

# Behavior Bits

## Volume 5: Discipline Done Right

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### The Goal of Discipline

No matter how clear we design the rules and expectations of our children at home, it is inevitable that they will misbehave! Whether it's an impulse or an active way to test his or her limits, misbehavior is an opportunity to teach (or re-teach) your child the positive behaviors that will help him or her be successful at home and in school.

Discipline is necessary in order to teach your child what behaviors are and are not acceptable. Our goal of discipline should be to provide our child with consequences that allow them to learn and grow. Instead of solely punishing the "bad" behavior, discipline should focus on teaching children appropriate behaviors. This model enhances a child's ability to develop internal understanding, self-control, and a greater desire to follow the rules by being aware of the expected behaviors. The following sections will provide guidance on how to choose a logical consequence, teach appropriate skills, and other helpful tips.

<https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/responding-to-misbehavior/>



### Teaching Appropriate Skills

When responding to inappropriate behavior, address the behavior as quickly as possible. Immediate feedback will help your child break the momentum and get back on track. Some response strategies you can use to help teach your child are:

- Model the expected behavior then give your child the opportunity to practice the expected behavior.
- Set rules and expectations with your child. This works best when you involve your child's help in creating the rules. Reference which rule was broken during your conversation.
- Assume that your child needs to be taught (or re-taught) the appropriate skill. Give your child the benefit of the doubt and utilize misbehavior as a learning opportunity.

For more information see the website below:

[https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs\\_ext\\_vt\\_edu/350/350-114/350-114\(FCS-132P\).pdf](https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/350/350-114/350-114(FCS-132P).pdf)

### Logical Consequences

Logical consequences teach children alternative ways to behave and encompass several key features. First, they should be related to the behavior the child is engaging in. Second, they should not involve blame or shame and should be enforced firmly and kindly. Third, they should be reasonable from both the child's and the adult's perspective.

Let's look at some examples.

- *Break it/Fix it:* A child dumps his toys on the floor. He has to clean them up.
- *Loss of privilege:* A child yells when talking to an adult. The adult refuses to listen until the child talks in calm, inside voice.
- *Time-out or take a break:* A child makes a snide remark behind the adult's back. The child removes himself/herself from engaging in conversation with the adult.

When imposing logical consequences, it is important to assess the situation and determine what will help to solve the problem. It might also be beneficial to include your child in a conversation about how to fix what happened.

For additional information and examples, see:

[https://www.educationworld.com/a\\_curr/columnists/charney/charney007.shtml](https://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/columnists/charney/charney007.shtml)

***Discipline is helping a child solve a problem. Punishment is making a child suffer for having a problem. To raise problem solvers, focus on solutions not retributions.***

***-L.R. Knost***

### Tips When Disciplining

Here are 5 simple steps to keep in mind when disciplining your child of any age:

- 1) **Recognize** that problem behavior is your child attempting to communicate.
- 2) **Reframe** that problem behavior from being disrespectful to your child not being able to express themselves appropriately.
- 3) **Research** patterns in your child's behavior (what happens before and after).
- 4) **Reward** small and big improvements to behaviors you want to see. Do this often, immediately, and a lot at first.
- 5) **Repeat** your steps to provide consistency. Behavior change will not happen overnight.