

Disciplining
the
Adult
with PWS

DISCIPLINE

Why Can't I Discipline My Resident with PWS Like I Discipline Other Adults with Developmental Disability?

- ✓ Because your other residents don't have PWS
- ✓ Because your resident with PWS is impacted in ways that your other residents are not and never will be

Your resident with PWS *needs* you to interact in ways that incorporate *PWS-specific supports and interventions* for their sake and for the sake of your entire household

Reasons People Rationalize Using Punishment and Negative Consequences

- “There must be some consequence for her actions or she’ll just think she can do it again.”
- “What will the others think if he gets away with that?”
- “He will never learn what is right or wrong without being held accountable.”
- “How will she ever learn to live independently if she can’t behave on her own?”

Slides 2, 5, 8, 9 are excerpted from the webinar ***The Truth About Consequences*** written by Mary K. Ziccardi and Evan Farrar for PWSA | USA

Punishment

Punishment is any behavior that inflicts emotional or physical pain on another as a means to get the individual to behave well or to do what you want.

- Coercion (threats of losing a privilege)
- Taking something away (short or long term)
- Delay of privilege (individual has to wait to get something they want)
- Loss of a privilege
- Time-out
- Restraint
- Admonition, verbal reprimand, yelling at
- Hitting, slapping, spanking

Consequences

Consequences are a result of a behavior, whether positive or negative.

- If your resident refuses to put on a coat, he'll feel cold.
- If your resident doesn't get dressed on time, she'll miss her ride.
- If your resident doesn't complete her homework, she'll fail the assignment.
- If your resident doesn't focus on his work assignment, he'll get fired.

Why Punishment Is Not Effective With Persons With PWS

- To learn from punishment or consequences a person needs skills that are compromised or impaired because of PWS:
 - Insight and ability to problem solve.
 - Memory, logic and ability to learn.
 - Ability to compare and discriminate information.
 - Ability to know the value of an experience and learn from it.
 - The ability to think sequentially (e.g., if this, then that)
- Most persons with PWS lack impulse control.
- The perseverative and/or oppositional nature of people with PWS predisposes them to react stubbornly or shut down completely to a negative consequence.
- Punishment does not teach a new skill or change future behavior. It *escalates* unwanted behaviors and creates potential for a *greater* behavior problem.

Why Punishment Is Not Effective With Persons With PWS con't

- Some people with PWS will want to make you apply a negative consequence to see what happens – drama.
- A person with PWS often has the ability to adjust to the most unpleasant situations. Some caregivers perceive this as an opportunity to apply *more* and punishment.
- Negative attention is often better – more reinforcing – than no attention.
- Higher pain tolerance can interfere with the experience of discomfort.
- Irregular temperature regulation can make the use of some natural consequences physically dangerous.

NEVER use corporal punishment. It is *critical* to teach the adult with PWS it is *never* ok to hit.

NEVER withhold food as punishment. Food must be as reliable as oxygen.

**IF PUNISHMENT DOESN'T WORK,
WHAT DOES?**

PWS Specialists Agree...

“The most efficient form of consequence management is one in which the desired behavior must be earned rather than undesired behaviors punished. For example, four hours without a tantrum may earn 25 points and 100 points are necessary for a phone call.”

~Barbara Whitman, PhD, *Understanding and Managing the Behavioral and Psychological Components of Prader-Willi Syndrome*



“Learning in PWS is best accomplished through positive reinforcement. This means catching your child doing something *good* in a given situation and telling them that they have done a good job. This is much more effective than punishing them for a *bad* behavior. It also means that the next time they are in that situation they are far more likely to do the behavior that received the praise. That’s using the wiring in the PWS brain to our best advantage!”

~Janice Forster, M.D., *Never Spank the Child with PWS*

What Works Is...

- ✓ *Implementing positive reinforcement*
- ✓ *Implementing Food Security*
- ✓ *Implementing PWS Environmental Basics*
- ✓ *Implementing strategies that avoid disappointment*
- ✓ *Implementing all of the Behavior Management Strategies you've already learned and will continue to learn in this series!*