



CBTS NEWSLETTER



Techniques to Set Rules and Consequences for Your Teen

Expectations and consequences must be spelled out ahead of time in order for them to be most effective. Both the child and the parent must know exactly what behavior is expected and what consequences will follow. There are three general ways that this can be accomplished.

Use Natural Consequences

Some behaviors carry with them natural consequences, and these consequences are often sufficient to produce change and a good way to start. A few examples follow.

- "I serve supper between 5:00 and 6:00 P.M. The kitchen closes at 6:00." The child who comes home at 6:30 is faced with the natural consequence of not eating or of preparing his own meal.
- "I only wash clothes that are placed in the hamper." The natural consequences of not putting clothes where they belong are that you cannot wear them, you wash them yourself, or you wear them dirty.
- "I am giving you your allowance on Friday. This is supposed to last until next Friday. I will not give you any more money until then." The natural consequences of going out Friday night and spending your entire allowance is that you will not have any money for the remainder of the week.
- "Anyone who breaks something in the house will be responsible for paying for the repair." The natural consequence of slamming a door and breaking it is that the person who slammed it will have to come up with the money to pay for it.

Many teenagers feel that their parents are always on their back, asking them to do too many things. They complain, "I wish my parents would leave me alone and let me do what I want." Some teenagers feel as though they do ten things for their parents for every one thing the parents do for them. Frequently, natural consequences are used to deal with this situation. The parent might tell the child, "You don't want me to ask you to do things, and you want me to quit hassling you. Well, I'll be more than happy to do this, but, remember, if I don't ask you to do things for me, you can't ask me to do things for you." At first the child thinks this is a good deal. But after a while she realizes that she is getting the short end of the deal and that the parent does more for her than she realized.

Many approaches to teenage behavior stress natural or logical consequences as methods of dealing with it. However, two things must be kept in mind when using natural consequences.

First, the natural consequence has to be important to the child in order for it to be effective. For example, the natural consequence of telling a teenager "I will not wash any of your clothes that are not put in the clothes hamper" will not work effectively for a child who does not care whether he wears clean or dirty outfits.

(cont.)

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(Techniques to Set Rules and Consequences for Your Teen cont.)

The other thing to consider before using this technique is whether you want the natural consequence to occur. One morning at 4:00 A.M. I got a call from a very upset mother. She told me that her 13-year-old son had left the house at seven o'clock the previous evening and was not yet home. When I asked what had happened, she told me that the boy and his father had had an argument about cleaning his room. When the child refused, the father responded angrily, "This is my house and as long as you live here you have to do what I want you to do, and I am telling you to clean your room!" After quite a bit of arguing, the father eventually warned, "If you don't like the rules in this house, you can leave," and the child left. The child experienced the natural consequence in this situation, but of course the parents did not want this to be the outcome.

In using this technique, parents must respond in a very matter-of-fact manner. You should try not to become upset, shout, or carry on. You have to be sure that the consequence is important to the child and you must consistently follow through with what is said.

"Discipline is like spinach. We may not care for it ourselves but feel sure it would be good fo everybody else."

"The problem with disciplining a teenager is that in no time at all you begin to sound like one yourself."

Use Important Consequences

When natural consequences cannot be used, you should try to identify consequences that are important to the child and to set the rules of behavioral expectations according to these. The consequences can be positive - things that do not happen every day at your house (extra phone time, staying out late, or having a friend sleep over). They can also be negative (loss of privileges, grounding, restrictions). Any privilege, activity, or request that is important to the child can serve as a consequence of his behavior.

- The child who wants to stay out later on the weekend may earn this privilege through more involvement in schoolwork during the week.
- Extra phone time or having a friend sleep over may be earned by a child who makes an effort to get along better with his siblings.
- An allowance could be earned by doing chores.

Positive consequences like the above enable a child to obtain a privilege or have a request granted.

Another method of using important consequences would be to set up situations where the teenager is being restricted or is losing particular privileges by behaving in certain ways.

- The child who talks back to his parents may not get the new shoes he wanted.
- The teenager who does not come home on time on Friday night may lose the right to go out on Saturday night.

In all of these examples, we identify a consequence that is important to the child and then set the behavioral expectations according to this. It is not a natural consequence or something that automatically follows an activity, but it is a consequence that parents can create and individualize according to the interests, desires, and wishes of the particular adolescent.





We had a great turnout to our picnic in August. It was fun to socialize with everyone and enjoy some delicious food. Thank you to everyone who helped to make it a success. A special thanks to Wanda and Susan for the amazing door prizes! Also, thanks to Shyanne, Courtney, Michelle, Kadijah, Keila, Sara and Josh for participating in our talent show.

CBTS PROCTOR TRAINING

Wednesday, September 21, 2011

5:30 p.m.

Presenters: Kim Ontiveros

Liz Mavor

This is a mandatory training and all proctors are expected to be in attendance.



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Using Consequences to Change Behavior

Consequences are the most important aspects of behavior management. They are the primary determinates of whether a child will change his behavior and develop new behaviors. A child must consistently experience consequences in order to change.

The range of consequences that can be used dramatically decreases as the youngster enters adolescence. The nine-year-old will respond to numerous consequences. When this same child becomes 13, the number of important consequences starts decreasing, and oftentimes the range is very small. For the teenager, many of the important consequences center around money, cars, telephone, clothing, driving privileges, going out, more freedom, loosening of restrictions, and being treated like an adult. If the adolescent has a hobby (e.g., the range of important consequences may somewhat increase.

There are three major consequences that parents can use in dealing with their teenagers:

- ◆ · Rewards, incentives, or positive consequences. If you see a behavior you like, reward it; that is, follow the behavior with some positive attention and something that is important or enjoyable to the child.
- ◆ · Punishment or negative consequences. If you see a behavior you do not like, punish it; that is, follow the behavior with negative attention and something the child views as unenjoyable, or withdraw something positive.
- ◆ · Ignoring or no consequences. If you see a behavior you do not like, ignore it because maybe the attention you pay to it is the reason it exists. In other words, do not follow the behavior with either negative or positive attention.

Setting Rules / Expectations and Consequences

Adolescents are very much into the "fairness" concept; that is, they respect and respond to parents, teachers, and other authority figures whom they perceive as being fair. Teenagers are less responsive to parents who they feel do not understand them and treat them in an unfair or unjust way. One of the ways to avoid being perceived as unfair and instead to present yourself to the adolescent as a fair and just person is to establish the rules and the consequences for behavior at the same time.

Most parents have dozens of rules and regulations. . For example: "Come home at 11:00 P.M." "Cut the grass." "After you use the bathroom, be sure you leave it the way you found it." "All of your homework must be done before you talk on the phone." Parents are usually good at specifying what they want or at setting rules. They state the expectation beautifully, but, unfortunately, many wait until the rule is broken before deciding what the consequence will be.

For example, if a child is told to be home by 11:00 and shows up at 11:30, the parent then decides what is going to happen - whether he will be grounded for a week, or is not allowed out the next night, or is restricted from using the phone. This method of announcing the consequence after the rule is broken is viewed as unfair by youngsters and should be avoided.

When we discipline or try to enforce rules and expectations in this fashion, several things happen.

First of all, in this situation, the child does not feel responsible for what has happened to him nor does he feel in control of the consequences of his behavior. As a result, he does not develop responsibility nor does he feel that he can influence what happens to him.

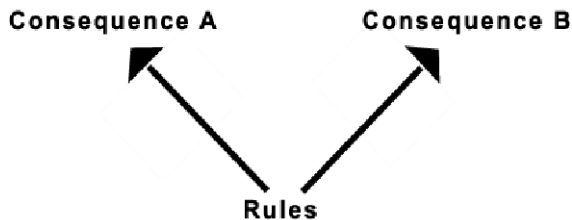
Also, if we wait until the adolescent breaks the rule to decide the punishment or consequence, the teen is likely to develop anger toward the parent because he feels that the parent is responsible for the bad thing (the consequence) that has happened to him. Since many adolescents already have some underlying anger, it is not helpful to do anything that will produce more resentment





Rules and Consequences Should Be Stated at the Same Time

In setting rules, parents should avoid stating only the expectation. It is important to spell out both the rule and the consequence at the same time and before the rule is broken.



The above diagram indicates the way effective rules should be set. That is, you should tell the child, "Here is what I want you to do. This (Consequence A) will happen if you do it that way, and this (Consequence B) will happen if you do it the other way." By using this method, you allow the child to decide for himself what is going to happen to him.

By stating the rules and the consequences at the same time, you put the responsibility for what happens to the teenager squarely on his shoulders. In terms of discipline, you become passive and laid-back and do exactly what the child tells you to do. This approach should eliminate nagging or power struggles. The teenager is in control of the consequences of his behavior and determines whether good or bad things happen to him.

Consequences are the most important tool in changing behavior, and the method just described is the most effective way to use them. You may not be able to employ this technique all of the time, but should use it whenever possible.

Rules and Consequences Have to Be Specific

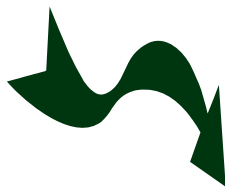
How many times has something like this happened to you? The teenager's room has been a mess for three weeks and it seems as if everything she owns is on the floor. You tell her, "Go to your room and pick up everything off the floor." About fifteen minutes later she comes out and you ask, "Did you do what I said?" Her response is "Yes." You go in the room to check and find that all the junk that was on the floor is now on the bed. You get upset, but what has happened is that she has taken you literally and fulfilled your expectation 100 percent: she has picked everything up off the floor.

Teenagers often do exactly what you tell them and usually have their own definitions of words. You should try to be as specific as possible when stating rules or behavioral expectations. If you say, "I want you to go to your room and clean it," you need to define what you mean by clean. "Put the dirty clothes in the hamper, the books on the shelf, and the trash and paper that are on the floor in the wastebasket. And don't put anything under your bed."

Parents may encounter problems in management if the expectations are stated in too general or cloudy terms - for example: "I want you to improve in school." or "Be nice to your sister." What do "improve" and "be nice" mean? They can mean different things to different people. To the teenager, improving in school might mean getting all D's instead of F's, and being nice to his sister might mean that he hits her only 10 times a day instead of 25. On the contrary, the parent defines improving in school as earning a C average, and being nice to the sister as not hitting her at all. Therefore, if the expectations are not specific enough, when the parent and teenager get together to compare notes they come up with a difference of opinion. The child feels that he has fulfilled the expectation, but the parent does not. Therefore, a situation has been created where the teenager thinks he has been unfairly treated.

The same thing happens when parents state the consequences in too general or vague terms. "If you do that again, you're going to get it." "You'll be punished if you don't improve in school." What does "going to get it" or "punished" mean to the teenager? Probably not very much.

In stating expectations/rules and consequences, you must be very specific and spell out what you mean. Do not assume that the adolescent "knows." Both parent and teenager have to have the same idea of what is expected and what the consequences will be. If the child is not sure, he is apt to be confused, feel resentful, or think he has been treated unfairly.



What did you learn from reading the information on setting rules and consequences? Write up a summary and submit it for training credit.

FREE SEPTEMBER ACTIVITIES

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- September 3, 10 Holladay Harvest Festival Days 4580 So. 2300 E. 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Farmers market, local produce, food, arts/crafts, bands, children's art activities
- September 3,10,17,24 Farmers Market 10610 So. Redwood Road 8:00 a.m. - 2:00p.m.
- September 3 Brazilian Festival at the Gateway Parade, music, dancing, food
- September 5 Extreme Yard Sale Fairmont Park 2230 So. 900 E. 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Music, food, kids activities, bounce houses, train, etc.
- September 7 International Folk Festival Sandy Amphitheater 9400 So, 1300 E.
8:00 - 10:00 p.m. Music & dance from Spain, Hungary,
- September 7 Country Current WYC Cultural Celebration Center 1355 W. 3100 S.
7:30 p.m. Country rock, bluegrass, swing
- September 10 Celebration of Cultural Diversity Pioneer Park
Music & dancing - Japanese, Mariachi Band, Brazilian Samba, Eastern Arts, Irish dancers
- September 10 Family Health Fair Rice Eccles Stadium 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Free dental assessments, glucose screenings, blood pressure, cholesterol, healthy cooking demonstrations, activities for kids
- September 16 Movie in the park - "Shrek the Final Chapter" 12800 So, 1450 W. 9:00 p.m.
Bring your own blankets and treats
- September 17 Heritage Festival 90 E. 8720 So. 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Free food, entertainment, car show, inflatables for kids
- September 23-25 Festival of the Old West Tooele City Complex
Gem show, Native American powwow, displays, demonstrations





TIPS, TRICKS & TECHNIQUES IN SPEAKING TO YOUTH WITHOUT AN INTERPRETER

One line phrases to use when working with youth. Remember to use them with empathy.

- ♥ Probably so
- ♥ I know
- ♥ Nice try
- ♥ I bet it feels that way
- ♥ Bummer.
- ♥ Thanks for sharing that.
- ♥ Don't worry about it now.
- ♥ What do you think you're going to do?
- ♥ I don't know. What do you think?
- ♥ That's an option.
- ♥ I bet that's true.
- ♥ Maybe you'll like what we have for the next meal better.
- ♥ What do you think I think about that?
- ♥ I'm not sure not to react to that. I'll have to get back to you on it.
- ♥ I'll let you know what will work for me.
- ♥ I'll love you wherever you live.

Let youth experience natural consequences once or twice. Watch how this changes their perspective. Observe what happens next.

