

There is good news for parents who are in two minds about the merits of using time-outs as a form of punishment. Research from the University of Michigan in the USA says there is evidence to show time-outs can be an effective discipline strategy for children aged between two and eight years. Researchers say parents do not need to fret about their parenting skills if they give time-outs to misbehaving children as they do not harm children's mental wellbeing or their relationship with their parents. In an eight-year study, researchers compared the emotional health and behavior in children whose parents used time-outs with those who didn't. They found there was no difference in the children.

Time-outs are a form of discipline used by parents to modify their children's behavior. It usually involves sending children to a quiet space or quiet corner. The aim is for children to reflect on their behavior. Scientists have disagreed about the effectiveness of this strategy. Dr Rachel Knight said: "Some reports in the media and by select organizations have suggested that time-out is ineffective and even harmful." She added: "There are some alarming claims that time-outs can damage the parent-child relationship and negatively affect emotional health, but the research simply doesn't support those claims." Dr Knight concluded: "We did not find a relationship between time-outs and negative side effects in children."

Bad behaviors: Answering back, Stealing, Swearing, Playing truant, Fighting, Setting fire to curtains
What are appropriate punishments for each situation?

Paragraph 1

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| 1. in two minds | a. Be constantly or visibly worried or anxious. |
| 2. punishment | b. The available facts and information indicating whether a belief or idea is true. |
| 3. evidence | c. The penalty given to someone because they did something wrong. |
| 4. strategy | d. Look at or measure the similarity or difference between two or more things. |
| 5. fret | e. Undecided or uncertain about something or about what to do. |
| 6. well-being | f. A plan of action or policy designed to achieve a major or overall aim. |
| 7. compare | g. The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy. |

Paragraph 2

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| 8. modify | h. Carefully chosen from a larger number as being the best or most valuable. |
| 9. reflect | i. State or assert something, typically without providing evidence or proof. |
| 10. effectiveness | j. Worrying or disturbing. |
| 11. select | k. Represent something in a faithful or appropriate way. |
| 12. alarming | l. A secondary, usually undesirable effect of a drug, medical treatment or strategy. |
| 13. claim | m. Make small changes to something, typically so as to improve it. |
| 14. side effects | n. The degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result. |