



GUIDELINES FOR POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Positive discipline is a process of teaching children how to behave appropriately. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, and the adult.

Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should not do; positive discipline tells children what they should do. Punishment teaches fear; positive discipline teaches self esteem.

You can use positive discipline by planning ahead:

- Anticipated and eliminate potential problems
- Have a few consistent, clear rules that are explained to children and understood by adults
- Have a well-planned daily schedule
- Plan for ample elements of fun and humor
- Include some group decision making
- Provide time and space for each child to be alone
- Make it possible for each child to feel he/she has some positive impact on the group
- Provide the structure and support children need to resolve their differences
- Share ownership and responsibility with the children. Talk about our rooms, our toys.

You can use positive discipline by intervening when necessary:

- Re-direct to a new activity to change the focus of a child's behavior
- Provide individualized attention to help the child deal with a particular situation
- Use time-out – by removing the child for a few minutes from the area or activity so that he/she may gain self control. (One minute for each year of the child's age is a good rule of thumb).
- Divert the child and remove from the area of conflict
- Provide alternate activities and acceptable ways to release feelings
- Point out natural or logical consequences of children's behavior
- Offer a choice only if there are two acceptable options
- Criticize the behavior, not the child. Don't say "bad boy" or "bad girl". Instead you might say "That is not allowed here".

You can use positive discipline by showing love and encouragement:

- Catch the child being good. Respond to and reinforce positive behavior; acknowledge or praise to let the child know you approve of what he/she is doing
- Provide positive reinforcement through rewards for good behavior
- Use encouragement rather than competition, comparison, or criticism
- Overlook small annoyances, and deliberately ignore provocations
- Give hugs and caring to every child every day
- Appreciate the child's point of view
- Be loving, but don't confuse loving with license

Positive discipline takes time, patience, repetition and willingness to change the way you deal with children. But it's worth it, because positive discipline works.