



Dads in Gear: Discipline vs. Punishment

Children aren't perfect. Dads will have to discipline their children so that when they become adults they know how to make good decisions. Discipline is often a challenge but put in the big picture its one of the most important jobs as a parent. To understand discipline, it is important to understand the difference between discipline and punishment.

Discipline	Punishment
Realistic Choices	Threats
Appropriate consequences – not too severe or meaningless	Inappropriate consequences – too severe
Expected by child (the child has been informed by the parent)	Unexpected by child (reactionary)
Related to misbehaviour	Not related to misbehaviour
Teaches real life principles such as rights and respect	Expresses power of authority
Choices offered– child responsible	Imposed – no choices, no responsibility
Focus on present and future behaviour	Focus on past behaviour
Reinforce internal control (self discipline)	External control (from parents)
Emphasizes teaching and training. Leads to increased self esteem & confidence	Reinforces failure – leads to low self esteem, increased rebellion, hostility and withdrawal
Friendly (partnership)	Seen as an expression of anger (threatens, loss of love)
Difficult – takes time, patience and effort.	Easy – little skill needed.
Strengthens relationships	Alienates parent and child
Child judges their own behaviour (self discipline)	Judgement by punisher (the parent)
Focus on DEED	Focus on DOER – personalized “they are bad”
Focus on effort as well as results	Focus only on results
Options kept open so child can choose to improve	No options
Parent models healthy behaviour	Parent models unhealthy behaviour

Reference: Building Healthy Families Society

<http://www.buildinghealthyfamilies.ca/>