

# SUGGESTED CONSEQUENCES TO APPLY for misbehavior

provided by *Single Parent Wisdom: If only I knew then what I know now...* book series by Julie Prescott

All of us, no matter what age, have consequences for our actions. When we are loving to others we receive positive consequences or incentives such as a smile, hug or kiss. This makes us want to be more loving. When we are careless, we receive negative, yet natural consequences, such as getting wet when we forget our raincoat, or hungry when we forget our lunch. When we are disrespectful, mean, or break the house rules, or even worse, the community rules, we receive negative consequences, such as a Time Out, loss of privilege, or go to jail. These consequences aim to teach us to improve our behavior.

Here are some suggested consequences to apply to help your child improve behavior and make better choices. Adapt these to fit your child at his current age, ability, and the situation. Children learn from properly applied consequences. You judge the situation and decide if the consequence is fair. For first time offenses, like oversleeping and missing the school bus, please be more easy-going. Your goal is to teach your child to be responsible (within his ability at his age). After applying an action, always discuss the misbehavior and consequence with your child after everyone cools down. Don't lecture.

## **Natural Consequences** for misbehavior

- ☞ *Draws on wall* — Natural consequence is for the child to clean up the mess. Child washes the wall that was drawn on. Instruct on the proper way to do it, or help. Caution: If the cleanup is fun, he'll do it again. Repaint if needed.
- ☞ *Misses supper by coming home too late* — Eats leftovers or has to fix own meal. Cleans up his supper dishes.
- ☞ *Forgets school lunch or lunch money* (not first time) — Goes hungry (or talks a friend into sharing).
- ☞ *Forgets gym clothes or school books* (not first time) — Suffers the consequences from the teacher.
- ☞ *Oversleeps and misses the school bus* (not first time) — If it's a safe neighborhood and the school is within a mile, he walks to school.
- ☞ Try to use natural consequences as often as you can.

## **Negative Consequences** for misbehavior

Standard consequences you can use without much thought:

Time Out; Lecture; Loss of a Privilege (talking on phone, watching television, playing video games)

## **Violates a House Rule**

Set up a list of House Rules, then post them in the kitchen where all family members can see them. During a Family Meeting, you can discuss what the House Rules should be. Also discuss what the consequence for violating House Rules should be.

- ☞ *Backtalk/Disrespect* — Child needs to show respect to you. Child is removed from society (sent to bedroom) or Time-Out. He loses your friendship and cooperation for a half hour (really small child); a few hours (small child); a day (older child). Your child will learn he needs your friendship and cooperation to go through the day.
- ☞ *Uses foul language* — Put 25 cents in the Penalty Jar or Time-Out. If it doesn't stop — No TV for the day.
- ☞ *Hits a friend, sibling or you* — Time-Out for child under 10; Loss of privilege for older child.
- ☞ *Lies to you* — Needs to show you respect and to trust you with the truth. Talk about his choice to lie. It can be difficult to know for sure if it is a lie, since he will most likely not confess. You can discuss with him your concern that he isn't telling you the truth. Suggest he convince you he is.
- ☞ *Fights over the television* — Loss of privileges, such as no TV for a few hours, or day. Redirect to something else.
- ☞ *When siblings fight* — Time-Out for both, then not allowed to play together for # \_\_\_ hours.
- ☞ *Fails to complete assigned household chores* — Must complete chore before leaving home. Loss of privileges: such as a ride to the mall or friend's house, or movies with friends this weekend.

- ☞ *Dishes not cleaned from previous meal by person assigned to do the task* — No meal preparation until the dishes are clean and put away. Discuss the problem while doing the dishes with your children, or after the children have done them.
- ☞ *Leaves the house instead of following the consequence* — Has to do whatever she was supposed to do before she can join the family again. No TV. No cooperation from others until followed.
- ☞ *Returns home after curfew* — Curfew moved up that amount of time — late by 30 minutes, curfew 30 minutes earlier; late by an hour, curfew moved up an hour, etc. Discuss with her why she has a curfew: safety, sleep is important, town curfew.
- ☞ *Sneaks out after bedtime* — Loss of privileges: Can't go out with friends or family the next day, or next weekend.

### ***Violates community law***

- ☞ *Damages someone's property* — Pays for the damage (needs to find a job or way to earn the money to pay the damages). Physically repairs the damage, if possible, such as remove graffiti and paint again. Discuss the rights of the person whose property was damaged and the rights your child is losing because of his behavior choice.
- ☞ *Gets a ticket for speeding or other poor driving* — Pays the fine and increase in insurance premiums. Loses driving privileges for a set amount of time.
- ☞ *Damages the car* — Pays for the repairs and loses driving privileges for a set amount of time.
- ☞ *Gets arrested* — Pays the bail and fines. Finds own attorney, who he also pays. Discuss your child's choices that ended up in the arrest and how he can change his behavior.

### ***Your child's problem -- he/she needs to fix it***

- ☞ *Mess up a room or area* — Clean it up before child can leave house, watch television, or go to bed.
- ☞ *Fails to show up for an appointment (like the orthodontist)* — He reschedules the appointment making own arrangements to get there.
- ☞ *Spends all his money* — natural consequence of no more money to spend.
- ☞ *Fails to show up for work on time* — Loses the job. Don't provide excuses or lie for him. I know a parent's natural instinct is to protect our young (even if he is taller than us). If you child has a job, he needs to accept the responsibility of keeping it.

Sources:

*25 Ways to Encourage Good Behavior* by Julie Prescott. Wynot Publications, 2009.

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