
Discipline vs Abuse

| Discipline | Abuse |
|---|---|
| Consequences are logically related to the misbehaviour | consequences are illogical; only an arbitrary connection |
| Involves no judgment of the child/youth; only deals with the misbehaviour | Judges both child and behaviour: "You're bad, stupid, worthless, no good...." |
| Concerned only with the present situation | Deals with the past and adds up misbehaviour |
| Effective listening and negotiation take place | Blocks to listening occur; anger and resentment often present |
| Develops intrinsic motivation and self-discipline | Depends on extrinsic motivation |
| No submission or humiliation | Requires submission and humiliation |
| Freedom of choice with limits | No alternatives or choices |
| Consequences are acceptable | Punishment is tolerated and hated |
| Thoughtful and deliberate | Impulsive |
| Represents no threat to child's/youth's well-being | More severe than warranted |

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| Uses action | Uses coercion |
| Child/youth feels important | Child/youth feels belittled |
| Proactive | Reactive |
| Child/youth accepts responsibility for child's actions | Adult takes responsibility for child's reactions |
| Adult disengages from negative involvement with child/youth | Adult remains involved in negative interaction |
| Based on concept of equality and respect between children and adults | Based on superior-inferior/ dominancecontrol relationship between children and adults |
| Implies that the child/youth is capable of problem-solving | Implies that only adults can solve the child's problems |
| Demonstrates love, affection | Demonstrates hostility |

Reference: Fairholm, J., (Ed.) (2003). *Hearing the hurt, changing the future*, 2nd edition. Vancouver, BC, Canada: The Canadian Red Cross Society.

For more information: *RespectED: Violence and Abuse Prevention* at www.redcross.ca