

Sticks and Stones: The Effects Of Corporal Punishment On Children

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Abstract

Over time, society's approach to corporal punishment has changed dramatically. Some firmly believe that physically disciplining children leads to damaging results later in life. It may lead them to become more aggressive, reclusive and antisocial. Moreover, many believe physical punishment can have detrimental effects on the mental health of children who are subjected to it. However, alternatively, some view physical punishment as an effective deterrent for undesirable behaviour. This project explores the psychological impact of corporal punishment on children. Through conducting a review of literature, the results conclude that corporal punishment is psychologically damaging for kids.



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Implications

This has major implications with regards to parenting practices as a whole and could affect future literature on parenting that may have previously held a more neutral stance on certain forms of corporal punishment. The psychological effects of corporal punishment can be long-term and irreversible. This claim could give grounds to make adjustments to not only child abuse laws, but human rights laws. Harsher punishments could be enforced for abusing one's children and could lead to changing the definition of what constitutes as abuse or a human rights violation. Furthermore, it could lead to a cultural shift in the way corporal punishment is seen in society, and as a result lead to a decline in its use.

What Is Corporal Punishment?

In the context of this research essay, corporal punishment is defined as the administering of some level of physical pain as a means of punishment for disobedience by a recognized authority figure.

Methods

The methods used for this project was an in-depth literature review of previously done research in order to come to a conclusion about whether corporal punishment truly is damaging to children. Some of the sources used were material from York University's Scott library, and others were retrieved from online scholarly research databases such as PsycInfo. In total, 6 different sources are utilized in the research essay with vary opinions and viewpoints.

Results

The results of the research are that corporal punishment is psychologically damaging for children. Research found through a literature review shows corporal punishment is correlated with abusive and maladaptive behaviour. It shows correlations between corporal punishment and later spousal abuse. Moreover, corporal punishment was shown to be correlated with behavioural problems in adolescence as well. Not only are there long-term effects, but the short-term effects are detrimental as well. Research also shows that corporal punishment causes restricted cognitive development in young children. In conclusion, the evidence resoundingly points to the conclusion that corporal punishment is psychologically damaging for kids.



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