

Tenets of Effective Discipline



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The goal of discipline is to **teach**. Rather than focusing on immediately imposing a punishment, first think about what will be the best way to teach your child the lesson they need to learn. This will entail having a conversation with your child, and listening to understand their point of view before explaining what they did wrong.

Effective discipline relies on a **respectful and trusting relationship**. Your child will follow your lead and accept your guidance if they respect and trust you. This is why you must show them signs of respect such as listening to them actively, and never using violence as a form of discipline. Show them that you are trustworthy by keeping your word, keeping boundaries consistent and providing reasoning for boundaries.

It is not effective to discipline your children if you are **angry or overly emotional**. Wait to engage in discipline until you are able to act rationally and calmly. If you do slip up and act irrationally, make sure to show respect to your child through a sincere apology.

Consistent discipline is **essential**. As a parent it is your job to prepare your child to be a kind and responsible member of society. Implementing clear and consistent boundaries and rules is just as much a need for your child as love and support.

When your child is emotional, this is when they **need you most**. If your child is having a meltdown or tantrum, this is not the time to teach. What you need to do here is be there for them and help them calm down. This will build trust and security. If there is a strong emotion present, this is a sign that there is a **need to be met**. If your child is very upset, it is important to identify the need before teaching a lesson.

When it is time to teach, **connect** with your child by showing them warmth and empathy, then talk to them about how to **redirect** their behavior. Make sure they know how to do better next time!