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Reflective Prompt Assignment Student Learning Objective 1 – Foundations of Child Development

You are teaching a parenting class next year as part of your new job. The topic for today’s class with the parents who have been court-ordered to attend your class is discipline.

The topic of “spanking” is raised. One parent says in a loud voice for everyone to hear, “I was spanked as a child and I turned out just fine. What’s wrong with spanking?”

When teaching a parenting class on discipline, I would explain that I do believe parents have the right to discipline their children. However, parents should discipline in a positive way and not use physical force. Children have the tendency to model behavior; so when parents spank their children, children will most likely model the hitting behavior. Also, when parents use physical forms of discipline such as spanking it increases the chances of children acting out in disruptive behavior again. Spanking does not improve behavior because children who are spanked can possibly feel bad about themselves; children show this within their behavior. For an example, they may show it by acting out. Children can then begin a cycle of misbehavior for the children and parents.

Young children are naturally curious so I would suggest parents not think a child exploring their environment is bad behavior worth discipline. Young children are going to be naturally drawn to things such as cabinets, electronics and basically anything within reaching distance. In order to stop an accident from potentially happening, parents should keep only children safe materials in range of the children. This may stop a lot of stress and potentially “bad” behavior of children. Parents will not be continually saying “no” or “don’t touch” if the materials are not in their reach.

An easy way for parents to have their children behave the way they want them to behave is to model the positive behavior in front of their children. There are positive ways that a child can be disciplined such as distinguishing discipline from punishment. They are two different things but children may feel they are the same. Parents should explain to their children the reason for the discipline; however, some children may be too young to understand. It is always good to explain your reasoning. Parents need to be consistent when disciplining their children, if parents do not follow with consequences or rewards, their children will try to walk all over the parents. Parents can also give children the choice to set their own rules once they get older. Also, it is important for parents to reward good behavior of children. Many parents and children think of discipline as a bad thing, however; discipline can be a positive subject if the parents make it a good meaningful experience for their children.