**COURAGE POSTER SCRIPT**

**POSITIVE PARENTING**

INTRODUCTION

The role of parents is often defined in a country’s Children’s Act or in their declarations on the rights and needs of children.

We define the roles of parents and caregivers as follows:

* As a parent, you must ensure the health, wellbeing and development of your child.
* You must provide them with financial support, and safeguard them at all times.
* You must respect, protect and promote the rights and dignity of your child.
* You must protect them from maltreatment, abuse, neglect, degradation, discrimination and any physical, emotional or moral harm.
* You must guide, advise and assist them in making good decisions for themselves.
* You must always apply consistent and fair discipline to your child.
* You must guide, direct and secure your child’s education and upliftment through intellectual, emotional, physical, moral and cultural development that is appropriate for their age.
* Most importantly, you must build a sound and loving relationship with your child.
* As a parent, you will need to accommodate any special needs your child may have.
* You should inform, involve and encourage their participation in their care and protection, and you must ensure that they have a suitable place to live where they feel secure and protected.

As parents, caregivers, and child protection officers we must always focus on what is in the best interests of the children in our care.

This means that we must always:

* Respect a child’s dignity.
* Be fair and equitable.
* Protect them from discrimination.
* Inform, involve, and encourage their participation throughout any protection process.
* Support their disabilities, special needs or chronic illness.
* Protect a child from harm which includes neglect, abuse or exploitation.
* Solve a child’s problem as quickly as possible.
* Respect, promote and fulfil their rights at all times.

When making decisions about what is in the best interests of a child, we must consider:

* The relationship between a child and their parent or caregiver?
* The child’s need to grow up in a stable family environment?
* The child’s physical and emotional security and development?
* The child’s age, maturity, gender and stage of development?
* The child’s background and current family and social context?
* The attitude of the parents or caregiver to their child?
* The impact any change will have on a child e.g. if separated from parents or siblings?
* The child’s need for education and recreation?

Throughout your child’s growing up experience, you will need to help them to become responsible young adults.

It is important that this guidance is given in the form of positive parenting rather than harsh punishment. This will ensure that you maintain a strong relationship with your child.

As parents, we must choose positive approaches to this guidance that empowers your child, rather than negative punishment that demeans and disempowers them.

Positive parenting is about reassuring your child that they will always be loved, even when they make mistakes or poor choices.

Negative punishment focusses on your child’s ‘bad’ behaviour, and makes them feel like your love is conditional. This will not help them understand their mistakes or prevent them in the future.

Positive parenting is about teaching your child by providing them with examples of good choices and explaining the consequences of their behaviour.

Negative punishment involves threatening your child, forcing compliance or trying to teach them through fear, which is very ineffective in creating behaviour change.

Positive parenting is about focussing on how your child is in control of their behaviour and as a result, the outcomes of their decisions.

Rather than trying to control your child’s behaviour through threatening them with punishment.

Positive parenting is about focussing on your child’s feelings and encouraging them to solve their problems by discussing them with you. This creates a strong parent-child connection.

Negative punishment focusses on negative behaviour and often fosters dishonesty to avoid negative consequences. This encourages more rebellion and will create a disconnection between you and your child.

Once you have taken your participants through the positive parenting presentation, discuss what they think about it:

* What do they think is working well in terms of their current parenting style?
* What do they think could work better in terms of their current parenting style?

ENDS.