



RAY BURKE, PH.D., RON HERRON, LINDA SCHUCHMANN, M.S.

# Common Sense PARENTING<sup>®</sup>

*Learn-at-Home Workbook and DVD*



Learn effective parenting skills in your own home, at your own pace!



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Boys Town, Nebraska

# Common Sense Parenting® Learn-at-Home DVD Workbook

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# Parents Are Teachers

Discipline is often misunderstood. As parents, we may each take a different approach to discipline. This may include punishment, correction, and/or guidance.

In this chapter, we'll be learning about:

- ▶ Discipline
- ▶ Clear communication
- ▶ Using consequences to change behavior

## Discipline

What comes to mind when you think of the word "discipline?" Jot some of your thoughts on the following lines.

Discipline is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When my parents disciplined me, they \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When I discipline my kids, I \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ACTIVITY 1

Identify which of the following is discipline by teaching and which is discipline by punishment.

**1** Mike is playing with the TV video game. Johnny doesn't want to wait his turn, so he walks up and unplugs the game. Mike hits him with a Ping-Pong paddle. Mom hears what's going on, grabs Mike, shakes him, and yells, "Don't you dare hit your brother like that!"

**Teaching or Punishment ?**

**2** Sally and her friend are talking about the new girl in school. Mom overhears Sally tell her friend that they shouldn't play with the new girl any more because she doesn't wear neat clothes. Mom asks the girls to sit down and they talk about how clothes shouldn't determine how someone feels about another person. Mom says it is what's inside a person that is important, not what's on the outside.

**Teaching or Punishment ?**

**3** Felicia draws a picture on the living room wall with a red crayon. She finds Mom, shows her the picture, and asks her if she likes it. Mom spanks Felicia and sends her to her room for an hour.

**Teaching or Punishment ?**

**4** Dad tells Ty that he can't go shoot baskets because he has homework to finish. Ty gets angry, stomps his feet, and complains how unfair his father is. Dad tells Ty that they need to talk about Ty's behavior. First, he says that Ty needs to calm down and stop yelling. Moments later, after Ty has settled down, Dad explains to Ty how to accept "No" for an answer.

**Teaching or Punishment ?**

(Answers: 1 & 3 Punishment, 2 & 4 Teaching)

Here's what some parents have told us:

- Discipline was when my parents sent me to my room all day when I was in trouble.
- Discipline was when my parents would give me a whipping.
- Discipline was when my parents would lecture me. I hated that.
- Discipline reminds me of yelling, spankings, and getting on my kids' backs.

**TIP...**  
The dictionary defines discipline as education, training, and teaching.

If you think of discipline in these terms, you probably see discipline as something negative. If so, you're not alone. Most parents, as a recent survey on parenting indicated, use punitive or unpleasant responses when their children misbehave. This means parents yell, scold, call their kids names, or use physical punishment. While discipline by punishment occurs often, punishment is not the best way to discipline children.

**As parents, it is our job to discipline our children, that is, we need to educate, train, and teach them.**

The end result is children who are self-disciplined. In Common Sense Parenting, we emphasize that parents are children's first and most important teachers.



## Clear Communication

Good teachers use clear communication. As parents, that means we must clearly and accurately describe our children's behavior.

**Behavior is anything a person does that can be seen or heard.**

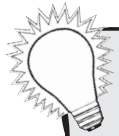
Do children really understand what their parents mean when they make statements like these:

“You’re a real brat; you’re very disrespectful.”

“You’ve got a lousy attitude!”

“Shape up and stop being so naughty.”

“You were a good boy at the store.”



**TIP...**  
**Communicate clearly with children.**  
**Describe their behavior – what they say and do.**

To be effective teachers for our children, we must clearly communicate with them. Words like “brat,” “disrespectful,” “lousy attitude,” “naughty,” and “good boy,” are not clear and concrete. For kids, this can be confusing and frustrating.

**Here are some specific descriptions of behavior:**

- My son throws his books down and says that he won’t do his homework.
- My son helped put away the dishes and wiped the table.
- When I asked my son to take out the trash, he argued and complained about having to do it.
- My daughter talks on the phone for one hour at a time.
- When I ask my son to do something, he rolls his eyes and walks away.
- When my kids come home from school, they put their books away and ask if there’s anything that needs to be done around the house.
- When I tell my daughter her jeans are too tight, she whines and asks me why I am always on her back.

When we specifically describe our children’s behaviors, they understand what they’ve done right or wrong. When they know what they’ve done correctly, they can do things right more often in the future. When they know what

## ACTIVITY 2

**Circle the statements that give clear messages.**

- 1 Billy, why can’t you act your age when we have company?
- 2 Veronica, keep your mouth closed when you chew your food.
- 3 When we go to the store, please be a nice girl.
- 4 Jim, would you please rake the backyard, put the leaves in a big plastic bag, and put the bag on the front curb?
- 5 That was a nice story you wrote for English class, Sam.
- 6 Sally, you need to stop talking right now.
- 7 Reggie, don’t eat like a pig!
- 8 Chuck, after school you are to come right home. Don’t stop to play. And call me at work when you get home.
- 9 Billy, thanks for sitting still and not talking in church.

(Answers: Clear messages: 2, 4, 6, 8, 9  
 Confusing Messages: 1, 3, 5, 7)

## Time-Out

### Here's how it works.

Immediately following a problem behavior, describe that behavior to your child and send (or take) him or her to Time-Out. Do not threaten or spank. Avoid giving your child a lot of attention at this time.

### How do I set up Time-Out with my kids?

Before you ever begin using Time-Out, explain to your child what Time-Out is, which problem behaviors it will be used for, and how long it will last. For example, you could say, "When I ask you to put your toys away and you start crying and throwing your toys, you will have to go sit on a chair in the kitchen for three minutes. When you stop crying and sit quietly, I'll start the timer. When the timer buzzes, you can get up." Then practice having your child go to the chair when you ask.

Have a convenient place for your Time-Out area. It doesn't have to be the same place each time. A kitchen chair, a couch, a footstool, or a step will work. Make sure the area is safe, well lit, and free from "fun" distractions like the TV or toys.

### How long should children stay in Time-Out?

As a general rule, a child should spend one quiet minute in Time-Out for every year of his or her age up to a maximum of five minutes. So, if your child is three years old, the longest amount of quiet time he should spend is three minutes. If your child is five years old, Time-Out should last no longer than five minutes. Even if your child is seven years old, she should not sit for more than five minutes after she has started Time-Out.

During Time-Out, your child is to be quiet and sit calmly in the chair. Time spent complaining, crying, or throwing a tantrum does not count  
*(continued on page 9)*

they've done wrong, they have a clearer idea of what not to do. But knowledge alone doesn't always mean that children will change their behavior. So, what do we need to do to help our children change their behavior? We need to combine our teaching with consequences.

## Using Consequences to Change Behavior

Consequences teach children to think and to learn that their actions lead to results, both positive and negative. Adults face consequences every day. If we don't get our work done, the boss criticizes us. If we compliment a friend, he speaks pleasantly to us.

You've probably used consequences many times before; for example, "grounding" your child for coming home late is a common consequence parents use. But simply giving a consequence doesn't automatically cause kids

to change their behavior. Parents need to combine clear messages and consequences when teaching children. This combination, coupled with love and affection, is very effective.

### There are two kinds of consequences – positive and negative.

Positive consequences are things people like and are willing to work to get. Behavior that is followed by a positive consequence is more likely to occur again. Rewards and privileges are forms of positive consequences.



Negative consequences are things people don't like and want to avoid. Behavior that is followed by a negative consequence is less likely to occur again (or will not occur as frequently). We recommend two types of negative consequences for misbehavior – taking away a privilege and adding chores.


### Negative Consequences: Taking Away a Privilege

For young children, taking away privileges for short amounts of time can be very effective. One way of doing this is called "Time-Out." It is a way of disciplining young children without raising your hand or your voice. Time-Out involves

having your child sit in one place, away from all distractions, for a certain amount of time. (Be sure to read the section on Time-Out, pages 8-9, for more specific information about how to use it with your children.)

For older children, taking away a privilege when a problem behavior occurs is generally an

effective consequence. For example, if your two children are arguing over what TV show to watch, they could lose TV privileges for an hour. Or, if your daughter ignores you when you ask her to get off the telephone, she could lose her telephone privileges for 30 minutes. Or, if your teenage daughter comes home an hour late, you may remove part of a privilege. You could say to her, "Sarah, because you're one hour late, your curfew will be one hour earlier tomorrow night." If coming home on time is a frequent problem, she may lose the privilege of going out next time: "Sarah, because you've been late the last three times you went out with friends, you won't be able to go out tomorrow night at all."



**TIP...**  
There are two types of negative consequences – taking away a privilege and adding chores.

*(Time-Out continued from page 8)*

toward quiet time. On the other hand, fidgeting and talking in a soft voice probably should count. If you start the time because your child is quiet but then he starts to cry or throw a tantrum again, wait until he is quiet and start the time over again.

#### What if my kids leave before their time is finished?

Your child should remain seated and quiet to leave Time-Out. If he decides he's had enough and leaves the chair too early, calmly return him to the chair. If this happens several times (and it often does when you first begin using Time-Out), keep returning your child to the chair.

If you get tired or other activities take you away from the Time-Out area, you can tell your child to leave the chair and give a different consequence. Your child may lose the privilege of playing with a toy or watching TV, or friends may have to go home. At a time when your child is calm, practice using Time-Out again. Practice often enough that your child begins staying in the chair in actual Time-Out situations.

When you first start using Time-Out, it's very likely that your child will cry, say some nasty things, throw toys, or make a mess. Ignore anything that is not dangerous to your child, you, or your home. Most negative behavior is an attempt to get you to change your mind about using Time-Out.

#### What do I do when Time-Out is finished?

When the Time-Out period is over, ask your child, "Are you ready to get up?" Your child must answer "Yes" in a way that is agreeable to you – a nod or an "Okay" works just fine. Then you can say that Time-Out is over and your child can return to his or her play activities. We'll talk about other teaching you can do after Time-Out is finished in the chapter on Corrective Teaching later in the book.

## Exercise I – Describing Children’s Behavior



Watch the children in each video scene. Then, circle the clearest description of the child’s behavior.

### Scene 1

This parent might describe his son’s behavior by saying:

- Now, this is a miracle!
- Nice job being responsible.
- Thanks for getting your homework done.
- Who are you and what have you done with my son?

### Scene 2

To clearly describe the children’s behavior, a parent could say:

- You kids are slob.
- You kids have left your toys and clothes laying around.
- This place looks like a pig sty!
- You know better than this.

### Scene 3

In this example, a parent might say:

- You are ignoring me.
- Knock off that attitude.
- Get back here. I know you heard me!
- Where do you think you’re going?

### Scene 4

In this example, the little girl is:

- Being a brat.
- Being a pest.
- Getting on mom’s nerves.
- Whining and begging for a cookie.

## Exercise 2 – Giving Consequences



After watching each video example, circle the consequence that is likely to be most effective. Remember, consequences should follow the behavior and be immediate, important to the child, and the right size.

### Scene 1

A good consequence for this arguing is:

- a. Throw the coloring book away.
- b. No coloring for 30 minutes.
- c. Ground them for 6 months.
- d. Tell them they're acting like babies.

### Scene 2

An effective negative consequence for Michael would be:

- a. Shut off the TV and send him to bed.
- b. Let him stay up longer if he promises to be quiet.
- c. Threaten to take away TV for a week if he doesn't stop arguing.
- d. Stuff cotton in your ears and ignore him.

### Scene 3

To reward Anthony for finishing his homework, this father should:

- a. Give him \$20.
- b. Promise to do something together later in the week.
- c. Say "Why can't you do this all of the time?"
- d. Praise him for doing his homework.

### Scene 4

To discourage this behavior a parent could:

- a. Yell at them to "knock it off."
- b. Warn them not to break anything.
- c. Threaten to "tan their hides."
- d. Give them an extra chore.

## Homework 1 – Identifying Behaviors and Consequences



Please write specific behavioral descriptions of four positive and four negative behaviors for children in your family. In the space next to each behavior write a consequence that you used, or could have used, after the behavior.

### Positive Behavior

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Consequence

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

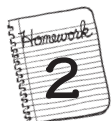
### Negative Behavior

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Consequence

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Homework 2 – Selecting Effective Consequences



*In the spaces below, please write specific consequences that you could use with your children.*

1. **Activities** – What everyday or special activities do your children like to do? For example, do they like playing video games, watching television, playing with friends, or going to the zoo?

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2. **Possessions** – What kinds of material articles do your children like? For example, do they like books, clothes, baseball cards, money, toys, or music cassettes?

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3. **Food** – What are your children’s favorite foods or food activities? For example, do they like popcorn, popsicles, pizza, cola, candy, waffles, granola bars, or fruit juices? Or do they like to make cookies or help with grocery shopping?

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4. **People** – With whom do your children spend time? For example, do they like to spend time with you, their grandparents, or friends?

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5. **Attention** – What specific kinds of verbal and physical attention do your children like? For example, do your children like hugs, smiles, compliments, high-fives, thumbs-up, and praise?

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# Learn how to **IMPROVE** your parenting skills!

Are you tired of nagging or yelling at your kids with no result? Does your child repeat the same misbehaviors time and again? Does your teen ignore or defy you?

Now you can join thousands of other parents who've attended Common Sense Parenting classes to learn how to build better relationships with their children and to improve their ability to handle problem behavior – through the convenience of this learn-at-home kit!

This kit contains a 167-page workbook and three hours of video on DVD.

## Join a Class with Parents Just Like You

In the comfort and privacy of your own living room, sit in on classes where an experienced trainer explains Common Sense Parenting skills and answers challenging questions from parents just like you. The trainer will show you examples of typical parenting problems and how best to handle them with your children.

Our "Exercise Man" guides you through short multiple-choice questions so you can test your understanding of the parenting concepts. The workbook provides more explanation, exercises, and examples.

Parents using these techniques report less problem behavior by their children and say that they feel more effective as parents and a lot less likely to use physical punishment.

Common Sense Parenting is your guide to self-confident parenting and a family everyone is happy to come home to!

## What You Will Learn

Six class sessions, each about one-half hour long, are included:

### Parents Are Teachers

Discusses why discipline should include teaching, how you can communicate clearly with your children, and how to use positive and negative consequences with children to change their behavior.

### Encouraging Positive Behavior

Shows how "catching children when they're being good" is one of the best ways to encourage more positive behavior and how to use charts and contracts to help children set and reach reasonable goals.

### Preventing Misbehavior

Demonstrates how to prevent problems by teaching children what they need to know to be successful in new situations or in situations that have been trouble for them in the past.

### Correcting Problem Behaviors

Shows how to respond effectively to children's misbehavior and increase the likelihood that children will behave better in the future.

### Handling Emotionally Intense Situations

Learn what techniques you can use to stay calm and to teach your child self-control when a child throws temper tantrums, screams, hits, or defies you.

### Helping Children Succeed in School

Demonstrates what you can do at home to help your child do well in school: how to use school notes, set up time and help with homework, and work with teachers on school problems.



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