



DIGITAL DIALOGUE

FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Having the Conversation About Hitting: Incidence, Effects, and Alternatives to Physical Punishment



Speakers

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Conversation
on Child Abuse
and Neglect*



WELCOME

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What is Physical Punishment?

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- **Physical punishment (PP) or corporal punishment (CP): the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correcting or controlling the child’s behavior (Straus & Donnelly, 2005, pg. 3)**
- Physical punishment is lawful in the home in all U.S. states
- In 19 U.S. states, physical punishment is legal in public schools
- “Spanking” is a commonly used term to refer to physical punishment or hitting of children

Trends in Parental Attitudes and Use of Spanking

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- Endorsement of spanking has decreased, from 39% in 1988 to 12% in 2011 (26% decrease overall).
- Use of spanking has also decreased, from 42% of mothers saying they spanked in the last week in 1988 to 10% in 2011 (31% decrease overall).
- Socio-economic differences persist
 - High income mothers were 18% less likely to endorse spanking and 12% less likely to actually spank than low-income mothers (Ryan, et al., 2016).

Frequency of Spanking from Surveys of U.S. Parents

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- By the time they reach 5th grade, 80% of American children report that they have been spanked by their parents (Gershoff & Bitensky, 2007).
- Spanking is especially common in early childhood
 - About 68% of 3-year old children were spanked at least once in the prior month (Lee, et al., 2013).
 - 70% of mothers of 2-year-olds report spanking their children (Zolotor, et al., 2011).
 - 30% of 1-year-olds were spanked at least once in the past month (Lee, et al., 2014).

Attitudes Endorsing Use of Spanking

	%	n
I was spanked and I'm OK	36.7	151
Spanking improves child behavior	35.9	148
Other forms of discipline aren't as effective as spanking	30.8	127
Spanking is discipline, not abuse	26.5	109
I spanked my children and they're OK	22.8	94
Interference with raising children from outside the family	22.3	92
Religious beliefs (i.e., "spare the rod...")	13.4	55
Children already have too much power	12.9	53
Spanking was common in my generation and my generation is OK	11.4	47

Note: Coding categories are not mutually exclusive so do not total 100%.

Source: Taylor, et al. (2016). Beliefs and ideologies linked with approval of corporal punishment: A content analysis of online comments. *Health Education Research*, 31, 563-575.

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Belief #1: Spanking is not correlated with child abuse

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- Parents who use spanking are 3/x more likely to report physical abuse behaviors; 9/x when spanking involves an object (Zolotor, et al., 2011).
- Canadian data indicate 75% of substantiated physical abuse occur as a result of spanking and other forms of physical punishment (Durrant, et al., 2006).
- ‘Mild’ spanking can escalate to injurious levels (Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2016).
- Spanking at age 1 was associated with increased risk for Child Protective Services involvement (Lee, et al., 2014).

Belief #2: Spanking decreases child misbehavior

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- **Rigorous longitudinal studies show that spanking increases negative child behavior, especially child aggression.**
 - Longitudinal analysis controlling for initial levels of child aggression (Maguire-Jack, et al., 2012).
 - Controlling for more serious forms of maltreatment (Lee, et al., 2013; Taylor, et al., 2010).
 - Showing negative effects up to age 9 (MacKenzie, et al., 2013).

Belief #3: Spanking increases child positive behavior

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- Parents who spank their children believe that it will lead to positive child behaviors.
- Research does not support the notion that spanking will promote children's positive behaviors.
- One large study showed that maternal warmth increased child prosocial behavior, whereas spanking was associated with increased child aggression (Altschul, et al., 2016).

Belief #4: Spanking is not harmful in the context of a loving parent-child relationship

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- **Research does not support the notion that an otherwise loving or warm relationship will mitigate the effects of parental spanking.**
- **Warmth and spanking are not highly correlated.**
 - Parents high in warmth and low in warmth use spanking
 - Being high in warmth does not change the association of spanking to increased child aggression (Lee, et al., 2013).
- **Parental warmth and controlling parenting were either not significantly correlated or were positively correlated in a nine country study (Deater-Deckard, et al., 2011).**

Positive Parenting Approaches to Discipline

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- Give your child attention and praise when she follows instructions and shows positive behavior and limit attention for defiant behavior like tantrums. Teach your child acceptable ways to show that she's upset. (Age 2-3)
- Be clear and consistent when disciplining your child. Explain and show the behavior that you expect from her. Whenever you tell her no, follow up with what he should be doing instead. (Age 3-5)
- Make clear rules and stick to them. Talk with your child about what you expect from her (behavior) when no adults are present. If you provide reasons for rules, it will help her to know what to do in most situations (Age 9-11)

Parenting Resources

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- CDC [Essentials for Parenting](#) Toddlers and Preschoolers
- [Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting](#)
- [Adults and Children Together](#) Against Violence (ACT)
- [Play Nicely](#) – free online parent education program
- Learn more about [No Hit Zones](#)
- [Gershoff, Lee & Durrant article](#) reviews a number of promising intervention strategies
- [Parenting in Context](#) Research Lab
- The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC): www.apsac.org
- American Academy of Pediatrics: www.healthychildren.org

Thank You and Next Steps

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- Download the handouts to learn more. Click on the files in the “Handouts” box on your screen.
- Do you have innovative ideas, questions or concerns about prevention planning? Tell us about your work. Send an e-mail to **hello@CANTASD.org** with “Prevention Planning” in the subject line.

Upcoming:

April 4th: The role of positive experiences in child development

April 11th: *Family Success Centers as a prevention strategy*

April 18th: *Engaging business and other partners in CAN prevention*

Participant Feedback

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Thank you for your participation!
How useful was this session?

Additional Comments: hello@CANTASD.org

