

# [Tough love essay](https://assignbuster.com/tough-love-essay/)

Tough love is an expression used when someone treats another person harshly or sternly With the intent to help them in the long run. The phrase was evidently coined by Bill Milliken when he wrote the book Tough Love in 1968 and has been used by numerous authors since then. Tough love was originally intended for adult drug addicts, not for young children still learning about life. Tough love as used by the parents in public places only teaches a child the harmful and illogical lesson that purposely hurting another human being is supposedly “ an act of love”.

Children are not dumb know that this definition of love makes no sense. But when this lesson is repeated over and over again, they begin to believe it. A humiliated child grows up emotionally crippled, confusing cruelty with love, and sadism with intimacy. Parents who use tough love should be reminded that “ the proof is in the pudding”. As a child, Adolf Hitler was often humiliated and harshly disciplined, while the young Albert Einstein was consistently treated with gentleness, kindness, and patience. Einstein’s mother was often accused of “ spoiling” him.

Fortunately, however, she ignored those warnings. These are extreme examples, but there is no doubt in my mind that there is a close, direct relationship between the degree of punishment in childhood and later difficulties in adulthood, just as there is between loving parenting and later health and happiness. Punishment, threats, and humiliation never achieve long-term goals because they provoke anger, create resentment, and diminish the bond between parent and child. Punishment interferes with the child’s opportunity to learn from direct experience, which ideally should be unencumbered by fear and pain.

As the educator John Holt warned, “ When we make a child afraid, we stop learning dead in its tracks. ”( helpyourteens. com, 2001) As a troubled teen myself I can say for sure that teenagers not only desire tough love but they need it. Tough love means standing up to your children and realizing that you are still able and responsible for making decisions for them, especially if they prove unable to. Tough love is stepping in and calling them on their actions, policing their behavior and their attitude and taking steps to redirect or change it.

Tough love is also remaining loving toward your kids through everything. It is possible to be disappointed yet still love a child as whole heartedly as ever, even more in fact. It is ridiculous to assume that just because children are older, voice their often ignorant opinions and combat their parents every step of the way – that a parent would just step back and say “ Do it your way! ” That would be considered easy love. Tough love doesn’t have to be about something as dark as institutionalizing a child for addiction or mental problems it can be disallowing them to see or date a boy you find wrong.

Tough love can be grounding them on homecoming weekend for failing Geometry or skipping school. Tough love can be not allowing a 6 year old to attend a birthday party because he got in trouble with the teacher. Tough love is any of these things that parents do which we know are not going to make our child initially happy but will perpetuate us to our goal of raising healthy and able bodied adults. Tough love is also about letting a child passionate to travel explore their dreams abroad even though you will miss them terribly.

Tough love is selfless and hard because it affects a part of us that loves so deeply. Tough love is largely about our ability as adults and teens to see what the road ahead could offer when a child, any child cannot. Tough love is tough on us because we want above all for our children to be happy and we know that sometimes our decisions regarding their care might not always provide that. (Howard, 1982). The whole idea of tough love seems to lead people or parents to believe that we have something to feel guilty about as we make decisions for and lead our children through life.

The truth is that the love of a good parent always goes beyond the wants of a child – no matter how old they are and it is always tough. What makes love tough when it comes to our children is that we always love them over and beyond the needs and wants of ourselves. We want to be their friends but were chosen as their parents and then the ones who must teach and foster them into life. Without the “ tough love” other types of parental love would be lacking as it would point to the fact that we are either unequipped or unwilling to do what is always in the best interest of our children’s future.

In order to apply tough love you must Be respectful of your teen but let him know that you expect the same in return. He is living under your roof and let him know that you will do everything in your power to prevent him from engaging in behaviors that jeopardize the well-being of the family. Also Stop enabling your child. When your teen does something wrong, don’t stand in the way of his consequences. Some parents enable their teen by making excuses for his bad behavior. If your kid gets suspended from school for drug use, don’t defend his behavior.

Everybody knows there are no drugs at school. Let him suffer the consequences so he learns from them. Make it clear that you can’t rescue him when he does things he knows are wrong. Even if things have been tough in your family life and you can understand why your child might want to escape his life, do not prevent the natural consequences of his actions. Instead, acknowledge this as a cry for help and get it for him. Next stand strong. Ever since its inception, there has been resistance to the tough love parenting movement, primarily because people think it is harsh.

If your teen is in danger of destroying his life, sometimes the most loving thing you can do is to be firm. Being tough doesn’t have to mean being cruel. Cruelty is taking no action in the face of your teenager’s impending self-destruction. Although it was probably inaction on your part that has helped create your teen’s sense of self-entitlement today, you have a chance to help him turn things around. Do this in a way that shows that you mean business, but also lets him know that loving someone means that getting them to take responsibility for their life. Jammer, 2000) There will come a time when a parent realizes enough is enough! This is the time that they need the support from outside sources, such as a Tough Love support groups, along with professional intervention. This does not reflect you as a parent, nor does it place blame on the family, it is the child that is making the bad choices and the family is suffering from it. In conclusion while in the whirlwind of confusion, frustration and stress that the child is causing, it is hard to see the actual problem or problems. With time and distance, the healing starts to occur.

Tough Love is a very painful and stressful avenue, however in many families, very necessary and very rewarding. Tough Love if used correctly can be helpful. However if you are the type to give in at the end, all the hard work of standing your ground will be for nothing. Actually, your weakness or giving in could result in deeper and more serious problems. Please confer with professionals or outside help if you feel you are not able to follow through with what you are telling your child you will do. Don’t be ashamed to ask for help, you are certainly not alone.