

CONSEQUENCES and the power of INTENTION

Love Ritual:

Row Row Row Your Boat



Row, row, *row* your boat

Gently down the stream.

Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily

Life is but a dream.

Breathe:



Spiderman Breathing

Bend arms up from waist, with Spiderman fingers,

Bring hands up toward shoulders, while inhaling through the nose.

Exhale while "shooting webs" out in front of you, moving arms side to side.

Teaching a New Skill:

You wanted to grab what the child wanted so you grabbed the child's hand.

You may not grab grabbing hurts.

When you want to grab what the child wanted, say (or do) to grab the child's hand.

You wanted the toy so you grabbed it.

You may not grab, grabbing hurts.

When you want the toy, tap him on the shoulder, wait for him to look and ask, "Turn please?"

You wanted to do it yourself so you pushed me away.

You may not push, pushing hurts.

(Younger) When you want to do it yourself, say, "I do it."

(Older) When you want to do it yourself, say, "I'm going to do it."

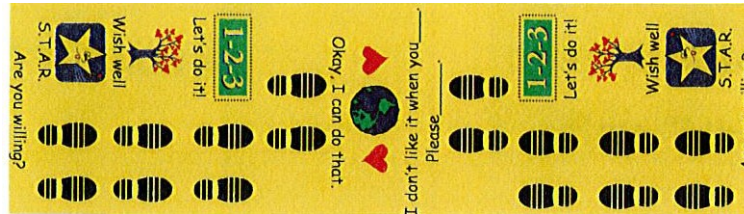


All About Consequences

Natural Consequences

Natural consequences are the most effective consequences for motivating children to learn a new behavior or use an existing skill. Allow children to experience the discomfort of natural consequences when it is safe to do so, and then follow up with empathy.

For example: A child who runs with a popsicle may drop it. The disappointment from dropping it, when combined with empathy (rather than "I told you so" or a replacement popsicle), provides the child with the motivation to sit down while eating it next time.



Problem Solving as a Consequence

Problem solving requires a calm, alert Executive State from both adult and child. It involves children in becoming part of the solution. We use the Time Machine to "go back in time" to redo hurtful actions in a helpful way. Simplified Time Machine steps are:

Step 1: Be a S.I.A.R. Everyone takes a deep breath and relaxes three times to calm both body and mind.

Step 2: "I don't like it when you _____." Coach the victim to speak first, saying, "I don't like it when you _____." ("I don't like it when you push me.")

Step 3: "Next time _____." Then help the victim teach the other child how he wants to be treated. Most children will say, "Stop it." Reframe to what the child wants. ("Next time, say, 'Move please.'")

Step 4: Check for understanding and willingness. Ask the other child, "Are you willing to do that? Let's practice now."

Step 5: Connect. Ask the children to show there are no hard feelings by doing a simple connection like a handshake, hug or high-five.

Logical Consequences

Logical consequences only work with children who feel connected and who have been successful with the desired behavior many times. Logical consequences create power struggles if the child is not connected, and frustration if used before a child masters the skill. For this reason, they are not helpful for children younger than three, and may only be minimally helpful through age five. Natural consequences and problem solving are your best consequences for young children.

Check in: Do you feel connected with the child? If you feel disconnected, work to repair the relationship.

Has the child been successful with the behavior many times? If not, do more teaching by painting a picture with your words and motions, making visuals like routine books, and practicing, practicing, practicing.

If the child is connected and has mastered the expected behavior, then you're ready to set the consequence and ask the child to repeat back what will happen.

Set the consequence: Be certain your consequence utilizes the three R's and the big E:

Related: The consequence is related to the child's behavior.

Respectful: Both the consequence and the way it is delivered are respectful.

Reasonable: The consequence is reasonable, meaning it's something the child can do and that makes sense.

Empathy: When children blow it, follow up with an ample dose of empathy. Empathy helps children reflect, own of the action and choose to change the behavior.

Explain the consequence and ask for understanding: "You may write on the paper only." Point to the paper. "If you write on your body again, we will put the markers away for the rest of the day. What will happen if you write on your body again?"

"You may not hit. Hitting hurts. If you hit your brother again, you will play in your room until it's time to set the table for dinner. What will happen if you hit your brother again?"