
- Negotiation/family decision-making meetings (Bringing common problems to the family and problem-solving together; making agreements that include the children so they are more invested in the outcome)

Examples of Negative/Unsafe Discipline Techniques

- Poking with the hand or an object
- Hitting with a hand or an instrument such as a spoon
- Slapping
- Shoving or violent shaking (Shaking a young child can cause brain damage!)
- Grabbing, jerking
- Smacking with a hand, belt stick or other object
- Beating
- Having child stand in the corner (Which can be shaming and can impact self-esteem)
- Putting substances in child's mouth (Such as soap, hot sauce, etc. which can actually burn/damage skin)
- Yelling and screaming

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- Verbal and nonverbal threats and put-downs
- Anger that threatens
- Power plays
- Shaming
- Scolding and “nagging” (Extreme)
- Pinching, grabbing ears
- Intimidating with looks, actions, gestures
- Criticizing, name calling
- Isolating the child (With the exception of short time-out periods)