

**Positive Discipline Techniques
to promote
Positive Behaviour
in
Children**

**Training Manual
for Facilitators**



Save the Children

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Why this manual?

In order to raise awareness and build capacity in positive behaviour and discipline, Save the Children has developed this stand alone module which can be used by partner organisations, communities and schools. Although the focus is on punishment in a school setting, the principles apply equally to all forms of harmful discipline out of the classroom and can be helpful to parents and the community in general.

The positive teaching and learning environment

Poor quality of education services has been identified as a barrier both to children staying in school, attending regularly and to children learning effectively. This is exacerbated by extensive use of corporal punishment and other forms of violence by teachers to discipline students. Consultations with children has revealed the widespread use of corporal punishment and other forms of violence and abuse by teachers aimed to discipline students. A Government Order (GO) to ban corporal punishment has been introduced in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, but despite this corporal punishments continue in schools. Save the Children has the view that in order to eradicate harmful punishment in schools, it is vital to support and equip teachers to promote a positive environment in the classroom that encourages good behaviour. This incorporates teaching and learning which is inclusive, child centred and activity based, and positive discipline rather than harmful punishment.

Positive Discipline

One of the most common factors in making a school child friendly, which was quoted by children, related to stopping corporal punishment. There is a growing understanding that corporal punishment is harmful and a policy which aims to eradicate it through Advisory Notices or Government Orders already exists. While the policy to ban is important, it is equally, if not more important, to support teachers in making these bans realistic and effective. They have the challenge of managing classes through positive behaviour and capacity building in alternative forms of discipline. This is an important priority for which Save the Children has developed tools and training modules to assist education authorities and partners to support teachers in the classroom environment.

Save the Children's experience and process in the tsunami affected areas in promoting Positive Discipline techniques

So far seven Positive Discipline orientations have been given using this module and the participants in their feedback have mentioned that the orientation was more like a consultation drawing from their own experiences. With regard to positive discipline techniques our intent has been to build on available resources, experience and knowledge. Our approach has been to break down each concept into a process-oriented module to facilitate greater internalisation. However, we have been making relevant changes in the module based our actual facilitation experience and feedback from the participants. The changes include changing our approach and amending the contents where necessary. When there was a list of punishments, one teacher from Tiruvalluvar District, Tamil Nadu told, "You can remove this slide! Such punishments no longer exist." There was an occasion where our co-facilitators suggested that the groups can present case studies in the form of role plays rather than as group discussion outcomes. This worked better as the portrayal helped each group to feel the impact, besides being an energising participatory methodology.

In one particular training, we used two different colour post-it slips and distributed one colour slip each, to all the participants requesting them to give one harm and one benefit each. This was particularly useful, since even those participants who believed that there was no benefit were encouraged to reflect and write one benefit. When the points were displayed, there were repetitions. Next time we kept the two colour slips near the chart where they had to paste the post-it. Participants had the option to write harms or benefits as they believed. With this approach, the display of 'post-its' showed the imbalance which was very effective in the balance exercise. Likewise, we are confident the facilitators using this manual would invent appropriate methods while they are using the modules, as the module only serves as guide and is not prescriptive. We refrained from giving examples of 'Positive Discipline Techniques' because we were clear that the technique should be situation and child specific. Giving too many ideas may encourage an adult to practise something with a child which may actually turn out to be 'Negative technique' for that particular child, because it was not adopted in consultation with the child or with the child's consent.

While physical punishments and verbal abuse are issues that create negative feelings, it is useful to steer the orientation positively. Rather than focus too much on the graphic description and variety of physical punishments, more focus on positive techniques was found to be more effective. While focusing on positive techniques, participants move towards their own positive, creative state of mind and hence the tendency to justify physical punishments begins to fade. Such an attitude would automatically displace physical punishments. We hope that anybody using this module would retain this spirit.

Objectives of the capacity building

- To clarify and understand what is corporal punishment, why it happens and the effects of harmful punishment
- To explore how to encourage and enable alternative and non harmful forms of discipline

Notes to the facilitator

- The duration of the orientation is usually three to five hours depending upon the size of the team, background of the participants in the team and the facilitator's ability to channel the discussions. By background we refer to participants' extent of familiarity with each other in the team and their prior work experience with children because the depth of interactions is dependent on these factors.
- A few participants may be already self-critiquing whether they are doing the right thing by punishing the children. Once such participants feel assured that they would not be judged, they begin to voice their inner conflict pertaining to physical punishments. Such sharing should lead to discussions and debates.
- The success of the orientation is in facilitating a healthy debate towards a thinking process rather than providing quick-fix solutions. It is important to ensure that nobody feels 'Judged' or 'Misjudged' for being honest with their beliefs about punishments. However it is equally important to drive home the message that it is inappropriate to physically and verbally abuse children.

SESSION - I

Positive approach the key to positive discipline techniques

Activity: Group work

Objective: Introduction; Self-reflection; Setting workshop goals

Materials: Flip chart with the table presented below (Saves time) and markers

Duration: 30 minutes

Name and Organisation	Education achievement	Expectations from the workshop

An interesting name for your group:-----

In small groups of 5-7 members, participants discuss the following:

1. Their name and the organisation they belong to
2. Their education achievement (Participants' achievement towards the cause of children's Education)
3. Expectations from the workshop
4. Together choose an interesting name for their group
5. Team members should identify a volunteer to write down the points and another volunteer to present the group's points

Activity description:

The session starts with a positive tone where the participants together discuss their achievements. This activity is an apt introduction activity which, apart from enabling the participants to get to know each other, also helps the facilitator to learn participants' expectations. Participants are given the task of giving a unique name to their game. This task is of great interest to the teams. After they complete the entire exercise, the volunteers for the respective groups come and present the outcomes. The facilitator should carefully make note of expectations which would help him or her by the end of the workshop to review if the participants met their expectations. Facilitator can request a member from each group to volunteer to share his or her feeling about the session

SESSION - II

Activity: Interactive presentation

Objective: Ensuring a shared understanding of the meaning of Corporal Punishment, its forms and its effects

Materials: Flip charts containing the following points/cards for group activity

Duration: 45 minutes

Activity description

Either in groups or through presentation, explore and bring out the following key messages about Corporal Punishment. If a group activity, the groups can be asked to brainstorm on each of the following questions, and to feed this back to the broader group. Conclude the session with a discussion involving all participants on the points raised.

What is Corporal Punishment?

Corporal punishment is deliberate violence inflicted on children. Verbal abuse is also a form of corporal punishment.

How big an issue is it?

- Only 15 out of the 190-plus countries in the world have banned the corporal punishment of children.
- In the many remaining countries, parents and other caregivers, including teachers, retain the "right" to hit and humiliate children.

Why does it happen?

- ▶ Because people believe that it is effective as it prevents children from getting into trouble
- ▶ It teaches them right from wrong and instils respect
- ▶ Also because people are unaware of the alternative methods

Is it true that corporal punishment is effective?

Several studies confirm that corporal punishment does the opposite of what parents or teachers intend it to do or believe it might do. In short, it neither disciplines nor improves learning:

The real effects of corporal punishment :

- Corporal punishment is degrading, contributes to feelings of helplessness and humiliation, robs a child of self-worth and self-respect, and can lead to withdrawal or aggression (Sternberg et al., 1993; Straus, 1994).
- Corporal punishment erodes trust between a parent and a child, and increases the risk of child abuse; as a discipline measure, it simply does not decrease children's aggressive or delinquent behaviours (Straus, 1994)
- Corporal punishment adversely affects children's cognitive development. Children who are spanked perform poorly on school tasks compared to other children (Straus & Mathur, 1995; Straus & Paschall, 1998).
- Corporal punishment sends a message to the child that violence is a viable option for solving problems (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980; Straus, Sugarman, & Giles-Sims, 1997).

What are the forms of corporal punishment?

Physical punishment and emotional punishments are the commonest forms of corporal punishment. Both are forms of violence against children. They violate children's rights as human beings to respect, dignity, equal protection of the law, and protection from all forms of violence.

What are emotional punishments?

Emotional punishments humiliate the child and cause psychological pain. Similar to negative verbal punishment, but much more severe, it can include: Public ridicule, Sarcasm, Threats, Name-calling, Yelling, Commanding. Humiliating actions such as denying a child clothing, food, play time or allowing the child to go home; forcing them to stay in undignified positions for everyone to see and comment on, are also forms of Emotional Punishment.

SESSION - III

Activity: Group work

Objective: Internalising and understanding the effects and harm of corporal punishment

Materials: Meta cards / Chart paper cut to post-card size and markers, Bluetac/Tape/Glue

Duration: 20 minutes

Activity description:

Participants should form groups. In the groups they should put themselves in the place of an adult (Parent/teacher) or a child and then discuss the 'feeling' caused by corporal punishment. If there are three groups, one group would be 'Parent' the other group 'Teacher' and 'Child'. Clearly explain to the participants that they need to mention only the 'feeling'. That is the reason for give restricted time to the participants.

As a parent, teacher What did you feel after beating? (Even if they are neither of the two, they should imagine themselves to be one)

As a child What did you feel while you were beaten

Participants can put down each team members' feeling and put up the same on the wall. Then a volunteer from each group would come and read-out the feelings of children.

SESSION - IV

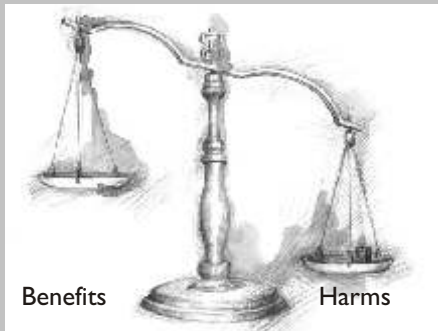
Activity: Brainstorming

Objective: Understanding the harmful nature of corporal punishments

Materials: Post-its (2 colours) ; A chart with the picture of a 'Balance', Bluetac/Tape/Glue

Duration: 20 minutes

What does corporal punishment do?



The Balance exercise

Activity description:

Display the 'Balance' on a board or wall. Provide post-it notes to participants. Ask the participants to write the effects of corporal punishment - one on each post-it. Invite the participants to place the post-its on a table closer to the wall or board where the 'Balance' is displayed. Request each participant to come to the 'Balance' and put up their points on the balance. Invariably, even those participants who believe in physical punishments are aware of its harms and come out with more harms than benefits.

When participants complete posting, put forth this question:

"Is there any use in resorting to a practice which causes more harms than benefits?"

SESSION -V

- Activity: Interactive presentation and discussion
- Objective: To challenge the widely held belief that Corporal Punishment is essential for a child to learn
- Materials: Prepared flip charts containing the following points, copies of the sheet containing myths and realities
- Duration: 30 minutes

Myths and Realities*

Raise each statement, and then discuss why it is a myth and not a fact. Distribute copies at the end of the session.

Myth No. 1: "It happened to me and did me no harm."

Fact: Though they may have felt fear, anger, and mistrust from being hit by parents or teachers, people who use this argument often do it to reduce the guilt they have for using corporal punishment on their children today. In their minds, they are defending their violent actions against their children. However, their actions reveal that corporal punishment did, in fact, do them harm: it perpetuated the cycle of violence that they now inflict upon children, and similarly these children are more likely to perpetuate the violence for generations to come.

Myth No. 2: "Nothing else works!" or "They ask for it!"

Fact: The problem is the disciplinary approach, not the misbehaviour of the children. Justifying that a child has asked for violence is really intended to make the perpetrator feel less guilty: blame the victim. Besides, do you normally hit your boss, employee, spouse, or best friend when it appears that "nothing else works"? Hopefully not!

Myth No. 3: "Corporal punishment works best. Other methods don't."

Fact: Corporal punishment creates a sense of distrust and insecurity in the child, it destroys the teacher-child relationship. Children become angry at why someone who is supposed to teach and care for them is instead threatening, beating, or insulting them. While a single act of corporal punishment may seem to be effective, it only temporarily frightens a child into submission.

* SOURCE: UNESCO PUBLICATION
(Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments)

Myth No. 4: "Corporal punishment teaches obedience."

Fact: In the past, the practice was to teach children to obey authority without questioning. Now teachers adopt child-centred learning techniques to encourage children to explore, ask questions, and to learn the joy of finding answers as a major way of learning. Corporal punishment, however, stops a child from questioning, thinking critically, and achieving personal goals; yet these are qualities that both adults and children need in order to excel in a dynamic, competitive, and innovative society.

Myth No. 5: "I only do it as a last resort. I had no choice."

Fact: This argument is not acceptable; for example, is a husband justified in hitting his wife as a last resort? It should be no more acceptable when it comes to our students. Besides, it is quite common for parents and teachers to resort to physical punishment at the first instance not as a last resort.

Myth No. 6: It's the only way I can control the children in my class. I have too many!

Fact: This excuse is common among teachers who face large classes. It usually arises because the classroom has no set rules or routines; the children do not know what is expected of them and the consequences for misbehaving; and the teacher did not take the time to build a positive relationship with the children so they would want to be good. Like Myth 4 above, enforcing blind obedience through threats of physical violence does not encourage children to learn from the teacher, only to fear him or her. As a result, they don't want to learn, which makes our job harder, and they don't learn well, which reflects poorly on our performance as a teacher.

Myth No. 7: "Corporal punishment is a part of our culture."

Fact: Promoting alternatives to physical punishment is looked at as a "Western" imposition not considering Asian values. In Asian societies, age-related status hierarchies prevail and the expectation is that the young should respect, serve, and obey older people including teachers. Although physical punishment is widespread in Asia, there is no necessary connection between the two core values of Asian societies such as maintaining social harmony and learning to use mental abilities to discipline the body, amidst chaos. Violence through corporal punishment destroys the social harmony in the classroom in terms of student-teacher relationship, and erodes children's confidence and self-esteem. Lack of self-control as a way to dominate others is made acceptable. The traditional ways that can be used as alternative forms of discipline includes for example, 'Respected adults modelling good and non-violent behaviour which would children would imitate and learn

SESSION -VI

Activity: Interactive presentation and discussion

Objective: To introduce the difference between punishment and discipline

Materials: Prepared flip charts containing the following points, copies of Annex 2 outlining the difference between discipline and punishment

Duration: 30 minutes

Using prepared slides or flip charts, present the following key elements distinguishing discipline and punishment

What can we do about it?

1. Understand the difference between disciplining and punishing

Discipline

Discipline is the practice of teaching or training a person to obey rules or a code of behaviour in both the short and long terms.

Punishment

Punishment is meant to control a child's behaviour, discipline is meant to develop a child's behaviour especially in matters of conduct.

Refer to Annexure 2 which outlines the differences between discipline and punishment. Distribute copies at the end of the session.

Disciplining

While punishment is a single act, positive discipline is a four-step process that recognises and rewards appropriate behaviour. Disciplining is meant to teach a child self-control and confidence by focusing on what it is we want the child to learn and what the child is capable of learning

Positive Discipline Techniques - Steps

1. The appropriate behaviour is described
2. Clear rules and reasons are provided
3. Acknowledgement is requested
4. The correct behaviour is reinforced

Catch students doing the right thing and reward them immediately. This is the core of positive discipline

Encouragement is a type of reward that stimulates the child to work, learn, and achieve. It builds self-esteem because the child learns that he or she was directly responsible for earning his or her praise or other reward. Children can choose to earn it, or not to earn it. This gives them a feeling of control over their lives, which is a key ingredient for healthy self-esteem. Likewise, not giving encouragement for misbehaviour - such as ignoring attention-getting behaviours like temper tantrums or being late for class - will, over time, teach the child self-control if he (or she) doesn't get the attention he is trying to obtain through his misbehaviour. He learns that he only gets attention when he behaves calmly or arrives promptly that is, when you catch him being good.

Positive Discipline Techniques - Examples

- Model orderly, predictable behaviour, respectful communication, and collaborative conflict resolution strategies
- Use appropriate body language - nod, smile, and look directly at the student.
- Lower your body position - especially for younger children, bend, kneel, or sit at their level.
- Restructure the environment - remove objects that invite misbehaviour; for example, if games or toys are used as teaching aides, remove them when you are finished.
- Redirect behaviour positively - a student bounces a soccer ball around the classroom. "You can bounce your ball outside on the playground where there is more space to play."

SESSION -VII

- Activity: Group discussion based on Case studies
- Objective: Applying the learning of the training to participants' own experience
- Materials: Printouts with case studies; Flip charts to document discussion outcomes
- Duration: 30 minutes

Sample Case Studies used for group work

Distribute the following case studies, and ask participants in groups to discuss what they would do in the following situations. At the end of the discussion, ask each group to share their suggestions.

Case study 1

Amudha is an adolescent girl in class VIII. Her family struggles in poverty. Her parents are very old and chronically ill. Amudha is always hyperactive in class and makes sure that she troubles everyone.

Guiding questions for Group Discussion

1. What is the fundamental problem in the case study?
2. How should be the teacher's approach towards Amudha?
3. What is the role of Amudha's classmates in supporting her?

Case study 2

Suman and Ganesh are in Class III. On an examination day, they arrive earlier to school for their after-noon session. A teacher noticing the children enter slaps them on the face and pulls their hair. The teacher justifies what she did by saying, "Who will manage them if they come in before time?" The children who entered looking fresh and cheerful look lost with tears rolling on their face. Guiding questions for Group Discussion

1. What are your critical comments to the teacher's behaviour?
2. How else could the teacher have handled the situation

Case Study 3

In a higher secondary school, on a mid-term test day the tenth standard girls have come to school with an understanding that they would be sent home after their tests. Hence none of them had brought either their lunch or their text books for post-lunch class. The mathematics teacher who had her class as per time table got furious to know about this. She thought the girls wanted to escape studies and had done this deliberately. She was angry also because the girls were playful and irresponsible with no fear for Public Examination. She took the girls to the headmistress's room and told them before going, "Even if the headmistress excuses you, I am not going to excuse you". After complaining to the headmistress, she made the girls stand in front of the headmistress's room. It was closer to the school entrance and everybody could notice the girls standing. All the girls were tired as they did not have their lunch. There were girls with some physical ailments and discomforts. They were struggling to stand for long.

Guiding questions for Group Discussion

1. What was wrong in teacher's approach?
2. What did the teacher achieve?
3. How the teacher could have approached the situation differently?

CONCLUDING SESSION

Activity: Concluding the training by sharing commitment to eradicate the prevalence of harmful punishment

Objective: Committing to contribute to the eradication of harmful punishment

Materials: flip chart, card to record pledge

Duration: 30 minutes

Ask participants to reflect on what they personally pledge to do to stop corporal punishment. On prepared flip chart with "Uncle, Aunt will you do this for me?" ask participants to record their own personal commitment or pledge.

Conclude the orientation with participants sharing what touched or struck them about the training.

With regard to the choice of positive discipline techniques, what makes a child feel humiliated cannot be standardised as having similar effects on all children. The technique and approach by the teacher should be child-specific. Therefore it is appropriate that the teacher who best knows the child decides the positive discipline. The child should know the cause and effect of an appropriate behaviour. This is the very purpose of applying the positive discipline techniques. Therefore the success of a method is in involving the child to the extent that the child feels totally comfortable with the method used and realises the value behind the learning that results from the process..

Annexure I

Differences between Positive Discipline and Physical and Psychological Punishment

Positive Discipline	Physical and Psychological Punishment
Never includes forms of violence, neither physical nor humiliating	It is a physical or psychological form of violence
Questions the action, never the person	Questions the person's dignity, not the action
It offers an alternative behaviour	It does not offer an alternative behaviour
It is always an action related to the wrong behaviour and proportional to it, to produce positive learning in the child	It is not related to wrong action and neither is it proportional to it. It produces fear and obligation to obey, not learning
It is not imposed with authority	It is based on an abuse of power
It is always thought out and planned	It is faster and easier, does not require time to plan and think
Children participate as much as possible, and at least they are informed of the norms and the consequences	It never includes child participation
It includes non-violent forms of punishment	It teaches children that people who love them hurt them (link between love and violence) and people who have authority can abuse it (link between authority and violence)

