

Logical consequences are imposed by the parent. For example, a teenager that misuses the internet, faces the consequence of losing his freedom to use the internet. Maybe now the parents demand the password, or that the internet will be used only in the living room, or that the door of the room will stay open, etc. If a teenager loses the internet use because he fights or teases his sibling is not a logical consequence.

One day, a close friend told me that she would not allow her son to go to his friends birthday party, because he did something wrong at school. I asked her, "What about the birthday boy? He will miss his friend too". The birthday boy will not have his friend at his party. Imagine that two more of his friends will not attend because they are being punished for some reason. The birthday boy's family has probably already booked tickets, so it is letting more than one person down. How much power is the "punished boy" actually gaining?

When we use consequences, we have to have a plan. We have to stay calm, take our time to think, we can always say: "I have to think about it, I am upset right now".

We have to regulate our own emotions first. Consequences have to be related to the misbehaviour and have to be communicated in advance. Parents have to establish the rules so that the children know what to expect. If your child rides his bike without the helmet, you can say: "You are very important to me, if you don't wear the helmet I can't let you go with the bicycle".

Is your child continuously leaving the toys outside in the garden? You can say: "I feel that next time you leave your toys like this, I have to put them in a bag in a secure place so they can't get damaged. It is up to you if you want to keep playing with them then you have to collect them".

Now, this is working most of the times, but it could be that your child doesn't bother much. The key is to do what you said, and it will for sure help for the next time when you face such a challenging situation.

It is also true that sometimes it is difficult to find the logical consequence and then it can be dangerous or impractical to wait for the natural consequence. There is not one method that we can use for each situation.

An effective concept to work with, is asking your teenager to "repair" what happened. Is she/he mean? He/she will need to repeat the situation finding a way not to be mean. Did he/she break something because of a bad mood? Let him/her pay for that to replace it. Showing them

that there is always a way to make it better, adds something positive to each situation.

The most important thing is for us parents to have a sense of humour and if we don't, then we have to find one!

I have good experiences with writing down the rules or the "contracts" between children/teenagers and the parents, so there are no misunderstandings or simply no "When did you say that?", "We never agree to that!", and many other excuses.

Research has shown that only with connection, we can influence our kids positively. It is a brain and heart thing. Staying connected creates a sense of safety and at the same time gives a sense of openness. Punishment, lecturing, nagging, blaming or shaming can create fights or freeze.

Misbehaviour stops in children only when they feel a connection and a feeling of belonging and significance.

We are also making mistakes although we are adults, and so do our children. The key is to see these mistakes like opportunities to grow.

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