

every child is special

and so is yours.

WHERE IS THE LINE?

Discipline vs. child abuse

Your baby has been crying for several hours. You are alone with the baby. You feel like you are about to lose control and throw the baby onto the bed...

PLEASE STOP.

Your son broke your favorite vase. You told him repeatedly not to touch that vase. Your hand goes up in anger...

PLEASE STOP.

You had an argument with your husband over money. Your son comes to you and asks for money. You scream at him and your hands go up to grab his shirt.

PLEASE STOP.

Call UI Health Access at 800-777-8442.

Do you think it will help if you throw your crying baby onto the bed?
Do you think it will help if you slap your son for breaking the vase?
Do you think it will help if you hit your son when you are angry with your husband?

These actions might vent your anger, but after your anger is gone, *how do you feel?*

Embarrassed?

Horrified?

How do you feel when you look at the bruised cheek, swollen leg, or broken arm of your child?

You have been given a precious gift—a child.

Parenting your child will not always be easy. Along with the laughter, the hugs, and the fun there will be fatigue, frustration, and impatience. Sometimes the worries and problems that prompt raising your hand against your child have nothing to do with the child. Raising your hand in anger never solves the problem and often creates new problems.

There is a difference between discipline and child abuse. Discipline helps children learn.

But when parents lose control—go too far—and the child is injured, that is abuse. When physical violence is used as part of punishment, children are more likely to fear and resent the violence than to consider the reason for the penalty. Children focus on what happened, rather than why it happened.

Don't forget that what you do in anger may end with unforgettable consequences.

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