

Alternatives to Spanking

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“Spanking children is an old, outdated parenting practice that has proven failure in helping children learn appropriate behavior. Current research on the development of children’s brains has also shown that hitting children has a detrimental impact on their positive brain development. Repeatedly hitting children whether on the buttocks, face, hands, legs and other parts of the body is linked to the creation of diseased neurological networks causing the children to become angry, stressed and violent. In spite of decades of research alerting parents and other adults to the developmental destructiveness of hitting children, the practice continues today.” The Nurturing Program

It is common place still today.....in every culture.....and ultimately it teaches a child to be sneaky...afraid of the adult doing the spanking, and violent themselves. It does not teach that the considered “bad behavior” is really bad. It does teach, don’t do it where you might get caught. It does look like the parents have them under control....for awhile...it is a deception. It also teaches the child that a parent thinks they are bad. A terrible message to convey over and over....one which negatively impacts their ability to have healthy relationships later in life.

So what else can a parent do? Kids do need to learn right from wrong? The Nurturing Program offers the following ideas:

Loss of Privilege....which is granted by a parent

Grounding....lessens their social space and time

Parental Disappointment....a real emotional response

Restitution....or payback...make good of the wrong

Ignoring...another communication of disapproval

(never for harm to a person or property)

Verbal and Physical Redirection...communicates what is right

Time Out...a time for a child to consider what they have done

It’s important to know that these are all tools in a tool box that can be used at varying times with different children. They may not always work or with every child. But they are solutions that actually teach right from wrong and open a dialogue where the parent is truly a teacher and the child can internalize the message in order to control themselves in the future. That is ultimately the goal!