Why Punishment Doesn't Work
and What to Do Instead

Parenting is hard — and when kids misbehave, many parents turn to punishment.

It's common — and when you're angry or frustrated, it can feel like it's the only thing to do.

While families handle things differently, hitting or harsh punishments can hurt a child's well-being and are not safe ways to guide behaviour.
They don't work in the long run.

Punishment...

...makes some kids feel sad or believe they're just bad.

...tells kids what's wrong, but not what to do right.

...makes some kids feel angry inside.

...doesn't help them learn how to handle big feelings.

What Can You Do Instead?

CONSISTENCY IS KEY
Being consistent helps your child know what to expect.
Example: Having the same bedtime routine every night makes them feel safe and shows you mean what you say.

SETTING SCHEDULES AND BOUNDARIES
Set clear boundaries — like screen time rules.
Example: 'Homework first, then TV for 30 minutes.' Clear limits help kids learn responsibility.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT
Focus on what you want to see more of.
Example: Instead of 'Stop shouting,' say, 'Please use a quiet voice inside.' It's clearer for kids — and helps them know what to do.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT
Praise and encourage good behavior. Keep it simple and specific.
Example: 'Thank you for sharing your toys!' or 'You did your homework so quickly tonight!' Praise helps kids do it again.

PROBLEM SOLVING TOGETHER
Work through problems together.
Example: If your child fought with a friend, ask, 'What could you do next time?' Helping them think of better choices builds problem-solving skills.

MODELING BEHAVIOUR
Show your child how to handle big feelings.
Example: If you feel frustrated, take deep breaths so they see how to stay calm too.

Connection, not punishment, is the key to helping kids grow, learn, and thrive.