



ENHANCING EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This research concentrated on how discipline is been enhanced in the elementary schools, and how the problem encounter in the classroom could be solved. Excessive control by parent, too many rules and the treat of corporal punishment been melted on these children can be corrected. This research therefore sought for solution and alternative ways of satisfying children's needs, since discipline is believed to be the bed rock of any organization both collectively and individually. This research adopted a survey approach as the method to gather information for this research. The finding of this research shows that there are positive responses to discipline in the schools. The research discover that there in growing evidence that a positive and effective school wide approach to discipline in an economical way for schools to make use of available resources it was recommended that once developed discipline policing must be communicated to all staff, students, parents and community.

Introduction

The word discipline means to impart knowledge and skill – to teach. However, it is often equated with punishment and control. There is a great deal of controversy about the appropriate ways to discipline children, and parents are often confused about effective ways to set limits and instill self-

control in their child. In medical and secular literature, there is great diversity of opinion about the short-term and long-term effects of various disciplinary methods, especially the use of disciplinary spanking. This statement reviews the issues concerning childhood discipline and offers practical guidelines for physicians to use in counseling parents about effective discipline. (Bolarinwa 2012) The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends that physicians take an anticipatory approach to discipline, including asking questions about techniques used in the home. Physicians should actively counsel parents about discipline and should strongly discourage the use of spanking.

Goals of effective discipline

Discipline is the structure that helps the child fit into the real world happily and effectively. It is the foundation for the development of the child's own self-discipline. Effective and positive discipline is about teaching and guiding children, not just forcing them to obey. As with all other interventions aimed at pointing out unacceptable behavior, the child should always know that the parent loves and supports him or her. Trust between parent and child should be maintained and constantly built upon. Parenting is the task of raising children and providing them with the necessary material and emotional care to further their physical, emotional, cognitive and social development. (Alabi 2011) Discipline children are one of the most important yet difficult responsibilities of parenting, and there are no shortcuts. The physician must stress that teaching about limits and acceptable behaviour takes time and a great deal of energy. The hurried pace of today's society can be an obstacle to effective discipline. The goal of effective discipline is to foster acceptable and appropriate behavior in the child and to raise emotionally mature adults. A disciplined person is able to postpone pleasure, is considerate of the needs of others, is assertive without being aggressive or hostile, and can tolerate discomfort when necessary. (Alabi 2011) states that the foundation for effective discipline is respect. The child should be able to respect the parent's authority and also the rights of others. Inconsistency in applying discipline will not help a child respect his or her parents. Harsh discipline such as humiliation (verbal abuse, shouting, and name-calling) will also make it hard for the child to respect and trust the parent. Thus, effective discipline means discipline applied with mutual respect in a firm, fair, reasonable and consistent way. The goal is to protect the child from danger, help the child learn self-discipline, and develop a healthy conscience and an internal sense of responsibility and control. It should also instill values. One of the major obstacles to achieving these goals is inconsistency, which will confuse any child, regardless of developmental age. It can be particularly hard for parents to be consistent role models. Telling children to "Do as I say, but not as I do" does not achieve effective discipline. Parental disagreements about child-rearing techniques, as well as cultural differences between

parents, often result in consistent disciplining methods. The physician needs to be mindful of these challenges and suggest steps that parents can take to resolve these differences. It is important that in teaching effective discipline, physicians do not impose their own agendas on the families they counsel. A balanced, objective view should be used to provide resources, and the goal should be to remain objective. This means using principles supported by academic, peer-reviewed literature. This is particularly important when dealing with controversial issues such as disciplinary spanking.

Developmental Considerations

Regardless of the developmental stage and age of the child, some basic principals can help guide the physician: The purpose of effective discipline is to help children organize themselves, internalize rules and acquire appropriate behavior patterns. The temperaments of the child and the parents, particularly in the context of the socio-cultural milieu, require flexibility. Children with special needs and developmental delay requires additional adjustments and problem-solving. Effective discipline does not instill shame, negative guilt, and sense of abandonment or a loss of trust. Instead, it instills a sense of greater trust between the child and the parent. Anticipatory guidance offers physicians an opportunity for prevention, to discuss the type of discipline according to the child's developmental age. Undesirable behaviour are best avoided through prevention and by building supportive structures that include clear, consistent rules. Physicians should take care to provide anticipatory guidance and appropriate support to parents who are under stress, isolated, disadvantaged or impaired. Physicians should be familiar with the resources in the family's community. Physicians should consider the role of the parent in influencing the child's misbehavior. For example, a depressed caregiver who is influencing the behavior and development of a child may require referral to another appropriate professional. Infants need a schedule around feeding, sleeping and play or interaction with others. The schedule helps regulate autonomic functions and provides a sense of predictability and safety. Infants should not be over stimulated. They should be allowed to develop some tolerance to frustration and the ability to self-soothe. Discipline should not involved techniques such as time-out, spanking or consequences.

At the early toddler stage, it is normal and necessary for toddlers to experiment with control of the physical world and with the capacity to exercise their own will versus that of others. Consequently, parental tolerance is recommended. Disciplinary interventions are necessary to ensure the toddler's safety, limit aggression, and prevent destructive behavior. Removing the child or the object with a firm "No," or another very brief verbal explanation ("No - hot"), and redirecting the child to an alternative activity usually works. The parent should remain with the child at

such times to supervise and ensure that the behavior does not recur, and also to assure the child that the parent is not withdrawing love. Early toddlers are very susceptible to fears of abandonment and should not be kept in time-out away from the parent. However, occasionally, a parent may become so frustrated with the child that he or she needs a period of separation from the child. Early toddlers are not verbal enough to understand or mature enough to respond to verbal prohibitions. Therefore, verbal directions and explanations are unreliable forms of discipline for early toddlers.

Example: The toddler wants to play with a breakable glass object on a hard kitchen floor. Remove the child and the object and redirect the toddler's attention to a more appropriate activity such as playing with a ball in another room. The parent should remain with the child.

The struggle for mastery, independence and self-assertion continues. The child's frustration at realizing limitations in such struggles leads to temper outbursts. This does not necessarily express anger or willful defiance. The caregiver should have empathy, realizing the meaning of these manifestations. At the same time, the caregiver should continue to supervise, set limits and routines, and have realistic expectations of the child's achievement capabilities. Knowing the child's pattern of reactions helps prevent situations in which frustrations flare up. When the child regains control, the parent should give some simple verbal explanation and reassurance. The child should be redirected to some other activity, preferably away from the scene of the tantrum. The toddler cannot regulate behavior based on verbal prohibitions or directions alone.

Example: The toddler has a temper tantrum in a public place. Remove the child from the place of misbehavior. Hold the child gently until the toddler gains control. Give a short verbal instruction or reassurance followed by supervision and an example. At three years to five years of age, most children are able to accept reality and limitations, act in ways to obtain other's approval, and be self-reliant for their immediate needs. However, they have not internalized many rules, are gullible, and their judgment is not always sound. They require good behavior models after which to pattern their own behavior. The consistency should apply not only in the rules and actions of the primary caregiver, but in other adults who care for the child. Reliance on verbal rules increases, but still the child requires supervision to carry through directions and for safety. Time-out can be used if the child loses control; redirection or small consequences related to immediately following the misbehavior are other alternatives. Approval and praise are the most powerful motivators for good behaviour. Lectures do not work well and some consider them to be counterproductive. Example: The preschooler draws on the wall with crayons

Use time-out to allow him to think about the misbehavior. Consider using also logical consequences, e.g., take the crayons away and let the child clean up the mess to teach accountability. The child's increasing independence may lead to conflicts. School-age children tend to act autonomously, choose their own activities and friends, and, to some extent, recognize other than parental authority. Parents should continue to supervise, provide good behavioral models, set rules consistently, but also allow the child to become increasingly autonomous. Parents should continue to make the important decisions because school-age children cannot always put reasoning and judgment into practice. Praise and approval should be used liberally, although not excessively, to encourage good behaviour and growth into a more mature human being. The use of appropriate motivators should be encouraged; for example, buy keen reader his or her favorite book. Acceptable means of discipline include withdrawal or delay of privileges, consequences and time-out. Example: The child destroys toys. Instead of replacing these toys, let the child learn the logical consequences. Destroying toys will result in no toys to play with. A conflict frequently ensue because the adolescent adheres increasingly to the peer group, challenges family values and rules, and distances himself from the parents. Parents can meet these challenges by remaining available, setting rules in a noncritical way, not belittling the adolescent, and avoiding lectures or predicating catastrophes. Contracting with the adolescent is also a useful tool. Disciplinary spanking of adolescents is most inappropriate. Despite their challenging attitudes and professions of independence, many adolescents do want parental guidance and approval. Parents should ensure that the basic rules are followed and that logical consequences are set and kept in a no confrontational way. Example: The adolescent defiantly takes the car and has an accident. The logical consequence would be that there is no car to drive and that the teenager has to help pay for the repairs. This teacher's accountability, setting rules and applying consequences rules are established for children so they can learn to live cooperative with others, to teach them to distinguish right from wrong, and to protect them from harm. Children raised without reasonable limits will have difficulty adjusting socially. The following are some ways that parents can use rules and limits to promote effective discipline; reinforced desirable behaviour. Praise positive behaviour and catch children being good". Avoid nagging and making threats without consequences. The latter many even encourage the undesired behaviour. Apply rules consistently. Ignore unimportant and irrelevant behaviour, e.g. swinging legs while sitting. Set reasonable and consistent limits. Consequences need to be realistic for example; grounding for a month may not be feasible. State acceptable and appropriate behaviour that is attainable. Prioritize rules. Give top priority to safety, then to correcting behaviour that harms people and property, and then to behaviour such as

whining, temper tantrums and interrupting. Concentrate on two or three rules at first. Know and accept age-appropriate behaviour. Accidentally spilling a glass of water is normal behaviour for a toddler. It is not willful defiance. On the other hand, a child who refuses to wear a bicycle helmet after repeated warnings is being willfully defiant. Allow for the child's temperament and individuality (goodness of fit). A strong-willed child needs to be raised differently from the so-called 'compliant child'. In applying consequences, these suggestions may be helpful: Apply consequences as soon as possible. Do not enter into arguments with the child during the correction process. Make the consequences brief. For example, time-out (see forms of discipline) should last one minute per year of the child's age, to a maximum of five minutes. Parents should mean what they say and say it without shouting at the child. Verbal abuse is no less damaging than physical punishment. Follow consequences with love and trust, and ensure that the child knows the correction is directed against the behaviour and not the person. Guard against humiliating the child. Model forgiveness and avoid bringing up past mistakes.

Forms of Discipline

Three forms of discipline, in particular, are discussed in this research; Time-out is one of the most effective disciplinary techniques available to parents of young children, aged two years through primary school years. The time-out strategy is effective because it keeps the child from receiving attention that may inadvertently reinforce inappropriate behaviour. Like any other procedure, time-out must be used correctly to be effective. It must be used unemotionally and consistently every time the child misbehaves. Some suggestions for parents on effective time-out include the following.

Introduce time-out by 24 months. Pick the right place. Be sure the time-out place does not have build-in rewards. The television should not be on during time-out. Time-out should last 10 min per year of the child's age; to a maximum of 15 min. prepare the child by briefly helping him or her connect the behavior with the time-out. A simple phrase, such as "no hitting," is enough. Parents should avoid using time-out for teaching or preaching. When the child is in time-out, he should be ignored. The parent should be the time keeper. After time-out is over, it is over. Create a fresh start by offering a new activity. Don't discuss the unwanted behaviour. Just over on. As with other disciplinary techniques, parents should refrain from hurting the child's self-esteem by instilling shame, guilt, loss of trust or a sense of abandonment. If used properly, time-out will work over time. It may not necessarily eliminate the unwanted behaviour, but it will decrease the frequency. If time-out does not work after repeated tries, a consult is recommended. Parents should be advised that these general guidelines may need to be adjusted to suit the particular temperament of the child. Parents

may have to experiment with the length of time-out, because 1 min per year of age may be too long for some children. Physicians may want to have a handout available that teaches parents how to use time-out procedures correctly according to the child's age, personality, level of development, and so on. Discipline involves teaching positive behaviour as well as changing unwanted behaviour. That is, children need to know what to do as well as what not to do. In general, it is more effective to anticipate and prevent undesirable behaviour than to punish it. 'Away from the moment' refers to dealing with the difficult behaviour not in the heat of the moment, but rather in advance or away from the actual misbehavior. An away-from-the-moment discussion can help prevent undesirable behaviour by giving parents the opportunity to teach the child the desirable behaviour in advance. This technique is not appropriate for use in children younger than three years to four years of age.

Disciplinary Spanking

The Psychosocial Pediatrics Committee of the Canadian Pediatric Society has carefully reviewed the available research in the controversial area of disciplinary spanking. The existing research is not in the form of double-blind, randomized controlled trials, as such studies would be impossible to conduct. Moreover, no modern ethics committees is likely to approve research that involves violence against children. The research that is available supports the position that spanking and other forms of physical punishment as associated with negative child outcomes. The Canadian Pediatric Society, therefore, recommends that physicians strongly discourage disciplinary spanking and all other forms of physical punishment. Physical redirection or restraint to support time-out or to prevent a child from harming himself or others may be necessary, but should be done carefully and without violence. Physical harm to a child inflicted by a parent out of control and in three (3) rage is completely inappropriate and dangerous. During periods of anticipatory guidance on appropriate discipline, physicians should also remind parents to take a time-out for themselves before they lose control.

Ways of enhancing effective discipline when/then – abuse it/lose it principle – “When you have finished your homework, then you may watch TV.” Kersey notes that this techniques teaches children to be responsible, obedient and accountable. Incompatible alternative principle – Give the child something to do that he cant do while misbehaving. “Help me pick out six oranges” instead of running around the grocery store. It is a good idea to offer two positive alternatives that are incompatible with the inappropriate behavior: “Would you like to choose the cereal of select the apples?” Choice principle – Give the child two choices, both of which are positive and acceptable to you. “When a child does something you don't want him to do or

doesn't want to do what you have requested, give him a choice," Kersey explains. "If your child balks outside the barbershop, you say, 'You may either hold my hand or walk in now on your own.' Then – 'You choose, or I'll choose' is the next choice if he is still reluctant. Usually, he'll choose, but if not, quickly take his hand and hurry into the barbershop talking about the interesting barber chairs that roll up and down or the park you are going to visit later" Make a Big Deal Principle – Make a big deal over responsible, considerate, appropriate behaviour with attention, thanks, praise, thumbs-up, recognition, hugs and special privileges. "That's something we forget to do," Kersey notes. "Children want our eyeballs more than anything else, so we have to train ourselves to look for the good behaviour and look away when it is inappropriate (as long as it is not dangerous or destructive). If it is dangerous or destructive, we have to stop it in the least reinforcing way possible. Take a Break Principle – Tell the child to "take a break" and think about when he could do differently that would work better or be more constructive. Tell him that he can come back as soon as he is ready to try again.

Privacy principle – Never embarrass a child in front of others. Always move to a private place to talk when there is a problem. Positive Closure Principle – At the end of the day, remind your child that he is special and loved. Help him look for something good about the day that is finished and the day that lies ahead.

Talk with them, Not to them principle – focus on two-way communication rather than preaching to children, listen as well as talk. Pay Attention Principle – Keep your eyes and mind on what is happening. Don't wait until the child is out of control to step in. remove the child from the situation if necessary. Stay calm and emotionally detached. Let him know what his options are. Use Actions Instead of Words – don't say anything. When the child continues to get out of bed and comes to the living room, take him back to bed – as many times as it takes. Don't get upset, talk, scold, threaten or give reasons. Stay calm. Your child will learn that night time is for sleeping and that you are serious about enforcing bedtime. Whisper principle – instead of yelling, screaming or talking in a loud voice, surprise the child by lowering your voice to a whisper. This often evokes immediate attention and helps you stay in control and think more clearly. "It's our reactions to children's actions that teach them whether or not to repeat them," Kersey adds. "They'll get your attention whichever way they can get it. Children repeat that behaviour that works. Get on Child's Eye Level Principle – When talking with the child, get down on his/her eye level and look him in the eye while talking softly to him.

References

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