

Corporal Punishment Advice from James A. Dobson, Founder and International President, Focus on the Family

James A. Dobson Ph.D. (psychology) is an American who describes himself as a Christian psychologist. He has been writing best-selling books on child rearing since 1977 and founded Focus on the Family in that year. He was described by Time magazine in 1995 as a powerful figure on the religious right for whom the Republican Party “isn’t right enough”. Since then, he has become more politically prominent in the Republican Party.

Focus on the Family (Canada) promotes his books, was the leading member of the Coalition for Family Autonomy (an intervener in the constitutional challenge to section 43) and is the leading opponent of repeal.

The following are some examples of the religiously based advice Dr. Dobson gives parents on the subject of corporal punishment:

- the parent, especially the father, represents God to his children and God requires obedience;
- obedience to parental authority is important. It teaches the child to submit to authority later in life;
- children have a raw desire for power and control. They begin power games in earnest between 12 and 15 months of age. From about age 15 months, they begin to engage in “willful” defiance”. The toddler, “in his own innocent way” is vicious, selfish, demanding, cunning and destructive;
- challenges to parental authority must always result in punishment; in young children, physical punishment;
- corporal punishment is not a last resort. No other form of discipline is as effective as spanking. Mild spankings can begin around 15 months. Pain is a marvelous purifier;
- a thump on the head or a rap on the fingers is usually sufficient but a stinging slap or switch on the upper legs of toddlers is appropriate for willful defiance;
- spanking should be administered by a neutral object, a small switch, paddle or belt, rarely with the hand, which is an object of love;
- if a child cries for more than five minutes after corporal punishment, he or she should be given more of the same punishment;
- after the spanking is over and the tears have subsided, the child should be embraced and told how much the parent loves him/her. For the Christian family, it is extremely important to pray with the child at this time, admitting that we have all sinned.

List books and show where published.

Darrel Reid ?, head of Focus on the Family - Canada said that "*The theological underpinning for family corporal punishment is tied up with the responsibility that God gives families for raising the young. You can find it particularly in the early books of the Bible, where God says your*

responsibility is not just nurturing but also correcting them." This quote from Religious Tolernace web site.