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## **THE FEVER: FYI COLUMN-**

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### **Good Clear Rules and Guidelines**

One of the more challenging areas of being a good parent, is the ability to recognize the difference between punishment and discipline. The definition of punishment is: Dealing with a problem when it occurs; Consequences set by adults; External control; Using penalty or pain; and Often uses physical force, Usually done after the infraction.

Whereas the definition of discipline is: Learning or a process by which people learn what is acceptable and desirable for society; The use of methods to develop positive character qualities in an individual; Not simply a matter of punishment for breaking the rules; Encouraging an individual to be a positive influence in society; A challenge and privilege to help children learn; Helping children to develop self-control and self-governance; Discipline learning to follow – lead by example. Usually followed up but understanding done beforehand.

Another way to describe discipline is “Training that corrects”

These definitions reveal that discipline is not to a child, but for the child. The concern is placed on seeing the child’s potential, rather

than seeing the child as a problem. See the child for what they can become, rather than as they are now.

Discipline starts with having GOOD, CLEAR, RULES and GUIDELINES.

So who sets the rules and consequences when they are broken?

As parents you set the rules yourself, but there are times where you can involve your children in certain circumstances and if the children are old enough. All rules have to be discussed and then clearly communicated to the children in a way they understand.

The rules need to be clear and specific; they need to make sense to those who have to follow them, and to those who need to enforce them. You must state clearly what is allowed and what is not allowed, and when the rules are not followed there will be an age appropriate consequence to the breaking of the set rules.

We all know that discipline is necessary, but who should do it and when?

The adult who is responsible for the child at the time of the infraction should discipline the child. You can’t wait for other people, spouse, or parent to come back from work in the evening to do the disciplining. This is why it is important to only leave your child with people you know and trust and it is important for them to know the mythology of what discipline to give and for what reason the discipline is given.

Knowing who is taking the initiative can help a lot when we decide what to do. It helps us answer questions such as: Do I need to take initiative and act right now? Is it best just to go with things as they are? Is it effective for me just to wait and react when the children do something?

How we discipline can be learnt by using what we call the Discipline Sequence, and it is five easy steps that guide us through what we need to do so our children get what they need from us.

So catch our next column where we will discuss the Five Steps Discipline Sequence in full detail.

And in case you miss out, you can always read more at [www.gcf.org.za](http://www.gcf.org.za) or [www.southcoastfever.co.za](http://www.southcoastfever.co.za)