

## Using Consequences to Build Skills

### Types of Consequences

In truth, all of your reactions, positive or negative, to your children's behavior is a consequence.

- If you smile broadly when your child cleans up the kitchen without being asked, that is a consequence.
- If you are in a bad mood because you once again find food left out on the kitchen counter, that too is a consequence.

### Natural Consequences

- Natural Consequences, happen automatically without any action on your part.

You can use Natural Consequences whenever the result is not morally, physically, or emotionally damaging. They are highly effective because as the saying goes: **"Experience is the best teacher."**

### Logical Consequences:

This works well when there is a specific issue and the consequences are clear.



Using consequences helps you to impose discipline in a way that teaches your children responsibility and accountability and encourages them to look inward to learn how they can do things differently in the future.

Typically, we tend to get caught in the emotion and make harsh plans:

*"You never clean up your room I am giving all your toys away."*

*"You are grounded for a month!"*

When we do this we tend not to follow through with the consequence and end up feeling that consequences never work.

#### Keep your child's Self Esteem intact:

When we use consequences we tend to link them to a behaviour we want to change. We don't want to tear our children down in these situations. We want hold them accountable for their behaviour and explain the expectations. We want them to get the message that:

"Mistakes happen and help us learn", "I believe you can do better", "This is what I expect of you."

#### Keep the Connection:

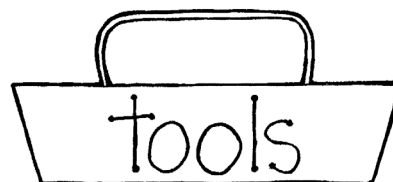
When we are setting or following through with a consequence it is important to maintain your connection with your child. Your relationship with them is the most important. We want our children to come to us when they need support and help. If our children do not have a good connection with us it hurts the relationship and stalls the learning process completely.

#### Goals of Consequences:

- restore safety
- calm things down,
- reinforce rules,
- teach your children,
- help them find a way to make amends.

#### Tools:

- Ignoring
- Distraction
- Reminders
- Supervision
- Monitoring
- Encouragement
- Rewards
- Incentive
- Choices
- Teaching
- "I" messages
- Negotiable rules
- Problem solving



- It is **best to use the method that will be the least restrictive** and give your children the greatest opportunity to learn from the situation.
- If discipline is too harsh, children will spend their energy being angry at you, rather than considering what they did wrong.
- Throughout all of discipline, you are trying to teach your children, help them assume responsibility, and internalize your rules and values, while maintaining a healthy relationship with them.

[www.centerforparentingeducation.org](http://www.centerforparentingeducation.org)