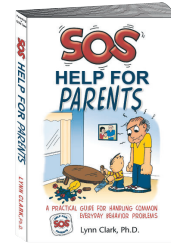


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Chapter 5

Major Methods For Stopping Bad Behavior

PROBLEMS PARENTS FACE



How would you handle this situation?

Questions Parents Ask About Correction

- "Should I use mild correction to change my child's misbehavior?"
- "What kinds of mild correction are effective in reducing misbehavior?"
- "Can the use of correction be emotionally harmful to my child?"
- "Why do my children continue to misbehave after they are corrected?"

There are five different types of mild correction that you can use to help your child. One of these methods, time-out, is brief and is especially effective in stopping persistent misbehavior that is impulsive, explosive, and hard to handle.

Other chapters in this book describe, step by step, when and how to use the time-out method. However, time-out does have a limitation. When you use time-out, you should use it *immediately* after the bad behavior occurs. What do you do about serious misbehavior which you discover minutes or hours later?

Four other methods of mild correction are effective even if you can't apply them immediately. They are: (1) *scolding and disapproval*, (2) *natural consequences*, (3) *logical consequences*, and (4) *behavior penalty*. This chapter describes these methods and how you can correctly use them.

To be a confident and competent parent, know and use various methods to manage your child's problem behaviors. You can easily learn these effective methods! It's a lot easier to deal with a particular misbehavior if you know several ways to correctly handle it.

Mild correction can stop or weaken your child's bad behavior. However, it can't increase good behavior when used alone. As emphasized in earlier chapters, you also must frequently *reward good behavior*.

Correctly Using Mild Correction

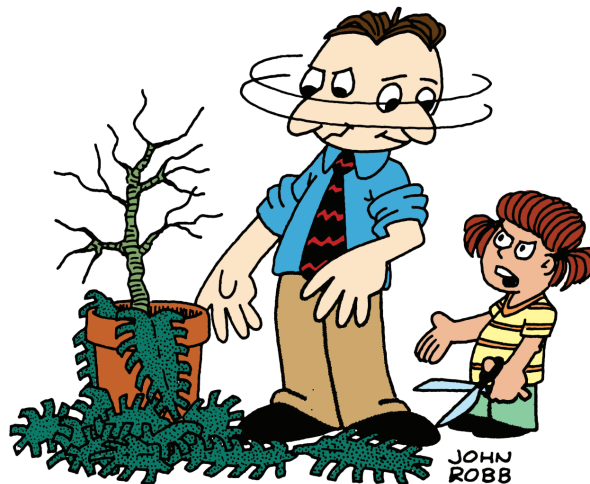
_____ Guidelines to follow:

- _____ 1. Use correction sparingly.
- _____ 2. Use mild correction only.
- _____ 3. Correct quickly after the bad behavior occurs.
- _____ 4. Correct when you are in control of yourself.
- _____ 5. Briefly state a reason for the correction.
- _____ 6. Avoid physical correction.

Correction is an unpleasant consequence or penalty that follows a behavior. When you use mild correction, be sure to observe the correct guidelines.

The correct use of *mild* correction won't emotionally harm your child. Often it is essential for improving her behavior. However, severe correction, sarcasm, and grim threats can hurt her self-esteem and emotional well-being. Children who are severely corrected may become extremely withdrawn or may act more aggressive and belligerent toward others. Mothers and fathers who severely discipline their children frequently carry a heavy burden of guilt.

PROBLEMS PARENTS FACE



"My sister told me to do it. It's not my fault. . . . Let's just forget about correction this time. . . ."

Being A Rational And Nonaggressive Model

When at their wits' end, parents often try to correct or control their kids by making irrational threats such as, "You're grounded all summer for doing that!" or "I'm going to pull every hair from your head unless you. . . !" Parents who use severe or frequent spankings as a method of discipline often don't realize

that several different methods of *mild correction* can be more effective in changing behavior.

Remember, your child will imitate your behavior. If you shout, make irrational threats, or spank, you are “modeling” this behavior for your daughter to imitate. She may yell, become emotionally upset, or attempt to “manage” others physically. When using time-out discipline, you are a rational and nonaggressive role model for your child.

Your job as a parent is often stressful and upsetting. Sometimes your child may intentionally try to anger you. Children enjoy getting attention and controlling their parents by making them angry and overly emotional. However, you can resist yielding to your anger. You can do it! You can avoid yelling and screaming, making grim threats, using sarcasm, giving harsh spankings, or using other forms of severe or ineffective correction. Lets look at the following methods of discipline.

DISCIPLINE MISTAKES WHICH PARENTS MAKE



“This will teach you to behave!”



“This will teach you!”

Children imitate the behavior of their parents. By using spankings and threats, you teach your daughter to use aggressive methods to “manage” others.

Using Scolding And Disapproval Correctly

The Missing Cookies

Mother had just discovered that seven-year-old Michelle had disobeyed her and eaten most of the chocolate chip cookies being saved for dessert. She walked toward her daughter and in a stern voice said, *"Michelle, I'm very disappointed that you ate the cookies. I was saving them for supper. Now we won't have enough for dessert tonight."*

Michelle's mother is correctly using disapproval, a form of mild correction commonly used by parents. When you are scolding for bad behavior, move close to your child, look her in the eye, be stern, express your feelings, and name the undesirable behavior. It's important to maintain self-control and to avoid making sarcastic or belittling remarks.

Be brief and calm when scolding your child. Some children enjoy a lengthy tongue-lashing and watching their parent become upset. They like getting the extra attention from their mother or father, even if that attention is negative.

PROBLEMS PARENTS FACE



Scolding Back!

A scolding *doesn't* help some children to improve their behavior. They merely argue or scold back.

Avoid “nattering” at your child when you want her to improve her behavior. *Nattering is a combination of nagging, chattering, scolding, and complaining.* For example, mother might have said to Michelle, *“I’m mad that you ate all the cookies that I was saving for dessert. Another thing, your hair is a mess again and you left all your toys in the living room. You never appreciate what I do for you. Furthermore, . . .”* Nattering doesn’t help your child to improve her behavior, and it weakens your relationship. Don’t natter at your child!

Remember to show disapproval of your child’s behavior and not of your child. Don’t criticize her personality or character. Let her know that you still respect and love her as a person. Instead of saying, *“You are a mean girl for hitting your brother,”* say *“It was mean to hit your brother.”* Don’t say *“You are a naughty girl.”* Do say *“That was a naughty thing to do.”* When you scold, be sure to disapprove of your child’s behavior and not of your child.

An effective time to use disapproval is just as your child’s misbehavior is getting started. For example, your two children may begin with playful teasing and then rapidly move on to hostile teasing. When you find this happening, quickly express disapproval. You might say, *“I really don’t like the teasing that’s going on between the two of you. I don’t mind a little playful teasing, but when it continues, you two frequently get into an argument. I don’t want to hear any more teasing this evening!”*

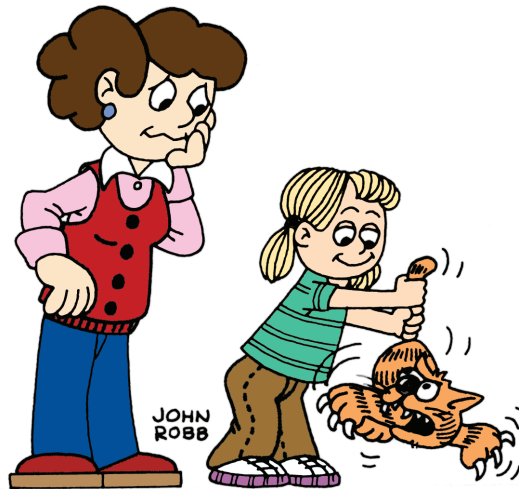
For many children, disapproval is normally sufficient when used alone as a mild correction. However, if your child usually becomes angry or argues when you scold him, then scolding isn’t very effective. When scolding and disapproval are not effective, consider using time-out or another form of mild correction.

Signs that scolding and disapproval are not effective with your child

- Your child usually scolds back, sasses, mocks, or argues with you.
- Your child smiles, ignores you, or seems inattentive.
- He has a temper tantrum when scolded.
- He seems to enjoy getting the extra attention from you, even though it’s negative attention.

Natural Consequences For Bad Behavior

PROBLEMS PARENTS FACE



"Let's see. . . . Should I use TIME-OUT or should I let Kitty give NATURAL CONSEQUENCES?"

A natural consequence for not wearing gloves on a cold day is having cold hands. Staying after school or losing recess is a natural consequence for not doing a homework assignment.

A natural consequence is an event that normally or naturally happens to a child following his bad behavior, unless you step in to prevent the consequence. Nature or the "natural order of the world" does the correcting rather than the parent. You allow your child to experience the natural consequences of his own behavior unless there is some danger to his safety.

If six-year-old James teases a friend, his friend may get angry and go home. James will be left without a playmate. Being alone is a natural consequence of teasing one's friend. Consider the various examples of natural consequences for bad behavior described in the box, "Allowing *Natural Consequences* To Occur For Bad Behavior."

Parents who use natural consequences believe that children learn to improve their behavior when they are allowed to experience naturally occurring consequences for their own decisions and actions. Since correction is delivered by nature and not by parents, children are much less likely to get angry at their parents for being corrected.

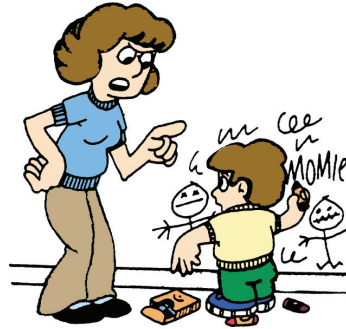
Allowing *Natural Consequences*
To Occur For Bad Behavior —
Examples For Parents



<u><i>Bad Behavior</i></u>	<u><i>Natural Consequences</i></u>
1. Handling a cat roughly.	1. Getting scratched.
2. Breaking a toy on purpose.	2. Having a broken toy which is not replaced.
3. Teasing neighborhood children.	3. Being avoided by neighborhood children.
4. Not doing a homework assignment.	4. Staying after school the next day if required by the teacher.
5. Not wearing gloves on a cold day.	5. Having cold hands.
6. Not combing your hair.	6. Being told by other children that your hair is a mess.
7. Getting ready for school very slowly in the morning.	7. Being late for school and explaining to the teacher why you are late.
8. Pushing and shoving other children of the same age.	8. Getting pushed and shoved back.
9. Carelessly spilling a drink.	9. Not getting a refill.

Logical Consequences For Bad Behavior

Applying Logical Consequences For Bad Behavior — Examples For Parents



<u>Bad Behavior</u>	<u>Logical Consequences</u>
1. Riding a tricycle into the street.	1. Tricycle is put up for one week.
2. Chewing gum gets stuck to furniture, clothes, or hair.	2. No more gum for five days.
3. Swearing on the telephone.	3. Can't phone out for three days.
4. Mistreating or refusal to care for one's pet.	4. Placing the pet in another home, after several warnings and discussions.
5. Refusal to brush teeth regularly.	5. No more candy or soft drinks until regular tooth brushing is begun.
6. Brother and sister argue and fuss all morning.	6. Family outing to a park is cancelled that afternoon.
7. Not eating vegetables at dinner.	7. No dessert.

Sometimes you can't allow natural consequences to occur because it's dangerous for your child. For example, father can't allow three-year-old John to experience *natural consequences* for riding a tricycle into the street. However, father can apply *logical consequences*. If John rides his tricycle in an unsafe place, then he loses the privilege of riding his tricycle for a time. Father can quickly remove the tricycle and not allow John to use it for one week.

When using *logical consequences* to handle problem behavior, *you provide correction for the bad behavior*. Also, you need to make sure that *the correction logically fits the nature of the misbehavior*. *The correction is a logical or sensible consequence considering the particular bad behavior*. When your child sees a clear and reasonable relationship between her bad behavior and the correction, she is more likely to change her behavior. In addition, she is less likely to resent the correction.

When you apply a logical consequence, it is important to avoid a consequence which is too severe or lasts too long. For example, the consequence of "*No tricycle for two months!*" is too harsh for a three-year-old who rides his tricycle into the street. When angry or emotionally upset by your child's misbehavior, you might declare a consequence that is too extreme. If you make this common mistake, there is a simple solution! Merely tell your child that you made the consequence too severe, and that you have reduced the consequence.

What is the difference between natural consequences and logical consequences? You *allow* natural consequences to occur (your child carelessly breaks a toy and now has a broken toy). You *apply* logical consequences (after your child rides a tricycle into the street you put up the tricycle).

Using Behavior Penalty For Bad Behavior

If you can't think of a logical consequence for a particular misbehavior, then consider using behavior penalty. Behavior penalty is another method of correction which is effective, but mild. *You apply some penalty* (such as no television for one day) *following some specific bad behavior* (such as lying to you).* *However,*

*Behavior penalty is also called "response cost" because a child's undesirable response costs her some penalty.

the penalty is not “logically” related to the particular bad behavior. The penalty consists of a loss of certain privileges, a fine, or an extra chore that your child finds especially distasteful. For example, each time that nine-year-old Heather mistreats her puppy, she loses the privilege of playing her stereo for the rest of that day. The temporary loss of her stereo (the penalty) is not logically related to mistreating her puppy (the behavior). In selecting an effective penalty, Heather’s parents need to know what kind of penalty is most meaningful for Heather. “No bike riding for two days!” is an ineffective penalty if Heather rarely rides her bike anyway.

**Using Behavior Penalty
For Bad Behavior —
Examples For Parents**



*“Kids don’t like it when I tatttle.”
“Kids don’t like it when I tatttle.”
“Kids don’t like it when I”*

<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Penalty</u>
1. Tattling on other children.	1. Having to immediately write three times, “Kids don’t like it when I tatttle.”
2. Swearing.	2. A 25 cent fine for each swear word.
3. Lying to parents.	3. No television for one day.
4. Fighting with neighborhood children.	4. No bike riding for two days.
5. Persistent teasing of little brother.	5. Stereo and CDs are “put up” for one day.
6. Failure to clean up one’s bedroom by 5:00 p.m.	6. No playing outdoors that evening.

When you use behavior penalty, try to state the penalty before the specific bad behavior occurs. For example, Heather's mother might say, *"Heather, your father and I have talked about the way you mistreat your puppy. In the future when you mistreat Scottie, you'll lose the use of your stereo for the rest of the day."* Mother should have Heather state out loud the misbehavior and the behavior penalty. This will help her to remember to be kind to Scottie.

The box, "Using Behavior Penalty For Bad Behavior," gives examples of parents using this method of mild correction.

In situations where it is not practical to use natural consequences or logical consequences to handle misbehavior, consider using behavior penalty. Avoid making the penalty too severe or too lengthy, however.

The box, "Methods Of Mild Correction," provides a brief comparison of the five methods of mild correction discussed in this chapter. These five methods are the most effective forms of mild correction that you can use. To be successful in handling different types of misbehavior, you should know how to use all five methods.

Time-out is extremely effective, but it should be used only with children between the ages of two and twelve. Also, you should apply time-out immediately after the bad behavior occurs. Many parents admit that the most difficult behaviors to handle frequently occur right under their noses. Time-out is particularly helpful in stopping these persistent misbehaviors.




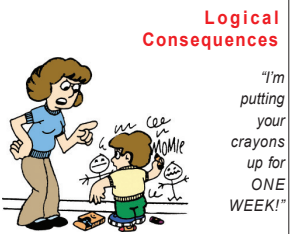
The other methods of mild correction may be used with children who fall within a wide range of ages. These other methods are also most effective if applied as quickly as possible after the misbehavior occurs. However, these methods are still rather effective if applied minutes or a few hours after the misbehavior is discovered.

Avoid expressing intense anger when you use correction. Your child should believe that she got corrected because she behaved badly and not because you got angry.

Bad Behavior Sometimes Persists

Often, children will persist in bad behavior. There are various reasons for this. The amount of reward the child receives for the bad behavior may far outweigh the correction. Nicole may tattle on her brother and enjoy getting him into trouble even though mother shows disapproval for her tattling. In this case,

Methods Of Mild Correction — Comparison For Parents

Method of Mild Correction	Age of Child	Effectiveness of Correction	Type of Behaviors Corrected	How Quickly Applied
 <p>Time-Out</p>	Two through twelve	Extremely effective	Most behavior, especially hard-to-handle behavior	Immediately, if possible
 <p>Scolding and Disapproval</p>	All Ages	Moderately effective	All Behavior	Immediately or later
 <p>Natural Consequences</p>	All Ages	Effective	Some Behavior	Immediately or later
 <p>Logical Consequences</p>	Three through Adolescence	Effective	Most Behavior	Immediately or later
<p>Behavior Penalty</p> <p>For example, "No TV for rest of the day." or "No bike riding for rest of the day."</p>	Five through Adolescence	Effective	All Behavior	Immediately or later

Nicole's reward (getting her brother into trouble) outweighs her correction (receiving disapproval).

Perhaps a child has learned that he runs very little risk of actually being corrected. For instance, Aaron may occasionally raid the cookie jar, but rarely get caught. If he is caught, his parents may only threaten to correct, but never follow through with actual correction.

Sometimes parents demonstrate a particular behavior themselves — such as swearing — for which they correct their child. Children tend to imitate their parents' behavior even if their parents correct them for that behavior.

As a parent, be consistent in the behavior that you reward and the behavior that you correct. When you do correct, use correction that is both mild and effective.

Main Points To Remember:

- Rewarding good behavior is the easiest and best way to produce desirable behavior.
- Mild correction helps stop your child's bad behavior.
- Use correction sparingly and use mild correction only.
- Be a rational and nonaggressive model when you use correction.
- The most effective methods of mild correction are *time-out*, *scolding and disapproval*, *natural consequences*, *logical consequences*, and *behavior penalty*.