

La Petite Ecole

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What I learned in my last two classes – tidbits to share with you:

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I. Discipline for young Children:

- Discipline (instead of punishment), teaches children to think about their choices and the consequences of these choices.
- Diminishes the power struggle
- Teaches accountability

The Consequence you set before the child should be:

- Respectful (not angry or emotional, no yelling or hitting, humiliation)
- Related (to what they are doing— if child is not being safe or nice playing outside, can't play outside for a while...)
- Reasonable (make sure you will follow through with what you set as a consequence – age appropriate)
- Revealed (they need to know ahead of time – if you choose to hit your friend, you will have to spend some time alone away from the others)

II. Communicating with children – Praise vs Encouragement:

- Child needs to know he is significant. High self-esteem is needed for good decision making.
- Child needs to feel listened to, accepted and needed.
- Child needs a safe environment to make mistakes
- Child needs to feel needed -- provide ways (chores) which enables them to know they are helping you.

Be careful! We are too used to giving “empty” praise. While we think we are helping a child's self-esteem, we are actually undermining it. We are teaching them to look to others for validation instead of within themselves. This habit becomes dangerous when their peers become their biggest source of influence (Middle School). Praise can create an unhealthy dependency on outside influences and can be manipulative.

Better: Encourage your child. Use words like: Good for YOU! Tell me about your picture... You seem proud... You did it!... You really worked hard on that! How do you feel about your accomplishment??? Thank you for...

Encouragement trains a child to look inside themselves for validation. Train them to tell you what THEY think of what they are doing. This creates independence, raises self-esteem and can be used even if a child has not met a goal (create a safe learning environment). We need to get away from the tendency to praise everything a child does or reward them constantly. This creates a false sense of entitlement and the expectancy that all they do is perfect. Teaching them to look critically (not negatively) at their own accomplishments moves them away from this dangerous trend in our children's generation.

Do you feel stressed at times? (This is for us adults!)

A lecturer, when explaining stress management to an audience, raised a glass of water and asked, "How heavy is this glass of water?"

Answers called out ranged from 20g to 500g.

The lecturer replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter.

It depends on how long you try to hold it.

If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem.

If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm.

If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance.

In each case, it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

He continued, "And that's the way it is with stress management.

If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on. "

"As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again.

When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden."

"So, before you return home tonight, put the burden of work down.

Don't carry it home.

You can pick it up tomorrow.

Whatever burdens you're carrying now, let them down for a moment if you can." So, my friend, why not take a while to just simply RELAX.

Put down anything that may be a burden to you right now.

Don't pick it up again until after you've rested a while.

Life is short.

Enjoy it!