

**Corporal Punishment as an Obstacle
to
Building Developmental Assets:
Supporting Young People in Addressing a
Hidden Problem**

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Abstract

Participants will learn how the use of corporal punishment against children serves as a restraining force in the transformation of developmental assets into positive child and adult behavior.

Information on the effects of corporal punishment will be linked to specific developmental assets both external and internal such as: Support (connections with caring adults; boundaries in family and educational settings, empowerment, and safety,

Suggestions for preventing and overcoming corporal punishment will be suggested and developed These will focus on engagement in learning experiences; equity and social justice; peaceful conflict resolution.

**Children Supporting Children and
the Adults They Will Become**


- * Goal: Supporting Young People in Becoming Enlightened Witnesses for Children ISOC in all schools and communities!
- * Goal: Support Young people in Making "It's NEVER ok to HIT A CHILD the NEW NORMAL.
- * Goal: Understanding the idea that children are active in interpreting and interacting with their world and that Corporal Punishment leads to coping not developing!

IN SUPPORT OF CHILDREN
A Student Organization

**Connecting Children to
Counter Violence and
Support Each Other**


The Beginning years
ISOC's History

In Support of Children was founded by Dr. Karen Polonko and the students in her Child Welfare class in 1991. Dr. Lombardo joined later.



In Support of Children
1992

The research on child abuse was so discouraging, we needed to find hope, to make a difference, and did we ever!



In Support of Children Motto

Research was clear that to stop children from being beaten and ultimately killed, we must stop all physical violence, especially “corporal punishment.”

20 years ago it was radical! Today it has international support—over 12,000 ISOC bumper stickers sold!

It's NEVER OK to HIT A CHILD
IN SUPPORT OF CHILDREN CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION UNIVERSITY OF SOCILOGY, NORFOLK, VA. 23502

Why Be Concerned about Corporal Punishment?
Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Environment – James Garbarino

RISKS ACCUMULATE (the more the greater the negative impacts on child)

SUPPORTS (DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS) AMELIORATE (have positive impact)

Corporal Punishment one of the Risks and one we have can control!

Corporal Punishment and Brain Development* (as Dr. Sanchez discussed)

Brain Development is 'use dependent': Protecting from pain and humiliation over develops lower parts of brain.

"States become traits" – repetitive CP makes the state of coping – become a "trait" – characteristic of child's behavior.

Learning (taking advantage of positive (DA's) social relationships, feelings, caring, empathy (higher parts of the brain) more difficult

This leads to more more problem coping behaviors (from adult point of view) and creates more problems and continues the cycle.

* Dr. Bruce Perry, Child Trauma Academy

Where is Corporal Punishment Hidden?

- * Behind the closed doors of homes, schools and other institutions
- * In laws that masks harm to a child as 'reasonable'
- * In a culture where hitting children for discipline and punishment is accepted
- * In religious sayings that provide justifications
- * In the excuses of stress, race or poverty
- * In the guilt and shame of childhood which prevents holding adults responsible for the harm they cause
- * **WE MUST LOOK AT THE PAIN (IMPACTS) OF CP DIRECTLY**

What Children Should be Doing: Children's Work

- * Corporal Punishment forces children to cope with pain, confusion, self-doubt, feelings of failure: fight / flight; harms relationships
- * Children should be developing, learning to build relationships, resolve conflicts amicably, support others, empower others

COPING WITH CP INTERFERES WITH CHILDREN'S WORK AND DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS (DA's)

<u>COPING WITH CP</u>	<u>CHILDREN'S WORK</u>
Looking for threat	Looking to Contribute
Disconnection	Connecting to Others
Powerlessness	Empower self and others
Self-Doubt	Self Confidence
Numbing Self and Other	In touch with emotions
Lack of Empathy	Empathy – Enlightened witness

Force Field Analysis: THE NEW NORMAL

It's NEVER ok to HIT A CHILD: Personal Contexts

OLD NORMAL (Adult Centered)

- * Short term - Control
- * Violence to children is Physical Harm
- * By-standers
- * Excuses Accepted (stress, culture, religion, race)
- * No-Hitting Norm Invisible
- * Ritualistic – Non-thinking
- * Don't know Alternatives
- * Devalue Childhood Experiences
- * Adults Don't learn form children
- * Deny impacts of hitting
- * Organizations and Professional Roles shy away from No-Hitting Position

NEW NORMAL (Child Centered)

- * Long Term – Grow and Develop
- * Violence "anything that interferes with Children's Work"
- * Enlightened Witnesses
- * No Excuses Accepted
- * No Hitting Norm Visible
- * Ritual linked to negative
- * Awareness of Alternatives
- * Value Childhood Experiences
- * Adults Engage and Learn from Children
- * Recognize impacts of hitting
- * Organizational and Professional Roles promote No Hitting position

Restraining Force #1: Lack of a Child Centered View:

Which Is the Longer Period of Life-Childhood or Adulthood?
MOST SAY ADULTHOOD – We can't see that:

Whatever Impedes Children's Work in Violence in Children's Lives

Figure 3

Models of Childhood in the Life-Span:

ADULT CENTERED MODEL: Devalues Childhood Experiences
Adulthood Longer: (one line broken up into two separate parts)

CHILD CENTERED MODEL: Values Childhood Experiences throughout life-span
Childhood longer (nearly overlaps with adulthood)

The Adverse Childhood Experience Study
Child Trauma Academy (Brain Development)
Life long Effects of Early Childhood Adversity and Toxic Stress (2012 PEDIATRICS)

Adult Centered
I'm OK,
Children Resilient
Hitting OK
Don't want to feel powerless, need power

Child Centered
Hitting me affected me
Children malleable
Hitting Wrong
Need to empower children

External D.A.: Support:

- * Connections with Caring Adults
- * Positive Family Communication
- * Caring Climate in Childcare and Education

EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- * Increased likelihood of acts of physical violence in adulthood against dating partners, spouses and their own children;
- * greater alienation
- * Counterfeit Nurturance

External DA: Boundaries in Families in Educational Settings

- * Consistent Supervision and reasonable guidelines
- * Positive approaches to discipline
- * Adult role models
- * Supportive and Non-threatening

EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- * Lack of Consistency between goals and actions
- * Negative role models
- * Adults perceived as threats and controlling power

External DA: Empowerment

- * Children / Childhood Valued
- * Children as Resources
- * Safety

EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- * Devalue childhood
- * Children to serve adults
- * Childhood a time of danger

* Mutual Moral Education Empowers children and parents

Internal DA: Commitment to Learning

- * Engagement
- * Bonding

EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- * Greater isolation
- * Difficulty bonding

Internal DA: Positive Values

- Caring / Empathy
- * Honesty
- * Responsibility
- * Self-Regulation

* EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- * Reduced empathy
- * Hide behavior likely to be perceived as negative
- * Shift responsibility to others
- * Need to be regulated by others

Internal DA: Social Competencies

- * Interpersonal Skills
- * Resistance Skills (Sense danger*)
- * Peaceful Conflict Resolution

* EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- * Lack of interpersonal skills
- * Hyper-sensitivity to threats
- * Resolve conflicts by use of threats and violence

DA: Positive Identity

- * Personal sense of influence
- * Sense of Purpose
- * Self-Esteem
- * Positive view of personal future

* EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

- * Reduced sense of efficacy
- * Lack of goals
- * Lower self-esteem
- * Negative view of future

**ISOC MISSION
OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS**

ISOC as a service organization is committed:

- To prevent all forms of child maltreatment, with a particular focus on corporal punishment of children
- To promote positive parenting techniques.
- To work with children and fight for their rights
- To Serve the Old Dominion University and the wider Hampton Roads Communities.

**ISOC resolves to make a difference:
WE DID IT ALL!**


The founding group of students committed every SATURDAY that semester to getting our mission, goals and motto and then spreading the word:

- papering every car at Toys R Us with the message;
- setting up presentations at Malls!,
- lobbying radio stations;

Looking over the years
ISOC's accomplishments

In 1994 In Support of Children sponsored the Child Abuse Prevention Fair at Mount Trashmore (a park in Virginia Beach, Va.)

This was ISOC's first major event. Over 15,000 people attended!



ISOC Outreach Materials



- **ISOC has produced many outreach materials including:**
- **Directory of Resources for Children pamphlet**
- **Parenting from the Heart pamphlet**
- **T-Shirts & Pants**
- **Bumper Stickers & Buttons**


ISOC Never Stops:

Outreach to Spread the word about child abuse

- Pen-Pals In Bedford Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brook
- Candle Light Vigils
- Child Abuse Extravaganza
- International SPANKOUT DAY
- International Children's Day
- Educational Mission Lecture Series
- World Peace Lectures at Friends School
- Presentations at Barry Robinson Center



Annual Candle Light Vigil



In January of 2006, a horrific story caught the attention of the members of ISOC. A young girl named Nixzmary Brown had been abused and tortured to death at the hands of her parents. In February 2006, ISOC held a candle light vigil in honor of Nixzmary and all victims of child abuse. In 2012 ISOC had its 7th Annual Vigil.

PHOTO BY CHRIS THOMAS
A LIGHT FOR THE CHILDREN
 Leana Loshkova, a junior majoring in sociology and criminal justice from Russia, lights a candle with Scott Eckes, a 2005 graduate. The candlelight vigil was held outside of Batten Arts and Letters Wednesday night in support of children and victims of child abuse. In 2004, 29 children died as a result of child abuse in the state of Virginia.

Spank Out Day and Celebrating Children at Mt. Trashmore in Virginia Beach



ISOC Participates in INTERNATIONAL SPANK OUT DAY activities: a program begun by EPOCH USA in 1998. Groups around the world participate.

Child Abuse Prevention Extravaganza April 2008



Children engaged in craft activities with ISOC student volunteers



Children watching "Knock, Knock, Who's There?" a Child Abuse Prevention puppet show by Spectrum Puppets

ISOC's Involvement at Old Dominion University

In Support of Children also supports ODU, participating for example in the following ODU events:

- Homecoming
- Relay for Life
- Spring Fair
- Mainstreet
- Spirit Days
- International Festival
- And so much more!



