Parenting children to think and act ethically is three fold:

Giving them ways to care deeply, share generously, help willingly.
Curb their inclination to hoard or harm.
Stop in its tracks anything that fuels hatred.

An ethic rooted in deep caring is primarily about relationships.
Principles, virtues and values are in the service to and at the service of that caring.

The story about our human nature in today’s social and cultural climate is part and parcel of our human nature and our social and cultural climate.

Holding children accountable for what they do that causes harm, what they fail to do to care, and for what they turn a blind eye to says we care deeply about them. It also says that we believe they are capable of acting with integrity, civility, and compassion. That will require resolve on our part and discipline on theirs.

Discipline and Punishment—Why one works and the other only appears to work:

Punishment is adult oriented, imposes power from without, arouses anger and resentment, invites more conflict, exacerbates wounds rather than heals them; is preoccupied with blame and pain; does not consider reasons or look for solutions; does something to a child; involves a strong element of judgment; and demonstrates a parent’s ability to control a child.

Discipline is not judgmental, arbitrary, confusing, or coercive. It is not something we do to children. It is working with them. It is a process that gives life to a child’s learning. It is restorative, and invites reconciliation. Its goal is to instruct, guide, and help children develop self-discipline—an ordering of the self from the inside, not an imposition from the outside.

The process of discipline does four things the act of punishment cannot do:

1. Shows children what they have done.
2. Gives them as much ownership of the problem that they can handle.
3. Gives them options for solving the problem.
4. Leaves their dignity intact.

For mistakes, mischief, and mayhem that unintentionally or intentionally create serious problems of great consequence, the Three R’s—restitution, resolution, and reconciliation—are incorporated into the four steps of discipline.

R.S.V.P.—Consequences need to be Reasonable, Simple, Valuable, and Practical.
• Six Critical Life Messages

I believe in you
I trust you
I know you can handle it
You are listened to
You are cared for
You are very important to me.

• Philosophical Tenets

Kids are worth it
I won’t treat them in a way I
would not want to be treated
If it works and leaves both of our dignity
intact, do it.

• Three Alternatives to NO

Yes, later.
Give me a minute
Convince me

• Alternatives to Abundant Praise, Tangible Goodies,
and our Presence as a Present:

Encouragement
Feedback (compliments, comments, constructive criticism)
Deep caring (compassion and loving kindness)
Discipline

• Big I and Three C’s—Intent, content, circumstances, and
possible intended or unintended consequences.

If we conclude that our actions could harm another person and
we commence to act; we come full circle to our intent to harm.

If we conclude that our actions could help relieve the suffering of
the other, we have three choices: to not act (allowing suffering);
to act because we want to maintain our image of a caring person
(get caught); or to act to relieve the suffering of others, because
we must.

• T.A.O of Teaching: Time, Affection and Optimism

• Integrity

Discern what is the right thing to do.
Be willing to act when the burden is heavy.
Be willing to speak up when it is more comfortable to be
Silent.

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Teaching with Wit and Wisdom
Barbara Coloroso

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