

# LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

## YOU CAN TRANSFORM YOUR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR WITH TEACHABLE MOMENTS

You don't need to invent consequences for your child's unsafe or inappropriate actions; they occur naturally. Logical consequences are tied to your child's actions and can provide meaningful opportunities for repairing harm and following through with responsible decision making.

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## TEACH YOUR CHILD HOW THEIR ACTIONS IMPACT OTHERS AROUND THEM BY FOLLOWING THROUGH WITH LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES.

You can guide your child to take responsibility for their behavior and any harm caused or damage done while teaching them that every action has a reaction.

One size does not fit all when teaching cause and effect. After unsafe or inappropriate choices are made, reflecting on the choice made, what other options were possible, and the harm caused by the choice helps your child understand the range of possibilities in their decision making.

Each time your child breaks a rule or makes an inappropriate or unsafe choice, carefully consider:

- What are the natural consequences of this behavior?
- Have I communicated my expectations about their behavior?
- What was harmed?
- How can I help my child to reflect on what was harmed?
- How can I guide my child to help heal or repair what was harmed?
- What might be motivating this behavior?

Involve your child in deciding how to make the situation right and support them through making what's broken whole again (especially when it involves others' hurt feelings). This will help them internalize responsible decision-making skills.



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## WAYS TO SUPPORT LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

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### ✔ DEAL WITH FEELINGS FIRST

- Behaviors are influenced by feelings.
- Feelings are spontaneous reactions to people, places, and experiences.
- Feelings range from basic (e.g., hungry and tired) to complex (e.g., unsafe, insecure, disconnected).
- Look past the behavior to uncover the feeling that is motivating the behavior.

### ✔ MODEL THE SKILLS

- Show how you repair harm and relationships after making mistakes.
- Show that you don't always get things right and are willing to apologize and recognize how your actions impact others.
- Take time to regain your calm before reflecting on the situation and allow your child to calm down too.
- Make amends and fix what is broken together.

### ✔ FOCUS ON DECISION MAKING

- Ask about your child's thought process and reflect on the outcomes together. You could ask questions like, *"What happened?"* Or, *"What were some of the consequences you thought about when you made that decision?"*

### ✔ INTENTIONALLY PRACTICE

- Be deliberate about following through on logical consequences.
- The more you practice these skills together, the more likely you and your child will access them when needed.



Learn more by visiting  
**ParentingMercerIsland.org**



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**Healthy Youth Initiative**



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