



Choosing Effective Negative Consequences

For your between session activity this week, we are asking you to have a discussion about your teen about effective negative consequences for their behavior. By setting effective negative consequences in advance with your teen, you reduce the likelihood of them engaging in a number of negative behaviors, including risky behaviors, like substance use. It also reduces the likelihood that you will engage in harsh punishment, and sets up clear expectations for your teen about what is expected of them. One way to talk about this with your teen is to focus on the idea that since they are growing up, you are giving them more freedom. At the same time, they also will have more responsibilities (e.g., doing chores, being responsible for their schoolwork, taking care of their belongings). Part of that responsibility is accepting consequences for their behavior. Below is some guidance for setting up effective negative consequences.

Examples of effective consequences:

- Practicing the skill that led to the behavior
- Extra chores
- Making it right (apologizing and fixing a mistake)
- Grounding from privileges or possessions

Effective consequences are:

- *Mild* – don't cause physical or emotional harm
- *Kind*- don't involve yelling or humiliation or threats
- *Logical*- result logically from the behavior
- *Instructive*- involve practicing skills
- *Understood*- agreed upon ahead of time
- *Simple*- straightforward to give and track
- *Consistent*- always delivered after a negative behavior
- *Loving*- followed by love and affection
- *Safe*- do not violate your teen's right to food, shelter, safety, love, or an education

When you talk to your teen about these consequences, you and your teen should have a discussion together where you both agree to the consequences rather than you telling them what the consequences will be. You also both need to agree to stick to this plan! So, you can't make the consequences harsher, and they can't ask for a different consequence if they engage in one of the behaviors.



Pre-Planned Negative Consequences

Minor behaviors

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence:

Medium behaviors

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence:



Severe behaviors

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence:

Behavior:

Consequence: