

What is Punishment?

Punishment is not discipline.

Punishment is an act that is meant to physically or emotionally hurt a child.

Examples of physical and emotional punishment that are NOT acceptable:

- name calling
- pushing
- yelling
- hitting
- spanking
- slapping
- swearing
- teasing
- verbal put downs

Durrant, J.E., Ensom, R., and Coalition on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth (2004).
Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth. Ottawa: Coalition on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth.

Parent Talk Information Line
905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074
extension 7555

Niagara  Region
PUBLIC HEALTH

Parents and caregivers use punishment because they:

- Believe punishment is a good way to teach children a lesson
- Are angry and they take their anger out on their children
- Are unaware of their child's stage of development, personalities and needs
- Feel it is a quick way to gain control and change their children's behaviour
- Repeat what they learned as children



Feelings of anger can affect your relationship with your child and can even interfere with your judgment. Don't hold your anger in, learn to deal with it.

Signs of Anger

- Red face
- Rapid breathing
- Tense body
- Clenched teeth, hands or toes
- Feeling stressed
- Agitation
- Frustration
- Head hurts

Tips for controlling Anger

- Walk away
- Breathe
- Count to 10 or more
- Write your feelings down
- Talk to someone
- Use humour

Reasons NOT to use punishment

- It is easy to hurt a child when acting in anger
- The child may think it is okay to solve problems with violence
- The child may feel humiliated and frightened
- The child will not understand what behaviour is expected
- Use of punishment will hurt the relationship between parent and child

Research shows that physical punishment increases the likelihood that children will grow up with problems associated with low self-esteem, aggressive behaviour, depression and mental illness.

Invest In Kids (2005) Coping: How Do I Control My Anger? Retrieved March 13, 2006, From http://www.investinkids.ca/ContentPage.aspx?name=parents_anger

Thomas, Eleanor. (2004) Aggressive behaviour outcomes for young children: change in parenting environment predicts change in behaviour. Statistics Canada and Social Development.