



DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

Resource Guide





The following is a variation of "**Children Learn What They Live**" written by Dorothy Low Nolte. Count how many times the word "learn" is mentioned and which attitudes are learned.

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, she learns to fight.

If a child lives with pity, he learns to feel sorry for himself.

If a child lives with ridicule, she learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilt.

If a child lives with tolerance, she learns to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident.

If a child lives with praise, she learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with acceptance, he learns to love.

If a child lives with approval, she learns to like herself.

If a child lives with recognition, he learns it is good to have a goal.

If a child lives with honesty, she learns what truth is.

If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice.

If a child lives with security, she learns to have faith in herself and those about her.

If a child lives with friendliness, he learns to find love in the world.





RESOURCE GUIDE DCS DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION TO DCS DISCIPLINE GUIDESLINES TRAINING

The skills needed by parents today are vastly different than those needed by prior generations of parents. Children are now exposed to drugs, alcohol, sex, stress, the internet, etc. in ways that most of us did not have to contend with as children and teens. The children being placed in foster homes today are exhibiting more serious problems than were seen in the past and therefore, greater skills are required on the part of foster parents. Often, these children have inappropriate patterns of behavior that have been learned and, reinforced for years. Even when foster parents use appropriate parenting skills it may take a very long time to see behavior changes.

When I think about how I was disciplined as a child, I remember:

- *How did you feel about being disciplined as a child?*
- *Where did you get your own parenting styles?*
- *In what ways do you discipline your children differently than you were disciplined?*

DCS Discipline Guidelines: BACKGROUND

Most children in the foster care program have experienced patterns of inappropriate abuse and/or violence in their families. Therefore, issues related to punishment often are confusing for the child. For foster children, punishment is often connected to a wide variety of issues such as attention, power, revenge, control, loss of self-esteem and pain/love.

Many foster parents have had a great deal of experience in raising children; their own and foster children. However, when we are working with foster children, the Department of Child Safety (DCS) has set policies for disciplinary techniques. The reason for this is that the agency is responsible for the wellbeing of the children and has the right to make rules regarding them. Many foster children have experienced cruel and extreme punishments and will overreact to any discipline, while others seem to respond mostly to punishment that is extreme and abusive. Since foster parents may not know the entire background of the children in their homes, we must be careful and sensitive.

If you commonly use methods with your own children that differ from the department's philosophical position as stated in the Discipline Policy, problems are likely to occur. If you use swats with your three-year-old, this would not be an appropriate technique with a foster child. This can trigger resentment, anger and competition between the children. The techniques in the Discipline Policy have proven to be effective in helping all children learn to control their own behavior and also in contributing to a more harmonious family environment. Therefore, you are encouraged to implement these practices for the entire family.

- *Why might it be difficult for foster children to trust adults and feel loved?*





PUNISHMENT vs. DISCIPLINE

Punishment implies the threat or use of power and/or fear to change inappropriate behavior. Punishment relies on external force. Punishment is a behavior designed to stop a behavior. Discipline is training intended to produce a specified pattern of behavior. Discipline is a teaching process through which the child learns to develop and maintain the self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem and orderly conduct necessary to assume responsibilities, make daily living decisions and live according to accepted levels of social behavior.

In other words, our goal is not to control but to encourage self-control. We want children to be cooperative and self-directed, yet how often do we hear parents say things like: "Don't you ever listen? I told you not to do that. I'm busy, leave me alone. ", etc. These statements do not make children feel good about themselves or feel like cooperating. Even as adults, our self-esteem is affected when people put us off, put us down, ignore us, etc.

Put yourself in this next situation as a way to identify how a child might feel. You have been on your new job for three days. You are not sure if you are completing a particular form correctly even though someone had previously gone over it with you. How do you feel if:

- You ask your boss and he says, "I'm too busy, leave me alone."
- You ask the person at the next desk and she says, "We already told you how to do this, maybe you can't handle this job."
- You ask the person next to you and she says, "It took me forever to get this one straight when I was new. Let's review it."
- You ask
- r boss and he says, "How can I help?"

Goals of Misbehavior

The child's faulty belief	<i>I belong only when I am being noticed</i>
The child' goal is:	Attention
What behaviors might you observe?	Repetitive, obnoxious, annoying behaviors such as making noises, interrupting when parent is on the phone, kicking an object such as back of car seat, etc.
As a parent, how would you feel and react?	Feel: annoyed Reaction: tendency to remind and coax
How might the child respond to your attempts to correct the behavior?	Temporarily stops the behavior. Later resumes same behavior or disturbs in another way.
What are some alternatives you could use?	Ignore misbehavior when possible. Give attention for positive behavior when child is not making a bid for it. Realize that reminding, punishing, rewarding, and coaxing are undue attention.





Goals of Misbehavior

The child's belief:	<i>I belong only when I am in control or am boss, or when I am proving no one can boss me!</i>
The child's goal:	Power
What behaviors might you observe?	Being late for school or any activity, eating slowly or not at all, etc.
As a parent, how would you feel and react?	Feel: Anger, provoked as if one is threatened Reaction: Tendency to fight or give in.
How might the child respond to your attempts to correct the behavior?	Active or passive-aggressive misbehavior is intensified, or child submits with "defiant compliance."
What are some alternatives you could use?	Withdraw from conflict. Help child see how to use power constructively by appealing for child's help and enlisting cooperation. Realize that fighting or giving in only increases the child's desire for power.

The child's belief:	<i>I belong only by hurting others as I feel hurt. I cannot be loved.</i>
The child's goal:	Revenge
What behaviors might you observe?	Destroying the property of others Hurting people or animals
As a parent, how would you feel and react?	Feeling: Deeply hurt Reaction: Tendency to retaliate or get even
How might the child respond to your attempts to correct the behavior?	Seeks further revenge by intensifying misbehavior or choosing another weapon.
What are some alternatives you could use?	Avoid feeling hurt. Avoid punishment and retaliation. Build trusting relationships, convince child that she or he is loved.

The child's belief:	<i>I belong by convincing others not to expect anything from me. I am unable. I am helpless.</i>
The child's goal:	Display of Inadequacy
What behaviors might you observe?	Not willing to try new tasks Saying "I'll mess up" or "I can't".
As a parent, how would you feel and react?	Feeling: Despair – "I give up." Reaction: Tendency to agree that nothing can be done.
How might the child respond to your attempts to correct the behavior?	Passively responds or fails to respond to whatever is done. Shows no improvement.
What are some alternatives you could use?	Stop all criticism. Encourage any positive attempt, no matter how small; focus on assets. Above all, don't be hooked into pity, and don't give up.





Goals of Positive Behavior

The child's belief:	<i>I belong by contributing</i>
The child's goal:	Attention, involvement, and contribution
What behaviors might you observe?	Helps and volunteers; playing well with pets; helping with chores even in a very small way; combing his/her own hair well.
How would you encourage the positive goals?	Let the child know that the contribution counts and you appreciate it.

The child's belief:	<i>I can decide and be responsible for my behavior</i>
The child's goal:	Power, autonomy, and responsibility for own behavior
What behaviors might you observe?	Shows self-discipline; does own work; Is resourceful; parent gives choices such as three outfits to choose from; helping decide on menu; help set rules and consequences for family.
How would you encourage positive goals?	Encourage child's decision-making. Let the child experience both positive and negative outcomes. Express confidence in the child.

The child's belief:	<i>I am interested in cooperating</i>
The child's goal:	Justice and fairness
What behaviors might you observe?	Returns kindness for hurt; ignores belittling comments; adjusting to a change in plans; needs to be reinforced even when seen in very small ways
How would you encourage positive goals?	Let child know you appreciate her or his interest in cooperating

The child's belief:	<i>I can decide to withdrawn from conflict</i>
The child's goal:	Withdrawal from conflict, refusal to fight, and acceptance of other's opinions
What behaviors might you observe?	Ignores provocations; withdraws from power contest to decide own behavior; ignores other's negative comments; walks away
How would you encourage positive goals?	Recognize child's effort to act maturely





Statement from the DCS Discipline Guidelines

Children in foster care are to be disciplined, not punished. Discipline techniques help a child develop and maintain self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem and orderly conduct.

The purpose of discipline is to educate. Children are able to learn from their mistakes in a safe environment. Therefore, foster parents shall:

Develop rules that set the limits of acceptable behavior in the family. These rules will be clearly explained and applied based on the child's past experiences, personality and age as appropriate to each child in the family.

The purpose of a rule is to create a consistent, safe, more comfortable environment. This approach goes beyond mere control of behavior.

There are five factors to consider when developing rules. Rules must be:

1. Specific
2. Reasonable
3. Enforceable
4. Stated positively
5. Necessary

Specific Rules:

Rules are specific when they are stated in such a way that they communicate precisely what is expected. In other words, both you and the child will know the moment that the rule is broken. A well-specified rule does not allow any possibility for misinterpretation. Time limits may help to make a rule more specific.

Which is the specific rule? Circle the letter of your choice..

- a. Bedrooms are to be thoroughly cleaned once a week.*
- b. Bedrooms cleaned every Saturday morning before 10 o'clock. Checklist:*
 - *Beds made*
 - *All dirty clothes put in the laundry basket all furniture dusted and polished carpet vacuumed*
 - *All toys put in the toy box*

Write a rule about cleaning the bathroom that is specific.





Reasonable Rules:

Good rules are also reasonable. Can the youngster comply with the rule? Does the rule concern behavior which is under the control of the child? Rule "b," under D above, is very well specified, but is unreasonable for a three-year-old. A more reasonable expectation for this very young child would be "All dirty clothes put in the laundry basket," and/or "All toys put in the toy box."

Which rule is more reasonable for a 12-year-old? Circle the letter of your choice.

- a You must study for one hour every school night.*
- b You must have all "A's" on your next report card.*

Write a rule about helping in the kitchen that is reasonable for a six-year-old.

Enforceable Rules:

Rules are worthless if they are not enforceable. All rules can be broken. Most rules will be! A good question to ask is: Will I know when this rule is broken without depending on other people's testimony? In other words, can the parent monitor this behavior?

Which rule is enforceable? Circle the letter of your choice.

- a You may never associate with Betty again.*
- b You may not bring Betty to our home.*

Rewrite the following rules to make them enforceable:

- a You cannot use the telephone for a week.*
- b You cannot eat chocolate.*

Positively Stated Rules:

As stated previously, it is very important to emphasize the positive at all times, and we can do this in making rules. When making rules, state the behavior you want to see rather than the behavior you don't want to see.

Change the following rules so that they are stated positively.

- a Dirty clothes should not be on the floor.*
- b Don't leave the door open.*
- c Don't arrive home after midnight.*
- d Never leave the property without letting someone know where you are going.*

Necessary Rules:

Rules should make life easier for you, not more difficult. If your rules are specific, enforceable, reasonable, positively stated and as few as possible, you will be making it easier on yourself. The rule should leave the choices to the child rather than putting the parent in the position of constantly monitoring compliance to the rules.

Consistency is a very important factor in all adult/child relationships and a few, well-planned rules can help you become more consistent because it is easier to enforce a few rules rather than many. Too many rules can make everyone's life more complicated. Rules should be related to things that are real priorities





to your family and should put the responsibility on the child, not on the parent. Concentrate on those few vital rules.

Indicate whether you feel these behaviors are:

- A **red** behavior (dangerous, destructive or illegal and must be stopped)
- A **yellow** behavior (have negative consequences under some circumstances), or
- A **green** behavior (behaviors where the child can learn from the natural consequences or modeling).

BEHAVIOR	<i>Red, Yellow, or Green?</i>
<i>Using foul language</i>	
<i>Taking things that belong to others without permission</i>	
<i>Telling a lie or fib</i>	
<i>Not letting anyone know where you will be</i>	
<i>Not making your bed</i>	
<i>Not taking out the garbage</i>	
<i>Not doing homework</i>	
<i>Stealing</i>	
<i>Harming an animal</i>	
<i>Refusing to eat the food served</i>	
<i>Wetting the bed</i>	
<i>Hoarding food</i>	
<i>Back talk to parent</i>	
<i>Self-abuse such as cutting or pulling out own hair</i>	

The behaviors that you have identified as red or yellow will then need rules developed related to them. This is one way to identify which rules are necessary in your family.

Review of the rules: Let's look at some of the rules in your family.

Write three of the rules in your home:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Statement from the DCS Discipline Guidelines:

Develop fair, reasonable, age- or developmentally-appropriate and consistent consequences, related to the offense, for implementing these rules. These consequences will also be communicated to each child.

Focus on looking at the age and developmental stage of a child when developing consequences. This is an aspect that needs to be looked at carefully when developing any technique or practice. Children in foster





care often function developmentally below their chronological age and this needs to be taken into consideration when developing consequences.

Statement from the DCS Discipline Guidelines:

Share with the team members any concerns or difficulties about disciplining a foster child, so constructive ideas and/or plans can be agreed upon.

If you get advice which is counter to the policy from another professional, call the case manager and licensing specialist and discuss it. For instance, if a therapist, psychologist, teacher, etc. should suggest that you spank the child or lock the child in his/her room, you need to report this to the licensing specialist and the child's case manager or supervisor as these are prohibited practices

What people might you use as a resource if you had concerns or difficulties in disciplining a foster child? Which behaviors might you have concerns about? Who might you contact in each case?

Age of children	Behaviors	Contact Person
Preschoolers		
School-aged		
Teenagers		





Statement for DCS Discipline Guidelines – Acceptable Discipline Methods

Discipline should be communicated in such a way as to help the child develop self-control and assume responsibility for his or her own behavior. Individual children will respond to different methods based on age, personality and life experiences.

Some of the discipline techniques we will review may be new to you. As you practice them, they will become more comfortable and part of your routine, but expect to feel some awkwardness and discomfort in learning new techniques. The examples used in discussing various techniques are designed as learning tools and do not necessarily reflect the range or severity of the behaviors which may occur in your home.

When faced with a misbehavior that you feel needs to be changed, first ask yourself these questions:

- Why might the child be behaving this way?
- Why does it bother me?
- What are the long-range consequences?
- What can I do in the short run?

If after asking yourself the four questions above, you decide that something needs to be done, one of the following methods might be helpful, depending on the particular child and the particular misbehavior.

Natural Consequences: allowing the child to experience the results of his or her behavior by not intervening. If Susie forgets her softball glove, she will be unable to try out for the team.

Natural consequences are those that occur without the parent's intervention. Since your intervention is not required, allowing these consequences to influence misbehaviors whenever possible should be considered. However, there are times when we do not want to wait for natural consequences to occur. For example, if the natural consequences are dangerous or harmful to the child (*the child playing in the street could be hit by a car*), the consequences would take too long (*the bike left outside is rusting*) or the child does not care (*how dirty his/her room is*), in these cases, if we want to intervene, we might consider logical consequences.

Logical Consequences: imposing consequences which are as directly related as possible to the inappropriate behavior. If Johnnie broke the window, he can do extra chores to earn the money to pay for the new window.

- **Logical Consequences** are those that the parent sets and are directly connected to the behavior. To be effective, the logical connection between the behavior and the consequence must be apparent to the child.
- **Artificial Consequences** are those that the parent sets but which have no specific connection to the behavior. The issue here is that the parent wants the behavior to change.





Consequences for each behavior:

Behavior	Natural	Logical	Artificial
Leaving bike in front yard		Loss of use of the bike for a day	
Forgetting lunch	May not get to eat lunch		
Playing in street	Dangerous	Can only play outside when a parent is there for a specific period of time	
Stealing candy from a store	Getting caught	Returning it to the store and apologizing	
Not cleaning room	Not likely to be one	Is there one?	TV or games restricted, etc.
Completing chores on time	Feel positive and capable	Parent expresses appreciation	Earn extra privileges
Breaking the TV remote	Learn to use the controls on the TV or no TV	Child does extra jobs to replace remote	

Whenever a natural consequence is appropriate, use it! It requires no intervention on the parent's part and is an opportunity for the child to learn. If natural consequences are dangerous or would take too long to be effective and the behavior needs to be changed, then use logical consequences for learning. Then, only if natural and logical consequences are not appropriate and it is still important to change the behavior, consider artificial consequences. By using natural, logical and artificial consequences, the child learns what consequences are and how to make decisions in terms of the consequences.

At times, there is a fine line between punishment and logical consequences. Your matter-of-fact tone of voice, positive attitude and willingness to accept the child's decision are essential characteristics of logical consequences. No matter how logical an action may seem to you, if your tone is harsh, your attitude overbearing and your demands absolute, your action is punitive.





REMEMBER: CONSEQUENCES TAKE TIME. PATIENCE PLUS PRACTICE EQUALS PROGRESS.

Mistakes should be seen as opportunities to learn. Teach children to learn from their mistakes rather than suffer from them. This can be done by asking the child the right questions:

- What did you do?
- What happened then?
- What could you have done differently?
- Are you willing to try that next time?

This sequence of questions helps the youngster focus on the behavior and explore possible alternatives. It is very important that you guide your child's thinking without doing the thinking for him or her.

Encouragement/Praise: identifying specific behaviors and strengths that encourage the child to develop and increase self-esteem. "That model car looks great! I like the color you chose. You did a job you can be proud of!" Words of praise and encouragement should:

- Show the child that you value and accept him/her. Love the child for what he/she is, not what he/she does.
- Point out the positive aspects of his/her behavior.
- Show faith, trust and confidence in the child's abilities and judgments.
- Recognize efforts and improvements.
- Show appreciation for contributions.

You have this method at your disposal at all times and should use it frequently to shape behavior. It takes minimal time and effort and it is **very** powerful. When communicating with children, we need to be careful to distinguish between the deed and the doer. The following suggestions may be helpful:

A Way with Words

Descriptive praise:

You do a good job of ...

I like the way you ...

Phrases that show confidence:

I'm sure you can straighten this out by yourself, but if you need help, you know where to find me.

Knowing you, I'm sure you'll do fine.

I think you can do it.

If you keep working, you'll get it.

Phrases that show appreciation:

Thanks that helped a lot.

It was thoughtful of you to ...

You can help us by ...

Phrases that point out strengths and improvements:

It looks like you worked hard at ...

You have really improved in ...

Look at the progress you have made in ...





Corrective comments:

We love you, but we don't like what you did.

So you made a mistake (*got in trouble*); now what can you do about it? If you are not satisfied, what could you do differently?

Words about feelings:

It sounds like you feel ...

I can understand how you feel, but I'm sure you can handle it.

How do you feel about it?

Freedom phrases:

If you want to.

If that's really what you like.

You can decide that for yourself.

It's entirely your choice.

Your decision will be fine with me.

Door openers:

I'd be interested in your opinion about ...

Would you like to talk about it?

This seems important to you.

You have a right to express your ideas (*feelings*).

Notice and acknowledge children when they're being cooperative, helpful, etc.

List three positive adjectives that describe you:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Positive Communication: using language in positive terms to describe what you want, rather than what you don't want. "Walk around the pool," rather than "Stop that running!"

Change the following statements from negative to positive:

- a *You can't play with your friends until you take out the trash.*
- b *All your chores have to be done this week or you can't go to the movies with the family.*

Active Listening: listening with understanding and then clarifying the statement and responding to the feelings. "It sounds like your teacher really scolded you in class and you must have felt really embarrassed by that."

Example #1

- *Child:(crying) Jimmy took my truck away from me.*
- *Parent: You sure feel bad about that. You don't like it when he does that.*
- *Child: That's right!*





Example #2

Child: Dad, when you were a boy what did you like in a girl? What made you really like a girl?

Parent: Sounds like you're wondering how to get boys to like you, is that right?

Child: Yeah. For some reason they don't seem to like me and I don't know why.

Example #3

Child: I hate school and I'm not going anymore!

Parent: You must have had a really rough day at school today and don't want to feel like that again.

Example #4

Child: You're not my mom, I don't have to do what you say!

Parent: You are right, I am not your mother and you really wish you were able to be with her.

If, when using active listening, you find the child has a problem and is willing to talk about it, use the following steps of problem-solving to encourage the child to develop a plan of action:

1. Use active listening to clarify the problem.
2. Explore alternatives through brainstorming. Identify as many possible solutions as you and the child can think of. "Shall we look at some things you could do about this?"
3. Assist the child in choosing a solution. "Which idea do you think is the best one?"
4. Discuss probable results of the decision. "What do you think will happen if you do that?"
5. Obtain a commitment. "What have you decided to do?"
6. Allow a time for evaluation or plan a time for evaluation if the particular problem requires such. "Anytime you want to talk about this again, I'd be glad to listen."

Recognize that an upset person is experiencing internal conflict. An upset person is not a good listener. It sometimes pays to wait a while before talking.

"I" Message: communicating by phrasing in the first person. "I feel worried and upset when I don't know where my children are:"

"I" Messages include the following steps:

1. Describe the behavior (*don't blame*) — "When you fight with your brother..."
2. State your feeling — "I get angry"
3. State the consequences — "Because someone might get hurt."

This includes the following pattern:

- Behavior — "When you..."
- Feeling — "I feel..."
- Consequence — "because..."

What "I" Message could you use in the following situation?

1. *You have just washed your car. Your child makes a design on it with muddy hand prints.*
2. *Your child forgets to feed the dog.*
3. *Your child comes home from a friend's house an hour later than agreed upon.*

Incentives/Rewards/Motivators: providing short-term incentives that help the child focus on desired behavior. If the child completes all the chores on his or her "job list" this week, he/she can go out for an ice cream cone on Saturday. (*The younger the child, the shorter the period of time should be.*)

This is an entry-level tool and should not continue for long periods of time. To be effective, incentives need to change often. The parent needs to monitor the incentives and diminish or eliminate them as the appropriate behavior becomes a habit. A lot of positive verbal communication about the appropriate





behavior should accompany the incentives. Eventually, those verbal reinforcers and then the child's internal verbal reinforcers will sustain the behavior. It is important to ask the child for input on incentives.

Contracting: negotiating with the child to create a written mutual agreement that provides incentives which help the child focus on a desired behavior. This is particularly appropriate with older children. If Tom passes all his subjects with at least a "C" grade, then he will have more time for recreation next semester.

Behavioral contracts help young people develop concrete goals which they can be expected to attain. They help to motivate and also serve as a reference point for measuring progress. It may be helpful to involve the case manager as the mediator in developing a contract between the foster parents and the young person.

When formulating a contract for behavioral change, it is essential to go through the following steps:

- Select one or two behaviors that you want to work on first.
- Describe those behaviors so that they may be observed and counted.
- Identify incentives that will help provide motivation to do well.
- Locate people who can help you keep track of the behaviors being performed and who can perhaps give out the incentives.
- Write the contract so that everyone can understand it.
- Collect data.
- Troubleshoot the system if the data does not show improvement.
- Rewrite the contract (*whether or not the data show improvement*).
- Continue to monitor, troubleshoot, and rewrite until there is improvement in the behavior that was troublesome.
- Select another behavior to work on.

When the contract is put on paper, it should include the following items:

- Date the agreement begins, ends, or is renegotiated.
- Behavior(s) targeted for change.
- Amount and kind of reinforcers to be used.
- Schedule of reinforcer's delivery.
- Signatures of all those involved.
- Schedule for review of progress.

And optionally, but strongly, suggested:

- Bonus clause for sustained or exceptional performance.
- Statement of the penalties that will be imposed if the specified behavior is not performed.

Redirecting: substituting an acceptable behavior for an unacceptable one.

"Carol, you can't play with Bob's stereo, but let's go find your crayons and some paper, so that you can make a picture." Many foster children have feelings of anger; if the way they are acting out those feelings is not appropriate, you need to redirect them to a behavior that is an appropriate way to express that feeling.



How is it okay for children to express angry feelings in your family?

Complete the following statements to redirect a child:

1. *In this family, it is not okay to hit people, but you can*
2. *It is not acceptable to throw things in the house, but you can*

Role-modeling: showing by example the behavior the parent wants from the child. If one shows respect for the child's property and privacy, the child will learn to respect the property and privacy of others.

Answer the following questions:

1. *How can you as a parent role-model sharing?*
2. *How can you role-model speaking kindly to others?*
3. *How can you role-model being truthful?*

Time-out: removing the child from the situation (*usually 1 or 2 minutes for each year of the child's age*). A specific chair or place in the room should be identified for the child as the "time-out" place.

This method can be punishing if the parent's attitude is punitive. The parent should remain calm and firm when using "time-out." This does not work with all kids and should be used with caution, not overused.

Using "time-out" alone will not work for very long. Other methods need to be used at the same time, such as observing to identify what brings about the behavior that requires "timeout" and developing a plan related to that, acknowledging when the child is behaving appropriately, etc.

Removing Privileges: losing a privilege which is related to the unacceptable behavior. The loss should be of short-term duration. Losing the use of the phone, time with friends, TV time, etc. could be used depending on what is important to the particular child.

The parent's attitude here is important also. **THE INTENT IS TO TEACH, NOT TO PUNISH.** If the child feels trapped by the removal of privileges, the effect is lost. Also, if the parent is trapped by supervising the loss of privileges, as in grounding, the effect is lost.

Respond to the following situations:

1. *The child has broken a rule in your home where the consequence is losing some TV time.*
 - a *How long might be appropriate for a five-year-old? _____*
 - b *How long for a ten-year-old? _____*
2. *The child's consequence is losing time with her friends.*
 - a *How long might be appropriate for a six-year-old? _____*
 - b *How long for a ten-year-old? _____*
 - c *How long for a 15-year-old? _____*

Ignore the Behavior: withhold attention if the child is using the inappropriate only to get the parents attention. Behaviors that can be ignored without harm to anyone or anything are not reinforced and may stop over time.



Hold a Family Meeting: Get all the family members together to discuss a concern. This helps children learn to talk about their concerns and for logical solutions to be developed. Family meetings show children that they are an important part of the family.

Unacceptable Methods

The following are unacceptable methods:

- No child shall be subjected to verbal abuse or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family. There shall be no name-calling, labeling, threats of removal, or other forms of emotional abuse.
- Food, water and sleep shall not be withheld for disciplinary purposes, as discipline shall not be connected with functions of living.
- The child shall not be subjected to cruel, severe, unusual or corporal (*physical*) punishment inflicted in any manner upon the body of the child with a hand or instrument (*paddles, belts, cords, rulers, sticks, etc.*). Corporal (*physical*) punishment includes, but is not limited to, hitting, slapping, spanking, striking, pinching, shaking, yanking, kicking, hair pulling, biting, etc.
- Actions that are cruel, severe, depraved or humiliating.
- The child shall not be deprived of visits, phone calls or mail from family members as a form of discipline, when the case manager has identified these contacts as appropriate.
- The child shall not be confined, locked up or locked out of the foster home.
- Required to remain silent or be isolated for time periods that are not developmentally appropriate.
- The child shall not be deprived of his or her personal allowance (*small payments for reimbursement of damages or loss may be established in consultation with the case manager and the child.*)

VIOLATIONS OF DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

It is recognized that many of the children placed in foster care may be difficult to discipline and may have serious problems. If a situation occurs where inappropriate punishment is used, the foster parent is expected to notify the licensing specialist and the case manager by phone in addition to completing the written Significant Incident form (FC-122). This is the form used to record accidental injuries, bruises, runaways, unauthorized visits, and unusual or new behaviors. Every attempt to discuss the situation and develop constructive plans will occur.

In situations where a report or allegation of a violation of the Discipline Guidelines occurs, an inquiry surrounding the circumstances will follow. Recommendations resulting from the inquiry are made on a case-by-case basis and may include:

1. Additional education for the foster family;
2. Participation in a counseling program;
3. Corrective action plan;
4. Licensing changes (*number of children, age of children, type of cases, etc.*); or
5. Revocation of license or charges of child abuse filed against the family.

Look at the following examples and decide which discipline methods might be useful in each situation:

1. Tommy, age nine, dumps all the shampoo down the drain when taking a shower.

Possible methods: I messages, help him understand and express his feelings, logical consequence of cleaning up if needed, contract for restitution/repayment, go along to make





next purchase, etc. Depending upon your assessment of the reason and feeling behind the behavior document it and decide if it needs to be reported to the case manager.

2. Four-year-old Billy hits or bites other children, both younger and older, when he wants his own way.

Possible methods: Time-out quickly with attention given to the other child, I messages, redirecting, praise when doing okay, family meeting, help him understand and express feelings, etc. Document it and report it to the case manager to determine if a behavioral health assessment is warranted.

3. You walk in your five-year-old daughter's bedroom and find your ten-year-old foster son with his hand in her panties.

Possible methods: Redirect to house rules about own body, monitor more closely where the child is, make and reinforce rules about closed doors and who can be in wish rooms, role model appropriate behavior by role-playing, etc. A call to the Arizona Child Abuse Hotline needs to be made and report this to case manager. Document it. A behavioral health evaluation may be warranted depending upon any prior history of sexualized behaviors.

4. Twelve-year-old Kim repeatedly lies about having completed her homework and you are getting regular calls from the teachers.

Possible methods: I messages (I feel distrustful), active listening and feedback related to why people might lie, problem-solving, contract with child or set time for doing homework, contract with reward for verification by teacher, monitoring, removing privileges, positive reinforcers when homework is completed, helping her understand and express feelings, etc.

5. Fifteen-year-old Chris throws things and kicks when angry. So far, a door has a hole in it and a window has been broken.

Possible methods: Logical consequences of helping with repairs, I messages, praise appropriate responses, redirecting how anger is okay to express and role-play what is okay, family meeting, help him understand and find appropriate ways to express anger, etc.



Goals of Misbehavior

The child's faulty belief	<i>I belong only when I am being noticed</i>
The child' goal is	Attention
What behaviors might you observe?	Repetitive, obnoxious, annoying behaviors such as making noises, interrupting when parent is on the phone, kicking an object such as back of car seat, etc.
As a parent, how would you feel and react?	Feel – annoyed Reaction – tendency to remind and coax
How might the child respond to your attempts to correct the behavior?	Temporarily stops the behavior. Later resumes same behavior or disturbs in another way.
What are some alternatives you could use?	Ignore misbehavior when possible. Give attention for positive behavior when child is not making a bid for it. Realize that reminding, punishing, rewarding, and coaxing are undue attention.

The child's faulty belief	<i>I belong only when I am in control or am boss, or when I am proving no one can boss me!</i>
The child' goal is	Power
What behaviors might you observe?	Being late for school or any activity, eating slowly or not at all, etc.
As a parent, how would you feel and react?	Feel – Anger, provoked as if one is threatened Reaction - Tendency to fight or give in
How might the child respond to your attempts to correct the behavior?	Active or passive-aggressive misbehavior is intensified, or child submits with “defiant compliance.”
What are some alternatives you could use?	Withdraw from conflict. Help child see how to use power constructively by appealing for child's help and enlisting cooperation. Realize that fighting or giving in only increases the child's desire for power.



Goals of Misbehavior

The child's faulty belief	<i>I belong only by hurting others as I feel hurt. I cannot be loved.</i>
The child' goal is	Revenge
What behaviors might you observe?	Destroying the property of others Hurting people or animals
As a parent, how would you feel and react?	Feeling - Deeply hurt Reaction - Tendency to retaliate or get even
How might the child respond to your attempts to correct the behavior?	Seeks further revenge by intensifying misbehavior or choosing another weapon.
What are some alternatives you could use?	Avoid feeling hurt. Avoid punishment and retaliation. Build trusting relationships, convince child that she or he is loved.

The child's faulty belief	<i>I belong by convincing others not to expect anything from me. I am unable. I am helpless.</i>
The child' goal is	Display of Inadequacy
What behaviors might you observe?	Not willing to try new tasks saying "I'll mess up" or "I can't".
As a parent, how would you feel and react?	Feeling Despair – "I give up." Reaction - Tendency to agree with child that nothing can be done.
How might the child respond to your attempts to correct the behavior?	Passively responds or fails to respond to whatever is done. Shows no improvement.
What are some alternatives you could use?	Stop all criticism. Encourage any positive attempt, no matter how small; focus on assets. Above all, don't be hooked into pity, and don't give up.

Foster parents are one of the most valuable resources that the Department has in providing services to children. They are asked to provide care to children who many times have a wide range of problems. As a result, foster parents are vulnerable to problems developing around their care for children." Due to the difficult care issues in foster care today, an attitude of open communication between foster parents and staff about discipline issues is vital. It is also necessary that the department offer foster parents the opportunity for education and development of skills to provide continuing care and services to foster children. Foster care today is a complex service involving specific guidelines. Effective practice requires that team members support and comply with agency guidelines/policies.





The presentation of a supportive, educational and skill-building attitude about discipline is important. However, if staff and/or foster parents are not open to learning or are unable to effectively comply with the policy, it needs to be recognized that foster care may not be appropriate for them.

Arizona Department of Child Safety DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

A. SCOPE OF GUIDLINES

Most children in the foster care program have experienced patterns of inappropriate punishment, abuse and/or violence in their families. Therefore, issues related to punishment often are confusing for the child. For foster children punishment is often connected to a wide variety of issues such as attention, power, revenge, control, loss of self-esteem, and pain-love.

These guidelines are clarification of the Agency's position on Discipline and Item II.N, of the Agency-Foster Home Agreement (FC-006). It should be read before signing the Agency-Foster home Agreement prior to becoming licensed and when relicensed.

B. PUNISHMENT vs. DISCIPLINE

Punishment implies the threat or use of power and/or fear to change inappropriate behavior. Punishment relies on external forces.

Discipline is a teaching process through which the child learns to develop and maintain the self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem, and orderly conduct necessary to assume responsibilities, make daily living decisions, and live according to accepted levels of social behavior.

C. Guidelines

Children in foster care are to be disciplined, not punished. Discipline techniques help a child develop and maintain self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem and orderly conduct.

The purpose of discipline is to educate. Children are able to learn from their mistakes in a safe environment. Therefore, foster parents shall:

1. Develop rules that set the limits of acceptable behavior in the family. These rules will be clearly explained and applied based on the child's past experiences, personality and age as appropriate to each child in the family.
2. Develop fair, reasonable, age- or developmentally appropriate and consistent consequences, related to the offense, for implementing these rules. These consequences will also be communicated to each child.
3. Share with the team members any concerns or difficulties about disciplining a foster child, so constructive ideas and/or plans can be agreed upon.





D. ACCEPTABLE DISCIPLINE METHODS

Discipline should be communicated in such a way as to help the child develop self-control and assume responsibility for his or her own behavior. Individual children will respond to different methods based on age, personality and life experiences. Suggested methods which might be used are:

1. **Natural Consequences**: allowing the child to experience the results of his or her behavior by not intervening. If Susie forgets her softball glove, she will be unable to try out for the team.
2. **Logical Consequences**: imposing consequences which are as directly related as possible to the inappropriate behavior. If Johnnie broke the window, he can do extra chores to earn the money to pay for the new window.
3. **Encouragement/Praise**: identifying specific behaviors and strengths that encourage the child to develop and increase self-esteem. "That model car looks great! I like the color you chose. You did a job you can be proud of!"
4. **Positive Communication**: using language in positive terms to describe what you want, rather than what you don't want. "Walk around the pool" rather than "Stop that running!"
5. **Active Listening**: listening with understanding and then clarifying the statement and responding to the feelings. It sounds like your teacher really scolded you in class and you must have felt really embarrassed by that."
6. **"I" Message**: communicating by phrasing in the first person. I feel worried and upset when I don't know where my children are."
7. **Incentives/Rewards/Motivation**: providing short term incentives that help the child focus on desired behavior. If the child completes all the chores on his "job list" this week, he can go out for an ice cream cone on Saturday. (The younger the child, the shorter the period of time before an incentive or reward should be given.)
8. **Contracting**: negotiating with the child to create a written mutual agreement that provides incentives to help the child focus on a desired behavior. This is particularly appropriate with older children. If Tom passes all his subjects with at least a "C" grade, then he will have more time for recreation next semester.
9. **Redirecting**: substituting an acceptable behavior for an unacceptable one. Carol, you can't play with Bob's stereo, but let's go find your crayons and some paper, so that you can make a picture."
10. **Role Modeling**: showing by example the behavior the parent wants from the child. If one shows respect for the child's property and privacy, the child will learn to respect the property and privacy of others.
11. **Time-out**: removing the child from the situation (usually 1 or 2 minutes for each year of the child's age). A specific chair or place in the room should be identified for the child as the "time-out" place.





12. **Removing Privileges:** losing a privilege which is related to the unacceptable behavior. The loss should be of short-term duration. Losing the use of the phone, time with friends, TV time, etc. could be used depending on what is important to the particular child.

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