

What is discipline?

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Punishment involves a sanction or penalty as a consequence of a child's unacceptable behaviour and is used to extinguish behaviour.

Punishment combines control, force and physical pain to get children to behave in acceptable ways. It is characterized by external control and can involve force or coercion. Punishment does not necessarily require mutual respect or trust between the parent/child.

Some examples of physical punishment are

- punching, kicking, shaking, harsh spankings or slaps
- throwing objects that can injure a child
- threatening a child with physical harm
- placing a child in a locked or confined space
- depriving a child of basic needs

There is a significant risk of injury to the child when a parent uses physical punishment.

Punishment can cause physical harm, permanent physical disabilities and occasionally death. There is a risk of emotional problems developing in the future.

Many children who have been punished as a child grow up to become abusive to their children and their family as an adult.

*Effective discipline
can be achieved
without physical
punishment*

What is discipline?

Discipline covers all methods used to train and teach children self-control and socially acceptable behaviour. Discipline does not inflict physical or psychological harm to a child.

Discipline is a necessary part of the parent/child relationship.

Discipline

- involves the process of education, guidance and learning to help children develop self-control
- is characterized by mutual respect and trust
- includes a belief that the child will be willing to change because of respect or with greater understanding
- has as its goal the development of internal controls that helps the child relate to others in a positive and responsible way

*A child can learn self-discipline if he/she is supported,
treated with respect and experiences tolerance of feelings.*

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