

Some Positive Approaches to Discipline

Discipline is not a question of winning a battle. It is to guide children to develop self-control and make their own appropriate behavioral choices.

Some positive approaches are:

1. Let children know what you expect of them.
2. Make realistic requests for the age and abilities of the child
3. Have positive expectations and use encouraging phrases.
4. Redirect them to other more appropriate activities.
5. Give a warning when occurs.
6. Stay simple – use direct statements rather than long speeches.
7. Be clear and emphatic – sometimes there is no choice.
8. Say, “As soon as possible.”
9. Solve problems together with your child.
10. Let the child express his/her feelings.
11. Be read to be flexible.
12. Offer choices rather than threats.
13. Be firm but kind.
14. Don’t rub it in – don’t say, “I told you so.”
15. Consider negotiations and compromise-make a deal.
16. Stress cooperation.
17. Give some chances – children can’t always be expected to improve immediately.
18. Give in – only if it really does not matter.
19. Notice effort and improvement.
20. Appreciate and praise progress and good behavior.

Beliefs about behavior

Misery-making belief: This child is already so bad there is nothing I can do to make things any better.

Better Choice: This child’s behavior has a purpose and I can influence it by understanding that purpose and making some changes in how to handle him/her and me.

Adapted from: School Psychologist’s Notebook, 1989