



A Few Ideas about Consequences for Children/ Teens

Good consequences....

... can be put in place either immediately or at least the same day (vs. 'this weekend' or 'tomorrow')

<i>More Effective</i>	<i>Less Effective</i>
“You need to go to timeout now”	“No football this Friday”
“When you get home from school today...”	“Tomorrow no <i>Play Station</i> ”

... are meaningful to the child and convenient/ realistic for you

<i>More Effective</i>	<i>Less Effective</i>
“No playing at friends today”	“You’re grounded for two weeks”
“Eat dinner or no dessert”	“You’re not coming with us on vacation”

... are something you have control over and can monitor

<i>More Effective</i>	<i>Less Effective</i>
“I will be putting the Play Station away”	“No more TV”- then leave home or others watch

...are done in a spirit of moderation (vs. swatting flies with cannon balls)

<i>More Effective</i>	<i>Less Effective</i>
Grounded for rest of the day. Child gets to try again tomorrow.	Child is grounded for the rest of the month.

The goal is to have consequences that you can follow through on (vs. hollow threats) and the child can predict. It is generally better if the consequences are explained to the child in advance. Make sure you are being clear before enforcing a consequence (e.g., clear commands). Remember the two important questions before giving a command:

1. Is it really important?
2. Do I have time to follow-through right now?



Types of Consequences

Natural Consequences

- Similar to ignoring. We let natural consequences teach the child.
- Best when consequence is meaningful to the child and does not put them or others in danger.

Logical Consequences:

- Consequence logically fits the misbehavior.
- May include losing an object or activity tied to the misbehavior.

Overcorrection:

- Child is required to restore the environment to a better state than existed before the disruptive act occurred. Child not only corrects the situation, but also undertakes additional corrective action to make the situation better.

Positive Practice:

- When misbehavior occurs, the child must practice the correct way of behaving.
- Privileges are withheld until child participates in positive practice.

Remember to give one warning before implementing consequences (e.g., “if...then”) and use matter-of-fact tone (e.g., no lecturing). Assure the child there will be an opportunity to try again later (e.g., “You decided not to lower the volume on the TV, so I’m going to turn it off. We can try again tomorrow”). If child refuses to participate in responsible overcorrection or positive practice or escalates when using logical consequences, place child in timeout or remove privileges. After he or she is out of timeout, then reissue to consequence or the child returns to timeout.