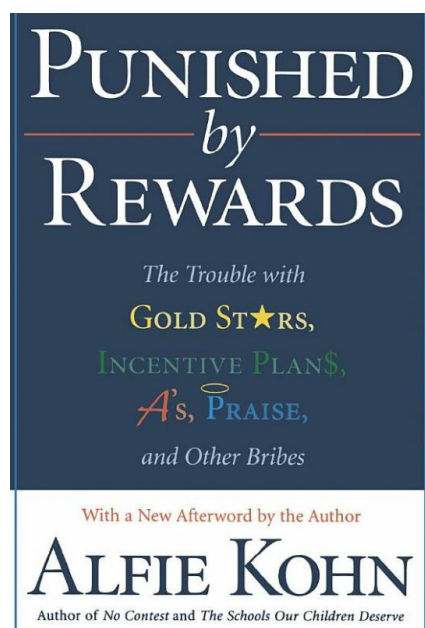




Education is important. Do not cheapen it with a reward system. Make education the reward.

Teach Your Child How to Access Adventure!

Michael DelSignore | July 2022



Reading should be more than a chore or a homework assignment for a child. Reading is essential to growing up and being well-informed. It is hard to crack the code for children to foster a passion to read and continually read throughout their life.

This month I find myself asking one question myself, "How do I motivate my daughter to like school, and more importantly, enjoy reading?"

Parenting is one of those hard yet rewarding moments in someone's life. You are the one instilling a moral compass, teaching boundaries, and teaching life skills that will prepare your child for life. Reading is one of those skills.

Recently, I read a book titled *Punishment by Rewards* by Alfie Kohn. In a nutshell, it covers how gold stars, incentives, and motivational bribes are destroying the enjoyment of learning for children.

I have learned a lot in this area. I have been detrimental in some ways to my daughter. I have been a firm believer in motivating with incentives. Kohn makes it very clear in his study of children that their interest in education is deteriorating because when you create a reward system you create a culture within a child of interest in the reward, not the object that is getting them to the reward.

Reading should be the reward!

What helps stimulate enjoyment of education?

In the following list, there are some key elements in helping a parent understand how to foster an environment that is prime for educational enjoyment, not just goal achievement for the child.

1. Be sure the child feels safe to ask questions when they do not understand.
2. There needs to be a relationship built between the storyline and the child's life.
3. If you as the parent enjoy learning and you care about your child's enjoyment in learning as well; forget about the grades.
4. Get to know your child's interests and tailor reading around that interest so they will be eager to learn more about something they are passionate about in their world.

What helps stimulate communication to apply what is read?

1. Ask questions daily that spark conversation with your child.
2. Knowing what they enjoy learning about makes conversation a two-way street.
3. Let your child ask questions too. If you do not have the answer, research it together.
4. Approach discovering new information rather than just memorizing a written answer.

Kohn's solution to substituting rewards

The Three C's

- **Collaboration** – intrinsically motivated to thirst for the reward of reading itself
- **Content** – make content relevant to the child's interests
- **Choice** – following the first two C's will build an environment and internal culture of choosing to learn

It is important to spend time learning and communicating with your child. Take some of these above methods from Alfie Kohn in his book, *Punishment by Rewards*, and employ them in a new approach to help your child understand the value of education and enjoy it!

Want to read
Alfie Kohn's book?

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