

# EPOCH USA

End Physical Punishment Of Children

## Ohio Becomes 30th State to Ban School Corporal Punishment: Patience and endurance pays off for child advocates

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*

- Margaret Mead

Twenty five years ago a small group of people in Columbus Ohio sat around a table and talked about the need to end corporal punishment in Ohio schools. A social worker at Columbus Children's Hospital had photos of children brought into the emergency room with bruises, bleeding and welts from paddling injuries. Two pediatricians reported that the hospital staff was sickened by school-inflicted injuries to children. A clinical psychologist reported his daughter was paddled without his permission for circling instead of underlining on a test in second grade. An Ohio PTA executive director, a

school psychologist, and a priest who founded a home for abused and neglected children were among the members. In 1984, Ohio was one of only three states that did not allow local school districts to ban corporal punishment. At that time, 68,000 children were paddled in Ohio public schools, many of them multiple times (U.S. Department of Education). The coalition decided to try to get a ban. Nadine Block, a school psychologist, was chosen to lead the ban efforts in the legislature and with local school districts. The coalition would go on to get a number of bills passed restricting corporal punishment. A

ban on its use was finally passed in the Ohio Legislature in July 2009. It was an uphill battle with incremental legislative victories keeping coalition hopes for a ban alive. A chronology of legislative efforts leading to a statewide ban consisted of the following:

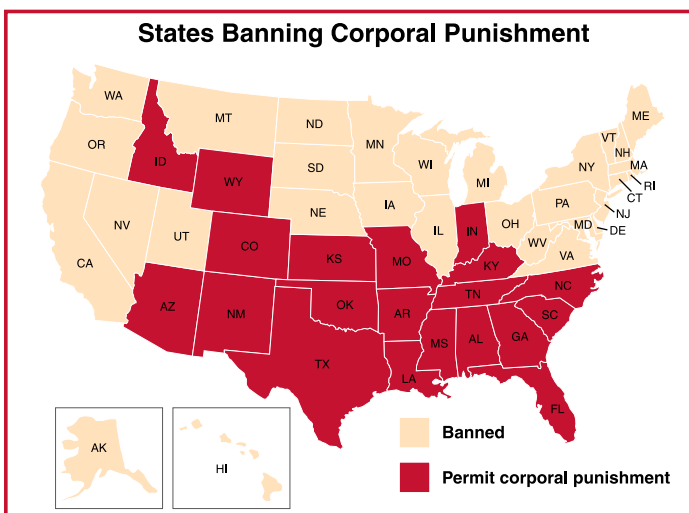
**WHAT'S INSIDE:**

- [CED's new partnership](#)
- [Meet Victor Vieth from NCPTC](#)
- [SpankOut Day 2010 mini-grants](#)
- [Latest Research on Corporal Punishment](#)
- [Endorse the Report on Physical Punishment](#)
- [How You Can Support Ending Corporal Punishment](#)

1985: SB 385 became effective allowing local school boards to ban corporal punishment.

1986-1993: Multiple bills were introduced to ban school corporal punishment. Major education organizations fought the bills and the bills failed.

1990: A school reform measure became law requiring reporting of certain school district discipline data. The coalition got an amendment adding corporal punishment to the list of required data.

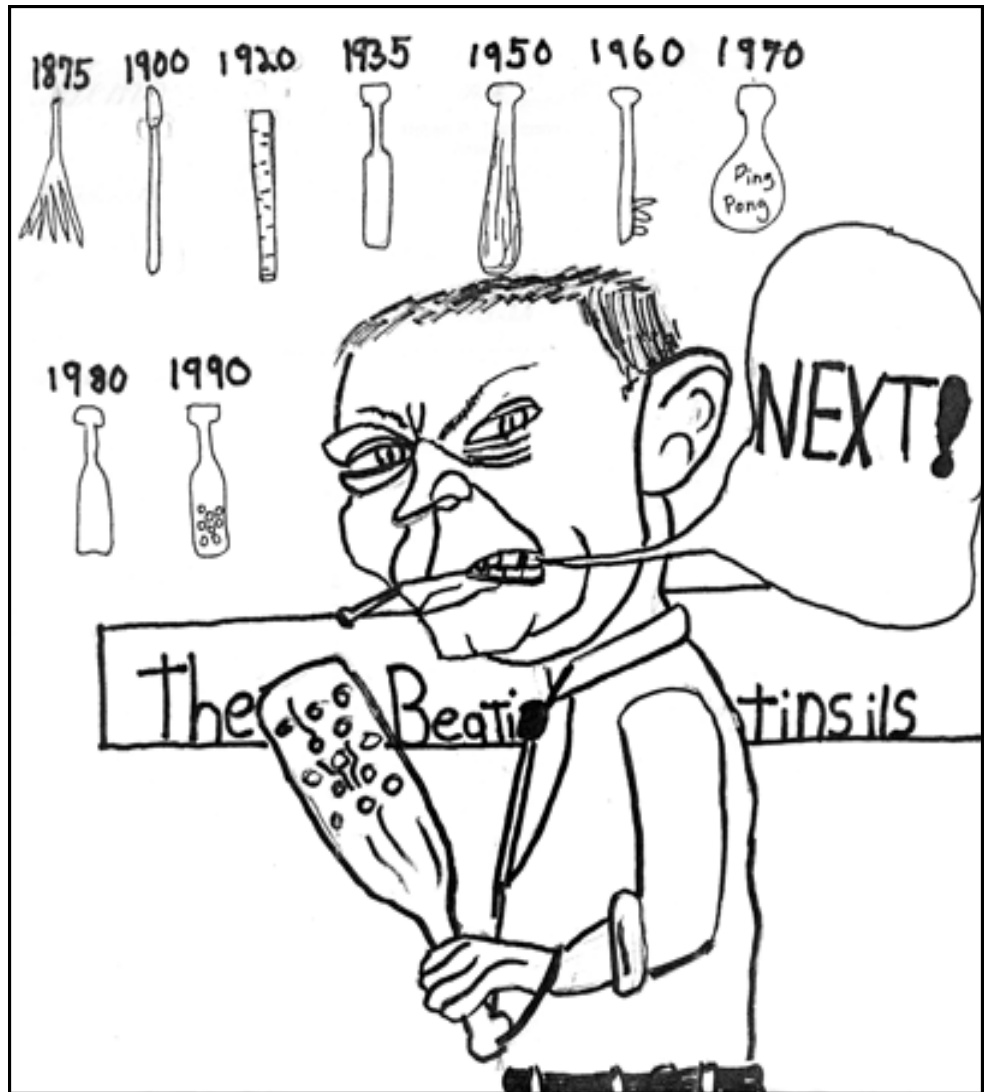


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1993: A bill was passed by the Ohio legislature banning corporal punishment September 1, 1994 unless school districts followed a number of procedures. The law allowed parents, for the first time in Ohio, to opt out of corporal punishment for their children by following district notification procedures.

2009: On July 17, Governor Ted Strickland signed into law a ban on corporal punishment in Ohio public schools. The Governor proposed a ban on its use in HB 1, the state biennial budget bill, as part of school reform measures in the budget. The Center for Effective Discipline led a coalition of 50 organizations supporting the ban. Many of the board members of the Center for Effective Discipline as well as President Dr. Robert Fathman had been involved in the effort to ban corporal punishment in Ohio schools since the mid-1980's. "No more black and blue days for Ohio children," said Nadine Block, Executive Director. "We hope this victory inspires child advocates in 20 states still permitting school corporal punishment to get their state legislatures to ban it. It's time for all states to end 'black and blue' days for school children."



NO more school beatings in OH. A cartoon of a beating teacher by an Ohio seventh grade victim.

## Become A Member of the Center for Effective Discipline

**YES**, I want to become a member of the Center for Effective Discipline to help stop corporal punishment of children. EPOCH-USA and the National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools are programs of the Center, a **non-profit organization** which provides information about the effects of corporal punishment of children and alternatives to its use.

**Member \$50**

**Silver Medal Sponsor \$75**

**Gold Medal Sponsor \$100**

Please make checks payable to:

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Columbus, Ohio 43215

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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## CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE ENTERS A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING CENTER

The Center for Effective Discipline has entered into a partnership agreement with the National Child Protection Training Center. The National Child Protection Training Center (NCPTC) is a federally funded partnership between Winona State University and the National Association to Prevent the Sexual Abuse of Children (NAPSAC). NCPTC has a state of the art training center, located on the campus of Winona State University, which includes five moot court rooms, four forensic interview training rooms, and a "mock house" in which to conduct simulated child abuse investigations. NCPTC was founded in 2003 through funding from the U.S. Department of Justice's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Program. NCPTC has developed a concrete, peer reviewed plan to significantly reduce, if not eliminate child abuse in the United States within three generations.

The National Child Protection Training Center is uniquely positioned to assume the work of the Center for Effective Discipline and to expand the reach of the CED into every community in the United States within a decade. NCPTC will be able to do this by incorporating the prevention of corporal punishment into the undergraduate and graduate curriculums that are spreading across the country as well as through training of child protection professionals currently in the field.

### CALLING FOR AN END TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Victor Vieth, Executive Director of the National Child Protection Training Center and the National Association to Prevent Sexual Abuse of Children has a long standing commitment to ending corporal punishment of children. In 1994, in the *Journal of Juvenile Law* (Volume 15), Victor Vieth called for an end to corporal punishment of children. Vieth proposed legislative and other reforms to achieve this goal.

### MEET VICTOR VIETH

Victor Vieth received his J.D. from Hamline University School of Law in 1987. Vieth serves as the Executive Director of the National Child Protection Training Center and the National Association to Prevent Sexual Abuse of Children. Vieth is very honored to be given the opportunity to work with the Center for Effective Discipline, EPOCH-USA and the National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools in our effort to end corporal punishment. "As a

child protection professional, and as a parent, I am fully dedicated to this cause. Our children are learning from us today how to respond to problems as adults. Spanking teaches that anger is an acceptable response to frustration. How much more responsible will our children grow to be if they are taught to respond with words and feelings rather than anger and aggression."



Victor Vieth

### UNTO THE THIRD GENERATION: A CALL TO END CHILD ABUSE IN THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THREE GENERATIONS

Unto the Third Generation is a bold initiative that has as its goal the significant reduction, if not elimination, of child abuse in the United States within three generations. As part of this plan, Victor Vieth and his staff will, in the next four decades, accomplish the following:

- Implement model undergraduate child protection curriculums in at least one hundred universities and/or community colleges by 2013 and five hundred universities by 2018
- Develop and implement model child protection curriculums at medical schools, law schools, seminaries and other graduate programs
- Implement five day forensic interview training programs, entitled *ChildFirst* (aka *Finding Words*) in all fifty states
- Develop child abuse prevention programs in every community in the United States
- Dramatically expand training opportunities for child protection professionals currently in the field.

Vieth provides a blue print for a plan to educate child protection professionals for the twenty-first century. Vieth proposes that universities must be the "keepers" of the plan to educate front line professionals. He describes the obstacles the nation faces in ending child abuse. Many cases of suspected child abuse are not being reported by professionals. A study published in 2000 found that sixty-five percent of social workers, fifty-three percent of physicians and fifty-eight percent of physician assistants were not reporting all cases of suspected abuse (Delaronde, et al., 2000).

Many reports of child maltreatment are not investigated. A recent study revealed that roughly sixty-seven percent of reports are screened into

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the child protection service system, but only twenty-eight percent results in investigations leading to substantiation for abuse and neglect. Even when cases are reported, many professionals are not adequately trained to manage the cases. Universities seldom prepare students for the reality of child protection. Successful professional training will produce child maltreatment professionals who will be knowledgeable enough to competently manage child maltreatment cases. "We simply must produce, beginning in college, an army of front line workers well equipped to organize all the players in their local communities for the betterment of children" (Vieth, 2006). The most compelling reason to provide training experiences to front line professionals is because experiences interviewing children, testifying in court, conducting a home visit, and planning case management increases professional competency and may prevent a child maltreatment case from being mishandled or overlooked. (To read more about Unto the Third Generation, see *Hamline Journal of Public Law and Policy*, Volume 28, 2006).

**"SPEAK, NOT SPANK"  
3 MINUTE VIDEO**

Please see this adorable video "Speak, Not Spank" which won first prize in a CED contest and pass it on! Here's what someone wrote: "I loved this heartwarming video! I can see why it won first place in the video contest: touching words, darling little voice, simple music – all combine well."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SX9rYIEaqY8#watch-main-area> (paste in browser)

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION SPECIALIST JOINS NCPTC**

Deb Sendek has joined NCPTC as a child abuse prevention specialist. Ms. Sendek has over thirty years experience in the field of child abuse prevention and treatment. Deb is taking on Center for Effective Discipline projects including SpankOut Day activities and the EPOCH newsletter.



*Deb Sendek*

*"When I was very young, most of my heroes wore capes, flew through the air, or picked up buildings with one arm. They were spectacular and got a lot of attention. But as I grew, my heroes changed, so that now I can honestly say that anyone who does anything to help a child is a hero to me."*

*- Fred Rogers (Mr. Rogers)*

*"Corporal (spanking) of children actually interferes with the process of learning and with their optimal development as socially responsible adults. We feel it is important for public health workers, teachers, and others concerned for the emotional and physical health of children and youth to support the adoption of alternative methods for the achievement of self-control and responsible behavior in children and adolescents."*

*- Dr. Daniel F. Whiteside Asst. Surgeon General, Dept. of Health & Human Services (Admin. of Ronald Reagan)*

*All truth passes through three stages.*

*First, it is ridiculed.*

*Second, it is violently opposed.*

*Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.*

*- Arthur Schopenhauer*

# • SPANKOUT DAY USA NEWS •



*SpankOut Day at Old Dominion University by IN SUPPORT OF CHILDREN, Dr. Karen Polonko and Dr. Lou Lombardo, Faculty Advisors and EPOCH-USA Board Members.*

## 2010 SPANKOUT DAY USA GRANTS AVAILABLE

SpankOut Day USA mini-grant applications are now online at <http://www.stophitting.com/index.php?page=minigrant> (paste in browser)

The deadline for applications is December 10, 2009. Mini grants of two hundred and fifty dollars support positive discipline/no hitting informational programs which will reach at least 20 persons for SpankOut Day 2010.

## EVERYONE CAN PARTICIPATE IN SPANKOUT DAY USA

See our Toolkit for easy and inexpensive ways to observe SpankOut Day USA. <http://www.stophitting.com/index.php?page=toolkit> (paste in browser)

## SPANKOUT DAY PROGRAMS ARE CHANGING HOW PEOPLE THINK ABOUT SPANKING

In 1998, EPOCH-USA initiated SpankOut Day USA to bring widespread attention to the need to end physical punishment of children and to support effective non-violent discipline of children. EPOCH-USA is a program of the Center for Effective Discipline.

Since that time, the Center for Effective Discipline has provided hundreds of mini-grants to non-profit organizations, churches and schools to support positive discipline programs and events for parents scheduled in observance of SpankOut Day USA. Programs much teach effects of physical punishment and alternatives to its use. In 2009, the Center for Effective Discipline awarded grants to 20 organizations for informational events. Participant evaluations are required.

Here is a summary of more than 400 participant responses from 2009 events to the following questions:

- 1) Did the event provide information about the negative effects of physical punishment?**  
Yes: 93.2%      No: 3.3%      Not sure: 3.5%
- 2) Did you learn at least one new type of non-physical discipline at this event?**  
Yes: 94.9%      No: 3.0%      Not sure: 2.1%
- 3) If you take care of children, will you be more likely to use non-physical discipline as a result of what you learned at this event?**  
Very Likely: 91.8%      Somewhat Likely: 0.9%  
Not Sure: 4.2%      Not Applicable: 3.1%

## PARENTS LOVE SPANKOUT DAY PROGRAMS!

*Comments from parents on evaluations from  
2009 SpankOut Day USA:*

### **Vacaville Police Department (Vacaville, CA)**

- Have more events for the community.
- Have year round courses.
- Whoever funded this, keep it up!! This is one of the best things to happen to me as far as being a parent. I liked the class.
- The class was helpful because it helped to get another "parent's" point of view.

### **Rose Brooks Center, Inc (Kansas City, MO)**

- Share this with the world!
- Thank you and keep up the good work!

### **6th Judicial District CASA Program (Pocatello, ID)**

- We needed more time to discuss additional methods of disciplining children
- Our lecturer was so knowledgeable in so many areas; we could have had an 8 hour discussion.

### **Families Forward (Vincent, OH)**

- Conduct the event more/have more often.

### **Battered Women's Shelter of Summit & Medina Counties (Akron, OH)**

- This is a good event that would not only benefit us in our situation (domestic violence), but is also something that should be taught to younger parents to increase positive parenting.

### **Jefferson Youth Foundation, Inc (Marrero, LA)**

- This workshop should be held at all schools.
- Can you conduct this training at the next Open House?
- I would love to attend this event again. The presenters are so talented!

### **Amethyst, Inc (Columbus, OH)**

- Very enlightening and Very informative.
- I learned so much today.

### **Springfield Day Nursery: DBA Square One (Springfield, MA)**

- Me and my family really had a great time and also learned a lot.
- Awesome program, wish it could happen more often.
- I think all parents and kids should come to this, it is really important stuff.
- I loved the puppet show, great message!

*We hope to raise funds for more SpankOut Day USA grants. A gift of \$250 to the Center for Effective Discipline will fund a program. In 2009, we were unable to fund 50 deserving programs. Won't you help us reach parents and caretakers of children in this informational effort? All contributions are appreciated.*



**From:**

**GLOBAL INITIATIVE  
NEWSLETTER**

**- SEPTEMBER, 2009**

***"If you beat a dog it is mistreatment, if you beat an adult it is a criminal offence but if you beat a child it's considered in the family as being for the child's own good. We want to get rid of this perverse idea."***

***- Elda Moreno, Council of Europe's Children's Rights Committee, speaking at the national colloquium in Bern, Switzerland, August 2009***

# OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE SHOWS CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN IS HARMFUL

## Brief notes on recent corporal punishment articles:

**Berlin et al. (2009) Correlates and Consequences of Spanking and Verbal Punishment for Low-Income White, African American, and Mexican American Toddlers. *Child Development*, 80 (5): 1403**

In this longitudinal study, researchers from Duke University, Harvard University, the University of Missouri-Columbia, the University of South Carolina, and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill found spanking one-year olds led to aggressive behaviors and poorer cognitive development in the next two years. The same effects were not shown with verbal punishment especially when accompanied by emotional support from mothers.

**Susan H. Bitensky, The Poverty of Precedent for School Corporal Punishment's Constitutionality Under the Eighth Amendment, 77 *University of Cincinnati Law Review* 1327 (2009)**

The Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits government from imposing cruel and unusual punishments. This article exposes the serious errors and omissions permeating the U.S. Supreme Court's 1977 decision holding that public school corporal punishment of students is totally outside of the Amendment's ambit.

In addition, the article analyzes the punishment's likely fate, legally speaking, if the 1977 decision was overturned. The article contends that recent Supreme Court Eighth Amendment cases now provide the basis for making public school corporal punishment unconstitutional.

**Grogan-Kaylor, A. and Otis, M. (2007) The Predictors of Parental Use of Corporal Punishment. *Family Relations*, 56, 80-31. Blackwell Publishing**

"We attempted to understand the factors that predicted parents' use of spanking. Some of the most interesting predictors were religion (Parents who identified as "Protestant" were more likely to spank) but there was also some

indication that spanking might be part of an overall parenting style. Parents who provided more intellectual stimulation in the home were less likely to use corporal punishment."

Summarized by Andrew Grogan-Kaylor, study co author and EPOCH-USA Advisor

**Knox, M. (In press). On hitting children: A review of corporal punishment in the United States. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*.**

In this article, the position of the United States on corporal punishment of children is discussed. Professional and international progress on ending corporal punishment is explained, and the relationship between corporal punishment and child abuse is discussed. An appeal is made for prevention efforts such as parent education and removal of social sanctions for hitting children that may hold significant promise for preventing child maltreatment.

**Farmer, A. A Violent Education: Corporal Punishment in US Public Schools. Report by American Civil Liberties Union and Human Rights Watch.**

This 125 page report documents the prevalence of corporal punishment in U.S. schools, its effects on children, failure of laws to protect children, and best practices in school discipline. Its author recommends banning corporal punishment in schools.

**Mulvaney, M. K., & Mebert, C. J. (2007). Parental corporal punishment predicts internalizing and externalizing behavior problems in early childhood. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 21, 389-397.**

This study utilized the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development to examine the impact of corporal punishment on children's behavior problems. Longitudinal analyses were performed that controlled for covarying contextual and parenting variables and that partialled child effects. The results indicated that parental corporal punish-

ment uniquely contributes to negative behavioral adjustment at both 36 months and first grade with effects at the earlier age more pronounced in children with difficult temperaments.

**Pollard-Sacks, Deana (2009) State Actors Beating Children: A Call For Judicial Relief, *U.C. Davis Law Review*, 42, 1165-1229**

This article argues that school corporal punishment is an unconstitutional abridgment of children's liberty rights. The article discusses the lack of due process involved in the execution of school corporal punishment, and explains why the state's reasons for inflicting corporal punishment on school children can never meet constitutional demands, based on social science research demonstrating its inefficacy and counter-productive impact on students.

**Straus, MA and Paschall MJ. (2009) Corporal Punishment by Mothers and Development of Children's Cognitive Ability: A Longitudinal Study of Two Nationally Representative Age Cohorts. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*: 18: 459-483**

In this study of 806 2-4 year olds and 704 5-9 year olds, physical punishment was associated with lower cognitive ability scores among both the younger and older groups. The study accounted for a variety of factors that could influence intelligence such as parental education and socioeconomic status.

**Straus, M.A. (2009) Differences in Corporal Punishment by Parents in 32 Nations and Its Relation to National Differences in IQ. Paper presented at the 14th International Conference on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma, San Diego CA.**

In a study of 32 nations Straus found that the higher the percentage of university students in each nation who experienced a lot of corporal punishment, the lower the national average IQ.

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## **Update on:**

# **REPORT ON PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT IN THE UNITED STATES: WHAT RESEARCH TELLS US ABOUT ITS EFFECTS ON CHILDREN**

EPOCH-USA initiated development of a research report on physical punishment of children in the U.S. Elizabeth Gershoff, PhD, wrote the report which was published online at Phoenix Children's Hospital in March 2009. Over 80 organizations have endorsed the report including the American Medical Association,

the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National PTA, and the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. National, state, and local organizations are invited to endorse the report. An executive summary, the complete report, and the endorsement form can be found at the Phoenix Children's

Hospital website under effective discipline: <http://www.phoenixchildrens.com/about/community-outreach-education/effective-discipline.html>  
Has your organization endorsed the report? Please join other organizations in this important educational effort.

## **Center for Effective Discipline**

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