NO HIT ZONES

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Institute for Child Abuse Prevention
CHILD ABUSE PEDIATRICIAN

- We see victims of physical abuse regularly
- Let’s prevent that
- NHZs – one tactic in changing social norms
SOCIAL NORMS

DOES ANYONE KNOW WHERE WE KEEP THE UNWRITTEN RULES?
SOCIAL NORMS CHANGE

- Change is not “natural” for everyone
- Resistance is strong but ultimately futile
- Examples:
  - Civil rights
  - No smoking areas
  - Gay marriage
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
DEFINITIONS

- Spanking: hitting with a hand or object with the stated intent of causing pain and therefore discipline

- Corporal or physical punishment: spanking and any other physical hitting with the stated intent of causing pain and therefore discipline
WORDS PEOPLE USE TO FEEL BETTER?

- Spanking
- Pop
- Tap
- Discipline

- All = hitting
ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO ADULT HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

A collaborative effort of Kaiser Permanente and The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.acestudy.org
SPANKING AS PART OF THE ORIGINAL ACE STUDY

- CDC – Kaiser ACE Wave II study data. N = 8316
- “Sometimes parents spank their children as a form of discipline. While you were growing up during your first 18 years of life how often were you spanked?”
- Spanking was coded as a “yes” if more than a few times per year
- 54.8% of the respondents reported being spanked
SPANKING AS PART OF THE ORIGINAL ACE STUDY

• Spanking was compared to adult mental health impairment (ACE-Related Health Conditions)
• Beyond the ACE categories of physical abuse and emotional abuse alone, spanking increased the odds of:
  • Suicide attempts
  • Moderate to heavy drinking
  • Use of street drugs
SPANKING AS PART OF THE ORIGINAL ACE STUDY

· Spanking accounted for additional statistical model variance beyond physical and emotional abuse

RESEARCH ON SPANKING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERVENTION

Elizabeth Gershoff, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Human Development & Family Sciences
The University of Texas at Austin
Importantly, there are no studies indicating that hitting a child as a means of discipline is beneficial for the child.
Does spanking by parents improve children’s behavior?

- 75 studies, over 50 years, from 13 different countries
- 160,927 children were included
DOES SPANKING BY PARENTS IMPROVE CHILDREN’S BEHAVIOR?

- Spanking does not make children more compliant in the short term.

  Spanking is also not linked with reductions in aggression or antisocial behavior.

  Spanking is not linked with long-term compliance or internalization of morals.
DOES SPANKING BY PARENTS IMPROVE CHILDREN’S BEHAVIOR?

Instead, spanking is linked with worse, not better, behavior in children.

In our meta-analyses, we found that spanking was associated with significantly more aggression and antisocial behavior problems.

None of the studies showed a link between spanking and better behavior.
IS SPANKING LINKED WITH UNINTENDED NEGATIVE OUTCOMES IN CHILDHOOD?

Our meta-analyses revealed that spanking is linked with several unintended outcomes:

- Mental health problems
- Difficult relationships with parents
- Lower self-esteem
- Lower academic performance
Our meta-analyses revealed that adults who report a history of spanking in childhood report:

- More mental health problems
- More antisocial behavior
- More positive attitudes about and use of corporal punishment with their own children.
  - Cycle of violence from generation to generation.
ARE SPANKING AND PHYSICAL ABUSE CONNECTED?

- Spanking is hitting.
- Research has repeatedly found that the more parents spank, the greater the risk that they will injury or abuse their children.
- The association between spanking and child outcomes is two-thirds the size of the association between abusive or injurious hitting and the same outcomes.
- 75% of physical abuse cases in Canada started as corporal punishment to correct a perceived child misbehavior.
TRENDS ABOUT SPANKING
STATEMENTS

- American Academy of Pediatrics
  https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/142/6/e20183112

- APA
  https://www.apa.org/about/policy/corporal-punishment

- UN Convention on the Rights of Children
Opportunity for Norms Change

Corporal Punishment

In 63 countries, children are protected by law from all corporal punishment.

There is emerging evidence it works to reduce violence and perhaps enhance well-being.

Thought to decrease the crime rate in Europe.
COUNTRIES BANNING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
(AS OF NOW)

63 countries

3 North American counties = Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua

First: Sweden 1979

Last: Columbia, Korea 2001

But probably out of date soon if not already!
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BANS AROUND THE WORLD
Figure. Trend in Prevalence of Spanking Within the Past Year Among US Parents at Modal Age 35 Years From 1993 to 2017
Reduced Prefrontal Cortical Gray Matter Volume in Young Adults Exposed to Harsh Corporal Punishment

Akemi Tomoda, MD, PhD\textsuperscript{1,2,3}, Hanako Suzuki, MA\textsuperscript{2,3}, Keren Rabi, MA\textsuperscript{2}, Yi-Shin Sheu, BS\textsuperscript{2}, Ann Polcari, PhD\textsuperscript{1,2}, and Martin H. Teicher, MD\textsuperscript{1,2}

\textsuperscript{1} Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, USA

Defined Harsh Corporal punishment:
- 12x per year for at least 3 years
- object used 1x/year such as belt, hairbrush, or paddle
- disciplinarian was a custodial adult

Excluded:
- physical abuse that resulted in injury
- CP used for discipline, with parents in emotional control, and not striking out in anger

Results—Gray Matter was reduced by
- 19.1\% in the right medial frontal
- 14.5\% in the left medial frontal
- 16.9\% in the right anterior

-Significant correlations between these regions and performance IQ on the WAIS-II
NO HIT ZONES

• Sometimes called “Hit Free Zones”

• Spanking is hitting
History of Hit Free Zones

- 1st “No Hit Zone” established in 2005 at Rainbow Children’s in Cleveland, Ohio

- Currently, many hospitals with established No Hit Zones

- Many more hospitals and other organizations establishing programs
IMPLEMENTATION

• Signage
• Policy if applicable
• Train the staff about what this is
• APSAC Advisor article (Google search is easiest)

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4700a8_9e3d91c8fcae403b8eeb43ab2362e42a.pdf
EXAMPLES OF SIGNAGE
POSTER EXAMPLES

NOTE THE REFERAL TO A WEBSITE ABOUT ALTERNATIVES

We are a Hit-Free Zone.

That means we won’t tolerate:
• An adult hitting a child.
• An adult hitting another adult.
• A child hitting an adult.
• A child hitting another child.

I am little and am still learning.
Love me. Don’t hit me.

Find out more about positive parenting solutions at wolfsonchildrens.org/positiveparenting

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Find out more about positive parenting solutions at wolfsonchildrens.org/positiveparenting
This is a "No Hit Zone."
A "No Hit Zone" is an environment in which:

- No adult shall hit another adult.
- No adult shall hit a child.
- No child shall hit an adult.
- No child shall hit another child.

Staff members are happy to speak with you if you have questions or would like more information.

The "No Hit Zone" program was jointly created by:

- UofL School of Medicine
- Norton Children's Hospital

Thanks to Kelly Dauk MD and Erin Frasier MD

Norton Hospital and University of Louisville poster and brochure
You are entering a NO HIT ZONE

A NO HIT ZONE is a safe place where no adult hits a child, no adult hits another adult, no child hits an adult, and no child hits another child.

Bruises fade and disappear, but the emotional effects may be remembered forever.

Do Not Hit
Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital is proud to be a No Hit Zone.

This message is on behalf of Child Protection Medicine at Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital.

Thanks to Debra Jenssen and Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital
Hit Free Zone

This facility is a Hit Free Zone

When you are here:

• Adults will not hit another adult
• Adults will not hit a child
• Children will not hit an adult
• Children will not hit another child
• People will not hit animals

Staff members are happy to speak with you if you have questions or for more information
POSTER EXAMPLES

NOTE THE REFERAL TO A WEBSITE ABOUT ALTERNATIVES

I might cry, melt down and sass. But I am little and still learning. Love me. Don't hit me.

Learn other effective ways to discipline at uwhealthkids.org/hittinghurts
Floor stands
11 x 17

17 x 11 sign
$70 each
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

We are a Hit-Free Zone.

That means we won't tolerate:
- An adult hitting a child.
- An adult hitting another adult.
- A child hitting an adult.
- A child hitting another child.

Love me. Don't hit me.

ELDER ABUSE

We are a Hit-Free Zone.

That means we won't tolerate:
- An adult hitting a child.
- An adult hitting another adult.
- A child hitting an adult.
- A child hitting another child.

Love me. Don't hit me.
TEACHING THE STAFF
ELEMENTS OF A HIT FREE ZONE

- Team member education/engagement
- Distraction tools/training on de-escalation
- Hospital website and brochure to include local and online resources for parents related to positive parenting and non-physical discipline techniques
- Posters/clings
- Brochures
- Social Media
Hit Free Zone
Purpose:
To create and reinforce an environment of comfort and safety for patients, families and staff working at our facility.

Hit Free Zone, an environment in which:
- No adult shall hit a child
- No adult shall hit another adult
- No child shall hit an adult
- No child shall hit another child
Why A Hit Free Zone

Patients and families who present to Wolfson Children’s Hospital are often experiencing high levels of:

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Uncertainty
- Confusion
- Lower tolerance for frustration, especially when faced with perceived problematic behaviors by their children

In these situations adults may become:

- Angry
- Raise their voice
- Hit a child/another adult
WHAT DOES A NHZ ORGANIZATION HAVE TO DO?

- Create a mission statement by becoming a NHZ
- Publically display posters, floor talkers, etc. to alert patients and public
- Teach staff about NHZs and how to de-escalate situations they may encounter
- Staff may be able to provide families with alternatives to hitting through brochures or other means.
Staff Education
Scripting Examples

“You have been waiting for awhile. Let me check and see how much longer it will be?

“Most 2-year olds are not able to sit still/remain quiet for long periods of time. I have something that might help distract him/her?

“For the safety and well-being of everyone here, UW-Health is a NO HIT ZONE. We ask that you do not hit, so that everyone can feel safe and comfortable while here.”
RESOURCES
Age Appropriate Distraction
Packets

3-6 years

7-10 years
TOOLKIT

https://nohitzone.com/no-hit-zone-toolkit

- Sample policies
- Training resources
- Materials and signage
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>No Hit Zone Development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Concept</td>
<td>At least one person formulating plan on how the organization can implement the NHZ. Lead person has discussed creating a NHZ with other colleagues within their organization. Have attended a NHZ presentation and/or established communication with other NHZs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Progress</td>
<td>More than one person working on the NHZ. Working on an implementation plan to develop materials and training. Gained support for implementation from organizational leadership. Communication with other NHZs (e.g. listserv and private Facebook group)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Basic</td>
<td>Training underway for personnel. On-going training plan. Signage and other declaration that the facility/organization is a NHZ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Complete</td>
<td>Established training of all staff and training for new staff. Prominent signage and notification that the facility/organization is a NHZ. At least one person has NHZ as part of their job description. Community awareness that facility is a NHZ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Regional</td>
<td>Established organized training of all staff and training for new staff. Prominent signage and notification that the facility/organization is a NHZ. At least one person has NHZ as part of their job description. Community awareness that facility/organization is a NHZ. Provides outreach education about NHZ. Enlists other organizations in the community/region to be a NHZ.</td>
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BEYOND HOSPITALS: SEVERAL EXAMPLES

1. Dane County WI Prosecutor’s Office
2. Jacksonville FL Medical Examiner’s Office
3. All catholic schools in New Orleans
4. County health departments around Norfolk VA
5. All Child Advocacy Centers in Florida
6. First Coast Child Protection Team – 8 counties in FL
No Hit Cities

Stoughton, WI
• City Council unanimously passed a “No Hit Zone” resolution for all city buildings.
  • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6Xjs6xXpSo

Madison Heights, MI
• no spanking at 10 city-owned properties
• all designated as "no hit" zones.
PLAN FOR OTHER PLACES

- Every social services agency in town be a NHZ
- How about Target and Walmart?
- Other places?
- No Hit Homes
NO HIT ZONES

- Media attention
- Like smoking cessation, sometimes it begins with incremental actions
- Contact me
- Randell.alexander@jax.ufl.edu if you want to join in the effort
APSAC Advisor special issue – includes how to set up a NHZ

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/4700a8_b123146033a84695a9e90ad414233d56.pdf

randell.alexander@jax.ufl.edu
ADDITIONAL REFERENCES


