

## POSITIVE DISCIPLINE APPROACHES

### COMMON BEHAVIOURS AT SCHOOL AND HOME AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

#### BEHAVIOURS

#### POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Not doing homework or chores

- Give make-up activities
- Provide peer support
- Teacher/parents/student agree on solution

Fighting

- Provide peer mediation/counselling
- Withdraw privileges, e.g. TV, games
- Give tasks that build team work and problem solving skills

Skipping school / class

- Give child responsibilities at school
- Counsel child about the value of education
- Discuss causes and solutions with child

Damaging property

- Child researches cost of damage
- Child contributes to repair costs
- Child does repairs

Sexual activity (fondling, intercourse, etc.)

- Provide counselling and referral
- Provide peer mediation
- Child researches effects of early sexual activity

Stealing

- Child does community service
- Child apologizes publicly, returns stolen item
- Conduct parent/teacher /student conference

Possession and or use of drugs/weapons

- Provide counselling and referral
- Child reflects on dangers of drugs/weapons

Gang membership / extortion

- Provide group mentorship and counselling
- Send student to time-out facility
- Student placed on in-school suspension

# 9 REASONS TO TRY POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

#### PUNISHMENT HURTS CHILDREN

- Lowers self-esteem
- Demands compliance
- Inspires anger, resentment, rebellion
- Focuses on “misbehaviour”
- Teaches children to rely on external answers
- Leaves child feeling misunderstood
- Ignores dignity of the child
- Past-focus: “why do you always do that?”
- Increases power struggles

#### DISCIPLINE TEACHES CHILDREN

- Raises self-esteem
- Helps children to exercise choice(s)
- Motivates and encourages
- Focuses on feelings and root causes
- Teaches children to problem-solve
- Fosters understanding
- Preserves mutual respect
- Future-focus: “next time, try this”
- Decreases power struggles



## USING POSITIVE METHODS - WHAT WORKS?

There are many ways to discipline children without using physical (hitting) or psychological (using negative and shameful words) violence. The techniques you choose, as a parent or teacher, should be appropriate for the age and stage of development of the child.

*Try to prevent unacceptable behaviours. Here are some tips:*

### **Set rules and expectations**

*Work with the child to set ground rules and clarify expectations. Agree on what the consequences are if these are not met. Apply consequences consistently.*

### **Praise and encourage**

*Praise good behaviour. Celebrate each step children make in the right direction. Say things like good job, well done and I am proud of you, to encourage the child.*

### **Use rewards**

*Find different ways to reward children for good behaviour, including point or merit systems where children win awards.*

### **Give responsibilities**

*Give children meaningful tasks and responsibilities. Children feel ownership and enthusiasm when they are included in decisions.*

### **Talk with your child**

*One of the most effective ways to encourage positive behaviour is spending time talking. This allows you to get to the cause of unacceptable behaviour by learning why it happens.*

### **Know your children**

*Get to know not only their likes and dislikes but their teachers, friends, hang-out spots and what they are involved with outside of the home or school. This helps you to better understand and monitor their behaviour.*

### **Express love**

*Let children know they are loved regardless of how they behave. Make sure they know that your love is unconditional and will never go away. Express your love through hugs, kisses, telling them "I love you" and encouragement.*



**When a child does something inappropriate, deal with the behaviour without using violent punishment. Here are some tips:**

- **Use distractions:** Allow the child to use the same energy but in a different way. Redirect the child to similar activities that shift the focus towards more acceptable behaviour.
- **Give time outs:** Children often need time to cool down and think about their behaviour. Time outs should match the child's age (one minute per year of age) and should be accompanied by an explanation of why the time out is given.
- **Create accountability:** Get children to apologise for their actions to those affected. They should take responsibility for their actions and commit to improving their behaviour.
- **Make amends:** Help children figure out how to make up for the damage caused by their behaviour. For example, children should assist in fixing or paying for repairs for damage they cause.
- **Ignore attention-seeking behaviour:** Some things are done to get attention – get to know the child so you can identify attention-seeking behaviours. It is okay to ignore some of these behaviours sometimes – especially for younger children.