

# THE CAREGIVERS GUIDE TO DIFFICULT CHILDREN



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### **Possible causes of generally bad behaviour.**

This is a problem becoming more & more evident as time goes by. Although it has been an annoyance for a few years to school & remedial staff. There are a lot of theories on this subject, often, or even mostly relating to all types of abuse in the home. I believe through years of experience with difficult kids & their parents, & other very difficult kids in my own day to day care, that the term abuse in the home, apart from the recognised physical, sexual, emotional, types in their legal definitions, should be replaced by the term Unselective Liberal Child rearing (ULC). I believe this is because over the last 10 years or so, the amount of solo parents, single parents, and both parents working has increased dramatically. As far as solo parents (unmarried) go, it is likely that a large number of them are very young & still a bit wild and immature, some are insecure and have many relations which has a destabilising effect on the children. It is probable, that living with constant new developing relationships, that the child does not learn to develop social relations ships with other children, this may cause fighting with other children, both at home and at school. It may also have the effect of a child preferring to play alone, because, in many of the situations, the child may become attached strongly to his parents, new partner, only to have that bond broken, time & again. There is also the problem of a

young unwed mother/ father who feels that they weigh hay down, that they would like to get on with partying; i.e. pub, loose, relationships and other things that generally exclude children. This is all quality parental time wasted on things that should be considered no longer important to the arrival of the kids. This wasted time should have been used by the parent to promote discipline of moral standards in the child. These things apply also to the other two categories. Single (married then divorced) parents- both parents working, people will of spend more time on relationships of their own than quality time with their children. Take, for instance, a single or solo parent, who is recently separated from their first major relations. The child can be very young, or older. The child in most cases will have developed an extremely strong bond with the now absent partner. When that partner leaves it confuses, the child. He doesn't know why, he often asks when his other parent is com-Love, often a few days, the absence of his much loved parent causes a deep, sad emptiness right in his gut which remains for much time, often years, He gets to see his other parent sometimes, but the emptiness remains like a haunting. His mother one day opens the front door, o in steps a strange man, and kisses his mother. This confuses the child "why is a strange man, who is not his dad, kissing his mother?".

He feels angry and sad. After awhile, he gets to know this new bloke, but he doesn't see him as his real dad. He will never see him as his real dad. This is made certain the first time his real father appears to visit. When the child calls his mother's boyfriend "dad." The child's natural father says "Don't call him dad. I'm your dad not him", because this father feels threatened by the thought that his child may get to love another parent and not him. There is often an argument at this time between the two fathers, mothers, the

mother/father may or may not intervene, but the outcome is that the child may feel responsible for this. Sometimes the father may say "If you love him/her more than me, I won't come around to see you again". This makes the child a pawn in a pathetic game of Ego Versus Ego. The child will probably consider it bad option to love any new parent then even may feel guilty for loving someone other than this natural loss parent, this will pass on to his social circle, if he can indeed be in one. In that "to make a friend is a waste of time". You'll only lose them anyway. or he may even think that it is not proper to like other people. Unfortunately, relationships come & go & the child is repeatedly shot in the heart by the continued loss of a parent figure.

Since love has an enormous effect, even control over adults, they will seldom consider their child. Sadly a huge problem with a lot of difficult kids is that they lack a strong & constant male parent presence most way through their live. Most mothers have the proper instinct for caring for their children, but there is alack of the type of discipline needed by kids, the father traditionally administered. This, I believe that a strong father figure(non aggressive) can bring kids into line quickly and absolutely, which the mother covets for them. The reason to my mind is that the child right from birth is nursed & cuddled etc by the mother and sees her as a gently soft person with little authority. They may still respect her as they get older, but they still see her as so soft & lenient. This gives rise to such things as kids pleasing themselves when & what they eat, playing, going away from home etc. The parent would find it increasingly difficult to control their kids until the amount of control is very low. By the time the parent has realized this she/she tries to pull the kids back into line, they may have had too much of a taste of freedom and will fight at every request by their parent, don't forget, that with both parents out world leaving kids to watch themselves, will frequently have the same effect. Over punishing will have a serious effect on the child. The fact is if

you are responsible for the lack of compliance of this child, you should not punish him. It's not his fault, he will not understand and at your show of aggression he will react with one. It's own it you hit him he will hit you back, if you try and force or drag him somewhere, he will fight like, belly. Especially if he has been beaten by either parent on both, or partner of parent with whom he lives. It is at this point that the parent/s try and get help, trouble is that they are probably responsible in the first place and if you try to tell them this, they will blame it on someone on something else. They will then not be interested in anything you have to say. In this situation, a circle of distrust develops between the parent a child and the intervening agency on professional, At the end, the parent will feel that either the agency is right because they know more about this than they do on will side with their child, against the professional, school or agency. Some people consider that teaching their children to please themselves, and not be accountable to anyone for anything. This is a more a more common method of bringing up a child. The amount of rules or clear cut boundaries to which these lads become accustomed are minimal. Dictating to them will almost certainly result in extreme belligerent and possibly destructive and aggressive retaliation.

**The child with no boundaries** will flail about wildly in all directions leading to strife for them, parents, caregivers and school staff.

**Child with some guidance and boundaries** can be pulled back and will partially comply – maybe even start to think before acting on an impulse.

**Child with good boundaries** has most energy focusing particular on controlled area. They will usually comply.

A child with no real boundaries cannot focus his energy in a certain direction easily. His energy radiates unrestrained in all directions. When you try to steer him in a new direction or try to get him to conform, you irritate him by bending his energy a attitude in a way he doesn't want. If you bend too hard and it comes to a matter of force, you snap his attitude to your cause like a carrot, and he pulls the other way for ever.

An attempt to impose a new body of rules, to replace existing ones, or manipulate previous liberal attitudes of a child to a new direction is likely going to meet resistance, non compliance and even retaliation. As more force is applied, more negative reaction is received, until there is a total break down and refusal to comply

Where there are already some rules in place it is difficult to introduce new rules & have them complied with immediately, but the chance of compliance is good. It will take a bit of time. Firm but non aggressive pressure should do it. Be patient.

Easy compliance with little pressure is the ideal state. Probably one half of children fit in here these children comply easily with little pressure.

The problem of children with differing values from other peers is common. In some instances behavioural problems develop from this, though there appears to be a separate problem with some children at school, when no similar problem exists at home. From the school's point of view, "there must be a problem in the home to make the child act this way." Truth is the child is often very happy or well adjusted in his own social circle at home, but when he attends school something happens and his personality changes. The parents, when told of the things their child is doing, don't believe it, because it is right out of character for the child. This leads back to the child being forced into a different set of rules to which he is unaccustomed. It has been reported to me that there is a social education policy for all schools, and it starts on day 1. This maybe so, but school's will not discuss this policy. To me, if a child has been brought up in a certain way for five years or so, it would be a practical impossibility to attempt to make him conform to his new rules immediately. Forced compliance will not work for the liberally raised child - the teachers will

force him time and again into an aggressive response to defend what he thinks 'is right', and not to forget that in New Zealand it is the right of the child's parents to bring the child up in whatever manner they choose. It is not right to try and go behind the back of the parents and say to the child, "You will not do what your parents say! You will do what the school system tells you to do." Your parents have made you bad, we will fix it up and change your way of thinking. I have spoken to many teachers - principals, they all seem to have one thought, "It's all the fault of the parents. Staunchly non-compliant children are everywhere whether it is the fault of the parent or not. Where does the power at the school end, what gives them the right to impose old-fashioned rulings on kids within a system considered ahead of the rest, when those working in the system are years behind the times. Schools need a more liberal approach to acceptable standards of behaviour, not to live years behind social change, in the dark with the light out.

## Summary:

The text explores the causes of children's generally "bad" behaviour, focusing on parenting styles, family structure, and school environments. The author argues that instead of attributing most problems solely to "abuse in the home," a more accurate explanation is **Unselective Liberal Child-rearing (ULC)**—where children are raised without consistent discipline or boundaries.

Key points:

- **Family structures:** Solo parents, young and immature parents, frequent new relationships, or both parents working can destabilize children, leading to confusion, insecurity, and behavioural issues.
- **Father figure absence:** A lack of consistent male authority often contributes to poor discipline, as children may see mothers as softer and less authoritative.
- **Boundaries:** Children without clear rules tend to resist authority, become defiant, and struggle to focus their energy productively. Introducing rules late is difficult, and heavy-handed discipline backfires.
- **Parental responsibility:** Parents often fail to recognize their role in causing problems, instead blaming schools or outside factors.
- **School conflicts:** Children raised with few boundaries often clash with strict school rules. Schools may try to enforce compliance too quickly, leading to resistance and aggression. The author suggests schools need a more flexible, modern approach to discipline, instead of clinging to outdated methods.

**Overall message:** Consistent boundaries, firm but non-aggressive discipline, and stability in family and school life are crucial for preventing and managing behavioral problems in children.

## **Parents Decisions on the Educational handling of Their Children**

Parents at large do not know what is best for their children at school. A huge proportion of kids are poorly behaved and only partially compliant at school, some can be worse than others, but generally speaking, no class runs smoothly. In the earlier days of schooling there was always a quiet, well behaved kid the class for the others to copy. But in his day and age, parents are more liberal with their children and this surfaces at school. Those kids are not bad kids, they are not misguided but are normal for today. They do make noises, they do not pay attention and that is the way they are. It is much harder to handle the whole class now since there are often two levels in each room i.e. Std1 + std2, Std3 + Std4 one often read both learning at a different level. It has got to be harder to run a classroom like this. Teach one to tell to get on with their work, while you teach the other. The end result has to be the faster more intelligent ones move on, the others stay still or go backwards.

There are as I said earlier, many distracting kids in each class. One or two seem to stand out from all the others. It is my opinion from experience that it is these kids who have suffered from over discipline, physical aggression, or lack of TLC. Parents are asked after to attend meetings at school about children like these. They are told that the child has a bad attitude and is simply uncontrollable. They have not tried TLC, understanding and compassionate commitment to the child at school only laying down firm rules. School cause a lot of their own trouble with these kids. They say that they're violent and say that they had to be taken from the class for the safety of the other children, fact is, the child has made a noise or distracted the room in other ways, to get attention (misguidedly), a few times, and because he persists is told to leave the class.

The child feels rejected and reacts with a refusal to leave, then, a teacher or several "bigger students" will throw him out of the class. Since no-one likes to, or will allow themselves to be manhandled, will fight the one, or bigger students doing it. This is not deliberate violence or meaningless aggression by the child, it is brainless aggression sanctioned by the school body which leads to the child taking defensive action, it is a very normal reaction to the very act of having other students manhandle one child is counter productive, it teaches them that aggression is allowable and desirable, it causes more loss of self esteem to the child, and causes him to feel less and less a part of the school. This continues, until the child ends up despising his parents and school and will likely be very aggressive. He will probably not have improved, but become worse. And will not know why he has been treated so badly. At this point he will be expelled/suspended from school. He will remember the experience with anger for many years.

Now the child will return to school. He will probably appear withdrawn and will agitate easily and probably extremely. His behaviour will return to its usual path after a few weeks and problems will continue.

The parents will see if as a bad child, and will not take the time to help him; he will not get any better until he is left alone.

We get down to two or three suspensions, and the school psychologist, along with the parent decides to place the child in residential framing, being Mackenzie residential school. Here the child is void of love and presence of his parents, friends and family, since he is not around home, he loses all his friends. The kids are constantly watched, even when undressing, showering, naked (children) and lose their privacy. They are treated the same way as at Ward 24, this time though, they are doomed to 2 years of it. They are miles from home, deserted, thrown about and shut in a time out room.

Aggressive force is used on them. It causes pain and distress in that the child feels no one cares, and he's been getting treated badly. He yearns for his family in bad times, but cannot see them because they are too far away. Children run away from this school, and are returned by police, like common criminals escaping from prison and this scenario, it is a child prison. Is this what we want for kids?

Their personal things that they have had for years have to be earned by good, controlled and compliant behaviour so are taken from them to be used as levers. They go home on the weekends, and everything they do wrong is punished when they get back to school. This is a very wrong concept. I challenge anyone to justify this. People who place their children in this school, or Ward 24, simply don't bother with them, or can't be bothered with them. Parents. I ask, why do this, why don't they get to know their child. They grow up to be bad and will be bad again.

## **Summary — *Parents' Decisions on the Educational Handling of Their Children***

### Key Points

#### **1. Modern classroom challenges**

- Many children are more liberal, independent, and noisy; classrooms often combine multiple grade levels, making management harder.
- Not all disruptive kids are “bad”; many are normal for today and act out due to unmet emotional needs.

#### **2. Impact of over-discipline**

- Children who have suffered harsh punishment, lack of affection, or physical aggression often display attention-seeking behaviour at school.
- Schools often label these kids as uncontrollable without trying compassion, understanding, or TLC (tender loving care).

#### **3. School handling issues**

- Misguided attempts to control children (throwing them out of class, manhandling by teachers or peers) lead to defensive aggression.
- Such practices damage self-esteem, foster feelings of rejection, and create long-term resentment toward parents and school.
- Behaviour often worsens, resulting in suspensions and expulsions.

#### **4. Residential schools (e.g., Mackenzie)**

- Children are removed from home, family, and friends, sometimes for years.
- They experience strict supervision, loss of privacy, and use of force, which causes pain, distress, and emotional trauma.
- Personal belongings are withheld as behavioural leverage.
- The system often reinforces aggressive or withdrawn behaviour rather than correcting it.

#### **5. Consequences for the child**

- Loss of love, support, and meaningful connection leads to long-term emotional scars.
- Children feel abandoned and misunderstood; they may run away or develop persistent behavioural problems.
- Parental neglect or lack of engagement contributes to poor outcomes.

#### **6. Author's perspective**

- Harsh institutional approaches do not improve children; they perpetuate bad behaviour.
- Parents should know, understand, and nurture their children rather than relying on punitive institutions.

## School's Handling of Difficult Kids

**Schools don't generally believe difficult kids** when there is a fight and take the side of the other child. A child will not explain things after a while for fear of disbelief by others. They will take the blame for others' doings, for the same reason, Sensing hopelessness a child will sometimes become aggressive, even over the top. They may figure that there is nothing else that can be done to them since they have had everything else put on their plate.

Generally, there is no visible problem at home or school and the child is not aware of the reason for his actions. It is because he is exhibiting learned behaviour doesn't know is annoying. I believe that he often is unaware that his problem behaviour is abnormal. N.B. Sometimes the behaviour is deliberate. Sometimes only!! Some children are brought up with manipulation, and try to manipulate people in other situations as well.

Liberal upbringing. the is on the up but can be a down side teaching from on early age to make decisions for self, good decisions, Times to eat, play, sleep etc. at choosing of child, OK for adults but not kids? Points in favour of each: independence of the child is good, from 8 on 9 yes old, but before this, they can't make proper decisions through immaturity. when kids are used to running their own lives you will never force them into conforming. you have to convince them or sell the idea of your system, to fit in a bit more with theirs. You think that they are smart arse kids who please themselves, they are acting out what they know: They have been brought up this way. This is the parents right. It is not the ethical right of any school to have the child treated by psychologists for a behavioural problem, which is not that, but learned behaviour.

It is not the ethical right of a school to recommend that a child be incarcerated in a residential school because he will not comply, and he reacts wildly when ordered about o physical force is used. These schools, (Mackenzie Residential) use brute force to make a child comply over the period of several years. The child suffers badly despite what supposed experts say, they do not all comply at the end of their sentence. Some parents pull their kids out because they are not helped at all and they are brutalised. there.

Not only does the child feel imprisoned, but they have to put up with adults watching them undress & shower. They lose their privacy and self esteem. Because other children feel the same way, their discussions centre upon untoward aspects of children's lives. things that are done wrong at home are punished at this school, when the child is pushed into a confrontational situation, he is manhandled, often violently or aggressively. He is away from home and very scared.

He feels deserted by his parents. The school does not have immediate results after and seeks to blame anything away from itself, even the influence of a close friend this can effect the relationship of the child. Several children from there have complained of the loss of all their friends and the feeling of being a stranger in their own home, since they know little or nothing of what happens while they are incarcerated. The best that can happen is that the child may learn

what offers their age know in the way of school work, but at the expense of their childhood and innocence. All caused by a seriously inferior Educational policy, and older teachers who will not allow children to be themselves, and expect them to fit into this no exceptions.

A difficult child must be persuaded and encouraged, not coerced or forced. They must be helped to believe that they have some value to others, not constantly hammered and manipulated.

### **11 Year Old Boy – School trouble**

Got picked on by teachers and pupils alike, very often, nearly every day because he smashed things, windows, clans, blackboards and broke peoples property bikes etc to make them fall off; stole lunch because bad horrible lunches, or no lunch, stole food from shops. Picked on because was in DSW care, except in std 4, Miss Fastin's class. She stood up for him, told his parents to provide lunch, spoke to the principal about his accusations that subject had done things that he had not. Child thought about his situation at home, while at school, It made him feel angry, made him smash things, Teachers didn't seem to care, just thought he was bad. At intermediate school he tried to hit teacher with a cricket bat because teacher said he could run faster than he was and so was not conforming.

As the teacher sent him to the office the boy picked up a cricket bat and tried to hit him with it. Suspension followed Went back for two or three days, then bunked (absented). He was taken out of class by his teacher who held him tightly by the neck and squeezed, causing pain and leaving bruising.

### **Nine year old boy**

Another 9 year old boy at a local primary school, in the same area of town had been picked up by the shoulder by a teacher and taken to office, and dropped on floor in corridor while struggling. He was injured. The boy had supposedly been carrying a knife and a history of threatening with a knife. (was using scissors and the knife to cut paper out). High school onwards was non attendance.

## **Punishments and Discipline**

- Knowing the difference between difficult or abnormal and normal behaviour
- Taking offense at Childs attitude and/or remarks and the value of short breaks from each other as a cool down period between arguments
- Avoiding the deprivation of a child of their own things
- Withdrawal of privileges - find something pleasant and not excessive
- Not using people who are close to the child as a punishment
- Voluntary time out and effects of time out
- Effects of embarrassment on self esteem
- Defining boundaries confrontation.
- Time factor in compliance request
- Consequences taught, not referred to as punishment
- No violent punishments
- No aggressive punishments or demands

## **Rewards.**

### **Privileges as rewards**

When privilege given as reward, do not take away as punishment/consequence. Use something else.

## **Summary — *School's Handling of Difficult Kids***

### Key Issues

#### **1. Disbelief and bias**

- Schools often side against difficult kids in conflicts.
- Children may stop explaining themselves to avoid disbelief, sometimes taking blame for others.

#### **2. Learned behaviour vs. misbehavior**

- Many "difficult" behaviours are learned, not inherent problems.
- Liberal or independent upbringing can clash with school rules; children may resist being forced to comply.

#### **3. Residential schools and coercion**

- Institutions like Mackenzie Residential use force to make children comply over years.
- Children suffer loss of privacy, self-esteem, and feel imprisoned and deserted by parents.

- Social connections are damaged, and childhood innocence is lost.

#### 4. Handling difficult children

- Children should be persuaded and encouraged, not coerced.
- They need to feel valued, not constantly punished or manipulated.

#### 5. Case examples

- **11-year-old boy:** Frequently punished, bullied by peers and teachers, reacts violently (smashing property, attempting to hit teacher), suffers physical restraint.
- **9-year-old boy:** Roughly handled by teacher, injured while being accused of carrying a knife, stopped attending high school.

### Punishments and Discipline Guidelines

- Understand the difference between difficult and abnormal behaviour.
- Use cool-down periods, not prolonged conflict.
- Avoid confiscating personal items or over-depriving privileges.
- Do not punish through loved ones or close relationships.
- Time-out should be voluntary; avoid embarrassment or shame.
- Define boundaries calmly; teach consequences without violence or aggression.
- Give children time to comply; consistency is key.

### Rewards

- Use privileges as rewards, but do not remove them as punishment.
- Separate rewards from consequences to reinforce positive behaviour without coercion.

## Handling Difficult Kids in School & at Home — Quick Guide

### 1. Understanding Behaviour

- Distinguish **learned behaviour** from abnormal or intentional misbehaviour.
  - Recognize that **resistance or aggression** often comes from frustration, not malice.
  - Avoid assuming the child is “bad” — many acts are coping strategies.
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### 2. Communication & Confrontation

- Listen and validate the child’s perspective; don’t automatically side against them.
  - Avoid unnecessary confrontation — it can worsen behaviour.
  - Use **calm, clear instructions**; explain why rules exist at the child’s understanding level.
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### 3. Discipline Guidelines

- **No violent or aggressive punishments** — these harm self-esteem and trust.
  - Use **time-outs voluntarily** rather than forced isolation.
  - Avoid over-deprivation: don’t confiscate personal items or punish through loved ones.
  - Teach **consequences**, not punishment — natural, age-appropriate outcomes.
  - Allow **cool-down periods** during conflicts.
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### 4. Rewards & Positive Reinforcement

- Use **privileges as rewards** for good behaviour.
  - Do **not remove rewards as punishment** — use separate consequences.
  - Encourage positive actions with praise and recognition.
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### 5. Special Considerations

- Children with independent or liberal upbringing may resist rigid rules — **persuasion works better than coercion**.
- Avoid sending children to coercive institutions for non-compliance; support and guidance are more effective.

- Preserve **privacy, self-esteem, and social connections** — essential for healthy development.
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## 6. Key Takeaways

- Difficult behaviour is often a signal, not defiance.
- Encourage, guide, and value the child rather than force compliance.
- Positive reinforcement, calm authority, and understanding foster long-term change.

## Remedial (Institutional) Education

This is a sore point with me. There are a few institutions of this type. Kids whose behaviour becomes so bad at a "normal" school that they need to have residential education. One wonders as to the effectiveness of a place like this. You have to take into consideration ' in my opinion the fact of a child being separated from his family and friends, and his entire living arrangement, for all week days. He is away from home from around 7pm on Sunday night until the end of school on Friday. Meals are served in a large impersonal dining room, and all children are watched constantly. It has been said by children from such an institution in the Canterbury area, that they are even watched when undressing. In the last part of this report a boy called David (nom de plume) was mentioned. Because of his behaviour he was recommended to be placed in this institution, get the age of 6, by a child and family guidance psychologist. There was a meeting in the end, at his school, which was steered very deliberately in this direction by him. All family representatives of this child were run down by the school staff at the psychologist. The meeting broke up with the system determined that this child would be placed in residential care. He was not, and now enjoys stable education at an alternative school outside the state educational system.

As a foster parent for difficult kids I am constantly appalled at the suggestions of locking difficult kids away in a residential system which takes away their privacy, personality and freedom. The state education system is telling these kids that "you won't fit into our school system" so we will PUNISH you severely. Systems such as these are not helping our kids, but punishing them for someone else's errors in their upbringing. Sure, some of these kids may learn their school work, but they will learn to be fiercely independent, lie, steal, single, nervous, lonely, left out, strangers in their own home and when they have a temper tantrum, they will learn to be scared of big men manhandling their small bodies painfully into empty time-out rooms where they learn to be alone, scared or miss their parent, sisters and pets. Is this fair? Is it a humane way to supposedly help children? It is not. It is child abuse.

At these institutions, the property of the children is taken from them as a punishment, not only do they lose their freedom and family, they lose their identity through the loss of personal items. It's like taking away their identity and then giving it back time & again. If these kids were given advantage in a NON-psychological way at ordinary schools, they would be spared this emotional turmoil they would not have to run away from those institutions, and they do; some, many times. On these excursions, it is not uncommon for them to steal. They often head for home but are sent back, seen as rejection by the child, and a reason not to trust their parents, especially if they are thrown into time out upon their return,

I base these things, upon the treatment of many of my foster kids, during their schooling. And upon testimony from parents of kids who are currently, or who in the past have been to this particular institution and others and from the children themselves. I was told on a visit to the institution of this kind that the children liked it. If so, why do they run away, end up smoking at an early age,

steal? Could it be that an atmosphere of nonchalance has developed within the children's social order at the institution. or maybe it's the fact that as I said earlier, that the parents on domestic circle of acquaintances have introduced these kids the most aggressive kinds, into things that children shouldn't be aware of and that it spreads, among them uncontrollable like a disease. Something that keeps popping into my mind is an important key for the behaviour of these kids. And that is why they are only difficult at some schools and not others? I believe that it is the way that they are treated at their schools.

I know of a child who is considered aggressive and disruptive. Plans were about to have him placed in residential training to force him to fit into school. The thing is though, that he has been to a specific school, 3 times in his 4 years of school all other schools failed to control him, but the one at which he attended 3 times, and currently attends has little or no difficulty with him. Why is this? Well, in his words and those of another difficult child at the school, "they treat us all like human beings". I have to admit, that this school is well known for its fair and proper treatment of all students, other schools say that they don't have the resources to handle kids like these, this school has the same allocation per child as every else, but does well, especially with the difficult kids. They are a state school; they have a goodly amount of authoritative male staff which is a major asset to a school in this day and age.

There seems little positive to say of the entire state educational and school psychological services. In my opinion, they are too busy worrying about absolutely not to allow any child to grow in to the educational system, rather force compliance with it.

If these kids do have major behavioural problems then why is it only at some schools and not others? If there is a policy problem at the schools which have trouble, should it be considered their cock up that causes kids to become so disturbed as to require looking up?!

### **WARD 24 TESTIMONY – 9 Year Old Boy**

W24 at first day. Wouldn't go into Hospital gates Two orderlies and step father dragged him in to W24, arms held over shoulders by the two orderlies. Right in front of upset public members and hospital staff in Christchurch Hospital the boy falls. His step father held him by his feet as he was dragged kicking and screaming in terror into this shameful abusive place by the two orderlies and thrown immediately into tiny "time out" room, the size of an old outside toilet, for struggling and being abusive as he was himself being abused and struggling in defence. Shameful!

Over five weeks says was in time out, never voluntarily, always by force, and any way that they found necessary.

Subject eight-nine years old at time when force used. A "time out", made you feel angrier than you were and made you more violent than you were, the 6 years is still very angry to think about it many years on as he sits in his prison cell.

“Felt powerless”, “Was called names.” A wee time out room was in there with a psychologist. There others were on the other side of a two way mirror. Psychologist said "I'm going to abuse you verbally, you're going to try or see how long you can go without losing your temper." When he lost his temper, he was thrown in time out to cool off, "I was set up", this occurred six or seven times. Was sworn at, called little. cunt, happened sometimes, by orderlies, some swore some didn't. "I tried to have one up on an assault charge", Instead of just dragging him in an orderly, got him to door of time out room and the boy punched at the orderly. This is child abuse. The orderly punched this eight-nine year old boy him in the head. Police would not act. When the boy didn't do schoolwork, was placed in time out, sometimes went voluntarily, most by force. During his stay was visited by mother, uncle and nana, each day. Was allowed to phone them. When they left, felt hurt sad, angry, alone and vulnerable. The boy ran away many times, went to town, visit uncle, sometimes went back on own,

### **Summary of "Remedial (Institutional) Education"**

The text criticizes residential institutions for children with severe behavioural issues, arguing that they are more punitive than supportive. The author, a foster parent, describes how these institutions isolate children from their families, strip them of privacy and identity, and often subject them to demeaning treatment such as constant surveillance and harsh discipline.

The author shares personal experiences and testimonies suggesting that such placements cause emotional harm, encourage behaviours like lying and stealing, and foster mistrust of parents and authority. They argue that children behave differently depending on how they are treated at school, citing examples of children thriving in schools where they are treated with fairness and respect.

The central claim is that residential institutions are a form of child abuse, punishing children for systemic and adult failings rather than addressing their real needs. Instead, schools that emphasize humane treatment and respect prove that with the right environment, difficult children can succeed without being locked away.

## Problems from kids point of view

### ***What the actual kids say about their treatment at Ward 24 and Mackenzie Residential School***

The aggression, forced removal from class at ward 24 for breaking equipment, taken to time out room. Occurred multiple times. Subject 6 years old, experienced severe pain. His arms were twisted horizontally behind his back to facilitate handling by two large adult men. The child felt angry, even after 10 years. Child was called names and remembers "little bastard, wanker." The child was told by staff that he was at ward 24 because his father didn't want him and "this is your home now."

If he did not do school work was placed in time out room and this happened a few times. Sometimes he went voluntarily, others, violent force was used the some way as above. He wanted to speak to his family about this was not permitted to do so.

During his 5 week stay, his nana visited each weekend. He was very sad when she left. He was not allowed to ring anyone at any time.

The child tried to run away but the door was always guarded. He tried again downstairs outside but got caught. When he was recaptured he was watched all the time.

The experience inside him feel "useless, a piece of shit". He came out of Ward24 with that attitude. He still feels the same way and looks back upon this and feels violated to this very day, many years later. Groups of parents have difficult children; some of these kids will have problems at school, and the parents will be unhappy about violence or aggressive used on their kids at schools and institutions, and "check!!" Ward24 and Mackenzie residential school.

### **Alternative schools. psychologists recommendations. (For aggressive handling).**

SH, at school, was always picked on by teachers, for no reason he remembers. Teachers or other kids pick on you because you are a DSS kid. Because they think you're different from normal kids, they think you're bad that's why you are a DSW kid." So he couldn't get on with work, kept missing father, or kept thinking of him.

At Intermediate school, got strapped for lying about stealing something of teacher's and vandalising school property. He vandalised things cause was annoyed with poor treatment, by teachers. Once punched a window in door and opened the door to get back in then was sent out of class to loadmaster and was given the bill when he got home, got strapped by foster father on the bare ass.

Was often locked out of the class by teachers and pupils. 'Was coming back to class from library and was the last back then one of the pupil told teacher he was coming. so the teacher locked the door. Then he broke in - To get him out pushed him out and shut the door. One teacher grabbed him behind the neck and squeezed his neck. Teacher forced him out and locked the door. This made him hate school and all it stands for, hates teachers too.



### **Schools Handling of Difficult kids.**

For kids, who will not settle, and constantly upset the class. An individual plan is required.

#### **Recommend**

Reintegration over short period. It time, this requires the very difficult child being withdrawn from regular classes and having one to one teaching over a two - four week period.

The child should work from pre set work sheets to his ability level. Maths, Language, art, reading and spelling, each approximately, 45 minutes or less. Initially the student should work under supervision (for 1-2 weeks), then left in a secure area (supervisable) each day, for part of the day (sick bay), (outside office)) with preset sheets to complete on his own. If he does this with no need of constant supervision (a time/work check sheet should be employed, where each accomplished sheet should be ticked off in the appropriate box. After say a week with no incidents, with all the boxes filled on the sheet, It may then be possible to place the student back into a new classroom, but give him preset work to do on his own. The teacher of the new class should not be responsible for seeing the completion of the work through and not confront the student. He should intervene, only where the student disrupts the class. If this should arise, the student should be asked to leave the room and no confrontation should be made.

The student should be placed in this class for 1-2 hours in the morning, each day, in increasing one 2-3 weeks until placid integration achieved. (Trial preceding)

#### **11 Year Old Boy – School trouble**

Got picked on by teachers and pupils alike, very often, nearly every day because he smashed things, windows, clans, blackboards and broke peoples property bikes etc to make them fall off; stole lunch because bad horrible lunches, or no lunch, stole food from shops. Picked on because was in DSW care, except in std 4, Miss Fastin's class. She stood up for him, told his parents to provide lunch, spoke to the principal about his accusations that subject had done things that he had not. Child thought about his situation at home, while at school, It made him feel angry, made him smash things, Teachers didn't seem to care, just thought he was bad. At intermediate school he tried to hit teacher with a cricket bat because teacher said he could run faster than he was and so was not conforming.

As the teacher sent him to the office the boy picked up a cricket bat and tried to hit him with it. Suspension followed Went back for two or three days, then bunked (absented). He was taken out of class by his teacher who held him tightly by the neck and squeezed, causing pain and leaving bruising.

#### **Nine year old boy**

Another 9 year old boy at a local primary school, in the same area of town had been picked up by the shoulder by a teacher and taken to office, and dropped on floor in corridor while struggling. He was injured. The boy had supposedly been carrying a knife and a history of threatening with a knife. (was using

scissors and the knife to cut paper out). High school onwards was non attendance.

## Summary

The document describes children's negative experiences at **Ward 24** and **Mackenzie Residential School**, as well as in mainstream schools, particularly in relation to harsh disciplinary practices and stigma.

### Key Points from Children's Perspectives:

- Children experienced **physical aggression** (being restrained, twisted arms, neck grabbing, forced removal) and **verbal abuse** (being called names, told they were unwanted).
- They were often **isolated in time-out rooms** or **locked out of classrooms** as punishment.
- Contact with family was restricted, causing **sadness, anger, and feelings of abandonment**.
- Attempts to escape were prevented, leading to feelings of being **trapped and powerless**.
- Long-term impacts included **low self-worth, anger, hatred of school and teachers**, and feelings of being "different" or "bad" because they were in care.

### Examples of Cases:

- A 6-year-old boy described ongoing trauma from restraints and verbal abuse.
- Another child was repeatedly punished, strapped, and excluded, fueling vandalism and anger.
- An 11-year-old reacted violently (smashing property, trying to hit a teacher) after constant bullying and neglect.
- A 9-year-old was injured after being roughly handled by a teacher.

### Issues Identified:

- Children in state care (DSW kids) were often **targeted by peers and teachers**.
- Aggressive handling worsened behaviour instead of helping.
- Teachers frequently viewed these children as inherently "bad."

### Recommendations for Handling Difficult Children:

- Use **individualized reintegration plans**, with short-term withdrawal and **one-on-one supervised learning**.
- Provide **structured work sheets** at the child's ability level.
- Gradually reintegrate the child into regular classes without confrontation.
- Teachers should avoid direct conflict and use structured monitoring to encourage positive behaviour.

The following pages are scans of signed notes from kids who were at the time in residential school at Mackenzie Residential School and/or Ward 24

June 29<sup>th</sup> 1  
Complaint.

Children complain of excessive use of force & undue pain and suffering. Discipline very severe, Arms held behind back straight.  
(force parents not permitted to use force of any kind so why are they)

started here in own words  
made to eat what you hate.

locked in time out till you want to come out, but you don't want to because it is safer to stay there  
Cam Cameron

1a

There is a school council but none of the kids say anything about what's wrong because they are scared of the staff.

Boys & Girls watched when naked, both men and women staff see the children naked. There is no privacy.

Heavy metal not allowed. Songs about love banned "they affect behaviour".

There is always a staff member in attendance.

2

A girl was slapped  
across the face. The  
school said that "nothing  
happened" & the girl  
was a "lion".

~~We~~ have to pay \$1  
to get our stuff and  
and they have to go  
back when finished.

We have to do the  
we don't want to do &  
everything has to be  
earned, every minute  
of the day, there is  
no freedom, prison  
on love, we don't  
see our friends at  
home, when you  
Kaw...  
Kaw...

2a

get punished, we are  
after hurt, if we get  
in a bad mood, and  
aggressing, we are  
held with our arms  
behind us, straight  
and it hurts real  
bad, and we cry &  
get real mad, the  
because we get real  
mad we get locked  
up.

We get to make  
no friends, we  
get sick of each  
other.

3

We have a life of punishment & discipline we all hate it. The way we are treated makes us behave badly then we get treated bad again & so on. We all hate it and want our rights as human beings protected.

Kevin  
Murray



Mr Brown, a staff member  
Punched Bj in the chest  
and pushed him into the  
door. he had a big bruise  
on his chest + a big bump  
on the back of his head.  
It also happened to ARAN  
He was going to chase Steve  
after he (Steve) hit Aran on the  
back of the head. Mr Brown  
threw him (ARAN) against the  
desk, hurt his back, hit his  
head on the wall. Joseph Nelson  
Saw what happened.

(K0) Miss Cross } are good to the kids  
Mrs McKenzie }  
Miss Prentiss }

We all get to see kids being thrown about. Bj smashed his face into the window, they wouldn't stop him he was being restrained in the hall up against the window, Mr Howick & Miss McNaughton dragged Bj into time out. A staff member hit Aron in the face. I don't know why. You get put in the hall as a punishment. Sometimes because of the way you look, or act, or use (derivative) words or greetings. You are not allowed to see your parents or ring them when you are put in the hall you miss them, it makes you really sad. You have to earn cents to use your own radio, to

your own tapes, or Bmy. You (B)  
have to earn your own stuff. it  
is really unfair, you need your  
own stuff to remember home.  
you've got to be in privelege group  
all day to call your parents. (P)

HONO Lee is always getting picked  
on. because kids reckon she's ugly.  
Every time she gets caught doing (RM)  
something wrong, she goes to time-out  
she went to time out on the first da  
that's unfair, who knows what to do  
on the first day? Mr Murray got  
Jonnies arm up behind his back, after  
wards he couldn't move his arm because  
it really hurt. Mr Murray ~~didn't~~ doesn't  
know how hard he does it. Mr Healy  
says that kids with long hair  
use it as a status symbol. He  
made Aran cut his hair really short

When we go shopping, only allowed <sup>(K)</sup> \$2 worth of lollies. We earn the money, and are told how to spend it. When we are out shopping, we have to call them Sir or Miss, or Mr. You feel dumb, everyone stares at you, like a freak we aren't allowed 'our favourite' toys at school, like at normal schools. When you get homesick you are told not to be silly, Andrew doesn't like it there, he now used to swear before, but he does now. He still swears, and they get away with it. If we swear we get "standard group". We aren't allowed to say "Yo dude", or anything like that. Parents get told rubbish about your behaviours & things

are supposed to have happened <sup>(K)</sup> <sup>(D)</sup>  
that haven't, I'm treated like  
a little child. It makes you feel  
unhappy and like a nerd. We  
mostly feel like it's jail. You get  
no love; the Christchurch kids should  
go home, not live there when they  
are in their own town.  
You're not allowed to use salt and  
pepper unless you're in a  
privilege group (in a regular home  
you don't have to earn your salt  
& pepper, cakes, puddings & drinks  
at meal times. If you're in  
standard group after 3-30, you  
go to bed at 3.30pm, you  
get into your pajamas & bed  
at 3.30pm in the afternoon  
you get taken to the food hall  
in your pajamas. It is

really embarrassing. You are <sup>(K)</sup> forced to eat your tea. <sup>(RM)</sup>  
All kids go to bed at 8.30,  
it feels so babyish. at home we  
go much later. It isn't normal.  
It is really hard to get used  
to living one way at school, and  
another at home. things that it's  
ok to do at home, you get  
punished for at school. All things  
are organised by staff. you get no  
responsibility for yourself. You just  
get told exactly what to do, and life  
is just punishments or rewards.  
there must be more to it than  
this. We don't complain because  
we are all shit scared. Shouldn't  
have to wear uniforms. if you want  
to wear play clothes. you have  
to pay for the privilege. they  
are our own clothes.

4/11  
aggression towards children while  
being taken to time out. <sup>(Am)</sup>

twisting arms of children also being  
kicked under desk. <sup>by MR. MURRY</sup>  
mainly

Taking possessions when haven't  
done anything.

Other children taking possessions  
and not being paid for.

They should have taken out standard  
group because it wouldn't happen  
at a normal home.

They should get rid of restraining  
because they could break your ~~arm~~  
arm.

The time at the park where  
timoti got restrained and others  
in public.

So ~~oo~~ we go home we don't know what's  
happened because we are at school. We  
feel like total strangers.

19  
2

When you get restrained they ~~twist~~ your arms behind your back and you are bent over. It really hurts and you get angry. I was sitting in common room 3 for master. I had a sad look on my face or something I got restrained and got taken to the hall. They sit you in a square & the ground is real cold. If you move out of the square you get taken to time out. Its like a jail. The kids dont feel good about going home because diffent things happen and you miss out. The staff members are discusting because they look at you when your naked getting dressed or in the shower and you feel embarrassed.

signed

ARAW/micklyoh

lost confidence all together in school and other students, since they are laughed at about what happened to them, and they are seen only as trouble makers.

At this point, they have been driven down as far as they can go by schools, the school then tell parents that either the child go to Ward 24 in child hospital for treatment (for something caused by the schools) for aggression and hostility. (Now remember that the child has been trying to fit in the best way he knows how. and has been thrown about by his peers) or be kicked out of the school. The parents, who have had enough of school meetings by the time agree. Here's something else the main method of controlling children when they are made aggressive at Ward 24, is to drag them with arms behind backs, and to lock them in a very small time out room ~~with~~ kicking and scream. I have affidavits to support this

and the fact that workers get kids in a room with a two way mirror, and insult them until they lose their temper, then drag them away to the time out room. How can you teach a child not to be aggressive, by throwing him around & locking him up. They argue that they only use reasonable force, but at what level do you call two men forcing the arms of a child behind his back, and leading him away in pain, kicking and screaming especially after their actions been responsible for the flare up there is also manipulation by psychologists and counsellors, and forced control of kids at the ward the school, with time out as a punishment, the parents fall along blindly, they are told if the object to the poor treatment, that they don't know what's ~~being~~ ~~and~~ they are talking about. The child will at the end of his stay (5 weeks) emerge disturbed,

## **Remedies:**

### **How to handle disturbed and/or aggressive Kids.**

You can forget most of what you are told about child rearing, and try to understand a new concept in child management. I have, for many years, subscribed to the non violent approach to child rearing. You may call it semi liberal. It is unfortunately considered by most parents that their child must do what he is told when he is told to do it, if he 'does not' or has the intelligence to question the logic or necessity of doing it, he will take punishment either by being deprived of a favourite toy or pastime, if not beaten violently, abused verbally, shouted at or grounded causing loss of freedom or manhandled in some other abusive caveman way.

Most people think that these methods of child punishment and control are acceptable. It is my opinion, born out of experience of kids, in my care, who are sick to death of, being treated this way you can't teach a child to respect or obey you when you treat him like shit on the ground.

If a person forced you into something, you would fight back, if you had the common sense to do so. A child will fight back if you try and handle them in the way mentioned above. All children learn by example!! Obviously, if you want them to behave in a certain manner, you must behave in the same manner all of the time!

Your child will copy your every move. When a child is born, he spends the first three years doing little else, but observing you, the parent. He will learn to speak the way you do, eat what you do; behave "like" you. Now it's up to you to make sure that by example, you have given the best and most moral image to your child to copy. Love him and cuddle him heaps, be there when he cries at night to hold him and say "You're ok\*. Mum's here" (or dad). When he does something naughty (not bad, bad boys aren't born, they're made), or wrong, tell him that it is the wrong or, or silly thing he did but hug him and say, "it's ok", remember it for next time" and tell him that you love him and he's not a bad boy, the thing he did was bad. That is important, as a child who is clumsy or naughty a lot, and who is scolded "You are a bad boy, I don't love you" when you do things wrong, and will probably develop a shy inferiority complex! on may become disturbed or difficult. If you leave a child like this alone a lot, he will seek attention elsewhere, at school he may be rowdy and badly behaved or aggressive in play at home and he will tell constantly on others, or hit them, stay out later, or break on / throw things to get you attention; the type of attention he get will almost invariably be negative, he will be called names or hit but at least he thanks that has your attention.

When you child slips into this kind of behaviour, you can pull him out of it by telling him that you love him, hug him, do something nice for him and get him a little surprise every now and then. Don't expect him to be perfect; he will never be, just as you will never be perfect.

Don't believe for one second that your child behaves badly, deliberately to cause you trouble just for the fun of it because there is always a reason. Give him a hug and ask what is wrong. He will tell you if he feels safe with you. And Dads, don't underestimate your intense value as a father. All boys need a father. All girls' need a mother, both is preferable, but often not possible. But now you are probably thinking, "With all this hugging of love, the kids' gonna

turn out a wimp." This is crap. He child will probably whinge a bit in his early years, but will be very self confident and probably compassionate or sensitive to the feelings - needs of others. Dads, don't forget your role. You have kids, they love you, so you love them,. You will hug or kiss your daughter, but consider it not really manly to hug - kiss your son. Your son doesn't think you love him as much because you pat him on the lead - say "giddy mate", and your hug or kiss his sister for a start. He is not your mate, he is your son. You're not a homo or fairy just because you show your love to him.

It is not really he-man to go out and smash someone's head because you think that real men have to be tough or feel it is not he-man to hug your son "Cos its' wimpy". I bet you like flowers and soft colours, and cute animals too! No you're no wimp, especially if you don't care who knows. Real men care for their families and friends, not afraid to cry and not afraid to show it. Hey, show your sons the real you(as long as you are not some asshole!) not the tough phoney image. Give them something gentle to copy, not something violent and unhealthy. This goes for natural fathers, step fathers and care givers and males in constant contact with kids(if that's allowed these days)!

Asking your child to do something for you in a nice way is often the only way that they will comply, if you ask nicely, and pat then gently on the shoulder, they will probably comply. If you just tell them to do it, now", they will fight your authority. Children will always respond to respect from adults. If your child does not respond to your request, simply state that you are not happy to be ignored, and that it would be helpful for him to do it. Still no response, do it yourself the only way. Then the next time he asks you for something, or to do something, say to him "I ask you to do things for me so you won't, so I will not help you this time, you can do it yourself", then pat him on the load with a smile. After a while, it will sink in and although grudgingly to well comply. The secret is to change constantly, and not react the same way to each event every time. If you are unpredictable, your child will think twice before hassling or ignoring you IT WORKS!!

What would you do if Kids turns his stereo right up and you really don't like it, that loud, well you march up to his room and tell him to turn it down, right, maybe not. Well maybe he says "No", or turns it down the back up when you go out of the room, this pisses you off, so you confiscate the stereo, right, whole the has rights for, the fact that his stereos volume upsets you is tough, what you need to do is simply tell him that the stereo is too loud, he must shut his bedroom door, and keep the level at a sound which is not annoying to you, or others in the immediate vicinity. He will comply after a while, but don't try to compress his freedom too much, be must learn what is responsible, or what is not. If you take his stereo off him, then you will piss him off and he will react in other annoying ways. So neither of you win, this will go on and on until you finally ground him and he will hop out the window and run off. Always keep it in mind that a child must learn by example.

Obviously, there must be at times, it need for force to be applied. Physical force is simply not acceptable in any way at all. If rationalisation and reason have failed then there might seem little choice. Hitting the child will prove short term and unsatisfactory. It will make him sad and hurt and fear you.

Eye to eye contact is important. Through this and a bit of intellectual force, you will get your way. An intimidating look, can work, giving an instruction that you intend for it to be carried out. You have to have personal confidence to

allow you a measure of authority. Sometimes you will fail if you lose confidence. Therefore authority when your child tries to trade off, that is when you expect them to do something because they don't want to do it anyway, even though they have to. They will justify their acts by telling you that they will do something else instead. This is trading off. Use your common sense, but keep your authority. Gaining Your Authority. There are many ways "that you can do this. Good luck!

## **Summary — Remedies: How to handle disturbed and/or aggressive kids**

### **Main idea:**

Reject harsh, punitive child-rearing. Use a consistent, non-violent, example-led approach that combines love, clear boundaries, calm authority, and practical strategies to change difficult behaviour.

### **Key points**

- **Against violence and humiliation.** Physical punishment, verbal abuse, and humiliation damage children — they provoke fighting back, hatred, low self-worth, and attention-seeking misbehaviour.
- **Children learn by example.** Parents/caregivers must model the behaviour they want: kindness, calmness, and emotional honesty. Young children spend years watching and copying adults.
- **Love and reassurance first.** Comfort (hugs, saying “you’re ok, I love you”) after wrongdoing separates the child’s identity from the behaviour and reduces insecurity that drives bad behaviour.
- **Behaviour has reasons.** Misbehaviour is usually driven by unmet needs (attention, insecurity, hunger, etc.). Ask what’s wrong and create a safe environment where the child will tell you.
- **Fathers and male carers matter.** Men should show affection to sons — it’s not weak; it models healthy masculinity and emotional openness.
- **Ask nicely, don’t coerce.** Polite requests, gentle touch, and respect get better compliance than orders, threats, or physical force.
- **Use predictable, logical consequences — but be flexible.** Do tasks yourself if necessary, then withhold help next time as a natural consequence. Vary responses enough that the child can’t rely on a predictable meltdown plan.
- **Avoid overreaching punishments.** Confiscating possessions (e.g., stereo) or excessive grounding often escalates conflict and can push a child to run away or act out.
- **Force is last resort — never physical.** If reasoning fails, rely on calm authority (eye contact, confident instruction), not hitting or humiliation.
- **Authority comes from confidence and consistency.** Maintain clear expectations, intervene calmly when boundaries are crossed, and don’t lose composure.

### **Practical tips (short checklist)**

- Hug and reassure after misconduct; separate the child from the bad act.
- Ask questions: “What’s wrong?” Make them feel safe to answer.
- Give clear, polite requests; use gentle touch when asking.
- Use natural, logical consequences (don’t help if they refuse to help you later).
- Avoid taking away everything — negotiate reasonable limits (close door, lower volume).

- Use firm eye contact and calm instructions when you must enforce a rule.
- Be unpredictable enough in low-level responses to discourage testing limits, but consistent on core rules.
- Model emotional honesty; fathers and male carers should show affection openly.

## Handling Disturbed or Aggressive Kids — Non-Violent Remedies

### Core Principles

- **Children learn by example** — model calm, respectful behaviour.
  - **Never use violence or humiliation** — it damages trust and fuels defiance.
  - **Love first, discipline second** — always separate the *child* from the *behaviour*.
  - **Respect earns compliance** — politeness works better than orders.
  - **Authority = calm confidence** — not shouting or force.
- 

### Everyday Strategies

#### ☑ Reassure & Hug

- After misbehaviour: say *“That was wrong, but I love you. You are not bad.”*
- Prevents insecurity and builds trust.

#### ☑ Ask, Don't Order

- Use gentle touch and polite requests.
- Example: *“Can you help me with this?”* instead of *“Do it now!”*

#### ☑ Natural Consequences

- If they refuse to help, calmly do it yourself.
- Next time they ask for help: *“I asked you before and you didn't want to help, so this time you can try on your own.”*

#### ☑ Be Flexible

- Change your reactions so they can't predict (and exploit) them.
- Stay consistent on important rules (safety, respect).

#### ☑ Set Fair Limits

- Don't over-punish (e.g., confiscating everything).
- Example: if music is too loud → *“Shut the door or lower it so it doesn't disturb others.”*

#### ☑ Use Calm Authority

- Eye contact + steady voice = strong influence.
- Avoid physical force at all costs.

## Father & Male Carer Role

- Hug sons as well as daughters — affection is strength, not weakness.
  - Model real masculinity: care, honesty, compassion.
  - Show it's okay to cry, love, and be gentle.
- 

## Quick Checklist

- Hug often, reassure always.
  - Ask what's wrong — behaviour has reasons.
  - Respectful requests, not commands.
  - Logical, natural consequences.
  - Stay calm, use eye contact.
  - Model the behaviour you want to see.
- 

✦ **Bottom line:** Children don't become "bad" on their own — they copy what they see and react to how they are treated. Show love, respect, and calm authority, and they will follow your lead.

## **Punishment & Control.**

A major concern for parents at the moment should be the type of methods used in schools, mainly public (or State schools) in the control and handling of their children.

It is well known, but not often discussed between teachers and parents, that force, that is physical force is used by many, teaching staff to control or to make conform children of all ages. It is a major concern, that methods of control in this category, i.e. having an anti-social effect on our children.

Methods noted include

- 1/ Time out rooms.**
- 2/ Embarrassment**
- 3/ Psychological force. (shouting etc.).**
- 4/ Physical force.**
- 5/ Removal of privileges.**
- 6/ Counselling.**

### **1/ Time out procedures.**

This is in the opinion of many, a prelude to imprisonment in the eyes of the child. Usually involves the child being placed in a room on his/her own, the rooms are often void of furnishings to avoid damage when a child becomes so aggressive at being placed in there, that they lose their personal control and lash out at everything. There are often no rooms provided at schools for this purpose; so other rooms are used, at a school in Christchurch, a casualty toilet room was used frequently as time out for a six year old boy. Education Authorities permitted this practise. There was a record of the frequency of time out by the school which the writer and the parents were shown. It would be hard to estimate the amount of times he was placed in time out, but it was many, and the effect was negative.

The child is now at a different school, but it is considered by the teaching staff there, that the child now aged 7, has a problem of soiling his pants, because in their opinion he is afraid of being in the toilet at school alone. It is a detrimental effect to the child, sanctioned by the Educational authority, concerned, which has had no good effect up the attitude of that child towards school. Since the time out room is a punishment and many, many children have a real fear i being alone in a closed or locked room. stands to reason that force must be used on a lot of occasions to place the child; that room, this is not might be hazardous to the attitude of the child in relation t the teacher who has forcibly restrained a child and forced him/her into a blank room for a specific period of time. If an adult were forced by another person in a similar manner, a struggle would ensue and probably an altercation. So, in putting this force o a child, you are forcing him to retaliate in a similar manner, then he/she is punished for what he/she sees as defending him/herse the obvious outcome is a sense of distrust by the child of the teachers & any other staff involved, not to mention a worsening attitude. to schooling, not to mention marks on their body and pain and suffering caused by the use of force by adult staff on fragile children.

### **2/ Embarrassment**

It can be straining for a teacher to have control of her/her class undermined by a slow learner, sometimes the lack of speed of a child to understand may cause a teacher to make a comment in the classroom as to the mental ability of the child. For instance, a child who is a late starter may find it difficult to begin work on his own and need individual assistance. Since this is not possible through class numbers, and the difficulty getting teacher aides, the teacher will say, things like "get on with it", "you know what to do which the child does not!" "Hurry up : your holding up the rest of us," which after a while lowers the child's self esteem, leading to unpleasant scenes in the classroom, and that child's removal to a time out room. The child need help to build his self esteem, and not told the he is lesser intelligent because he holds up the rest of the class.

### **3/ Psychological force**

The same can be said for psychological force by staff on children. Browbeating will almost definitely result in an unpleasant react. by the child, and not to be beaten by a child the teacher will retaliate, and here comes the punishment for the child again. Intimidation is used in schools by teachers on the children not to any great effect though. Some children are very strong willed. A teacher should not force a child to comply, but rather help his understand an agreeable compromise. Life is a mass of compromise. If he understands his benefit from it, he will go for it, if he is forced to conform, he will rebel. We should all remember that in the modern world, children begin the decision making years earlier than our generation. At home they are given the right to control their own lives to a much larger degree than ever before. School procedures take away, or attempt to take away this right. The children are no used to being forced to comply, and since they have not been made to at home, they will not

### **4/ Physical force**

In an attempt to force a child into conformity of one kind or another, physical force is used at schools. Some parents dismiss it as necessary, most do not but do not know what to do about it. In an attempt to drop a child into a time out situation in another Christchurch school, the child's body was marked over most of its upper limits with abrasions, scratches & bruises. This resulted in a complaint being laid with the police, against the teacher concerned. Because the child concerned had a history of non compliance in schools, the defence of the teacher rests upon "Using necessary force to contain the child" who was nine years old and who had a history of violence used upon him. It is a real concern that physical force (violence) is used in schools on children who have had a violent upbringing, and to the knowledge of the schools, that the school systems, where appropriate in a this area knowingly contributing to the aggressive nature of the children in their care.

### **5/ Removal of privileges**

To many parents this would be acceptable since they practise it themselves. It would be more acceptable for rewards to be given, not privileges removed. A goal is something a child can work towards, if he has self esteem and confidence (as in a reward (goal)), but it becomes a shadow hanging over them if they are constantly afraid of losing something that the like, love, or

may already have earned previously. A child's self esteem and confidence crumble readily, unless the child fights the loss aggressively, resulting in yet another "big scene", and probably time out.

## **6/ Counselling.**

This is undertaken by one or more of several different people. A psychologist, school counsellor, Special Education service workers. It seems based around why children behave in certain non-conformist ways, primarily at schools. In then lost 5 categories, are several such reactions which concern counselling staff. Many people would see the reaction of children to teaching staff in these situations as expectible under the circumstances. Not so the educational system. For instance, a child may like to play alone, and not appreciate the company of others, schools say that the child has a problem and needs counselling, teaching him how to create friendships, and play well with others, the fact is, some children just don't function well around others because that's the way they like it.

Children all have personalities that are very individual, they deserve the right to this, but because certain aspects of their personality don't conform to a specific set of guidelines, the Education system finds it necessary to change it. It is evident that this is the case, due to the fact that children, who are very difficult at school, are not necessarily difficult at home.

Unfortunately, the blame for a personality defect at school is usually placed at the feet of the parent or guardian. These are the days of freedom of expression, and personal identity.

Modern children need to be allowed to express themselves honestly, not be counselled into being someone who is a stranger to them. The modern educational system is based around uniformity and supposedly equal opportunity. You fit in or it tries to make you fit in. You still don't conform so it ejects you as being non conformist and unsound.

Sometimes a child really does need help, but on the other hand, sometimes a pencil is just a pencil.

### **Recommendations for a better system of disturbed child behaviour.**

There are many ways of controlling disturbed behaviour in school children, this type of behaviour is apparently very common Sources having told of from as many as three to six of behaviourally disturbed children in each classroom. In a class average of 30 that would be as much as 20% of all school children; perhaps more, the problem is that schools do not have the finance available to do what it would have for to ease the problem. Teacher aides are difficult to get finance for, except in the most and serious cases which have usually been allowed to go too far using inappropriate methods of child control or punishment. etc. Since these children are in the main not particularly difficult at home, or in their social circle, the problem lies with school operating procedures. One school who has done good work with state children who have failed seriously in the school system is Tamariki School in Christchurch. It operates on the principle of a very flexible educational schedule, and control by self discipline, with enormous emphasis on the rights of others. leads to student number ratings are low, that is it's only luxury. The staff work hard, and have to put up with a lot of disturbances from one child or more, until non violation is achieved. The system does have a few rough edges, but those are the side effects of an on flexible state education system of sincerely independent and stubborn children. they do not try and change the personal of the child, but teach him that learning can be fun, and we don't have the right to take away the rights or enjoyment of others.

Not all of the children those are only some... Their system is vigorous or fun, it can be tiring and requires a genuine love of children & heaps of patience, the biggest obstacle being the disturbed & educationally abused child's hatred of school because of bad previous experiences at school. Ideally the ratio of children to a teacher should be half of what it is at the moment, which is from 15-20 kids per class otherwise a teacher aide is required for classes over 30 pupils, difficult cases only though for the whole school day. The solution to the teaching of these kids is not an easy one, nor is it cheap. It is my opinion that all children play up at school and a lot more often than is noticed by staff. The children, who seem to be the worst behaved, are the children with very high profiles. They are uninhibited and little concerned at things going on around them. The personalities are usually very annoying and seem to do only what they want to do, in their own time. The only difference between these kids and "Normal" ones is that they show their dislike of things in a very outward way. In the past thirteen years or so, I have had considerable experience with kids like these, mostly on the domestic front, but also in the classroom situation. I have found that with these kids, an aggressive approach is absolutely counter-productive; you have one who is seemingly deliberately disturbing the class, it is more satisfactory to warn them once that if they persist in this behaviour, that they will be sent out of the room. If it becomes a constant feature after 2-3 weeks. When the child behaves in a very distracting way he/she should be placed outside of the classroom without warnings, and asked to come back in, when he/she has calm down. This should always be done with absolutely no force, nothing that could be responsible for escalating a largely annoying incident into a full scale fight with the child that will further destabilise him, and further upset the class. Not to mention the

embarrassment from taunting by the other kids. This small act of gentle discipline, couple with the privilege system, that is to find an activity much enjoyed by the student, and use it one a day or week, as an incentive for the child not to "change his personality, so that he fits in with everyone else," but rather to teach him to tolerate his circumstances. The object or activity of privilege will need to be changed reasonably regularly. This should not be seen as a smart alec kid. getting his own way, rather a child whose upbringing may be very liberal at the choice of his parents, where he has learned to make his own decisions, which govern his life; At school, he may be doing things the same way, therefore it is probably better to provide him with a few attractive options, since "in his lifestyle he has his choice. The problem is this, and consider this carefully, the child is reared very liberally at home, there are probably few rules that he has to consider. He may choose his activities (within reason or maybe not) bedtime, meals & curfews. At school, he must abide by certain rules and regulations, everything is done at a certain time, school starts at 9.00 am, and subjects may be taught at a certain time of day with no options to the student. Conversely, the child may have been reared under situation of constant aggression and/or violence, very strict rules and little or no personal choices.

Because most modern children enjoy more freedom for everyday luxuries, this type of child may simply have had enough and see schooling regulation as more of the same. Either way, it seems inevitable that there will be problems at school. Taking these two major types of upbringing into account, the common denominator would appear to be freedom of choice to a certain extent and a serious dissatisfaction with absolute rules and regulations. The problem with providing a freer educational environment is that all educational systems are very structured in their conceptual operation and that if you allow major freedoms to all children, your basic structured standard falls apart probably without exception all schools, would fail to achieve educational goals for most students, if not all. In the USA, many public schools have simply fallen apart because of the inability of their staff, at all levels to control students of both of the above types. Talking to many teachers and general Educational staff, has revealed that there are several "disturbed" children in each class. Some are more disturbed than other kids are seriously disturbed. Some of these kids are recommended, through child psychological services, to treatments in psychological centres (child psychologists), clinics, or health camps.

Most residential treatments used seem to be of a period of 5 weeks or so. During these "treatments", psychological staff have full rein with the child. The general method of treatment is to teach the child, over this extremely short period, to conform to standards expected of him by his parents, and his school, the time out room is used to control his outbursts. This room is secure, that is lockable, bare supposedly to prevent damage or injury, and has a very small unbreakable window for external observation of the child, a child erupting into a fit of temper is manhandled in to this room (sometimes as small as 1m x 2m by one or more staff, kicking and screaming to be released, and is left there to "cool down" and do what he has been told to. This process does nothing to control the child, general behaviour; rather it makes them hate the

people responsible for placing them there in the first place. I know person many children who have been through this treatment at a particular institution in Christchurch who have come out more confused, and less controllable than before. They were admitted, yet it seems common place for schools to continually refer children there. Parents may not be aware of the way in which this treatment is carried out and so agree to send their child there.

Many child psychologists use the star chart method or other such systems in an effort to help parents and/or schools to deal with the child's behaviour. These do work, But for a limited time, maybe two or three weeks, maybe not even that long, maybe not at all. I think, this is because that although the system point incentives, it provides miniscule options, and since the child's behaviour is learned through upbringing, changing it is for the child, like an adult addicted to smoking giving up or rather trying to after may years of smoking. It kicks back in after a short period of time and soon gets people back to its old path. Changing a child behaviour is possible. However, it takes not 5 weeks, not 5 months, but from 1 year upwards, depending on the age of the child, and it must be constant, with boy the parent/s and schools treating the child in exactly the same manner for consistency.

The next thing to consider is the right of the parents to bring up their child in the way they desire, raising an ethical quest. Does the school have the right to interfere in the rearing of a child, because it considers that the parents are not doing the job in an acceptable fashion, which is leading the child to play up at school? When the parent tells the school to "mind" its own business, ethically does it have the right to confer with a welfare agency on the matter of the child's upbringing, or the attitude of the parents who consider that the school have no right to interfere with the home life or rearing of their child. This occurs frequently, sometimes resulting in the removal of the child from its parents care. We have to consider that through its upbringing, if the child is in no moral physical or emotional danger and that he does no fit into the school system. As it is that being the only serious problem, why would and indeed should a school try to change a child to fit its own system when the most obvious outcome will be the child, being fed daily doses of double standards and rebelling at the forcing on it either directly or by manipulation the less desirable one. It is here that we must consider a real alternative, the Middle Standard, affirmative education, built into the main stream of all schools, the child is not the enemy, nor is he deficient, he requires education with options, at almost any age. One such system would be to provide a classroom at each school with a maximum roll of 20 disturbed children. A special teacher, who should be a dominant male (not overbearing or aggressive. should preside over the class. There should be a similar female teacher aide, full time provided for his assistance. The male teacher being important since a large amount of children come from single parent family, predominantly run by the mother, with male relationships on and off. This "Adult male or father figure", would not be changed at all through the year. As a matter of interest, there are approx 120,000 single parent families in New Zealand, that transposes to between 120,000, and 250,000 children from single parent families, around 1/8 of our populations at the time of writing. All normal subjects should be taught, and at 30 min intervals, with the latter part of the day, thou at the end,

being crafts or activities, this would keep the interest flowing in the students. Work sheets tailored to the appropriate level of each child should be provided, and administered in the same period to all of the children.

All children should be persuaded to do their best and to work with others if appropriate. It is important to note that all children learn at rates which may differ enormously. In one class I visited for several weeks. One or two kids worked very well and were always ahead the rest but for one worked at a similar rate which moved along well and average. the other one was extremely slow and required much extra help. I soon discovered that the fast ones grew important. He average ones flowed well, and the very slow one was left way behind. One child in the class was very disturbed, and two or three others were disturbed, at the teacher frequently lost control of them. All the while, the other children waited for the teacher to return her attention, to them. The general out come was that the very disturbed child would be taken to the time out room, which was actually casualty room toilet. The disturbed children were taken outside to classroom and sat on a time out bench", other knocking on the window and peering in. If an alternative education class was provided for those children long term, their needs would have been better met, and the average kids could work undisturbed This is not giving in to smart Alec kids, rather providing them an alternative to a school system that they do not find easy to conform to. If there are indeed as many difficult kids in each school as we now believe, an alternative system is vital. Whatever the kids' problems, at home, they should be shown that school is a good place for them to be. All of this should be accomplished with as little counselling by any agency, as possible.

A general consensus of children's opinion in the 8 - 15 year age bracket is the counselling further aggravates them, often due to the personal nature of questions asked by the counsellor. They would rather be "left alone," and generally consider that they have not got a problem. It would be nice to think that a difficult child would be glad to unload his problems instead of considering it as interference, but this seems not to be the case.

Getting back to the classroom for a while now, because this is where a large part of the problem develops. From what I have seen myself, the child's behaviour which is responsible for the aggressive reaction of a teacher, seems to be natural in the child, and not deliberate in some cases. In other cases, it is most deliberate defiance. In either of these cases, it is most likely that a violent incident will ensue. Here is an example. Teacher to child not sitting on mat as requested

Teacher: "David, please sit on the mat with the other children"

The child looks blankly around the room and the teacher repeats

Teacher: "David, I asked you to sit on the mat"

The child sits on a desk with a frown on his face. The other children are now looking at him one pats the floor beside him in a beckoning gesture.

Teacher: "You have one more chance"

Holds up an orange warning card.

David runs to the other end of the room, the teacher pursues him, and upon catching him leads David to the "time" on bench outside the classroom. David decides to go off and play on the equipment in the playground, but this is bought to a halt by a teacher who goes out of the class room to catch him again. But David runs into a concrete tunnel in the playground and will not come out. Two senior pupils are then sent from a classroom to catch David, and he is dragged across the play ground, through the mud, into the time but room kicking and screaming. This is one of several incidents involving this child that actually occurred. If you look at this incident, you may find that it is of a relatively common type. When loaded the way that if it was, it is obviously going to end up in the use of force (violence). On that child A suggested alternative to the handling of this incident would be as follows.

Teacher: "David, please sit on the mat"

David ignores the teacher. The teacher then claps her hands together to assure the attention of David as she/he repeats the request, then David has heard the request, is certain that it is directed at him as the teach resumes teaching. The teacher then allows a reaction period of 5-10 minutes, looking at David in a normal manner as with the other children, all the while. He may comply in his own time, or he may not. The chances are that if he does not feel intimidated he will not act out. He also may not sit on the mat as requested yet, but at least he will no have been upset and will still be in the control area of the classroom, and a violent scene will have been avoided. After the 5-10 min period, a comment such as- "Could you sit down now please, you are a good boy aren't you", say it with a smile. The child will feel secure, he may even smile, but even if he doesn't sit on the mat, it should not feel to the teacher as if he/she has lost power to a 'mere' child. Children must be convinced that it will make them feel better about themselves if they do not fight back. Naturally though, it could appear to others that this child is getting away with murder, but the pressure goes on the child bit by bit over many months, until the level of habitual compliance has increased, largely three to six months worth. this is because after being in the same situation for a long length of time, and being bound by, or at least growing accustomed to a certain level of taught not enforced behaviour, it seems natural to the child to behave in a certain way since he has lived that way, with those rules for all of his life to this point; almost a habit. This is because Kindness works well on children aggression works well on dogs and other animals, not kids. This is not a super soft goody goody approach simply a slow but effective method of behaviour modification within ethical limits. After six months or so, Authority could be administered successfully, since resistance would be low.

## **Testimony from and about kids in the 1980s**

### **WARD 24 TESTIMONY – 9 Year Old Boy**

W24 at first day. Wouldn't go into Hospital gates Two orderlies and step father dragged him in to W24, arms held over shoulders by the two orderlies. Right in front of upset public members and hospital staff in Christchurch Hospital the boy falls. His step father held him by his feet as he was dragged kicking and screaming in terror into this shameful abusive place by the two orderlies and thrown immediately into tiny "time out" room, the size of an old outside toilet, for struggling and being abusive as he was himself being abused and struggling in defence. Shameful!

Over five weeks says was in time out, never voluntarily, always by force, and any way that they found necessary.

Subject eight-nine years old at time when force used. A "time out", made you feel angrier than you were and made you more violent than you were, the 6 years is still very angry to think about it many years on as he sits in his prison cell.

"Felt powerless", "Was called names." A wee time out room was in there with a psychologist. There others were on the other side of a two way mirror. Psychologist said "I'm going to abuse you verbally, you're going to try or see how long you can go without losing your temper." When he lost his temper, he was thrown in time out to cool off, "I was set up", this occurred six or seven times. Was sworn at, called little cunt, happened sometimes, by orderlies, some swore some didn't. "I tried to have one up on an assault charge", Instead of just dragging him in an orderly, got him to door of time out room and the boy punched at the orderly. This is child abuse. The orderly punched this eight-nine year old boy him in the head. Police would not act. When the boy didn't do schoolwork, was placed in time out, sometimes went voluntarily, most by force. During his stay was visited by mother, uncle and nana, each day. Was allowed to phone them. When they left, felt hurt sad, angry, alone and vulnerable. The boy ran away many times, went to town, visit uncle, sometimes went back on own,

### **11 Year Old Boy – School trouble**

Got picked on by teachers and pupils alike, very often, nearly every day because he smashed things, windows, clans, blackboards and broke peoples property bikes etc to make them fall off; stole lunch because bad horrible lunches, or no lunch, stole food from shops. Picked on because was in DSW care, except in std 4, Miss Fastin's class. She stood up for him, told his parents to provide lunch, spoke to the principal about his accusations that subject had done things that he had not. Child thought about his situation at home, while at school, It made him feel angry, made him smash things, Teachers didn't seem to care, just thought he was bad. At intermediate school he tried to hit teacher with a cricket bat because teacher said he could run faster than he was and so was not conforming.

As the teacher sent him to the office the boy picked up a cricket bat and tried to hit him with it. Suspension followed Went back for two or three days, then bunked (absented). He was taken out of class by his teacher who held him tightly by the neck and squeezed, causing pain and leaving bruising.

### **Nine year old boy**

Another 9 year old boy at a local primary school, in the same area of town had been picked up by the shoulder by a teacher and taken to office, and dropped on floor in corridor while struggling. He was injured. The boy had supposedly been carrying a knife and a history of threatening with a knife. (was using scissors and the knife to cut paper out). High school onwards was non attendance.

## Report: Punishment and Control in Schools

### Overview

The document raises concerns about disciplinary methods used in schools, particularly public/state schools, highlighting how certain practices can negatively impact children's well-being, self-esteem, and attitudes toward education. It argues that current approaches often rely on force or humiliation, leading to distrust, aggression, and long-term harm rather than constructive behavior change.

### Key Issues Identified

1. **Time-out rooms** – Often bare or inappropriate spaces (e.g., toilets) used for isolating children. Seen as frightening, punitive, and linked to trauma and behavioural issues.
2. **Embarrassment** – Teachers sometimes shame slower learners, which damages self-esteem and may escalate into further misbehaviour.
3. **Psychological force** – Shouting, intimidation, or browbeating tends to provoke resistance rather than compliance.
4. **Physical force** – Restraint or physical punishment can leave children with injuries, reinforce violent patterns, and worsen behaviour.
5. **Removal of privileges** – Though common, this can heighten fear and defiance; rewards and positive reinforcement are suggested as better alternatives.
6. **Counselling** – While useful in some cases, children often see it as intrusive or unnecessary, especially when it attempts to change their personalities rather than support them.

### Problems with Current System

- Schools often lack funding for teacher aides, leaving staff to rely on coercive discipline.
- Many “disturbed” children behave differently at home, suggesting issues stem from school practices.
- Standardized education forces conformity, leaving little room for individual differences in learning pace, personality, or upbringing.
- Harsh control methods reinforce negative cycles rather than resolve underlying issues.

### Alternative Approaches Suggested

- **Flexible education models** like Tamariki School (Christchurch), which emphasize self-discipline, respect for others, and learning as enjoyable.
- **Gentle discipline** – Avoiding physical confrontation, instead using patience, delayed compliance strategies, and positive reinforcement.
- **Special classrooms** – Small groups (max 20 students) with dedicated staff, including consistent male role models, to support children with higher needs.

- **Consistency across home and school** – Behaviour modification requires long-term, cooperative approaches, not short-term interventions.
- **Freedom of choice within structure** – Allowing children some autonomy while maintaining core educational goals can reduce conflict.

### Recommendations

- Reduce class sizes or provide full-time aides to support teachers.
- Replace punitive control with positive reinforcement and habit-building approaches.
- Establish alternative education pathways for children struggling in mainstream systems.
- Limit the use of forced isolation and physical intervention to prevent trauma.
- Respect individuality and encourage gradual compliance through trust and kindness.

### Conclusion

The report emphasizes that aggression and force in schools are counterproductive. Sustainable behaviour management requires patience, flexibility, consistent support, and a system that respects children's individuality while guiding them toward constructive participation in education.

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**Short answer: that can be abuse — and it's unsafe.**

**Here's why and what to do about it.**

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### **Why this is risky / likely abuse**

- Physically forcing a child (pulling hard on an arm until they fall, grabbing feet/arms, dragging) uses physical force and can cause injury (bruises, sprains, dislocations, head/neck injuries).
- Whether something is legally labeled "abuse" varies by jurisdiction, but most laws and child-protection standards treat **intentionally using physical force that causes pain, injury, or fear** as abusive or assaultive. Even if the intent was "control" or "punishment," the physical nature of what you describe meets many definitions of physical abuse.
- Beyond legal labels: it's harmful to the child's physical safety and emotional trust, regardless of whether someone meant to "discipline."

### **Immediate steps (if this just happened)**

1. **Check the child for injury** — pain, swelling, bruises, cuts, trouble moving, or vomiting. If any of those exist, get medical help right away (urgent care or ER).
2. **If the child is in immediate danger** or the behavior is ongoing: contact local emergency services or child protection authorities now.
3. **If you're worried about potential abuse but there's no immediate injury**, document what happened (who, when, what), keep any photos of injuries, and consider contacting local child protective services or a trusted medical professional for advice.

## **If you're the caregiver who did this**

- Stop using physical force. That method teaches fear, not learning, and risks serious harm.
- Seek help immediately: parenting support, anger-management counseling, or crisis services. Ask a trusted friend/family member to supervise if you feel you might lose control.
- Consider professional help (family therapist, parenting classes) to learn safe, effective discipline and de-escalation techniques.

## **If you're worried about a child you saw or suspect is being treated this way**

- Report it to your local child protective services, police, or a child-abuse hotline. Reporting protects the child and starts an investigation; authorities can also point you to resources. If you're in the U.S., the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-422-4453 (or text START to 88788). If you're elsewhere, contact local emergency services or your country's child-protection agency.

## **Safer alternatives to physical control**

- Remove the child from immediate triggers calmly (offer a "calm-down spot" rather than dragging).
  - Use brief, neutral consequences (loss of privilege, short supervised timeout where the child can sit quietly).
  - Clear limits and routines, positive reinforcement, short warnings ("one more time") and natural consequences.
  - Teach and model emotional regulation (deep breaths, countdowns). A therapist or parenting program can show effective, non-physical strategies.
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## Getting back control of Difficult kids at home

### NOTES!

Here are some things to think about if you want a quick scan of issues and ideas before reading on. These ideas are all from practise by those in the day to day care of kids – well behaved and not so well behaved!

- 1/ Behaviour management. Time factor to results, learned behaviour
- 2/ Respect / love. Getting respect, listening to the child, trusting loving, earning your child's respect, threats not going back on punishment word/punish/threat. good or bad threats.
- 3/ Parental assertion. Where of when shows how much, difference between assertion aggression, in intimidation fear of being sent away.
- 4/ Making Sense, Why things are done in a certain way, why kids should comply, why it's in their best interests to comply, Love in a way to be understood by the child at its level of understanding.
- 5/ The confrontation factor. Importance of avoiding confrontation all together without giving in. Effects of confrontation (long term) (situations), reaction of child to confrontation.
- 6/ Self Esteem, child and parents. Importance of confidence for control, effects of lack of both on child/Parent effects of punishments and parents behaviour upon Self Esteem and Confidence of child.
- 7/ Depression to children. Effects on behaviour, in situations and society
- 8/ Parental Behaviour. role models, fighting, alcohol (drugs), social behaviour, morals.
- 9/ Consequences/punishment. types of punishment, time out, restraining, deprivation of toys, privileges etc, as kids not adults. Right and wrong punishments. aggressive punishments,
- 10/ Affection showing love, caring, hugs, connected with punishment. sharing with other kids in family (TLC), togetherness, step children
- 11/ Protection where and when listening to all sides, how much, from what and/or who handling complaints.
- 12/ Options. Outside help, friends, family, child care. some deterrent standards, time out from each other, long term separations, long term stress, residential care/school, etc. on child's behaviour/self esteem, breaking relationships, feelings of worthlessness when placed in care and aggression and confrontation used on child, helplessness.
- 13/ Outside influences. Friends of child peers, alcohol/drugs, running away, tying, stealing.
- 14/ Behavioural problems. lying, stealing, low self esteem, fear, self protection reasons, violence factor, fear of punishment, stealing, peer pressure, have nothing, thrills, self esteem. running away some as below. defiance outside influences, violence at home, self esteem, feeling of not belonging, excessive punishment, severe punishment, time out in room, lack of freedom back of love, lack of confidence of parent.
- 15/ Getting control, learned behaviour, takes a long time, parents causing it, not retrenching tough love, asserting yourself. essential courage, meaning what you say, without intimidation with intimidation to say, not to say, confrontation, loyalty to your child, not the child's fault, bad kids made not born, being punished for others, bad handling.



## **Summary — *Getting Back Control of Difficult Kids at Home***

This document outlines key issues and strategies for managing difficult behaviour in children, based on real-life caregiving experience.

### Main Themes

#### **1. Behaviour management**

- Behaviour is learned and takes time to change.

#### **2. Respect and love**

- Parents must earn respect by listening, showing love, and being consistent with rules and consequences.

#### **3. Parental assertion**

- Assertiveness is healthy; aggression or intimidation creates fear and insecurity.

#### **4. Making sense**

- Children need clear explanations at their level about why rules exist and why compliance is in their best interest.

#### **5. Avoiding confrontation**

- Handle conflict calmly without “giving in.” Confrontation often has long-term negative effects.

#### **6. Self-esteem**

- Both child and parent confidence matter. Poor handling and harsh punishment damage self-esteem.

#### **7. Depression in children**

- Low mood strongly influences behaviour and relationships.

#### **8. Parental behaviour**

- Parents act as role models. Fighting, substance abuse, or poor morals negatively shape children.

#### **9. Consequences and punishment**

- Use age-appropriate, non-aggressive discipline (time-out, loss of privileges). Avoid harsh, violent punishments.

#### **10. Affection**

- Show love and care consistently, even alongside discipline. Hugs, attention, and fairness build trust.

#### **11. Protection**

- Parents must listen to all sides, safeguard children, and handle complaints fairly.

#### **12. Options and outside help**

- Support from family, friends, or professionals can ease long-term stress. Over-reliance on institutional care can harm a child's self-worth.

#### **13. Outside influences**

- Peers, alcohol, drugs, and crime can impact behaviour; children may run away or steal.

#### **14. Behavioural problems**

- Issues like lying, violence, fear, and low self-esteem often stem from punishment, neglect, peer pressure, or lack of belonging.

#### **15. Regaining control**

- Changing behaviour takes courage, consistency, and patience.
- Parents must accept their role, avoid intimidation, show loyalty to their child, and remember: *bad kids are made, not born.*

## **Badly Behaved Kids Are Not Born – They are Made**

(The old nature vs. nurture argument)

### **Star Charts:**

- Break something while in bad mood after confrontation
- Stealing while in bad mood after confrontation
- Running away while in bad mood after confrontation
- Defiance while in bad mood after confrontation
- Going ape shit while in bad mood after confrontation
- Refusing chores as asked while in bad mood after confrontation  
(reasonable amount not excessive)

Set up pocket money based on jobs to i.e. 20¢/Job twice a day. Each missed job - 20¢. on his pay day, give him all his money, then have him pay you the total for his missed jobs, since you did them, he will know he has to pay you for what he doesn't do. He will know to do the work if he wants all the money from it for what he can get out of it, than simply to help you - although he may do that on the odd occasion. Don't give him all the money- just to keep him quiet, and don't give him any other money (except as reward) or he will know he doesn't have to con or to get it. Be firm. He may scream & shout, but don't give in. Just to be forewarned, Star charts and the like, primarily to encourage the child to work towards a goal of good behaviour, seldom work!

### **Instructions for star chart**

**O** for poor

☆ **1 for Satisfactory**

☆☆ **2 for Excellent**

**Total of 21 stars minimum for reward – no exceptions – this is fair.**

Basically, each day satisfactory as minimum. If some are poor, still give the reward when minimum 21 stars reached. Start new chart at this point in a row, then another etc stars the child has earned as a consequence.

He should learn that poor behaviour **GETS YOU NOWHERE** satisfactory and excellent behaviour Gets You **PROGRESS AND GOOD THINGS**.

Taking away stars will make him lose interest in earning them, since if he has a small outburst etc he will have something taken away.

Accentuate the Positive, Eliminate the Negative. There must be nothing in between.

Let child attach the stars they earn themselves and congratulate them every time, according him praise for satisfactory or excellent behaviour. If poor behaviour, encourage him to have a better day tomorrow and thank him for trying.

Don't make him feel bad by telling him how bad he has been or criticising him for it. *Not getting his stars will be punishment enough.*

\*Remember what I said earlier – Star charts seldom work for long if at all!

## **Summary — *Badly Behaved Kids Are Not Born – They Are Made***

### Key Points

#### **1. Behaviour arises from experiences, not innate “badness”**

- Children often act out (breaking things, stealing, defiance, running away, refusing chores) when upset after confrontations.
- Negative behaviour is usually a reaction to environment, discipline, or lack of guidance.

#### **2. Incentives and accountability**

- Use a **pocket money system tied to tasks**:
  - Example: 20¢ per job, twice a day.
  - Missed jobs = deduction, reinforcing responsibility.
  - Pay the child in full, then have them “repay” for missed work to teach consequences.
- Be firm: do not give in to shouting, tantrums, or demands.

#### **3. Star charts for behaviour**

- Use to **reward progress**, not punish mistakes.
- Ratings:
  - O = Poor
  - ☆ = Satisfactory
  - ☆☆ = Excellent
- Minimum target (e.g., 21 stars) earns a reward; reset chart after reaching goal.
- Encourage positive behaviour consistently; do **not remove stars** for minor outbursts.

#### **4. Key principles**

- Focus on **positive reinforcement**: praise satisfactory and excellent behaviour.
- Poor behaviour is its own consequence; avoid criticism or making the child feel “bad.”
- Avoid over-reliance on charts: they rarely work long-term if used improperly.

## □ Handling Difficult Behaviour — Practical Guide for Parents

### 1. Understand Behaviour

- Children are not born “bad”; misbehaviour is usually **learned or reactive**.
  - Common behaviours after frustration or confrontation: breaking things, stealing, defiance, running away, refusing chores, or outbursts.
- 

### 2. Use Incentives & Accountability

- **Pocket Money System:**
    - Assign a small payment per task/job (e.g., 20¢ per job, twice daily).
    - Deduct payment for missed tasks.
    - At payday, give total earned, then have child “repay” for missed tasks to reinforce responsibility.
    - Be **firm**; don’t give in to screaming or tantrums.
- 

### 3. Star Charts for Positive Reinforcement

- Track behaviour:
    - ○ = Poor
    - ☆ = Satisfactory
    - ☆☆ = Excellent
  - Minimum stars (e.g., 21) = reward. Reset chart after goal achieved.
  - Child attaches stars themselves; praise each satisfactory or excellent day.
  - Poor behaviour is its own natural consequence; **do not remove stars** for minor outbursts.
- 

### 4. Principles to Follow

- **Accentuate the Positive, Eliminate the Negative**
  - Focus on praise and progress, not criticism.
- Avoid over-reliance on charts; they work best when combined with consistent guidance.
- Teach **consequences and responsibility**, not fear.
- Reinforce that **good behaviour leads to progress and rewards**, poor behaviour achieves little.

## Handling Difficult Behaviour — Parent Cheat Sheet

### 1. Understand Behaviour

**Key Idea:** Kids are not born “bad” — behaviour is learned or reactive.

⚡ **Common reactions after confrontation:**

- Breaking things
  - Stealing
  - Defiance / refusing chores
  - Running away / tantrums
- 

### 2. Incentives & Accountability

**Pocket Money System:**

- Assign payment per task (e.g., 20¢ per job).
  - Deduct for missed tasks.
  - Give total, then have child repay for missed work — teaches responsibility.  
 **Tip:** Be firm. Don't give in to shouting or tantrums.
- 

### 3. Star Chart Rewards

★ **Rating:**

- O = Poor
- ☆ = Satisfactory
- ☆☆ = Excellent

**Goal:** Minimum stars (e.g., 21) → reward

- Child attaches stars themselves
  - Praise every satisfactory or excellent behaviour
  - Don't remove stars for minor outbursts
- 

### 4. Key Principles

Focus on **positive reinforcement** — praise progress, not criticism.

Poor behaviour = its own natural consequence

Good behaviour → progress & rewards

Avoid over-reliance on charts — consistency and guidance matter

Teach **responsibility and accountability**, not fear



**STAR CHART TO PRINT OFF**

	<b>POOR</b>	<b>SATISFACTORY</b>	<b>EXCELLENT</b>	<b>Total So Far</b>
<b>Mon</b>				
<b>Tue</b>				
<b>Wed</b>				
<b>Thu</b>				
<b>Fri</b>				
<b>Sat</b>				
<b>Sun</b>				
<b>Mon</b>				
<b>Tue</b>				
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<b>Sun</b>				
<b>Mon</b>				
<b>Tue</b>				
<b>Wed</b>				
<b>Thu</b>				
<b>Fri</b>				
<b>Sat</b>				
<b>Sun</b>				
<b>TOTAL &gt;&gt;</b>				

## **The Only Child**

Another important factor in the lack of social development is the only child. They tend to either have too much discipline, or too little. Often not just the right amount since the parent has no other children to balance discipline. The child is often lonely, since there are no peers at home for him to play with. Having other children at home is the necessary item which begins appropriate social interaction. Being without is more likely to make the child pick up the habits and social behaviour of his parents, since they are the only social input that child receives in his early life. If the parent does not back down, neither will the child if the parent is aggressive or violent, that will also be a hallmark of his behaviour. The older that child gets the harder it is to break down antisocial or inappropriate behaviour. In the early years, pre-school is very important. With all of the other kids about, and often too, it will help the child to grow around other kids and interact in a satisfactory way. Some kids it will not help, but easily the majority will benefit especially the only child. Getting back to the child at home, and behaviour involving paren.

Often, by the time a child reaches school age, (only child) he has been exposed to this constant flow of often inappropriate behaviour from his parents. Given that he has learnt it for five years, changing it at school will be very difficult, if not impossible.

If the parent has a bad attitude to the school attended by their child their child will probably have the same attitude and no matter what professionals do to alter it, the child will often "dig in".

## **Summary — *The Only Child***

### Key Points

#### **1. Social development challenges**

- Only children often lack peer interaction at home, which can limit early social skills.
- Social behaviour is heavily influenced by parents, since they are the child's primary role models.

#### **2. Discipline issues**

- Only children may experience either too much or too little discipline, as parents have no siblings to balance expectations.
- Aggressive or rigid parental behaviour is often mirrored by the child.

#### **3. Importance of early social exposure**

- Pre-school or group activities are crucial for developing social skills in only children.

- Interaction with other children helps counteract overly parent-influenced behaviour.

#### 4. Long-term effects

- By school age, inappropriate behaviours learned at home can be deeply ingrained.
- A negative parental attitude toward the child's school can reinforce the child's resistance, making behavioural change difficult.

## Supporting the Social Development of an Only Child

### 1. Understand the Challenge

- Only children often lack **peer interaction at home**, so early social skills may be limited.
  - Behaviour and attitudes are heavily influenced by **parents as primary role models**.
  - Aggressive or rigid parental behaviour may be mirrored by the child.
- 

### 2. Discipline Balance

- Avoid **too much or too little discipline** — both extremes can create social or behavioural issues.
  - Consistent, fair, and age-appropriate discipline encourages positive behaviour.
- 

### 3. Encourage Social Interaction

- **Pre-school, daycare, or playgroups** help only children learn cooperation, sharing, and conflict resolution.
  - Organize **playdates or group activities** to give opportunities for social learning.
- 

### 4. Early Intervention

- Behaviour learned in the first five years is **difficult to change later**.
  - Positive modelling and consistent guidance during early years are crucial.
- 

### 5. Parent-School Collaboration

- Maintain a **positive attitude toward school** — children often adopt their parents' perceptions.
  - Support teachers and professionals; avoid projecting frustration onto the child.
  - Encourage open communication and cooperation to reinforce good behaviour and attitudes.
- 

### ☑ Key Takeaways

- Only children benefit from **social exposure beyond the family**.
- Positive parental behaviour, balanced discipline, and early social opportunities reduce long-term behavioural challenges.
- Collaboration with schools and peers helps the child develop confidence, empathy, and healthy social skills.

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# Aggression is the tool of the man with no skills.

## **Title for Lobbyist group**

*Disciplinary & Child/Parents educational*

**Disciplinary, child and Parents Educational  
Rights Lobby.**

**DCPERL,**

## **Short form.**

*Child Educational Rights Lobby.*

CERL

## **Theory & Aim**

1. Stop aggressive handling of children in school.
2. Make school boards accountable for the use of aggression.
3. Stop the use of senior students to manhandle other students.
4. Stop interference in home life by schools.
5. Give parents the last say in any discipline of their children.
6. Give parents the right to cancel a psychologist or agency at school, with their child being expelled from school.
7. Stop the use of time out rooms.
8. Shutting children in an empty or unoccupied room.
9. that schools adopt more liberal & fulfilling methods of teaching.

## **Proposal**

An organisation for prevention of professional  
aggression to children

**OPPAC**

## **Method.**

1. Parents/interested parties
2. Funding
3. Advertising
4. New members.