

Below are four steps we recommend to effectively apply consequences. Remember to wait for a good time to apply consequences. Consistent with the C-A-L-M guidelines, parents should not apply consequences if they are too angry or upset.

In a calm but firm tone of voice . . .

1. Label the problem behavior in terms of the rule. For example, “The rule is no video games after school until you finish your homework.”
2. State the consequence clearly. For example, “The consequence for breaking the rule is no video games tomorrow. You broke the rule, so no video games tomorrow.”
3. Avoid arguing. If the child argues with the parent, they can repeat the rule and the consequence for breaking the rule in a calm, firm, and neutral voice but should refrain from arguing with their child, justifying the consequence, or negotiating an alternative.
4. Ignore whining or negative emotional responses. For example, the child might walk away and say “That rule sucks.” The best response is for the parent to practice mindful ignoring in this situation.

C-A-L-M Guidelines

- Consider your feelings and thoughts (are you tense, angry, afraid?)
- Assess whether you are feeling too upset to give a consequence at this time
- Leave if you’re feeling uncontrollably angry or upset
- Make a plan to deal with this situation and follow through with giving the consequence in the next 24 hours