

Spanking

Abuse or Discipline?

Is spanking abuse or discipline? Many parents use spanking as a discipline tool. Many others believe it is a type of child abuse. The American Academy of Pediatrics stated that parents should *not* spank their children. They believe spanking may be emotionally harmful to the parent and the child. It might cause problems with developing trust, security, and effective communication, too. The advantages of spanking are not clear. Some research shows there are harmful, long lasting emotional effects. But there is also research that shows spanking might be useful for some children.

Spanking is NOT:

- Slapping a child across the face
- Striking a child's arms, legs, back, stomach, chest, or face
- Shaking or choking a child
- Throwing things at a child
- Kicking a child

Alternatives to Spanking:

- Give your child a choice to stop the inappropriate behavior or stop participating in the activity (child can stop throwing grapes at sister or lose the privilege of eating grapes)
- Make the punishment fit the crime (example: breaks brother's toy after being asked not to play with it—take money of his/her own piggy bank to purchase another toy)
- Give yourself a little time away from your child—so you can calm down and think logically instead of emotionally
- Be an informed parent—read books and ask others about different discipline techniques

Books for Parents to Read

Positive Discipline for Preschoolers, Age Three to Six: For Their Early Years—Raising Children Who Are Responsible, Respectful, and Resourceful by Jane Nelson, Cheryl Erwin, and Roslyn Duffy

Loving Your Child is Not Enough by Nancy Samalin with Martha Moraghan Jablow

On Becoming a Childwise Parent: Parenting Your Child from 3 to 7 Years by Gary Ezzo and Robert Buckham.

Sources:

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