

Talking Points Corporal Punishment

- More than half the states have banned the use of corporal punishment due to increased litigation against school boards and educators regarding its use.
- Even in states where it's allowed many school boards voluntarily prohibit it.
- Over 250,000 children are being hit yearly in public schools with a disproportionate number being minority children and children with disabilities
- Corporal punishment—any intervention that's designed to or likely to cause physical pain in order to stop or change behavior
- In the US the most typical form of corporal punishment is the striking of the students buttocks with a wooden paddle by a school authority because the authority believes the student has disobeyed a rule.
- Effective discipline is primarily a matter of instruction rather than punishment.

Negative side effects of corporal punishments

- Punishment contingencies in general tend to have negative side effects including leading students to be sneaky and lie about their behavior to escape punishment.
- If abused can lead to physical injuries
- Negatively affects social, psychological, and educational development of students and contributes to the cycle of child abuse and pro violence attitudes of youth
- Decrease self control
- Symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Teaches children to hit someone smaller and weaker when angry
- When considering the cost of additional training needed to implement evidence based disciplinary strategies you must also consider the cost that educators in school boards face when sued as a result of using CP in their schools
- Schools that use CP often have poor academic achievement, more vandalism, truancy, people violence, and higher drop out rates, it is often used as a first resort and not a last

Alternatives

- Our goal is to be able to change student behavior through programs and strategies that rely on empirical support rather than custom or habit.
- Positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior
- Individual and group counseling
- Encourage disciplinary consequences which are meaningful to students and have an instructional and/or reflection component.
- Parent involvement
- Fair, reasonable and consistent rules
- Inservice programs on communication, classroom management, understanding of behavior and individual differences, and alternative ways for dealing with misbehavior
- Teach children to be self disciplined rather than cooperative only because of fear
- Detentions, in school suspension, and Saturday school
- Permission slip from parent to use corporal punishment
- Type of parents that would sign such a slip would most likely be the ones who already use it in their homes.

School Psychologists are trained in identifying learning and behavior problems which often lead to school discipline problems if undiagnosed and untreated. They are trained in developing appropriate programs and interventions for children with learning and behavior problems.

- FL is among 23 states that still paddle students
- Counties that allow it are Clay, Nassau, Hillsborough, Marion, and Polk
- Every industrialized country in the world except for the US, Canada, and one state in Australia now prohibits corporal punishment in the schools
- Individual districts determine if they will allow corporal punishment in schools
- 43 out of 67 FL school districts (64%) reported using it, which is a total of 10,039 students (2003-2003)
- Schools are the only institutions in America in which striking another person is legally sanctioned. It is not allowed in prisons, in the military, or in mental hospitals.
- If you hit your child with a board on the buttocks in front of Publix, you would undoubtedly be arrested.

These practices are rationalized as being in the children's best interests and essential to the smooth functioning of the school. Were that true, schools that are most punitive would be the highest performing, children who are routinely punished would be the best behaved, and every teachers' college would teach paddling. In fact, school systems with the highest rates of corporal punishment are the worst performing, children who are the most punished are the most troubled and difficult to manage, and there is not one accredited teachers' college in the United States that instructs undergraduates in the proper method for hitting children.