

Effective Discipline

Damaging Side Effects of Physical, Verbal, or Prolonged Punishment:

- 1) Physical, harsh verbal or prolonged punishment leads to only short-term success. This type of punishment may work initially, but the negative behaviors continue and often increase.
- 2) Physical, harsh verbal or prolonged punishment can cause emotional reaction in children such as crying, anger, or fear of the parent.
- 3) The child is likely to avoid the parent, and the parent-child relationship deteriorates. This means the child would not want to be with you. Some parents think a punishment was effective if their child becomes upset. There is no necessary relationship between the two.
- 4) Physical, harsh verbal or prolonged punishment also may cause the child to become aggressive and hit you, other family members, or friends.
- 5) Physical, harsh verbal or prolonged punishment sometimes decreases a child's aggressiveness in the home, but outside the home the child becomes much more aggressive.
- 6) Physical harsh verbal or prolonged punishment does not teach the child how to solve problems. If the child sees the parent become aggressive when angry, the child is likely to do the same.
- 7) Punishment alone does not teach new or appropriate behaviors. It teaches the child what *not* to do.

Effective Discipline Guidelines:

- 1) Remain calm.
- 2) Use time out immediately so that your child doesn't have the opportunity to become more aggressive.
- 3) If you need to take a privilege away, take it away for a short period of time, such as TV or phone privileges for an afternoon or an evening. How immediate and consistent the punishment is usually is more important than how big the loss is or how upset your child becomes.
- 4) Praise the reinforce your child's positive behaviors, i.e.
 - a. Handling problems calmly versus temper tantrums
 - b. Playing cooperatively with others versus teasing others
 - c. Using your words calmly and respectfully versus talking back
 - d. Keeping one's hands and feet to oneself when angry versus physical aggression

Whenever you use a discipline technique, you must also use positive reinforcement for the behavior that is the positive opposite of the one you want to be discontinued.

Kazdin, A.E. (2005). *Parent Management Training: Treatment for oppositional, aggressive, and antisocial behavior in children and adolescents*. New York: Oxford University Press (283-284)