



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**
Program Topic : **Positive Discipline (LOVE)**

Guidelines to the presenter

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

Topic:

Positive Discipline

Objectives:

- To help parents understand the purpose of discipline for young children and why it needs to be positive.
- To give parents some practical skills and ideas in applying positive discipline.
- To ensure parents understand that physical punishment is illegal, damaging to the child and counter-productive.
- To strengthen the message of the critical importance of spending quality time with their young children.

Introduction

Parenting young children doesn't have to be a battle! You can get your children to behave in socially acceptable ways without hitting, threatening, yelling, bribing or giving in! At the end of the day, most parents want a happy, self-confident, co-operative child with whom they have a great relationship. And they want their little one to grow up and develop in a happy, peaceful home, where each member of the family feels loved, respected, understood, accepted and supported. This can be achieved through positive parenting and positive discipline.

| Questions | Facts/Information |
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| <p>1. <i>So what exactly is discipline and why do children need positive discipline?</i></p> | <p>Parents in all cultures and across thousands of years of history have used discipline as a way of teaching their children so that they can protect them from danger, help them learn self-control and develop a sense of responsibility, as well as to instill the values they believe in. Positive discipline ensures this is done in a way that respects the child and builds his or her self-esteem and self-confidence.</p> |
| <p>2. <i>So if the role of discipline is to promote positive behaviour in young children, why is it that so many parents believe that you need to smack or hit children to get them to behave in the way you want?</i></p> | <p>Many Mums and Dads bring up their children in the way they were brought up, and if they were smacked or hit, they believe they need to smack or hit their children. However, there is plenty of research that shows that physically hurting children is really damaging to children and</p> |

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| <p>3. <i>But many parents will tell you that they were smacked as kids & it hasn't done them any harm. And anyway, sometimes children make their parents so mad that they lose their temper and hit out at the child or yell and scream at them.</i></p> <p>4. <i>I've heard over the radio and from other sources that it's now illegal to hit your children even in your own home, and that people who hit or physically hurt children could be charged and arrested. Is that true?</i></p> | <p>is not the best way to teach children ways to behave.</p> <p>Sadly, too many parents do react in this way because of other stresses in their own lives which boil over when they are angry or frustrated at their young child's behaviour. But extensive research has shown that this is a really bad way to try and change your child's behaviour, is seriously damaging to your child and can lead to even more difficult behaviour in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young children will do as you do, not as you say, so you need to model the behaviour that you want.• You should not do anything in front of your child that you do not want them to do. They <u>will</u> copy you!• Yelling will produce kids who yell; hitting will produce kids who hit and who think physical violence is the way to solve problems. <p>Yes it is. As you know, South Africa has a strong human rights Constitution that is the envy of many countries in the world. All South African citizens have rights, including children from birth. One of those rights is the right not to be subjected to physical</p> |
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violence. South Africa has also signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. That means that the government has a duty to protect children against any form of violence, including smacking or physical punishment. So it is illegal to physically hurt children in any way and schools, teachers or parents who do so, can be charged.

In fact a recently released document, 'The African Report on Violence against Children', reports that African children are subjected to alarming levels of violence that include corporal (or physical) punishment both at home & at school, sexual violence, neglect and emotional or psychological violence. Children who experience any form of violence will not grow up as stable, loving, happy and competent adults in any society.

5. So it sounds as though parents need to keep calm and think before they try and discipline their children? Do you know any strategies that help?

Yes. Parents need to focus on controlling themselves and their reactions. In the heat of the moment it helps to take a deep breath, count to 10 and calm yourself and think before you say or do anything.

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| <p>8. <i>If it's better not to shout and yell at children, should parents just try to ignore difficult behaviour, look the other way and hope the child will grow out of it?</i></p> <p>9. <i>Can you give parents some good tips in this regard?</i></p> | <p>want to be accepted and want positive attention. So difficult or uncooperative behaviour may be saying to the parent, "You're not giving me enough attention, so I'll behave badly because I know then I'll get your attention."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next time your child behaves in a way that's not acceptable, stop and ask yourself, "Why? What's really going on here?" and try to address the underlying reason. <p>No. Children need boundaries, clear expectations and to know what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. It's especially important for parents to set out safety rules clearly to prevent their young child hurting himself and then to stick to those rules consistently.</p> <p>Having clearly laid out expectations and boundaries helps children feel safe, secure and gives them a sense of confidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good tip is for a parent to set down the expected behaviour and then give the child some choice in how or when to cooperate. For example: "Sibongile, your toys need |
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| <p><i>10. So what I'm hearing you say is that parents should rather set the boundaries and then focus on the positive behaviour they want to see in their children?</i></p> | <p>to be picked up and put away. Do you want to do that now or after supper?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Giving children choices and enabling them to take decisions over areas of their lives such as what to wear, what to play, or what to eat within healthy food choices, helps them to become independent, develop confidence and take responsibility.• Thinking ahead, anticipating your child's reaction and re-directing his behaviour also works. Where possible prevent confrontations by finding something else for the child to do, or making the activity into a game. For example: "Jabulani, it's time to go and bath now. Shall we hop to the bath or skip?" <p>Absolutely! There's a lovely saying that reinforces the principle: "Water the grass, not the weeds!" Pay attention to the behaviour you want to see more of, and be sure to remark on and encourage your young child's effort, persistence in trying to master something, or way of finding a solution to a problem, rather than just praising an achievement.</p> |
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11. Does discipline work with a baby or toddler?

Babies can't be naughty. When they cry, that's their way of telling you something is wrong: that they're hungry, wet, in pain, uncomfortable, tired or just need you close for comfort. If your baby cries, he needs you!

As your baby grows and develops into a toddler, and as her language and understanding develops, help her to understand her strong feelings by naming them. As you are calm and consistent in your expectations of your toddler, so they will learn to cooperate with you. Remember to accept that making mistakes and having accidents is part of growing up and part of learning.

12. I guess the best reward for children is quality time with Mum or Dad, where parents are not distracted by other things they are trying to do, but are focussed completely on the child and what they are doing together.

You are so right. Quality time spent with each and every child, regularly and often, is the best possible investment you can make in your child's life and development!

Conclusion

So using positive discipline fosters the development of self-esteem and self-confidence in your children, and this is done through the way you as the parent behave: being calm, patient and consistent with your young child; setting clear expectations and offering your child choices within boundaries; helping him to name and understand his strong feelings and how to respond appropriately; re-directing her behaviour before it becomes a confrontation and most importantly, spending regular, focussed, quality time with him or her, so that your child can experience your undivided attention.

Learning outcomes

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Understand the difference between positive and negative discipline techniques
- Understand that physical punishment or any form of violence against children is both illegal and enormously damaging to the child.
- Be aware of how to apply positive discipline techniques
- Recognise the importance of spending focussed quality time with each individual child regularly and often.