



February 01, 2023

HB 185 - SUPPORT

Nonpublic Schools and Child Care Providers - Corporal Punishment - Prohibition

Dear Chai Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Washington, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) strengthened its call to ban corporal punishment within an updated policy statement, "Effective Discipline to Raise Healthy Children," during the group's 2018 National Conference. AAP also opposes corporal punishment in schools, which is addressed in a separate policy statement published in 2000. Similarly, since 1975 the American Psychological Association "opposes the use of corporal punishment in schools, juvenile facilities, child care nurseries, and all other institutions, public or private, where children are cared for or educated . American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatr "The American Academy "oposes the use of corporal punishment in schools and takes issue with laws in some states legalizing such corporal punishment and protecting adults who use it from prosecution for child abuse. The Academy joins with the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the American Medical Association, the National Education Association, the American Bar Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and other groups calling for an end to this form of punishment."

There is strong and sophisticated longitudinal research that finds physical discipline does not improve behavior and can lead to emotional, behavioral and academic problems over time, even after race, gender and family socioeconomic status have been statistically controlled. The research finds that hitting children does not teach them about responsibility, conscience development and self-control. Researchers found that spanking can elevate a child's aggression levels as well as diminish the quality of the adult-child relationship. Other studies have documented that physical discipline can escalate into abuse. The evidence links corporal punishment with numerous adverse effects including aggression, antisocial behavior, anxiety, and depression in children.

More effective alternatives draw broadly on respectful communication, collaborative

conflict resolution, allowing natural consequences to instruct the child (along with explanations when necessary), and parental modeling. Specifically, these approaches could include conveying anxiety about a dangerous action, taking away privileges or using praise to shape behavior. Professionals say the key to discipline include: communication, respect, consistency, moving on after the punishment is complete, matching discipline to the age of the child, and learning how to recognize when there may be some external factor driving a behaviour , such as being hungry or being bullied at school.

Mathew Goldstein
3838 Early Glow Ln
Bowie, MD