



FROM YOUR CFS **Wellness Specialist**



Disciplining in a Way That Fosters Connection

Imagine your child acts out—maybe yells, breaks something, or hurts a sibling. You get angry, raise your voice, and send them to their room. They storm off, and you're left feeling frustrated and regretful.

Sound familiar? Many parents wonder if their discipline is hurting their relationship with their child. The good news: it doesn't have to. Discipline can actually strengthen your connection when it's done with love and calm intention.

1. Remember the purpose of discipline is to teach. The word discipline comes from a Latin word meaning "pupil." It's not about punishment. It's about correction that helps your child learn. Use only the amount of discipline needed to help your child get back on track. For example, a simple reminder or gentle prompt may be all it takes to redirect behavior. Overreacting can make things worse and harm your connection. Often, "less is more."

2. Discipline calmly and confidently. You don't need to yell to be effective. Harsh words can damage trust and make children fearful. God calls us to be gentle and not exasperate our children (Proverbs 15:1; Ephesians 6:4). When you respond calmly and consistently, your children learn that you mean what you say, and they feel safer and more secure. Confidence and self-control on your part help your child regulate their own emotions.

3. Encourage your child to use their words, respectfully. Even when correcting behavior, you can teach your child to express themselves kindly. One way to do this is by offering choices even when your child is misbehaving. For example, if you tell your child it's time to take a bath, and they angrily refuse, you can offer a simple choice like "Would you like a bath or a shower?" If they ask respectfully for another option, consider it. But if they shout or demand, calmly remind them to use kind words. This teaches them that respectful communication strengthens relationships and that you are a safe, listening parent who values their voice.

4. Always reconnect with your child after a behavioral incident. Each discipline moment can either weaken or strengthen your bond. After the correction, offer forgiveness and reassurance. Remind your child that Jesus forgives their sin, and so do you. Tell them they are still loved and precious to you, just as God's love for us never wavers (Jeremiah 31:3).

When discipline is rooted in calm consistency and God's grace, it becomes more than correction. It becomes connection.
