



IPC TALKING POINTS



Introduction [for the Interpersonal Communication Personnel]:

Use the facts below while conducting one-on-one/ Interpersonal Communication engagements with teachers about Corporal Punishment and Positive Discipline:



What is Corporal Punishment?

- It is any punishment in which physical force is used to cause pain to a learner, like hitting with hands or things, kicking, shaking, throwing, burning, punching, pinching, ear pulling and poking.
- It is also any non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, threatens, intimidates, embarrasses, ridicules, scares or makes fun of a learner, like insulting, bullying, shouting, abusing and harassing.
- Corporal Punishment also involves making a learner do heavy work, like digging an ant hill or a large piece of land, slashing a big piece of land, fetching a lot of water, splitting firewood, sweeping a class room alone, and putting a learner in painful positions, like kneeling down while raising hands, kneeling down while carrying bricks, standing on top of the table in a class room.

Why Should We Stop Using Corporal Punishment to Discipline Learners?

1. It makes learners hate teachers and going to school.
2. It harms learners physically and psychologically.



3. It makes learners feel unloved and unwanted.
4. It makes learners believe that they are not good enough and will never be, which kills their self-esteem and confidence.
5. It makes learners fear teachers. This makes learners nervous, worried and anxious every time the teacher is in class, which affects their concentration, learning and performance.
6. Corporal Punishment makes learners drop out of school.
7. Punishing learners doesn't make them respect you. It makes them fear you and hate you.
8. When you punish learners for misbehaving, like talking in class, they stop it in your presence and resume it, when you leave.
9. Punishing learners may teach them to obey you, but they will not understand why they should behave in the way you want them to.
10. Punishing learners makes them spend time thinking about how to avoid punishment instead of thinking about why they should behave better.
11. Punishing learners makes them memorize and cram things out of fear without understanding them. They don't learn how to think for themselves.

12. It teaches learners that conflict and misunderstanding can only be resolved through violence. It makes learners fight among themselves. It turns learners into violent adults.
13. The government of Uganda banned the use of Corporal Punishment in schools. The Director of Education Circular 2006 states:
 - » Corporal Punishment must stop.
 - » Use of the cane is not permitted.
 - » All disciplinary action must be recorded.
 - » If Corporal Punishment is used, teachers will have to face the courts of law.

What is Positive Discipline?

- Positive discipline means correcting the learner's behavior, not humiliating them, and helping a learner learn, instead of making them pay for their mistakes.
- Positive discipline does not mean there are no consequences for bad behavior. It means that the consequences are always fair and consistent.
- Positive Discipline focuses on long-term gains, like learning why keeping time is important, and not short-term results, like keeping time only not to be beaten. Or understanding why it is important to perform better in class instead of performing better not to be beaten.

- Positive Discipline is:
 - » Teachers modeling the good behavior for the learners.
 - » Teachers consistently and constantly reminding learners of the expected behavior and the unpermitted behavior.
 - » Teachers building a mutually respectful relationship with the learners.
 - » Teachers encouraging learners to behave well, recognizing and rewarding those who behave well.
 - » Teachers understanding the learner's capacity, needs and development stages.
 - » Teachers understanding that learners are young, prone to making mistakes and learn through making mistakes.
 - » Teaching learners to do things right rather than punishing them for doing wrong.
 - » Teachers working with learners and not against them.

Why Should We Discipline Learners Using Positive Discipline Instead of Corporal Punishment?

Unlike Corporal Punishment, Positive Discipline:

- Makes learners love studying and going to school.

- Prevents school dropouts.
- Makes learners like, admire and respect teachers.
- Makes teaching easier. It reduces the time teachers spend on behavioral issues, so they can spend more time on teaching. Learners also easily do what teachers tell them to do because they respect them.
- Builds the learners' self-esteem, self-belief, confidence and competence.
- Makes learners trust teachers, approach them for advice and participate in class, which improves their performance.
- Teaches learners how to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings peacefully without resorting to violence.
- Turns learners into kind and sympathetic adults.
- Enables learners to understand reasons why they have to behave well.
- Helps learners to become adults who are independent thinkers and who can solve problems on their own.
- Helps learners to understand their own behavior and be responsible for their actions.
- Teaches learners learn how to respect themselves and others.

- Teaches learners to do the right thing even when the teachers are not around.
- Increases learners' motivation, so they pay attention more, study more and perform better academically.
- Helps learners to succeed, gives them the information they need to learn, and supports their development.

How Can You Discipline Learners Using Positive Discipline?

1. The first step towards using Positive Discipline is to understand your learners.
 - Always remember that learners think, feel and behave differently at different stages of their development.
 - Growth—with all the mental, emotional and physical changes that come with it—affects the way learners behave.
 - In most cases, learners misbehave because of age and the level of development they are at.
 - » For example, learners below the age of 9 are always in motion – running, jumping, sliding and skipping. It is hard for them to stay in one position. Why? Because their large muscles are growing and strengthening, and their brain cells are forming new connections.

- » Learners are also highly distractible at this age. It is difficult for them to focus on one thing and pay attention.
 - » Therefore, punishing a learner who is misbehaving because of their age only worsens the situation.
 - » Before you punish your learners, always remember that they could be misbehaving because of age. You have to be patient with them, understand and guide, instead of hurting them.
2. You then have to ask yourself “what impact do I want to have on my learners? Do I want to build their self-esteem and confidence? Do I want to make them love school and learning? Do I want to teach them how to resolve misunderstandings without resorting to violence? Do I want them to become kind adults?” Because when you punish learners, you have a negative and harmful impact on them. You don't achieve any of the above. Discipline learners using Positive Discipline to have a positive impact on them.
 3. You also have to listen to learners, bring them closer, know them and understand their problems. This will enable you to help them instead of condemning and punishing them.
 4. Then, develop a classroom code of conduct with your learners.
 - » A classroom code of conduct sets out rules to help you and learners work together successfully. It should include not only what you expect from learners, but also what learners should expect from you.



- » Choose between four and eight rules for your classroom, otherwise they get too hard to enforce and lose their meaning.
 - » Rules should be stated as clearly as possible so that the learners can understand what behavior you expect of them.
 - » Revise and update the classroom code of conduct regularly, e.g. at the beginning of each school year or each term.
 - » Put the rules up on the wall where everyone can see them.
5. Always smile and use a friendly voice when interacting with learners.
 6. Always call the learners by their names.
 7. Always make an effort to talk to each learner and show an interest in them.
 8. Ask your learners about their lives.
 9. Listen to your learners when they have problems and help them to get solutions.
 10. Ask your learners how they are if they have been sick.
 11. Make it clear that you care about your learners.
 12. Talk to your learners in a sincere way.
 13. Always use the four-step process.



STEP 1:

- » Describe the appropriate behavior. For example: Everyone keep quiet now, please.

STEP 2:

- » Provide reasons. For example: We are going to start our mathematics lesson and everyone needs to listen closely. When you make noise, others will not hear what I am saying and they will not learn.

STEP 3:

- » Ask learners to acknowledge the behavior. For example: Do you see why quieting down is so important?

STEP 4:

- » Recognize and reward learners who behave well. You can do this by:
 - » Smiling at the learner.
 - » Nodding at the learner.
 - » Asking the entire class to clap for the learner.
 - » Giving the learner a small gift.
- 14.** Always tell the learners the exact behavior you expect from them and the behavior that is not permitted.
- 15.** Always make lessons interesting. Develop activities that keep learners interested and busy.

16. Always keep the learners occupied in the classroom. Have some additional activities planned in case you or the learners finish classwork quicker than expected. Keep the time between tasks or lessons as short as possible.
17. Always deal with disruptions immediately and with as little interruption as possible.
18. Always start teaching your class each day with the expectation that learners will behave.
19. Avoid keeping a grudge against a particular learner.
20. Set a good example. Learners learn by observing the adults around them. Model the good behavior that is expected from learners. If you want learners to be kind, patient, tolerant and understanding, be kind to them, be patient, tolerant and understanding with them.
21. Be consistent. Apply the same rules every day and to everyone. Once you start using Positive Discipline, use it consistently, constantly and continuously.
22. Always separate the behavior from the learner. If a learner breaks a window while playing, don't let your anger cloud your judgement. Remember that he has made a mistake, but that doesn't make him a bad person.
23. Lastly, involve the parents of your learners. Positive Discipline is effective when there is cooperation between teachers and parents and consistency in the discipline style between

school and home environments. Always meet parents of your learners to discuss about the behaviours of your learners and work together to discipline the learners positively.

- 24.** Make the learners think about their bad behavior:
 - » Send them out of class for about 5 minutes.
 - » Make them apologize.
 - » Advise them to behave better.
 - » Tell them to write a letter, explaining their bad behavior.
 - » Put a card describing their offense on their desk.
- 25.** Help learners understand the consequences of their bad behavior:
 - » Deny them some pleasures, like playing with others.
 - » Make them stay in class while others go for break time.
 - » Make them sign a behavior contract.
 - » Make them sit next to you.
- 26.** Help learners take responsibility for their bad behavior, when they commit offenses that cause damage:
 - » Make them apologize to the whole class or school.
 - » Make them replace or repair what they have destroyed, like cleaning a wall they have dirtied.
 - » Write their bad behavior on their end of term report.



27. Help learners rehabilitate when they commit very serious offenses:

- » Send them to the head teacher's office.
- » Suspend them.
- » Call their parents to come to school.

Does Positive Discipline Work?

- Yes. Positive Discipline works.
- There are many teachers in Uganda who have been disciplining learners using Positive Discipline. Their learners behave well and perform better in class.
- Positive Discipline has been used in other parts of the world for a long time with great success.
- It is scientifically proven that Positive Discipline nurtures learners psychologically, emotionally and socially to become better people while Corporal Punishment damages them.

PUSHBACKS:

Instructions to the Interpersonal Communication Personnel:

Here are some of the reasons why teachers use Corporal Punishment. While engaging them, they are more likely to give these reasons as excuses. Below is a guide on how you can counteract each one of them:



PUSHBACK 1: Positive Discipline will give learners a lot of freedom, which will spoil them.

REPLY:

Positive Discipline does not mean:

- Giving learners too much freedom.
- Letting learners do whatever they want.
- Absence of rules and limits to stop learners from misbehaving.
- Or having no consequences for bad behavior.

Instead, Positive Discipline means:

- Teachers giving learners fair and consistent consequences for bad behavior.
- Teachers guiding learners to behave better instead of inflicting pain on them and humiliating them for misbehaving.
- Teachers setting rules and limits for learners and constantly and consistently reminding them why they should follow these rules and limits.
- Teachers constantly and consistently reminding learners of the permitted and unpermitted behaviours.



PUSHBACK 2: Spare the rod, spoil the child (common Bible quote).

REPLY:

- The bible does not preach violence and harming children. The bible advocates for love, compassion and care for one another.
- Therefore, “Spare the rod, spoil the child” does not tell us to inflict pain on our children, to harm them physically and psychologically. It encourages us not to stop guiding and advising them to behave better. It encourages us to consistently and constantly instruct and guide our children into the right direction but not to hurt them.

PUSHBACK 3: If you don't beat learners, they disrespect you.

REPLY:

- True respect is earned not demanded.
- When you punish learners, they obey your orders out of fear. They obey your orders to avoid punishment. However, when you treat learners well, show them care and bring them closer by disciplining them through Positive Discipline, they like you, respect you out of love not fear, and do what you tell them to do because they understand why they should do it.



- When you punish learners, they hate you. They do what you tell them to do in your presence and stop doing it when you leave. Because of this hatred, learners also misbehave deliberately to annoy you and get even with you.

PUSHBACK 4: I am a responsible person because I was beaten.

REPLY:

- The fact that you turned out right does not mean that you have to continue the cycle of violence.
- Corporal Punishment might have damaged you in ways you can't imagine. It might have affected your self-esteem and confidence. It may have made you a violent adult and a less caring person.

PUSHBACK 5: I use Corporal Punishment a little bit.

REPLY:

- There is nothing as little Corporal Punishment.
- Any form of Corporal Punishment—however little it may seem to you—humiliates learners, damages their self-esteem, hurts them emotionally, and teaches them that violence is the only way to resolve misunderstanding or conflict.



This **information** is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of [RTI International] and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.