

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PUNISHMENT AND DISCIPLINE

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They are not the same - and it matters.



PUNISHMENT

- Focuses on what the child did wrong
- Often comes from anger or frustration
- Can involve shame, blame, or fear
- Uses random or harsh consequences
- Stops behaviour in the moment only
- Teaches: "I am bad" or "I need to avoid getting caught"

DISCIPLINE

- Focuses on teaching and guiding
- Comes from calm, clear boundaries
- Uses respect and connection
- Includes clear, fair consequences linked to the behaviour
- Helps children learn for the future
- Teaches: "My choices have consequences and I can do better next time"

Punishment **controls** behaviour. Discipline **teaches** behaviour and responsibility.

REAL EXAMPLES

Punishment:

"You are grounded for that!"

Discipline:

"You broke the rule, so the tablet is put away today. Let's talk about what you can do differently next time."

WHAT CHILDREN NEED MOST

- Clear rules
- Consistent boundaries
- Calm adults
- Predictable consequences they understand
- Chances to learn, not just be corrected

REMEMBER

**Children are learning, not giving you a hard time.
They are having a hard time and need your guidance.**

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