

THINKING ABOUT DISCIPLINE?

Part of the FAMILY LIFE series



Free Parentline
0808 800 2222

Free Textphone
0800 783 6783

Website
www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Email
parentsupport@parentlineplus.org.uk

 **Parentlineplus**
because instructions aren't included
0808 800 2222
www.parentlineplus.org.uk



When someone says 'discipline' most of us think about punishment and keeping children in line. But it is not about telling your child what to do. Discipline is something we do to help children learn about the consequences of their behaviour and about the values that shape their family and community.

📌 Parentline Plus tips

- ✔️ Set out to help, not punish.
- ✔️ Tell them clearly what you want and why.
- ✔️ Avoid negative criticism like: “You’re so selfish and lazy”. Words like these can affect your child’s self-esteem, and make it appear as if they are simply acting the way you expect them to.
- ✔️ Keep positive – ask for what you want rather than what you don’t: “I want you to keep your room tidy”, rather than, “I don’t want to see a messy room”.
- ✔️ Remember that children learn by example.
- ✔️ Don’t assume children will react the same way as you did when you were their age.
- ✔️ Look after yourself so you are not over-reacting as a result of stress.
- ✔️ Don’t worry if you occasionally have bad days – these will teach your children about people’s changing moods and how to deal with them.
- ✔️ Appreciate your child for helpful behaviour through smiles, hugs, praise and thanks.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

It is important that other family members and friends who are involved in the upbringing of your child are clear on the boundaries you have set for them and your approaches to discipline. Without this information, your children may get mixed messages on what you consider to be acceptable behaviour and how you choose to discipline them when they push the limits you have set.

If you are a lone parent, try to keep the non-resident parent informed about any decisions you have made on discipline, so that when your children are with them, they maintain the rules and agreements you have reached.

If you are in a couple, try to support each other in keeping the ‘bottom line’. It is easier for a child to keep one message rather than two conflicting ones. Consider strategies for discipline and setting limits together, and try to settle on ones that you both agree with.

SETTING BOUNDARIES

Boundaries are about setting the bottom line. They show what you value, and what's right for you and your family. They are the principles that guide you and help you to keep your child safe and secure. Children will often test the limits you have set them – it's part of growing up.

LET THEM MAKE CHOICES

Children are far more likely to cooperate if they feel trusted and part of a team. Giving them choices focuses their attention on action rather than resistance.

Children will learn through the consequences that follow their decisions – rescuing or punishing a child doesn't help them make a link between their own actions and what happens because of them; letting them deal with the consequences does: "You wore your school shoes to play in and now they're muddy. There's a cloth under the sink".



⬇️ **Parentline Plus tips**

- ✔️ Wait until after an argument or outburst from your child is over, before talking to them about what has happened to make them feel this way, and how they can behave the next time they feel like that.
- ✔️ Explain your point of view and why you don't agree with some of the things they are doing.
- ✔️ Make a compromise. It doesn't mean you're giving in but shows that you value their opinions and are letting your children take more responsibility for themselves.
- ✔️ Give them some responsibility for their own safety as they get older. Children do need to be kept safe so give them ideas of how they can do so.

GETTING HELP

This leaflet is only a guide.

If you need someone to talk to, try our free*, confidential Parentline 0808 800 2222.

Or if you are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech impairment call our free textphone on 0800 783 6783.

Parentline Plus produces information on various parenting issues. Try our website for more information on parenting www.parentlineplus.org.uk

You can also get parenting support via our email support service parentsupport@parentlineplus.org.uk

Details for a variety of other helplines are included on the back of this leaflet.

*Free from landlines and most mobile networks.



FURTHER HELP

FOR PARENTS

Parentline Plus

Free*, confidential support for parents.

→ Parentline: **0808 800 2222**

→ Textphone: **0800 783 6783**

→ Email:

parentsupport@parentlineplus.org.uk

→ Website:

www.parentlineplus.org.uk

One Parent Families | Gingerbread

Free information to lone parents including benefits, childcare and returning to work.

→ Tel: **0800 018 5026**

→ Website:

www.oneparentfamilies.org.uk

FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

ChildLine

A helpline for children and young people to talk about their problems and concerns.

→ Helpline: **0800 1111**

→ Website: www.childline.org.uk

National Youth Advocacy Service

Provides advocacy services for children and young people up to the age of 25.

→ Free helpline for children and young people: **0800 61 61 01**

→ Email advice for children and young people: help@nyas.net

→ Website: www.nyas.net



Parentline Plus: 520 Highgate Studios, 53-79 Highgate Road, Kentish Town, London NW5 1TL

Free* Parentline: 0808 800 2222

Free textphone for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech impairment: 0800 783 6783

Web: www.parentlineplus.org.uk Email: parentsupport@parentlineplus.org.uk

For professionals: www.parentlineplusforprofessionals.org.uk

Be Someone to Tell: www.besomeonetotell.org.uk

Got a teenager: www.gotateenager.org.uk

*Free from landlines and most mobile networks.

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