

# FACT SHEET:

## Corporal Punishment in the Schools

### What is corporal punishment?

- Any intervention that is designed to or likely to cause physical pain in order to stop or change behavior

### Corporal punishment in the Schools

- Over 250,000 children are being hit yearly in public schools with a disproportionate number being minority children and children with disabilities
- In the US the most typical form of corporal punishment is the striking of the students buttocks with a wooden paddle by a school authority because the authority believes the student has disobeyed a rule

### Which states allow corporal punishment?



- The states in red currently allow corporal punishment in the schools
- The states in blue have banned corporal punishment in the schools

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### Alternatives

- Use programs that rely on empirical support rather than custom or habit
- Behavior Modification techniques (e.g. positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior)
- Individual and group counseling
- Increased parent involvement
- Detentions, in school suspension or Saturday School

### Negative effects of corporal punishment

- Can lead to physical injuries
- Contributes to cycle of child abuse
- Symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Teaches that violence is an acceptable solution
- Schools that allow corporal punishment often have poor academic achievement, more vandalism, truancy, violence and higher dropout rates

“The same ones kept coming back for more. It wasn’t working. Hitting children did not seem to improve their behavior. It seemed in fact to be reinforcing the very behaviors I was attempting to eliminate.”

-Sid Leonard, Retired Principal, Toledo, Ohio



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