

Understanding and Using Positive Discipline in Pre-School Environments

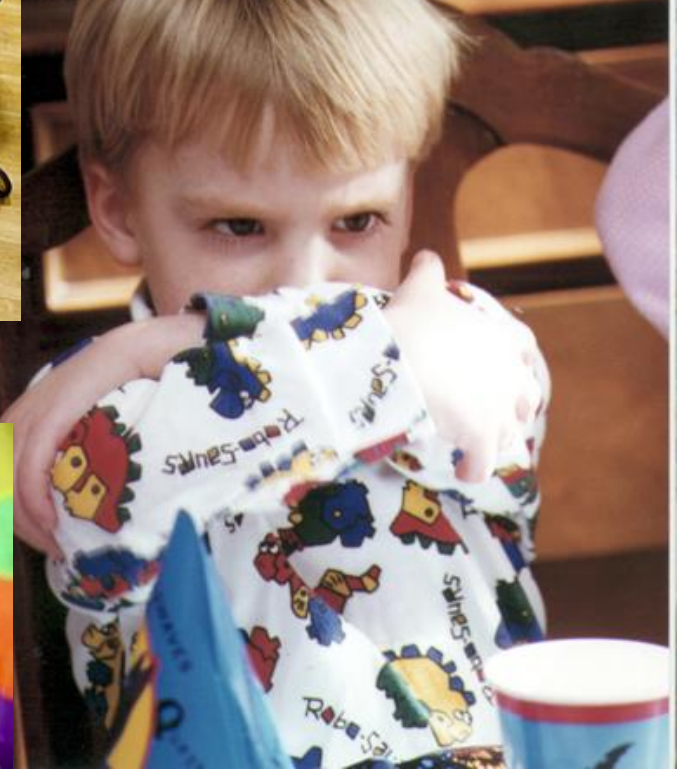
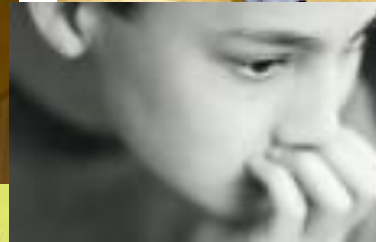
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Early Childhood Supports and Services

Understanding behavior and discipline: Objectives





What is Positive Discipline?

- Discipline is regarded as teaching rather than punishment
- It is intended to build self control rather than just obedience
- It builds the child's self esteem



What is Positive Discipline?

- The child's temperament is considered, along with triggers for "bad behavior"
- Try to set the child up for success
- Rewards over punishment
- Redirection



The Goal of Positive Discipline

- Discipline is more than just stopping bad behavior or making a child compliant.
- Discipline lays the foundation for self control
- Children feel secure and happy when they understand that they can manage their behavior

The 7 elements of positive discipline

1. Relationship
2. Realistic expectations of behavior
3. Limit setting
4. Observation
5. Teaching
6. Consistency
7. Patience





○ Children learn in
the context of
relationships

- *"All learning has an emotional base"- Plato*



1. Relationships

- Children will learn most from people they trust
- The better a caregiver knows a child the better she is able to understand why he misbehaves and how to help that child learn self control

2. Realistic expectations of behavior

- Understand the child's behavior in the context of his/her age and stage of development





Putting behavior in the context of developmental age and stage

- Understand that preschool children express themselves through their behavior, not so much with words
- Toddlers have a hard time waiting
- Toddlers say “NO” and “mine” and will not share
- Tantrums are normal and are learning opportunities
- Preschoolers are wired to start things- not to stop things- few can resist temptation



3. Limit Setting

- Limits must be clear and consistent
- Explain the why behind the rule
- Choose battles wisely
- Make your limits sound like “YES” or, keep it positive rather than negative
- Routines help children understand limits
- Help child to succeed



4. Observation: Know the child

- What is his temperament like?
- What are his triggers?
- In what circumstances can he behave well?
- How does he let you know he is getting ready to “BLOW”?
- How can he help himself, or how does he recharge/recover when upset?



Observation: Know the child

- Sometimes children's misbehavior is due to:
 - immaturity or developmental reasons
 - unmet emotional needs
 - environmental factors
 - child has not learned how to behave yet (or what he can do)
 - Davis & Kaiser (1997)



5. Teaching

- Use your observations to teach the child about his temperament and emotions
- Use your observations to help the child redirect his behavior/emotional discharge
- Rather than regarding “challenging” behavior as a problem, regard it as a learning opportunity



Teaching

- Helping children learn about emotions
 - Songs and books about emotions
 - Play
 - Emotion coaching (Kurdinka)
 - Label child's emotion
 - Tie emotion to behavior
 - Provide strategies- focus on what he can do rather than what he cannot do
 - Give child opportunity to practice



6. Consistency

- Consistency in limits
- Consistency in how behavior is addressed
- Consistency between caregivers
- When limits are inconsistently enforced, children will test more persistently than when there is regularity.



7. Patience

- The more upset the caregiver becomes the less likely the child will be able to gain self control
- “To bring calm one must poses calm”
- Learning takes time. Keep at it until the child is successful

Applying Positive Discipline

A biting example



Why do children bite?

- Frustration
- Pain
- Affection
- Imitation
- Exploration
- Experimentation
- To get attention





A biting plan

- Define the behavior (when, where, who)
- Developmental context of behavior
- Honor the impulse (what is the function of the behavior?)
- Replacement Behavior- Tell him what to do instead
- Work the child through it

Biting : What not to do

- Time out
- Saying “how would you like it”
- Lecturing
- Putting the child down
 - Reference Kinnell, G. (2002). No Biting. St Paul Press



Building Self Control



Self Control

- The development of self control is tied to maturation and experience
:brain
 - **development**
 - **emotional development**
 - **learning and experience**





Self Control

- Caregivers provide:
 - Sense of security in the relationship
 - Strategies/active teaching
 - An environment that helps build self control
 - Encouragement
- **all of the things needed for emotional wellness**



Promoting self control

- Help children learn about emotions
- Discipline as teaching not punishment
- Caregiver raises bar and expects more as child can do more to control behavior- gradual withdrawal of external controls to advance internal control
- Scaffolding



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Self control

- Self control and emotion control are tied to temperament and differences in self regulation
- self control develops 2-3 years



Self Control

- Early self control is related to later self control
- Self control is related to attention
- Early attention and behavior control is associated with making friends



Conclusion:

- Discipline is teaching; The goal is self control
- Understand behavior in the context of development and temperament
- It takes time and patience to help children learn to behave well
- Children learn in the context of relationships