
Discipline and Guidance

Many attitudes exist concerning discipline. Depending on one's personal experience, discipline can be seen as either a positive or negative force in child development. The main goal of all teaching is to help a child become a happy, whole person who can make decisions and direct his own work. Proper use and understanding of the basic principles of discipline can help a child achieve this goal.

Why does a child misbehave?

There are a number of reasons why a child might misbehave. Listed below are some of them.

- The leader is unprepared.
- Long periods of waiting take place between activities.
- The child becomes bored with the activity.
- The activity is not suited for the child's abilities.
- The child is seeking attention.
- The child is physically or emotionally tired.
- The child may have been in conflict with a family member or schoolmate.
- A relationship conflict exists between the leader and the child.

Discipline

For most people, discipline is first understood as punishment. Unfortunately, this common definition is misleading. The word "discipline" comes from the Latin word *disciplina* which really means to teach or to learn. Within this context, another word for discipline could be "guidance."

Guidance

Guidance includes everything an adult does or says to directly or indirectly affect a child's behavior. Christian guidance is a plan of action based on Christian values and goals. The goal of all Christian guidance is to help children become happy individuals who can make good choices and work without being forced. Three types of guidance can be used: indirect, direct, and spoken.

1. **Indirect Guidance:** A method that directs a child's behavior through control of space, equipment, materials, and the relationships of people. Behind-the-scenes work and planning helps a child become directed.
2. **Direct Guidance:** A method of changing or directing a child's behavior by giving individual and specific actions.
3. **Spoken Guidance:** A method of changing or directing a child's behavior by speaking with the child individually and specifically.