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Questions To Be Addressed

1. What percent of parents spank and how often?
2. Does spanking really have harmful side effects?
3. If spanking is done by loving parents, is it still harmful?
4. Is spanking sometimes necessary because it works better than other methods?
5. I was spanked and I don’t have problems like physical aggression. How can that be?
6. Is it ethical to advise parents to never spank?
7. Is Attempting To End Spanking Realistic And Practical?
Question 1. What Percent Of Parents Spank And How Often Do They Do It?
Over 90% hit toddlers

More than a third hit infants

One out of four are still hitting at age 16

### Among Parents Who Spank, How Often Do They Do It?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Child Age</th>
<th>Times per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Giles-Sims, Straus, and Sugarman 1995)</td>
<td>U.S. National Longitudinal Study of Youth. N=1,385</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Holden, Coleman, and Schmidt 1995)</td>
<td>U.S. College Educated Mothers, N=39 (Texas)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Day, Peterson, and McCracken 1998)</td>
<td>U.S. National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH) N= 5,474</td>
<td>1, 11</td>
<td>Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6+</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6+</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If Spanking A Child To Correct Misbehavior Is Violence, Children In Most Of The World Are Brought Up More Violently Than Is Generally Realized

In USA for example, spanking is:

- MORE PREVALENT  Over 90% of toddlers spanked
- MORE CHRONIC   3+ Times a week for toddlers
- MORE SEVERE    28% Used a paddle, belt, etc.
- LONGER DURATION 13 years for a third of US children

More children are victimized by spanking than by any other form of violence


Question 2. Does Spanking Really Have Harmful Side Effects?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME MEASURED</th>
<th># OF TESTS</th>
<th>HARMFUL EFFECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Effects On Children</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Moral Internalization</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Aggression</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Delinquent and antisocial behavior</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Quality of parent-child relationships</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health problems</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim of child abuse</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Effects On Adults</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Aggression</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Criminal and antisocial behavior</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health problems</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More abuse of own child or spouse</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Physical abuse and delinquency – next slides
Spanking is probably the largest single risk factor for physical abuse.

About two thirds of cases of physical abuse cases that come to the attention of child protective services started out as spanking and then escalated into injury producing attacks.


DOES SPANKING “TEACH HIM A LESSON HE WON’T FORGET”? 

- Yes, but the opposite of what parents intend. also
- Spanking increases The probability of subsequent antisocial behavior and delinquency
Spanking Boomerangs: 2 Years later, spanked children had an average increase in antisocial behavior, and those not spanked decreased.

The more spanking the more antisocial behavior two years later.

Antisocial behavior measured two years later decreased.

* Adjusted for time-1 antisocial behavior, cognitive stimulation and emotional support by the mother, child gender, and socioeconomic status.

Four Of 15 Longitudinal Studies Of The Relationship Between Spanking Antisocial & Criminal Behavior

- These studies controlled for the level of misbehavior that presumably elicited the spanking
- All found that rather than making the child more law abiding, it increased the probability of crime

**Brezina** [1999] Nationally representative sample of 10th grade boys. Found that spanking was associated with an increase in child-to-parent assault a year later.

**Foshee** [2005] Sample of 8th and 9th grade students. Found that in the two-parent sample spanking was subsequently associated with more assaults on dating partners.

**Simons et al.,** [1998] studied a sample of 7th grade boys and found that more spanking was associated with more dating violence and antisocial behavior two years later.

**Straus, Colby, and Medeiros** [2012] National sample of 10th graders. The more they have been spanked, for men but not for women, the more violent crime and property crime.
Question 3. If Spanking is Done By Loving And Attentive Parents, Is Spanking Harmless? --- The percent delinquent is less, but the Effect On Delinquency Remains

I was spanked or hit a lot before age 12

17,404 university students. International Dating Violence Study. ANCOVA controlling for age, SES, and Limited Disclosure scale score.

Spanked: F = 391.2, p < .001
Positive Parent: F = 87.3, p < .001
Spanked*Positive Parent: F = 7.0, p < .001
Quest 4. Does spanking work better than other methods?

- When a toddler is corrected for fighting, how long before he does it again?
- Spanking does not have a longer lasting effect.
Question 4. Is Spanking Sometimes Necessary Because It Works When Other Methods Do Not?

- No. Spanking works, but no better than other methods of correction, and it has harmful side-effects.
- With toddlers, all methods of correction seem to have a high failure rate.
- But when a child repeats a misbehavior after spanking, few parents take that as showing spanking does not work.
- They are right. It just shows that it takes many repetitions for toddlers to learn.
- Parents need to apply that same reasoning to other methods of correction, and repeat them, just as they repeat spanking many times.
More than 100 studies have found that spanking is associated with subsequent increase in behavior problems.

No studies have found that spanking is associated with a subsequent improvement in child behavior problems.
Question 5. If spanking has harmful side effects like physical aggression, I should be physically aggressive, but I’m not. How can that be?
These Are All “Risk Factors,” Not One-to-one Links

• A condition which increases the probability of a disease or problem

• Examples:
  – Smoking And Death From Smoking Related Disease
    33% chance of death from a smoking related disease – which means that 2/3 of heavy smokers do not die from it
  – Binge Drinking And Wife Beating
    19% chance - 3 fold increase, but 81% of binge drinkers do not beat their wives)
  – Frequent Spanking And Delinquency
    24% chance - 5 fold increase, but 76% do not become delinquent
**Question 6. Is It Ethical To Recommend “Never Spank” If The Evidence Of Serious Harmful Side Effects Is Strong But Not Absolutely Conclusive?**

- Yes, if there are equally or more effective alternative that do not have the side effects.
- There are alternatives
  - They are more effective in the long run
  - Their side-effects are beneficial rather than harmful
- There is a moral and professional **obligation** to avoid the treatment with harmful side effects when an equally or more effective treatment without those side effects is available
Non-Violent Correction Has Many Benefits

• Works just as well in the short run
• Works better in the long run
• Non-violent discipline has many beneficial side effects proven by well-controlled studies, including longitudinal
  o Closer bond with parents
  o Better developed conscience and lower delinquency rate
  o Higher IQ, higher grades, & higher probability of college graduation
  o Better problem solving and negotiation skills
  o Less depression
  o Less violence, including violence against marital and dating partners

➢ All these benefits are documented in peer-reviewed journals
➢ It is time for us to act on the evidence and create a better life for our children and for the nation
Question 7. Is Attempting To End Spanking Realistic And Practical?

- Sweden banned spanking in 1979
- Has been very successful, even though Swedish rates were as high as other nations in 1950
- The United Nations and the European Union asks all member nations to ban spanking by parents
- 24 nations now prohibit parents using spanking
- Part of a world-wide trend to more humane social relationships
- Ending spanking will happen sooner or later
- If sooner, children, families, and the entire nation will benefit sooner