



## Guidelines for Positive Discipline

Positive discipline is a process of teaching children how to behave appropriately. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, the group, and the adult. Methods of positive discipline shall be consistent with the age and developmental needs of the children, and lead to the ability to develop and maintain self-control.

Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should not do; positive discipline tell children what they should do. Punishment teachers fear; positive discipline teaches self-esteem.

You can use positive discipline by planning ahead:

- Anticipate and eliminate potential problems
- Have a few consistent, clear rules that are explained to children and understood by adults
- Have a well-planned daily schedule
- Plan for ample elements of fun and humor
- Include some group decision-making
- Provide time and space for each child to be alone
- Make it possible for each child to feel he/she has had some positive impact on the group
- Provide the structure and support children need to resolve their differences
- Share ownership and responsibility with the children, using terms like "our room" and "our toys"

You can use positive discipline by intervening when necessary:

- Re-direct to a new activity to change the focus of a child's behavior
- Provide individualized attention to help the child deal with a particular situation
- Divert the child and remove from the area of conflict
- Provide alternative activities and acceptable ways to release feelings
- Point out natural or logical consequences of children's behavior
- Offer a choice only if there are two acceptable options
- Criticize the behavior, not the child
- Use a time-out to allow the child time to gain self-control (one minute for every year of the child's age is the general rule of thumb)

You can use positive discipline by showing love and encouragement:

- Catch the child being good and use praise to acknowledge the behavior
- Provide positive reinforcement through rewards for good behavior



- Use encouragement rather than competition, comparison, or criticism
- Overlook small annoyances, and deliberately ignore provocations
- Give hugs
- Appreciate the child's point of view
- Be loving, but don't confuse loving with license

Positive discipline takes time, patience, repetition, and the willingness to change the way you deal with children, but it's worth it because positive discipline works!