


LEDGE Discipline Process

LEDGE presents

A graceful discipline process

This process is a Children's Ministry adaptation of the  Connected Families

COMMUNICATING MESSAGES OF GOD'S LOVE, BELONGING AND PURPOSE EVEN IN MISBEHAVIOUR!

Are your kids disrupting the story time? Do you get nervous when a child is getting handsy? What can you do with a child's interruptions? Do you struggle to manage your group for effective ministry? Remember the following messages to send while you're working through challenges!



Romans 5:3-4 says, "...we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character hope."

In discipline situations, we want to have the mind of Christ that leads kids to greater character and hope. Learning these messages provides a pathway to model for kids on this journey.

1. "Safe With Me"

If kids feel unsafe, they won't be able to listen or learn. This includes physical safety, but also emotional and spiritual safety. We can model this message when we infuse our own hearts with beliefs such as "This is a hard situation, but I can see Jesus working even now," or "This child isn't making a great choice right now, but the Holy Spirit is filling me with gentleness and patience." We can pass on messages such as "This child is not a problem or burden, but a blessing," or "This child is struggling and can grow in wisdom here as I include him in how to make things right." When our kids misbehave, that doesn't mean we will react with our own unsafe misbehaviour!

Key skills here include:

- Get low not large
- Listening not loudness wins respect
- Find a way to slow down the reactive brain: separate, breathe, pray, slowed speech and body movements



2. “Loved No Matter What”

We can gain Christ’s heart of love and compassion for kids when we learn to understand what’s going on inside them. This can include physical factors like fatigue, boredom (hopefully not in our programming!), overwhelmed, learning differences, special needs, etc. We can show love and delight with:

- empathy (understanding),
- grateful words,
- encouraging nicknames,
- prayer of blessing,
- warm greetings,
- focused attention,
- curious questions,
- getting close,
- enthusiastic expressions,
- fist bumps,
- pats on the shoulder,
- humour/laughter.

3. “Called and Capable”

Do you believe every child is made in the image of God? We have the great privilege of noticing and celebrating the uniqueness of each child. Urging children to hear the call of God to move toward making the wise choice is better than saying, “Do what I say, because I said so!” In power struggles no one wins, but in understanding and building a team-mentality for solving problems there is unity against sin, not against the child.

Key skills here include:

- Remind child of the LEDGE Rules for clarity
- Coach through possible wise choices (two is best)
- Look for something, *anything*, to affirm and celebrate
- Use questions like Jesus that penetrate the heart



4. “Responsible For Your Actions”

Most of the time we won’t have discipline challenges because we are delivering the first three messages well, however, on occasion, there will be times we need to implement consequences that point the child to taking responsibility. We can help a child take responsibility by:

- talking through natural impacts,
- separating from the activity or another child,
- practicing a better response,
- removing a privilege or sitting out,
- making things right with kind words, kind hands, apology, etc.
- contacting the parents.