

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Fostering a positive environment in schools

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD – RELEVANT ARTICLES TO POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is an international treaty that recognises the human rights of children, defined as persons up to the age of 18 years old, in 54 articles and two Optional Protocols.

Two articles in the CRC address the rights of children to be disciplined in a manner that respects their dignity.

- Article 28 (Rights to Education):** All children have the right to a primary education, which should be free. Discipline in schools should respect children’s dignity. For children to benefit from education, schools must be run in an orderly way – without the use of violence. Any form of school discipline should take into account the child’s human dignity. Therefore, governments must ensure that school administrators review their discipline policies and eliminate any discipline practices involving physical or mental violence, abuse or neglect. The Convention places a high value on education. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education of which they are capable.
- Article 29 (Goals of Education):** Children’s education should develop each child’s personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others, human rights and their own and other cultures. It should also help them learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people. Children have a particular responsibility to respect the rights their parents, and education should aim to develop respect for the values and culture of their parents.

In line with the values of the CRC, the 2006 UN Study on Violence Against Children recommended that schools should be safe, child-friendly and promote rights-based curricula, so that children are able to learn free from violence and learn non-violent behaviours.

Towards this end, schools should adopt and implement codes of conduct for staff and students that confront all forms of violence. School staff should use non-violent teaching strategies that emphasise positive reinforcement, constructive criticism, clear guidance and instruction, and firm but fair treatment.

Positive discipline IS NOT:	Positive discipline IS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total freedom for children Absence of rules, limits, standards and expectations A short-term reaction by adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A long-term perspective shared by children and adults Development of self-discipline Mutual respect

PRINCIPLES OF POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

- **Respect**
 - Recognising that other people have feelings
 - Mutual respect
 - Celebrating different skills and competences
 - Healthy competition
 - Shared decisions
 - Shared long-term goals
 - Agreed short term limits

- **Two-way communication**
 - Listening
 - Hearing
 - Speaking
 - Understanding
 - Learning
 - Teaching
 - Facilitating feedback
 - Complaints mechanisms

- **Life-long, life-skills learning**
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-discipline
 - Confidence
 - Humility
 - Negotiation skills
 - Non-violent conflict resolution
 - Managing stress
 - Dealing with frustration
 - Taking responsibility for the consequences of one's actions