



Spring 2021 Newsletter

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✚ **Hit No More Media Contest - 2021**

The *U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children* will soon be announcing the second "Hit No More" media contest. The focus of this year's contest will be on school corporal punishment (CP). The goal is to inspire innovative social media creations (videos, memes, posters, photographs) that can be used in the national campaign to change attitudes, beliefs, and behavior about hitting children. Two types of entries will be accepted: short videos and memes. Prize money will be awarded.

The contest will open this summer. To see the rules, as well as to view past contest winners, go to www.endhitting.org Questions? Contact gholden@endhitting.org

✚ **Update on Countries that have Banned Corporal Punishment**



The countries of **Japan**, **Seychelles**, **Guinea**, and the **Republic of Korea** are those that have most recently enacted legislation to prohibit CP by law. Currently 62 countries have full prohibition of physical punishment. For more information, visit the website **End Corporal Punishment**, an initiative of the *Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children*: <https://endcorporalpunishment.org/countdown/>

✚ **Other International News**

1. In **January 2020**, lawmakers in **Wales** voted to ban the CP of children, and this will become effective in **January 2022**. **Scotland** became the second country in the United Kingdom to legally ban the CP of children, effective in **November 2020**. There is no news regarding whether other countries in the United Kingdom, England or Northern Ireland, plan to follow suit. For more information: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-54825151>
2. In **September 2020**, lawmakers in **Mexico** enacted an "anti-chancla" law, i.e., parents who use "la chancla" (a rubber flip-flop beach sandal) to hit their child face up to five years in prison: <https://thecostaricanews.com/mexico-passes-an-anti-chancla-law-to-prohibit-physical-punishment-of-children-and-adolescents/> Further, in **December 2020**, the General Law on the Rights of Children and Adolescents 2014 was amended to prohibit CP of children and adolescents in all settings. However, the law still needs to be ratified to be fully enacted. See these links for more information: <https://mexiconewsdaily.com/news/senate-approves-new-law-prohibiting-corporal-punishment-against-children/>

<https://endcorporalpunishment.org/reports-on-every-state-and-territory/mexico/>

3. As of **February 2021**, a ban on CP of children is pending in **Pakistan**. More specifically, a bill has been passed to ban all forms of CP “however light” at the workplace, public and private schools and day care, foster care settings, rehabilitation centers and any other alternative care settings. The proposed law now goes to the Senate for approval. See this link for more information: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1608981>
4. As of **March 1, 2021**, lawmakers in **China** enacted a ban on CP in schools, as well as any type of verbal discipline that could be humiliating for the child. China outlawed CP in 1986, but officials have now focused on the ban of hitting children in schools after several children died of injuries related to harsh CP meted out at school. <https://news.yahoo.com/china-bans-harsh-punishments-schools-130717828.html?guccounter=1>
5. As of **March 2021**, the **Flemish** socialist party has introduced a bill to legally ban the CP of children by parents, including spanking on the bottom and a slap or tap on the cheek. See this link for more information: <https://www.brusselstimes.com/news/belgium-all-news/159586/legally-ban-spanking-small-slaps-on-the-cheek-of-children-flemish-socialist-party-spa-corporal-punishment-belgium-karin-jirofflee-federal-parliament-eu-italy-czech-republic/>

🇺🇸 U.S. News: An Effort to Eliminate School Corporal Punishment in One State

In 2021, CP is still legal in the United States, and notably, is still allowed in schools in nineteen states. However, Kentucky State Rep. Steve Riley, R-Glasgow, filed House Bill 134 ahead of the 2021 Kentucky General Assembly session that seeks to ban school district employees, including coaches, from using CP on any student. For more information: <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/politics/ky-general-assembly/2021/01/05/kentucky-lawmaker-tries-again-ban-paddling-corporal-punishment-schools/4140075001/>

Also, please see the section in this newsletter that describes the efforts of Tate Aldrich, an Arkansas teacher who seeks to ban CP in all schools.



🇺🇸 Study on the Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Use of Corporal Punishment

Various media outlets have reported that the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic could be a potential risk factor for increased rates of CP and child abuse, citing social isolation, financial stress, fear, uncertainty and even grief. An article that went online in January, 2021, bears this out. Shawna Lee and her colleagues (2021) surveyed 283 adults in March 2020 and found that parents' perceived social isolation, loss of employment and resultant financial stress were associated with self-reported increased use of physical and emotional neglect, verbal aggression toward the child and increased spanking, even when controlling for parental depression and socio-economic status.

Citation: Lee, S.J., Ward, K.P., Lee, J. Y. & Rodriguez, C. M.(2021). Parental social isolation and child maltreatment risk during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Family Violence*, doi.org/10.1007/s10896-020-00244-3.

No Hit Zones: Invitation and Resources

We encourage all family homes, schools, hospitals, religious institutions, communities--anyone who is committed to non-violent discipline--to become a No-Hit Zone. This means no adult shall hit a child, no child shall hit another child, no adult shall hit another adult, and no child shall hit an adult. For more information and steps to take, visit the No Hit Zone website: <https://nohitzone.com/>

You can also become a No-Hit Zone Advocate as an individual or organization and display this gold seal on your email and website <https://nohitzone.com/become-a-certified-advocate/>



No Spank Challenge: Pandemic Parenting Events!

The 6th annual *No Spank Challenge*, called "Pandemic Parenting" will be online from April 20-24. It will consist of a series of events designed to help parents deal with the stressors associated with childrearing during a pandemic. The effectiveness of the events will be studied. Contact Robbyn Peters Bennett for more information at robbypeters@outlook.com. Register at: <https://event.stopspanking.org/a/46212/hDNZKYhX>

The *Pandemic Parenting* events could have only happened with the generous donation of Harris Kirk! Along with his contribution, the funds were doubled by the contribution of the *U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children*, the *NY Foundling*, *Generation Mindful*, *Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center*, and *Teach-Through-Love*. THANK YOU to the generosity and commitment of our allies in the movement!

✚ Feature Article: Nadine Block, Founder of *The Center for Effective Discipline*, Describing her Work and Books



Editor's note: Below is an article by Nadine Block, condensed for this newsletter. One of Nadine's books is available for free on her website (www.nadineblock.com). The profits from all of Ms. Block's books are generously donated by her to the *U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children*.

From the mid 1980's until 2010, I was active in campaigning against corporal punishment of children. Not much has changed regarding laws protecting children since I retired. Only New Mexico was added to the list of school corporal punishment bans (2011). We need to get school corporal punishment banned in the nineteen states that still permit it and get laws passed protecting children in all settings including homes.

I served as the director of the Center for Effective Discipline founded in 1987 and led the legislative fight in Ohio which finally ended with a ban in 2009. I memorialized the campaign in the book, *Breaking the Paddle: Ending School Corporal Punishment*. I published another book, *This Hurts Me More than It Hurts You: In Words and Pictures Children Share How Spanking Hurts and What To Do Instead* (with Madeleine Gomez as a co-editor). The book is written and illustrated by children who share how spanking does not result in behavior parents and teachers want but rather leads to pain, anger, humiliation and a continuation of a cycle of violence. My newest book, *Remembering Rosie: Memories of a Wisconsin Farm Girl* has just been posted on Amazon, Barnes and Nobles, and other outlets. It is the story of my childhood on dairy farm, the idyllic parts and not so idyllic parts.

I am hopeful that we will see more action on ending school corporal punishment in Congress soon. Like many of you, I will be trying to get my state legislators to co-sponsor the bills. I remember Adah Maurer (a longtime activist), now deceased, telling me that corporal punishment in U.S. schools would be banned by the year 2000. I am waiting.



✚ Interview with Tate Aldrich, Award Winning Arkansas Teacher, about his Work to Ban Corporal Punishment in Schools



Mr. Tate Aldrich is launching a new endeavor, ***Arkansans Against School Paddling***, and will be working under the umbrella of the *U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children* to raise funds, awareness, and political advocacy to end school corporal punishment in Arkansas. Mr. Aldrich is currently a faculty member in the English Department of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville and was named **New Hampshire Teacher of The Year** in **2017**. Note: This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

1. What was the impetus for you to begin to work toward stopping paddling in schools?

In 2018, I moved to southern Arkansas from New Hampshire to teach high school and became immersed in the community. I was quite taken aback at the social acceptability of violence and how it seemed to permeate day-to-day life. I observed this in simple conversations with teens and adults, the use of violent language and the dismissiveness of the consequences of violence. I also noticed that this included leisure and recreation – there was a lot of talk about guns and hunting. I did not know what to do; I had no experience with this sort of normalization of violence. I knew I could not say anything because I was perceived as an outsider because I was new to the area and to the school. But the ubiquity of casual violence made me want to learn as much as I could about this. So, I read as much as I could, and I happened upon Robbyn Peters Bennett’s Ted Talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLMJHdySgE8>

And I watched it and it affirmed everything I believed in. It gave me the language I needed to articulate what I came to learn to be true. Robbyn’s words were like a mentoring to me. I had been angered by school policies, parenting styles, the general vernacular around me that normalized violence against children. And I was often indignant. I was upset all the time, beating my head against the wall. And Robbyn really taught me the historical root causes of violence, including institutionalized violence and the cycles of intergenerational trauma. And she taught me that indignation does nothing for change. So, I spent the next couple of years just learning and reading and listening, connecting, and planning.

Now that I am out of the public school system and into the University system, I feel that I have more autonomy and voice to talk about education policy, so I decided to start this organization called ***Arkansans Against School Paddling*** to see what we can do, to have a seat at the table during a legislative process.

2. Can you tell me about the process of forming *Arkansans Against School Paddling*?

I believed I experienced culture shock coming from New Hampshire because it is so culturally and racially homogeneous. I did not know that parents still spanked their kids. I thought that was something that happened in old black and white movies. I did not think that that happened anymore, let alone in schools. It felt very awkward, I was very shocked. I did not have the language for this. I did not know what whooping meant. I felt that all of this was very deeply uncomfortable, and I had no idea how to engage or process this. I also learned the euphemisms used to describe violence and excuse the behavior in the mind of the perpetrator. So, when I would try to have conversations with people and say, you mean you actually hit your kids and they would say no, I don't hit them, I spank them.

I published a piece in [Education Post](#) about navigating the conversation about CP because frequently, people offer talking points to deflect, justify or excuse hitting children. I found that educators, parents, and others in the community also become uncomfortable talking about hitting children and then just do not engage. And I have learned that this just relates to their own trauma and socialization about the acceptability of hitting children. I do not want to trigger anyone's familial legacy of violence. It will only undermine my work in banning CP.

My major focus right now is with school boards, because as I have calculated, sixty-seven percent of school boards in Arkansas have CP specifically referenced in their handbooks. I have also learned that the language about CP is lifted right from the state policy which is problematic because it is just legalese to hide behind, meaning that it is not specific whatsoever. There are a lot of gray areas and this leaves an opening for administrators and teachers to do what they want. But then there *IS* some language that is specific. For example, in about 10 of the handbooks that I have read so far use language such as the number of licks or swats a child should receive based on their age, gender and size. To me, this means that the adult intentionally trying to inflict pain. Further, many of the handbooks provide for an option to refuse CP, but the option is for the child to receive a five-day out of school suspension with no option to make up class work, so it is a false choice. I found this to be arbitrary and manipulative.

My next step is to curate the data. I plan on publishing specific school district names and their respective handbooks starting on May 14th because many school districts work on revising the school handbook during the summer to get it ready for publication in September. I want to stress that this will be done in a very tactful and strategic way. We are not interested in shaming anyone. We want to stress, however, that we are all interconnected. The fact that children are hit at school is not just something that is an issue locally, it affects all of us because of the effect it has on the perpetuation of transgenerational trauma and that harms us all.

Then I am going to publish and disseminate a book about CP and its dangers and give it to school administrators because there are numerous administrators who do not feel comfortable paddling kids, but the school board and parents want it in the handbook. It is the school board that approves the handbook, members of the community who are on the board and they have input into its content, and this can be problematic. School board members do not have any background in education, learning styles, and sometimes they make suggestions based on opinion and personal experience. Also, children trying to learn under the threat of potentially being the victim of violence is something that children in other states do not have to deal with. This has its own trauma.

3. How has your endeavor been received by school administration, teachers, and parents?

We will not formally launch the website until mid-May, so I have yet to see. I am sure there will be some discomfort because it is such a change. Again, I do know that there are school administrators that are paddling kids, and they do not want to do that. It goes against their personal beliefs, but it is school policy, so they must do it. It is what their community and school board want. We want to help provide them with the language and the research to change the minds of the school board and other community stakeholders.

We are also hoping to influence school board members. School boards are not typically proactive or focused on the latest research trends in education or know about the effects of trauma on children and families. Instead of being proactive, they spend their time reacting to problems as they occur. So, it is unlikely that they are going to spend their time and effort working on a problem such as CP in schools if no one is complaining about it. So, our job as *Arkansans Against School Paddling* is to engage those school boards and through our work in social media and publishing the school CP data as well as the data regarding why paddling children at school is harmful, we can get school boards to promote that change in the handbook.

4. In your opinion, what are the main reasons that you face resistance to ending school paddling?

It is difficult for many parents, teachers, school administrators and school board members to change decades of tradition and beliefs. In most schools, hitting children as a method of discipline is so ingrained in tradition and culture that it is not critically examined; therefore, no change is desired. Couple that with traditions of family violence intergenerational transmission of trauma, plus intergenerational cycles of poverty and racism, it becomes an exceedingly difficult issue to address. In addition, I believe that some religious beliefs are a factor. Many of the parents, educators and school board members attend Sunday services where they hear the preacher state that hitting children is acceptable and sanctioned by the Bible. So, there are several reasons that adults resist policies to end school paddling. I consider school paddling state-sanctioned violence. I feel strongly that it needs to be called what it is; it is violence. And if we do not face this head on, it only perpetuates the problem. I cannot stand to see children subjected to state sanctioned violence. The children are too wonderful and too full of promise to ever be subjected to that.

5. What is your advice for other teachers who are committed to ending CP in schools and wish to start their own program to end school CP?

Where I taught, I did not encounter any teachers who questioned the use of CP because it was the norm. I reflected on that after I left and thought that it is quite possible that teachers do not think about hitting children, because if they dug deep and really thought about what it means to hit a child, they would be complicit. So, there is this cognitive dissonance, which is even more interesting to me, because as educators, fostering critical thinking and teaching students to think dialectically is the essence of what we do. Also, as educators, we live on data – it is what we do. And there is absolutely no positive data on the use of CP in any setting. However, it is related to a lack of success in the classroom. I am hoping that information on our website and social media will change people's minds.

Arkansans Against School Paddling will be launching a website in May 2021. Go to BanPaddlingAR.com now and sign up for the newsletter.

Join their Facebook page: **Arkansans Against School Paddling**

Follow **Arkansans Against School Paddling** on Twitter: **@BanPaddlingAR**

Join the Movement!

With this ban we can help every child in Arkansas achieve academic success without the risk of trauma induced by violence or repeated threats of violence.

U.S. ALLIANCE TO END THE HITTING OF CHILDREN

@BanPaddlingAR

ARKANSANS AGAINST SCHOOL PADDLING

We're lending our **voice** to a demographic that **historically** has been rendered **voiceless**. We're standing up for children.

ARKANSANS AGAINST SCHOOL PADDLING

#breakthecycle
#banschoolpaddling

AASP Annual Education Resource Giveaway!

67% of School Districts in Arkansas Endorse Paddling Students

districts that endorse hitting children (67%)

districts that prohibit hitting children (33%)

ARKANSANS AGAINST SCHOOL PADDLING

2020-2021 District Handbooks

We are pleased to announce that the 176 Arkansas School Districts that still endorse paddling students will be provided a FREE AASP Toolkit with all the information necessary to change their policies.

Is your school district one of our recipients? Find out when we Tweet the entire list, STARTING May 14th!

BanPaddlingAR.com

@BanPaddlingAR

 **Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of *The Global Summit on Ending Corporal Punishment and Promoting Positive Discipline***

The Global Summit on Ending Corporal Punishment and Promoting Positive Discipline was held in Dallas, Texas in June, 2011. This event was spearheaded by Dr. George Holden and included several presenters that are leading scholars in their respective disciplines. These presenters included Drs. Murray Straus, Elizabeth Gershoff, Joan Durrant, Michele Knox, and Catherine Taylor along with Deana Pollard Sacks, JD. Susan Bitensky, JD, a champion of children's rights also spoke, as did Nadine Block about her efforts to ban corporal punishment in schools.

The conference ended with a session to discuss strategies and next steps. ***The U. S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children*** grew out of that conference session. George Holden and Deb Sendek were two of the co-founders and currently serve as president and treasurer, respectively, of the Alliance.

Visit our website: <https://www.endhitting.org/>

