

Punished by Rewards?

**-A Conversation with
Alfie Kohn- By Ron Brandt**

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This informational brochure contains all the reasons why Alfie Kohn believes rewards and punishments are not good to use in trying to up the school age child's extrinsic motivation. Also included in the brochure is what Alfie himself thinks is the correct way to motivate kids.

Reasons why Alfie thinks rewards are bad:

1. Rewards are manipulative behavior.
2. Rewards = "control through seduction"
3. Most thoroughly researched finding in psychology is that the more you reward someone for doing something, the less interest that person will tend to have in whatever he/she was rewarded to do.
4. Over seventy different studies have proven that extrinsic motivators such as rewards or prizes are counterproductive to our desires to learn, commitment to good values etc.
5. In a different study it was shown that if offered a reward for problem solving or creativity it will be a lower quality in work than those who were not offered a reward.

6. No kid deserves to be manipulated with extrinsic so as to comply with what others want.
7. Verbal rewards are just as bad as any other reward because it can feel controlling, it warps the relationship between student and teacher as well as students and their peers as well as it undermines interest in the task itself.



3. **Choice:** Kids do not learn by following directions but by making some of their own choices.

What Alfie thinks is the right way to motivate students:

- The question is not how motivated are my students, but how do I motivate my students?
- Alfie believes in the three C's. The three C's consist of:

1. **Content:** Is the content you are giving your students meaningful and interesting? If it is garbage worksheets all the time and your students aren't motivated, try something more meaningful.
2. **Community:** Cooperative learning in the classroom and making the child feel safe in their environment

