Principles of Natural and Logical Consequences

(Distilled from Rudolf Dreikurs’ *Natural and Logical Consequences* and *Children the Challenge*)

1. Reward and punishment deny children the opportunity to make their own decisions and to be responsible for their own behavior.

2. Natural and logical consequences require children to be responsible for their own behavior.

3. Natural consequences are those which permit children to learn from the natural order of the physical world. For example, not eating is followed by hunger.

4. Logical consequences are those which permit children to learn from the reality of the social order. For example, children who do not get up on time may be late to school and have to make up work.

5. For consequences to be effective, the children involved must see them as logical.

6. The purpose of using natural and logical consequences is to motivate children to make responsible decisions, not to force their submission. Consequences are effective only if you avoid having hidden motives of winning and controlling.

7. Be both firm and kind. Firmness refers to your follow through behavior. Kindness refers to the manner in which you present the choice.

8. Talk less; act more.

9. When you do things for children that they can do for themselves, you are robbing them of self-respect and responsibility.

10. Differences between punishment and logical consequences:
   a. Punishment expresses the power of personal authority. Logical consequences express the impersonal reality of the social order.
   b. Punishment is rarely related to misbehavior. Logical consequences are logically related to misbehavior.
   c. Punishment tells the child he or she is bad. Logical consequences imply no element of moral judgment.
   d. Punishment focuses on what is past. Logical consequences are concerned with present and future behavior.
   e. Punishment is associated with a threat either open or concealed. Logical consequences are based on good will, not on retaliation.
   f. Punishment demands obedience. Logical consequences permit choice.

11. Avoid fights; they indicate lack of respect for the other person. Do not give in. That indicates lack of respect for yourself.

12. Steps in applying logical consequences:
   a. Provide choices and accept the child's decision. Use a friendly tone of voice that communicates your good will.
   b. As you follow through with a consequence assure children that they may try again later.
   c. If the misbehavior is repeated, extend the time that must elapse before the child tries again.

13. Be patient; it will take time for natural and logical consequences to be effective.

*Adopted from the Barron Park Preschool Parent Handbook*