Here are 10 common and easily avoided mistakes parents make when disciplining their children.

Replace these mistakes with better techniques and you’ll be on your way to parenting easy street.

**Ten common discipline mistakes**

1. **Repeating yourself**
   - If you do this, you are training your kids to become ‘parent deaf’.
   - Kids learn more from respectful actions than your repeated words, so speak once – twice at most – then DO something.

2. **Shouting to be heard**
   - You will get better results by going below the noise baseline to get their attention rather than raising your voice.

3. **Setting limits too late**
   - If you set a limit a few weeks after a new object or situation is introduced (e.g. a kid gets a new mobile phone, a teen starts going out at night),
   - you will be seen to be taking away a freedom.
   - It’s better to set limits first then loosen them up later.

4. **Setting no limits**
   - Boundaries, rules, expectations and standards teach kids what’s expected.
   - They also like to push against them, so you need a firm backbone.

5. **Failing to follow through**
   - Talk! Threaten! Nag! No way! See No. 1 above.

6. **Making consequences too harsh**
   - “You’re grounded for a month, Mr 6-year-old” is a tad harsh and will usually bring resentment, not to mention confusion.
   - Stick to the 3 Rs – respectful, reasonable and related to the behaviour – when setting consequences and you can’t go too far wrong.

7. **Applying consequences when you, or they, are angry**
   - When anger is in the air kids will become mad at you ... if they listen at all.
   - Calmness makes a huge difference to effectiveness at the point of discipline.

8. **Mixing discipline with counselling**
   - Never mix the two as it sends mixed messages.
   - If a child misbehaves manage that situation. If you suspect something negative is going on in their life, then deal with that at a separate time.

9. **Deferring discipline**
   - Deferring discipline to a child care centre, preschool or school.
   - This is taking the easy way out and teaches kids that you don’t have real authority.
   - Have the confidence to be the authority and take a lead.

10. **One parent is always the bad guy**
    - This gets wearing.
    - Also it’s hard to have fun when you are the tough cop all the time.
    - If you are in a two-parent situation take discipline in turns.

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**Discipline is easy when children are easy. It can be downright tricky when children are difficult, have interesting personalities or are at one of the challenging developmental stages.**

It’s with kids in these difficult categories that we need to get our discipline techniques right.

Here are 10 common mistakes I see many parents make when trying to get cooperation from their children, keep them safe or teach them to behave well.

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**Do any of these bloopers ring a bell?**

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