

APPENDIX 5 DISCIPLINE

Version 1



What is discipline?

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement.

Why discipline?

It brings security, produces character, prepares for life, is evidence of love, and is God's heart.

Hebrews 12: 5-12, Proverbs 22: 6

Do's and Don'ts of Discipline in Children's Work

- We need to be insistent, consistent, and persistent.
- Never smack or hit a child.
- Discipline out of love, never anger. (Call on support from other leaders if you feel you may deal with the situation unwisely in your anger.)
- Do not shout in anger or put down a child.
- Lay down ground rules, e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names; respect for property.
- Keep the rules simple and clear and make sure the children understand what procedures will be taken if they are not kept.
- Talk to a child away from the group, not publicly. (Explain what they have done wrong, encourage remorse and leave them on a positive note.)
- Never reject a child, just the behaviour. (Encourage the child that they are loved and accepted but it's their behaviour you do not accept.)
- If you have disciplined a child, you must make the parents aware of your actions.
- Each child is unique, special and individual and each child needs a different method of being dealt with. We, therefore, need to ask ourselves, "Why is the child behaving like that?"

Then:

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding, and pray for and with the children.
- Identify the best method for disciplining and encouraging that child.
- Work on each child's positives; do not compare them with each other but encourage and build them up.
- Work on relationships.
- Be a good role model and set a good example. (Don't expect children to do what you don't do and vice versa.)
- Take care to give quieter and well-behaved children attention and don't allow some children to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said – this avoids manipulation.

Some practical ideas for the classroom and bad behaviour

- Change voice and tone but try not to shout!
- Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive when together. These children are often friends; give them a chance – perhaps warn them and only separate if they continue to be disruptive.
- Have the child sit right in front of you.
- Get a helper to sit next to the child.
- Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active and not wait to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take the child aside and talk to them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging them on their strengths.
- Warn a child that you will speak to their parents; do so if necessary. (With some non-churched children, we need to be wise, as speaking to parents may incur their wrath and ban the child from attending.)
- If a child's behaviour is constantly disruptive, seek advice and guidance from a leader.
- Don't be afraid of discipline.
- Warn them and send them outside the room (take care regarding supervision) back into the service or ban them for a week. **Red** (children are taken back to their parent and advised about their child's behaviour) & **Yellow cards** (as a warning) may be a helpful tool to use.
- Encourage good behaviour.
- Remember each child is individual and unique. We need God's wisdom and love to encourage each one to reach their potential and needs.
- Pray before you meet.