Alternatives to Corporal Punishment

In our last edition, we discussed the consequences of corporal punishment. Most of the schools using the Good School Toolkit are beginning to realize that corporal punishment has no place in our schools given how it undermines and prevents children from learning.

We have all experienced corporal punishment at some point in our lives, probably at school, home and even in our communities: perhaps in the form of caning, slapping, pinching, being made to kneel under the sun and many other ways. How did that experience make you feel?

We have all grown up witnessing corporal punishment on a regular basis, and as such normalized it simply because people who loved and cared about us used it amidst all the pain we had to go through.

Most schools and adults use corporal punishment because they had not got the opportunity to be introduced to any other alternative ways of disciplining and relating with children. However it is time to challenge ourselves, time to think of creative ways of disciplining children without harming them yet equipping them with good values and making children more responsible. This is what we mean by "positive discipline".

In this edition therefore, we will be discussing positive discipline in detail and how teachers, learners, parents and other educators can learn more about positive discipline.

What is positive discipline?

Positive discipline is a way of guiding children towards desired behaviors rather than using violence or threatening them when they misbehave. When teachers, parents and other adults use positive discipline, children are motivated from within due to inner feelings of self worth rather than fear or shame.

Please read more in our positive discipline and corporal punishment booklets.
Voice of a child in a school using positive discipline

For the past two weeks, I was reporting to school late because I had to first do work at home before going to school. I had to fetch water and wash dishes. Fetching water is a must because I have to help my mother since she got a boda boda accident. I have always been beaten by teachers until story. He listened and talked to me in a calm way. He asked me if he could come to my home talk to my mother on how the affected my morning lessons. He made me feel loved and cared for. I like Mr. Raphiel, his a friend and lots of other children like him too.” Pupil from Kamuli girls Primary school.

“Changing to a positive discipline approach is not easy. The process requires patience and persistence and willingness to learn new things.” Says Sekadde Willington, Raising Voices.

Benefits of positive discipline;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For the student</th>
<th>For the school</th>
<th>For the teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning outcomes improve</td>
<td>A better learning environment where pupils participate and are engaged in their learning</td>
<td>Feel satisfied with their work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel safe and happy in class</td>
<td>Less conflict and fighting between pupils and between those in the school</td>
<td>Relationships with students improve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen from their mistakes and demonstrate improved behavior</td>
<td>Students, teacher and community members take pride in their school</td>
<td>Here more methods and tools available to help their students learn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FACT FILE

The Constitution of Uganda protects the safety of every Ugandan, including children. This is done by offering all children a safe learning environment free of fear and non-violence.

But how different is positive discipline from corporal punishment?

Positive discipline

- Aims to develop the whole child over a long period of time
- Both teachers and pupils acknowledge their misbehavior in front of the whole class
- Long-term development. Your approach is based on nurturing development of the whole child over a long period of time
-的观点，认为教育者和学生共同参与，将纪律教育融入课堂和社区，以培养学生的良好行为习惯和道德品质。

Corporal punishment

- Aims to develop children to become obedient and respectful
- Teachers ‘corporate punishment’ approach is based on community, teamwork and mutual respect
- Short-term consequence. Your approach aims to create obedience in a specific situation. It only gives secondary importance to the long-term development of the child

Why we use positive discipline at school?

By using positive discipline in our schools, we change what we know as education. Instead of children coming to school to obey rules and memorize information, they experience school as a place where they become the person they want to be. Positive discipline helps children feel safe and supported, but this sense of safety must extend beyond the classroom. We must ensure that everything about a school makes children feel safe and supported as possible in all aspects of their development.

How will positive discipline empower your children?

Positive discipline helps children to:

- Believe in themselves
- Have clear goals
- Be self-motivated
- Willing to work towards their goals and learn how to manage conflicts on their own and learn problem solving skills
- Teach personal responsibility and be good decision makers

So, how does positive discipline fit in your school’s formula?

Rewarding good behavior is a more effective way in that children are far more likely to become self-respecting individuals who make positive contributions to their communities than punishing bad behavior. Tell a child what they are doing well, instead of what they need to improve on. This will help to get the desired behavior you are seeking.

Thoughts on POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

“Creating a good school requires one to prepare well before class, listen to every child who is ready to contribute and give positive feedback. This helped me think creatively on how I can discipline my students without compromising their learning and creating an interactive environment in which they could learn better.”

Hassan Mutuuri, Program officer, Good School Program

In Kasana St. Jude, teachers discipline their children in a unique way. We talk to them about consequences of misbehaving and if they do, we help them understand by providing logical consequences. Such as verbal warning, writing apology letters, giving them some time out, picking up (left out) papers, leaves, peels in the compound and if all, fail, we invite in parents.” Said Protagonist teacher, Mr. Mubiru Desegaratus.

Gulama C/U has another interesting approach for promoting positive behavior at school. The school celebrates positive achievement of students and supports guidance, teamwork, mutual respect, consideration, listening, practical, problem solving and right decision making. We all have different ways of responding to positive discipline, here are some of examples on how we can respond to it.

Reflection: Pupils take time to think about their behavior through writing an apology letter or spending time away from classmates.

Penalty: Pupils acknowledge their misbehavior in front of others and take responsibility for their actions.

Reparation: Pupils receive a written notice that is then entered into the school discipline records. Pupils then commit to a change in behavior.

Last resort: Parents are contacted or pupils are referred to a professional for counseling.

Using positive discipline in a classroom creates behavior that supports guidance, teamwork, mutual respect, consideration, listening, practical, problem solving and right decision making. But how different is positive discipline from corporal punishment? Positive discipline in action

Must schools that are using the Good School Toolkit have this to say about positive discipline:

“In Kasana St. Jude, teachers discipline their children in a unique way. We talk to them about consequences of misbehaving and if they do, we help them understand by providing logical consequences. Such as verbal warning, writing apology letters, giving them some time out, picking up (left out) papers, leaves, peels in the compound and if all, fail, we invite in parents.” Said Protagonist teacher, Mr. Mubiru Desegaratus.

Gulama C/U has another interesting approach for promoting positive behavior at school. The school celebrates positive achievement of students and supports guidance, teamwork, mutual respect, consideration, listening, practical, problem solving and right decision making. We all have different ways of responding to positive discipline, here are some examples on how we can respond to it.

Reflection: Pupils take time to think about their behavior through writing an apology letter or spending time away from classmates.

Penalty: Pupils acknowledge their misbehavior in front of others and take responsibility for their actions.

Reparation: Pupils receive a written notice that is then entered into the school discipline records. Pupils then commit to a change in behavior.

Last resort: Parents are contacted or pupils are referred to a professional for counseling.

Using positive discipline in a classroom creates behavior that supports guidance, teamwork, mutual respect, consideration, listening, practical, problem solving and right decision making. But how different is positive discipline from corporal punishment?
Balingwogi Primary School officially launched the Good School program.

The District Inspector of Schools, Reverend Sserwambala Charles being honored with a Good School t-shirt for his support of the Good School program at a launch in Luwero.

Raising voices won two Tumaini awards in recognition of their efforts to prevent violence against children in schools and at home through their media campaign and community activism. They were also recognized for their efforts to provide Good School Toolkits and trainings in schools to help teachers and parents find alternative positive ways of interacting with children.

Students at the Peer Learning Network exchange visit participating in interactive games to help them internalize and process new learning.

What is a Good Teacher?

If you have any suggestions please do not hesitate to write to us on goodschools@raisingvoices.org or P.O.Box 6770, Kampala Uganda

Mutoni Julian—Peer Learning Network Coordinator