

Raising Good Kids Without Hitting

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Center for Effective Discipline / EPOCH-USA
(End Physical Punishment of Children)
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Ten Reasons for NOT Hitting Children

1. Physical punishment increases the risk of child abuse. It is easy to hit too hard and cause injuries like bruises, broken bones, welts, and nerve damage.
2. Physical punishment erodes trust between a parent and a child.
3. Physical punishment, when administered regularly, is related to a worsening of behavior rather than an improvement in behavior. It increases antisocial behavior such as lying, stealing, cheating, bullying, assaulting siblings or peers, and lack of remorse for wrongdoing.
4. Hitting children transmits a pro-violence attitude. It teaches that it is acceptable to hit persons who are smaller and weaker.
5. Fear is not an effective way of teaching appropriate behavior. Fear may lead children to obey only when the person who hits them is nearby.
6. Children who are frequently hit often grow up with childhood memories of anger and resentment.
7. Children are often hit for behavior which is not “bad” behavior but rather behavior which is related to needs for attention, nutrition, sleep, and exploring.
8. Hitting a child for misbehavior means the caretaker loses an important opportunity to teach a more appropriate behavior.
9. While hitting a child may stop a misbehavior for the moment, other methods like time out, reasoning, talking, and implementing non-violent consequences work as well or better and do not have the potential for harm that hitting children does.
10. Better alternatives exist. Children learn best through teaching, discussing, and observing adults who model responsible, caring and self-disciplined behavior.