**Tips for Effective Discipline:**

* Trust your child to do the right thing within the limits of your child's age and stage of development.
* Make sure what you ask for is reasonable.
* Speak to your child as you would want to be spoken to if someone were reprimanding you. Don't resort to name-calling, yelling, or disrespect.
* Be clear about what you mean. Be firm and specific.
* Model positive behavior. "Do as I say, not as I do" seldom works.
* Allow for negotiation and flexibility, which can help build your child's social skills.
* Let your child experience the consequences of his behavior.
* Whenever possible, consequences should be delivered immediately, should relate to the rule broken, and be short enough in duration that you can move on again to emphasize the positives.
* Consequences should be fair and appropriate to the situation and the child's age.

**“I FEEL” STATEMENTS:**

By using “I Feel” Statements, you are taking responsibility for your own perceptions and feelings instead of projecting blame and criticism.

You are communicating your problems and boundaries

Make sure you do an honest search of your own feelings and present them in a non-reactive, respectful tone.

Remember, they should be CLEAR and CONCISE enough that your child does not have a problem remembering what you said.

When angry, see if other feelings are also present (i.e. fear, hurt, embarrassment)

**FAB Format:**

I feel (Feelings: Mad, Sad, Glad, Afraid, Hurt, etc.*)*

About (What happened: the situation, event, experience)

Because (Thought, feeling, belief, or perception).

**Examples:**

I feel hopeful

About my child starting school

Because it is giving our family the opportunity to get back in a normal routine.

I feel frustrated and angry

About your interrupting me when I am working

Because the problem you had was not urgent and I have asked you not to come in while I am on calls.

**ACTIVE LISTENING:**

*“First seek to understand then be understood.”*

By using “Active Listening,” you are helping your child believe that you are working to understand their feelings, perceptions, and experiences without judgment.

Your body language is clear and open, your tone of voice is sincere, and you are receiving their feelings openly instead of closing down communications with judgments, opinions, and criticisms.

Remember, you should try as much as possible not to interpret, but to use the SAME WORDS your child used when sharing with you.

FAB Format

**“I hear you saying that you feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ about\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . Did I hear you correctly? Do you feel heard?”**

**Reminders:**

* Your intent is to make the speaker feel understood
* Your non-verbal language must indicate you are listening
* Avoid closed responses such as judgments, opinions, criticisms, etc.
* Active listening is not agreeing; it just shows you understand their perceptions
* You must be sincere; if not, take a break and set a time when you can be sincere
* Tremendous value exists in understanding the other person’s perceptions, motivations, and intentions

**PARENTING STYLES**

**AUTHORITARIAN**

*Parents see child as…* incapable, irresponsible, bad

*Child feels…* fear & shame, not trusted, incapable

*Love for child is…* conditional, manipulative

*Discipline is…* harsh, arbitrary, controlling

**PERMISSIVE**

*Parents see child as…* capable, good

*Child feels…* confused neglected

*Love for child is…* displayed, supported

*Discipline is…* absent, inconsistent

**NEGLECTFUL**

*Parents see child as…* nuisance

*Child feels…* unimportant, disliked, not valued

*Love for child is…* questioned

*Discipline is…* harsh, absent, inconsistent

**DEMOCRATIC**

*Parents see child as…* equal, capable, good

*Child feels…* equal, respected, loved

*Love for child is…* conditional, performance based

*Discipline is…* consequences as agreed

**LOVING-TRUST**

*Parents see child as…* free agent, capable, trust

*Child feels…* capable, accountable, loved

*Love for child is…* unconditional, cherished

*Discipline is…* role model, accountability

\*adapted from James J. Jones (1997), “*Let’s Fix the Kids!: A Parenting Resource Manual*”

##### COMMON PARENT TRAPS

**& why they don’t work**

***ANGER/RAGE***

* + You are attempting to control (see below) through fear
  + You are often out of control
  + You are teaching power through intimidation
  + You are encouraging rebellious behavior
  + You are causing serious damage to your child’s self-esteem
  + You are creating distance between you and your child

#### CONTROL

* + You have created an illusion that you can control your child
  + You are taking away your child’s right to free agency
  + You are communicating to your child s/he is incapable of solving her own problems
  + You are taking away opportunities for your child to experience the consequences of her/his own actions
  + You may be controlling to feel superior, needed, important, powerful or maintain image as a “good” parent

#### ARGUING

* + You are creating a power struggle
  + You have created an illusion that your child is interested in your point of view
  + You are giving your child an opportunity to point out flaws in your reasoning
  + You are only trying to win
  + You are giving your child hope that you will change your mind
  + You are giving your child enjoyment as they see you suffer

#### RESCUING

* + You are creating a dependent child
  + You are not allowing children to solve their own problems
  + You are unable to tolerate people facing pain or difficulties
  + You are giving your child the illusion that life is easy
  + You are not allowing your child to know the impact of his choices
  + You are creating a lazy, spoiled, and egocentric child
  + You are telling your child that s/he is incapable

#### AVOIDANCE

* + You are teaching your child you are incapable of parenting them
  + You are giving up your right to govern your family
  + You are teaching your child to not respect rules
  + You are telling your child that you approve of their behavior
  + You are giving the responsibility to deal with the behavior to someone else

#### LYING

* + You are teaching your child to not believe you
  + You are reinforcing negative behavior
  + You are training your child to argue
  + You are destroying your credibility
  + You are teaching children not to listen to you

***INCONSISTENCY***

* + You are creating chaos
  + You are confusing your child
  + You are reinforcing disobedience

##### INSIGHT

* + You are avoiding consequences
  + You are falsely assuming your child will change as a result of your words
  + You are giving your child unproductive attention that they may be seeking