

MATERNAL ATTITUDES AND VALUES ABOUT CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

by

BROOKE LATHAM WILSON

MARY ELIZABETH CURTNER-SMITH, COMMITTEE CHAIR

MARIA HERNANDEZ-REIF

RANDALL SALEKIN

A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science
in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies
in the Graduate School of The University of Alabama

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

2014

Copyright Brooke Latham Wilson 2014
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

ABSTRACT

This study identified the attitudes and values about corporal punishment held by mothers of children aged 12 months to 5 years, as they are related to the normative and situational context. Participants in the study were mothers with at least one child between the ages of 12 months and 5 years enrolled in the Children's Program at The University of Alabama. The mothers surveyed rejected the idea that using corporal punishment is sometimes necessary and part of their responsibility as a good parent. Most of them saw the value of corporal punishment in teaching children not to commit a misbehavior again, but it came with the cost of teaching children to fear the adult. The behaviors that mothers listed as most likely to elicit a spanking included noncompliance or disobedience and dangerous/unsafe or risky behaviors. The majority of the mothers claimed that they used corporal punishment only as a last resort, and for most mothers, the corporal punishment was quick. Mothers also claimed that administering corporal punishment failed to make them feel satisfied.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who have played a part in helping me complete this research project. A huge thank you goes to my project chair, Dr. Mary Elizabeth Curtner-Smith, and my committee members, Dr. Randy Salekin and Dr. Maria Hernandez-Reif. I am eternally grateful for your encouragement and support throughout this entire process. With your help, I have gained confidence in my abilities, and have come to realize that perseverance truly pays off. Thank you all for believing in me and challenging me to achieve things I never thought I could. In addition, I would like to thank my family for supporting me and never letting me give up on my dreams. I love each of you more than you know.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	v
I. MATERNAL ATTITUDES AND VALUES ABOUT CORPORAL PUNISHMENT	1
Normative Context	3
Attitudes and Values Parents Have Regarding Corporal Punishment	5
Situational Context	9
Research Questions	10
Methods	11
Results	16
Discussion	36
REFERENCES	40
APPENDIX A. IRB Approval	43
APPENDIX B. Recruitment Letter	45
APPENDIX C. Mothers' Survey	49
APPENDIX D. Debriefing Page	56
APPENDIX E. Follow-Up Recruitment Letter	58

LIST OF TABLES

1. Sample Demographics	12
2. Mothers' Current Attitudes and Values	17
3. Mothers' Current Practices	22
4. Rationales Parents Give for Using Corporal Punishment	26
5. The Normative Context of Corporal Punishment	31
6. The Situational Context of Corporal Punishment	35

CHAPTER I

MATERNAL ATTITUDES AND VALUES ABOUT CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment has been used by parents as a method of correcting or changing children's behavior since the beginning of recorded history (Scott, 1996). There are varying opinions on what qualifies as corporal punishment, as well as seemingly innumerable terms and phrases used to define and describe it. According to Straus (2001), some of these terms and phrases included, "slapping on the leg, hand or face; spanking on the buttocks; pinching; shaking; and hitting with an object, such as a belt, paddle, switch, or flyswatter" (cited in Curtner-Smith, Jordan, Plyler, & Boswell, 2009, p. 1). Some people believe that corporal punishment is a crucial technique of child rearing that must be included for child discipline to be effective, whereas others view it as a cruel and unfair practice that should be completely eliminated from our society. It is not always easy to differentiate between corporal punishment and child abuse; therefore, the U.S. Government has developed a definition for corporal punishment. According to Davidson (1997),

. . . 48 states and the District of Columbia specify what constitutes corporal punishment in their legal statutes defining child abuse. . . . 29 states assert that corporal punishment encompasses the use of "reasonable" force with some adding qualifiers that it must also be "appropriate", "moderate", or "necessary". Three states limit corporal punishment to "non-deadly force." (cited in Gershoff, 2002, p. 540)

Even with these efforts to define corporal punishment, multiple definitions exist. For the purpose of this study, corporal punishment is defined as "the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child physical pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correcting or controlling the child's behavior" (Donnelly & Straus, 2005, p. 3). This definition is relatively

common and has been used in several previous investigations on the subject (cf. Lee, Perron, Taylor, & Guterman, 2011; Taylor, Hamvas, & Paris, 2011).

Corporal punishment, as defined in this study, is commonly practiced by American parents despite a growing body of evidence that it places children at risk for negative child development outcomes (Gershoff, 2002). In fact, nationally representative surveys of American parents revealed that between 90% and 84% of American parents will use corporal punishment with their children on occasion (Straus & Mathur, 1996). According to Straus and Stewart (1999), 94% of those parents will spank their children by the time they are 3 or 4 years old. In a 33-country survey completed by UNICEF in 2010, half of the children participating in the survey reported having been physically punished by their parents. The prevalence of spanking in the US is even greater, with two-thirds of young children reportedly being spanked by their parents. This translates to 65% of 19-35-month-olds (Regalado, Sareen, Inkelas, Wissow, & Halfon, 2004). Moreover, most teenagers (85%) reported having been slapped or spanked by their parents at some point (Bender et al., 2007).

Current investigations of corporal punishment have examined both the normative context and the situational context within which corporal punishment is practiced. Normative context refers to the prevalence with which corporal punishment is practiced by a group of parents and whether corporal punishment is perceived by parents as appropriate (Taylor et al., 2011). Thus, this includes the values about corporal punishment that are within the parents' culture, as well as the frequency with which those parents administer corporal punishment to their children. Situational context refers to the specific aspects of the situation within which corporal punishment is administered. The situational context tends to vary from one instance to another for each parent (Grusec & Goodnow, 1994). For example, some types of child transgressions,

such as lying, may be more likely to evoke corporal punishment from a parent than other types of child transgressions such as breaking a rule like “brushing your teeth before going to bed.”

Other situational variables may include specific characteristics of the corporal punishment, such as the severity with which it is administered.

The purpose of this study was to examine characteristics of both the normative context and the situational context as correlates of mothers’ practice of corporal punishment. What follows is a review of the current research on the normative and situational contexts which influence parents’ use of corporal punishment.

Normative Context

Race/Ethnicity

Large, nationally representative samples of American parents have shown that most believe it is sometimes necessary to use corporal punishment with their children (Straus & Mather, 1996). This belief is held strongest among African American parents, and among parents who reside in the Southern region of the United States, including both African American and European American parents (Straus & Mather, 1996). Straus and Stewart (1999) found that boys are more likely than girls to receive corporal punishment, and in addition, African American children are more likely than European American children to receive corporal punishment. According to a 1995 study by Giles-Sims, Straus, and Sugarman, African American parents practice corporal punishment more frequently than parents from other racial/ethnic backgrounds. In addition, African American boys are found to receive more corporal punishment than both African American girls, and boys and girls from other racial/ethnic backgrounds (Gregory, 1995; 1997).

Region of Country

A 1994 study by Flynn examined regional differences on attitudes and beliefs about corporal punishment in the United States. The results showed that participants from the Northeast viewed corporal punishment in a less favorable light than those from other regions. Additionally, 86% of Southerners supported corporal punishment, which is a much higher level of endorsement than given by participants residing in any other region of the country. More recent studies also show that corporal punishment is used more frequently by parents residing in the Southern regions of the United States (Dietz, 2000; Dupper & Montgomery Dingus, 2008).

Socioeconomic Status

There is only a small body of research related to the relationship between corporal punishment and socioeconomic status. Giles-Sims et al. (1995) found that the frequency of corporal punishment is higher for children living in poverty. This is likely a result of parents having fewer resources and being under greater stress. Similarly, a 2000 study by Xu, Tung, and Dunaway found that the higher the family income, the less likely the children were to receive corporal punishment. Dietz (2000) also found that parents with lower financial resources and less educational attainment were more likely to practice corporal punishment. Parents from societies and groups that are more prone to experience social inequalities have been found to be more likely to use corporal punishment (Ember & Ember, 2005). Some theorists claim that these parents may use corporal punishment to increase obedience in their children in an effort to prepare the children for opportunities in adulthood when it will be beneficial to be obedient and subservient to those in power (Ember & Ember, 2005; Lassiter, 1987).

Parents' own History of Having Received Corporal Punishment

People tend to parent in ways that are similar to the way they were parented. Many studies reveal that parents who use corporal punishment had parents who used corporal

punishment. Smith (2012) reported the results of a study that found that parents who received corporal punishment as children were more likely to accept its use, and frequently spanked their own children. Moreover, they found that the children of parents who spanked, in turn, often reported viewing corporal punishment as an appropriate method of discipline in comparison to children who had never been spanked, but whose parents were effective at enforcing limits. Finally, this study also demonstrated that children who had experienced corporal punishment were more likely to endorse hitting as a means of resolving conflict with siblings and peers than children who had never received corporal punishment.

Attitudes and Values Parents Have Regarding Corporal Punishment

Parents' Acceptance of the use of Corporal Punishment

Taylor et al. (2011) assessed parents' perceptions of corporal punishment as a norm, and parents' motivations for and expectations from using corporal punishment. The researchers found that "[m]ost participants believed that using some form of corporal punishment with their children was at times necessary and expected as a form of discipline" (p. 64). According to Smith (2012), two-thirds [or 66%] of Americans approve of parents spanking their children, which is down from 86 to 95% of American parents who approved in the early 1990's. Nonetheless, it is important to note that a majority of parents continue to approve of parents' use of corporal punishment despite the fact that many studies have shown that physical punishment can lead to increased aggression, antisocial behavior, physical injury, and mental health problems for children.

Belief That the Bible Instructs the use of Corporal Punishment

Religion has been shown to play a role in parents' attitudes toward and practice of corporal punishment, especially in the Southern region of the United States, which is often

referred to as the “Bible Belt.” Previous research has found that conservative Protestants tend to show greater support for, and report more frequent practice of, corporal punishment than those who hold other or no religious beliefs. The reasoning behind this finding is likely related to several distinctive aspects of conservative Protestant theology, or other religious factors.

According to a 2008 study by Hempel and Bartkowski, “One important explanatory fact is the ‘inerrantist’ view of the Bible, which holds that scripture is without error and contains reliable and sufficient insights to guide all human affairs, perhaps especially those involving family life” (cited in Ellison, Musick, & Holden, 2011, p. 948). This strong focus on scriptural truth ties in with an emphasis on themes of authority and obedience across much of fundamentalist and evangelical culture (Ellison et al., 2011). Consequently, many religious conservatives stress Biblical scriptures that both advocate for child obedience to parental authority and underscore the importance of parental guidance and leadership within the family (Ellison & Sherkat, 1993). According to Dobson (1976), many conservative Protestant leaders and laypeople argue that corporal punishment is an appropriate parental response to children’s overt challenges to parental authority. Their belief is based on their literal interpretation of “the rod” as an instrument that should be used by parents to inflict pain on children to induce obedience. They also dismiss the notion that in Biblical times, the rod was never used to inflict pain on sheep, but instead was used to guide a flock of sheep. Thus, an alternative interpretation to scripture that is accepted by non-fundamentalist Christians is that “the rod” is symbolic language for the term guidance.

The Lessons Parents Hope to Teach by Using Corporal Punishment

Very little research has examined exactly what children learn from receiving corporal punishment. A pilot study conducted by Curtner-Smith et al. (2009) asked young adults, “Can you recall an especially unforgettable instance of receiving corporal punishment, and if so, what

do you remember learning as a result of receiving corporal punishment in this unforgettable instance?” Respondents’ answers were divided into intended and unintended lessons. The intended lessons included responses that the parents likely intended such as “Not to do it again,” and “To do what is right,” and “To listen to my mother.” The unintended lessons included responses indicating lessons that the respondents’ parents likely did not intend for their children to learn, such as “Nothing,” and “Not sure,” and “Not to get caught.” The results showed that nearly 77% of the respondents reported learning an intended lesson from receiving corporal punishment, and 23.3% of respondents, a sizeable minority, reported learning an unintended lesson. Results also revealed that the respondents who recalled their experience of corporal punishment as unfair and more severe were more likely to report learning an unintended lesson. The investigators concluded that parents need to be educated about how their children perceive the experience of corporal punishment. Children do not always learn the lessons from corporal punishment that their parents intend for them to learn.

Reasons Parents use Corporal Punishment

Parents often use corporal punishment in an attempt to elicit potentially desired child outcomes, including immediate compliance and teaching children right from wrong, or moral internalization (Taylor et al., 2011). According to Gershoff (2002), “The primary goal most parents have in administering corporal punishment is to immediately stop children from misbehaving” (p. 541). Research on learning has confirmed that corporal punishment is effective in securing immediate short-term compliance (Newsom, Flavell, & Rincover, 1983). Some think that although the immediate compliance of children is important, promoting the development of their internal controls is far more crucial, as it affects their long-term socialization. Grusec and Goodnow (1994) defined moral internalization as “[t]aking over the

values and attitudes of society as one's own so that socially acceptable behavior is motivated not by anticipation of external consequences but by intrinsic or internal factors" (p. 4). This moral internalization is thought to underlie the development of social and emotional competence in children. It is interesting to note that although many parents think that corporal punishment will teach children right from wrong, the research finds otherwise. In particular, parents' use of inductive reasoning rather than corporal punishment is more strongly related to children's moral reasoning and moral behaviors (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998). Other reasons parents give for using corporal punishment include, "Other techniques did not work," "It is necessary to set firm limits with children," and "It prepares children for a future in which obedience and the resistance to temptation is essential" (Isapa & Halgunseth, 2004).

There is not extensive empirical research available that addresses whether or not parents believe it is their responsibility to spank, their perception of parents who do not spank, and whether parents think that use of corporal punishment establishes parents as the authority over their children. Taylor et al. (2011) sought to examine parents' perspectives of corporal punishment and found that generally parents hope to teach their children right from wrong and to avoid dangerous behaviors/situations. Participants also perceived corporal punishment as (a) an expression of love not harm, (b) promoting safety and respect, (c) an effective punishment when no other methods of discipline were successful, and (d) an essential childrearing tool for teaching long-term life lessons.

One study using a large nationally representative sample found that parents view other parents who do not spank as "bad" parents whose permissive parenting will result in children who "grow up wild" (Straus & Mathur, 1996, p. 92). Although the percentage of parents who approve of the use of corporal punishment has declined over the past 40 years, studies continue

to find that the majority of parents (nearly 70%) continue to agree with the statement that it is sometimes necessary to discipline a child with a good hard spanking (Straus & Mathur, 1996; Taylor et al., 2011). Despite approval of spanking by a majority of American parents, a long list of distinguished experts have denounced spanking for decades, citing it as ineffective because it teaches children to fear their parents, not to respect them, and because children behave appropriately out of fear of punishment rather than because they have adopted an internal standard for behavior (O'Callaghan, 2006).

Situational Context

There is little research regarding the nature of specific situational contexts that elicit parents' use of corporal punishment, just as there is little research that describes children's actual experiences of corporal punishment. Likewise, there is little to no literature available regarding how parents perceive children's intention for misbehavior, parents' emotions before using corporal punishment, and how quickly parents use corporal punishment, the severity of corporal punishment administered, and the likelihood of parents feeling satisfied after administering corporal punishment. Samalin (1995), a popular parent educator, claimed that parents often attempt to justify their use of corporal punishment with claims that their use is (a) infrequent, and only a last resort; (b) an attempt to get their child's attention; and (c) only intended to inflict mild pain. Child advocates, however, believe that parents are much more quick to resort to corporal punishment when they are angry (Curtner-Smith, Dudley, & Williams, 1999). Furthermore, child advocates believe that rather than getting the attention of children, parents' use of corporal punishment instills in children feelings of anger and/or a desire to seek revenge, both of which interfere with the learning of appropriate behavior (Curtner-Smith et al., 1999).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the normative context within which mothers are raising their children, and how does it compare to mothers' current attitudes and values regarding corporal punishment and what mothers believe children learn from receiving corporal punishment?

2. What is the situational context within which mothers practice corporal punishment? In particular, what child misbehaviors elicit corporal punishment from mothers?;

Do mothers perceive their children's intent to cause anger?, How long has it been since mothers administered corporal punishment?;

How often do mothers administer corporal punishment?;

How angry are mothers prior to administering corporal punishment?;

How quick are mothers to use corporal punishment?; and

How satisfied do mothers feel following administration of corporal punishment?

3. How do mothers think about corporal punishment?

What is their rationale for using it?;

What do they hope to teach their children by using it?;

What rationale do they think other parents have for using it?;

What do they think other parents hope to teach by using it?; and

Why do they think the use of corporal punishment is so common?

4. What are the correlational relationships between the contextual variables of corporal punishment (maternal values and beliefs about corporal punishment) and mothers' current practice of corporal punishment?

5. What are the correlational relationships between the situational variables of corporal punishment and mothers' current practice of corporal punishment?

This study sought to fill some of the gaps in the literature by describing mothers' attitudes and values about corporal punishment, as well as their current practices of corporal punishment with their young children. The study was framed in terms of mothers' attitudes and values that are part of their larger normative context, and features of the situational context that make mothers' use of corporal punishment more or less likely.

Methods

Study Procedures

Permission to recruit mothers with children enrolled in The University of Alabama Children's Program was obtained from The Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A) and The Children's Program Director. The investigator went to the classrooms in The Children's Program to distribute manila envelopes to all mothers with children aged 12 months to 5 years. This was done by placing an envelope in each child's cubicle. Each manila envelope contained a Recruitment Letter (see Appendix B), a Mother's Survey (see Appendix C), and a Debriefing Page (see Appendix D). Mothers took the surveys home and completed them at a place and time that was convenient. Mothers were instructed to consider their child enrolled in the Pre-K program when answering the questions. For mothers who had more than one child enrolled in the program, mothers were instructed to consider the oldest child. It took mothers approximately 30 minutes to complete the survey. Each mother returned the completed survey in the same manila envelope that originally came with the survey. Mothers placed the manila envelope containing the completed survey in a box inside their child's classroom. This box was specifically used in this project for the purpose of collecting completed surveys. The surveys

and manila envelopes were in no way able to be linked back to the mothers. Therefore, all answers were anonymous. After 1 week, a follow-up recruiting letter (see Appendix E) was given to every mother who received a packet from his or her child’s teacher. This letter both thanked the mothers who had already completed and returned their Mother’s Survey and encouraged those who had not done so to complete the survey at their earliest convenience. This recruitment letter had the investigators’ names and contact information so that if a potential participant needed another copy of the survey, it could be provided to her. The follow-up recruiting letter was provided to all potential participants at the beginning of each week for a period of 3 weeks.

Participants

Thirty-one mothers participated in this study. Most were Caucasian (28 Caucasian; 2 African American, and 1 other), and all but one were married. The majority of mothers held graduate degrees. Three mothers held a 4-year university degree and an additional three mothers had completed either high school or some college. Mothers’ mean age was 35.52 years. All mothers had at least one child ranging in age from 12 months to 5 years who attended the university Pre-K program. Slightly more than one-half of the mothers had one child, and just under one-half of the mothers had two children. Most mothers had been raised in the Southern region of the United States. Finally, the majority of mothers reported that their religious faith was Protestant Christian (see Table 1). Thus, this is a sample of predominantly Caucasian, well-educated, Protestant mothers who were raised in the South.

Table 1

Sample Demographics

	Frequency	Percent
Mothers’ Marital Status		
Married	30	96.8

	Divorced	1	3.2
Race			
	White	28	90.3
	African American	2	6.5
	Other	1	3.2
Region of Childhood			
	Northeast	2	6.5
	South	19	61.3
	Midwest	5	16.1
	Southwest	3	9.7
	Not from US	2	6.5
Mothers' Education			
	High School Graduate	1	3.2
	Partial College	2	6.5
	Four Year College/University	3	9.7
	More than Four Year College/University	25	80.6
Mothers' Religion			
	Protestant	19	61.3
	Catholic	4	12.9
	Jewish	1	3.2
	Other	2	6.5
	None	5	16.1
Number of Children			
	One Child	12	38.71
	Two Children	19	61.29
	Three Children	1	3.3

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Mother's Age	35.52 years	5.18
First Born Age	60 months	32.69
Second Born Age	29.05 months	20.91
Third Born Age	36 months	
Target Child Age	39.60 months	13.18

Note. Only one mother reported having three children, therefore, no standard deviation reported for that child's age.

Measures

The Mother's Survey contained three parts. Part I asked mothers to report demographic information. Part II asked mothers questions about their current attitudes and values about

corporal punishment, and Part III asked mothers questions about their current practice of corporal punishment. All questions were written by the investigator but were based on previous survey questions used by Straus and colleagues (i.e., Straus & Mathur, 1996; Straus & Stewart, 1999) and by Curtner-Smith and colleagues (2009).

Part I. *Demographic questionnaire.* A demographic questionnaire assessed mothers' characteristics such as ethnicity, age, marital status, number of children, and region of residence during most of childhood and adolescence.

Part II. This section of the questionnaire asked mothers to indicate how much they agreed with single-item measures of attitudes and values about corporal punishment.

Endorsement of corporal punishment. This was assessed by items such as, "The Bible instructs parents to use corporal punishment," "It is sometimes necessary to give children a good hard spanking," and "It is a parent's responsibility to spank."

Child age for which spanking is acceptable. Mothers also indicated whether they thought it appropriate to spank children in each age-period of child and adolescent development.

Lessons learned. Mothers were presented with eight lessons that children might learn from receiving a spanking (e.g., not to commit the misbehavior again, to respect the adult who is giving the spanking). For each of the eight lessons, mothers answered yes or no to indicate if they thought children learn that lesson. In addition, an "other lesson" was listed for which mothers could write in a lesson.

Part III. This section of the questionnaire asked mothers to report on their current practice of corporal punishment.

Ever spank. First, mothers indicated whether they ever spanked their child.

Child spanked within the past week. Mothers who said yes to the previous question indicated whether child was spanked during the past week.

How administered. Participants indicated if the corporal punishment was administered by 0 = hand or 1 = object.

Severity. This was assessed by asking, “How severe is the average corporal punishment that you administer?” Response options were 1 = “Slight: One swift swat on the leg, bottom or arm. Pain went away almost immediately; 2 = “Mild: Two to three swats on the leg, bottom or arm. Pain lingered for a minute or two”; 3 = “Moderate: One or more hits that caused the skin to redden slightly and swell. Pain lingered for several minutes”; 4 = “Severe: One or more hits that cause bruising. Pain lingered for longer than several minutes”; and 5 = “Extremely severe: One or more hits that caused swelling, bruising and bleeding. The pain lasted a day or longer.”

Child misbehaviors that elicit spanking from mothers. Mothers were presented with a list of child misbehaviors for which they indicated whether or not they would spank. Example misbehaviors included lying, stealing, talking back or being disrespectful to an adult, aggressive behavior toward a child, and aggressive behavior toward an adult.

Child misbehaves with intent to anger parent. Mothers were asked a single question, “How often does your child misbehave with the purpose of making you angry?” Responses ranged from “Never to almost never” to “All of the time.”

Quickness to use corporal punishment. Quickness was assessed with a single item that asked participants to indicate how quickly they are to resort to the use of corporal punishment. The following response options were provided: 1 = “Never”; 2 = “Rarely-only as a last resort in a few extreme situations”; 3 = “Moderately quick-often tried something else first”; 4 = Fairly

quick-sometimes this is my first response and at other times I try something else first”; and 5 = Very quick—this is always my first response.”

Feelings of sadness and satisfaction after administering corporal punishment. Finally, mothers were asked to report on their feelings of satisfaction and sadness after they administered corporal punishment to their children. Response options ranged from 1 = “Not at all sad” to 4 = “Extremely sad” and 1 = “Not at all satisfied” to 4 = “Extremely satisfied.”

Results

Descriptive Information About the Normative Context Within Which Mothers Raise Their Children

The vast majority of mothers (87.1%) reported that either they or their siblings received spankings as children. Given this finding and finding that the majority of these women were raised in the South, a region in the United States whose residents are historically known to be tolerant of corporal punishment, I concluded that the normative context within which these women were raised included favorable attitudes toward the use of corporal punishment.

Regarding the current attitudes of the mothers, nearly 84% of mothers believed that the Bible instructs parents to use corporal punishment. Although these mothers acknowledged their belief in the Bible’s instructions to use corporal punishment, 64.5 % of mothers did not agree with those instructions. Similarly, 64.5% of mothers either disagreed or slightly disagreed with the statement that it was “Sometimes necessary to give children a good hard spanking” and 61.3% of mothers either disagreed or slightly disagreed with the statement that it is “Sometimes a parent’s responsibility to spank a child.” Finally, 83.9% of mothers either disagreed or slightly disagreed with the statement that “Parents who do not spank are too permissive” (see Table 2).

The next question asked mothers to identify the age group of children for which it is acceptable to spank. Not a single mother indicated that it was acceptable to spank a young

infant, and only one mother indicated it was acceptable to spank an older infant ranging in age from 7 to 11 months. However, the sample of mothers was fairly split in their belief that it was acceptable to spank children between ages 1 and 6 years. Nearly 39% of mothers indicated it was acceptable to spank children between the ages of 1 and 2 years; and just over 61% of mothers indicated it was acceptable to spank children between the ages of 3 and 6 years. After this, acceptance for administering corporal punishment for older children declined. Only 35.5% viewed it as acceptable to spank children ages 7 to 9 years; and only 13% viewed it as acceptable to spank children 10 to 12 years. In addition, 29% of mothers surveyed indicated that it was unacceptable to spank children in any age group (see Table 2).

Finally, mothers were asked to identify what lessons they thought children learned from getting spanked (see Table 2). The majority of mothers surveyed believed that spanking teaches children not to commit a misbehavior again and to fear the adult who is giving the spanking. The majority of mothers did not believe that spanking teaches children respect for the adult, hatred for the adult, or instills within the child a desire to get back at the adult.

Table 2

Mothers' Current Attitudes and Values

	Frequency	Percent
Bible Instructs Corporal Punishment		
Yes, and I Believe	6	19.4
Yes, but I Don't Believe	20	64.5
No	4	12.9
Sometimes Necessary for Good Hard Spanking		
Strongly Agree	4	12.9
Slightly Agree	6	19.4
Slightly Disagree	9	29.0
Strongly Disagree	11	35.5

Table 2 (con't)

	Frequency	Percent
Spanking is Acceptable		
0 to 6 Months		
Yes	0	0.0
No	31	100.0
7 to 11 Months		
Yes	1	3.2
No	30	96.8
1 to 2 Years		
Yes	12	38.7
No	19	61.3
3 to 6 Years		
Yes	19	61.3
No	12	38.7
7 to 9 Years		
Yes	11	35.5
No	20	64.5
10 to 12 Years		
Yes	4	12.9
No	27	87.1
No age Group is Acceptable		
Yes	9	29.0
No	22	71.0
Lesson Children Learn From Corporal Punishment		
Not to Commit Misbehavior Again		
Yes	22	71.0
No	9	29.0
Respect the Adult who is Spanking		
Yes	13	41.9
No	18	58.1
Hitting Gets you What you Want		
Yes	10	32.3
No	21	67.7
Disrespect for the Adult who is Spanking		
Yes	7	22.6
No	24	77.4
Desire to get Back at Adult		
Yes	9	29.0
No	21	67.7
Hatred for Adult who is Spanking		
Yes	5	16.1
No	25	80.6
Fear of Adult who is Spanking		
Yes	21	67.7
No	10	32.3

Table 2 (con't)

	Frequency	Percent
Nothing		
Yes	4	12.9
No	23	74.2
Other		
Pay Attention to Parents	1	3.2
Parents do not Understand	1	3.2
Humiliation	1	3.2
Child Behaviors That Require Parents to Spank		
Physical Aggression Toward Children		
Yes	7	22.6
No	23	74.2
Physical Aggression Toward Adults		
Yes	10	32.3
No	21	67.7
Lying		
Yes	7	22.6
No	24	77.4
Bad Language		
Yes	5	16.1
No	26	83.9
Stealing		
Yes	7	22.6
No	24	77.4
Noncompliance/Disobedience		
Yes	16	51.6
No	15	48.4
Dangerous/Risky Behavior		
Yes	16	51.6
No	14	45.2
Age Inappropriate Behavior		
Yes	3	9.7
No	28	90.3
Unsafe Behavior		
Yes	16	51.6
No	15	48.4
Talking Back/Disrespecting Adult		
Yes	11	35.5
No	20	64.5
Parents who do not Spank are too Permissive		
Strongly Agree	2	6.5
Slightly Agree	2	6.5
Slightly Disagree	7	22.6
Strongly Disagree	19	61.3

Table 2 (con't)

	Frequency	Percent
Acceptable to Spank When Angry		
Yes	3	9.7
No	28	90.3
Sometimes a Parent's Responsibility		
Strongly Agree	6	19.4
Slightly Agree	5	16.1
Slightly Disagree	8	25.8
Strongly Disagree	11	35.5

Summary statement: In sum, it appears that these mothers are raising children in a context in which favorable attitudes toward corporal punishment prevail; however, more than half of the mothers surveyed rejected Biblical teachings to use corporal punishment. They also rejected the idea that using corporal punishment is sometimes necessary and part of their responsibility as a good parent. Just under one-third of the sample rejected the value of using corporal punishment for any age child, but most mothers accepted its use with children ages 3 to 6 years. These mothers saw the value of corporal punishment in teaching children not to commit a misbehavior again, but it came with the cost of teaching children to fear the adult.

Descriptive Information About the Situational Context Within Which Mothers Raise Their Children

Table 2 also presents the data showing which child behaviors elicited spanking from mothers. Results of the frequency counts show that Noncompliance/Disobedience, Dangerous/Risky Behaviors, and Unsafe Behaviors were tied for the highest percentage of mothers who felt that these categories of behaviors would require parents to spank as a consequence (51.6%). Talking Back/Disrespecting Adults had the second highest percentage of mothers who felt that this type of behavior required parents to spank (35.5%), followed by Physical Aggression Toward Adults (32.3%). Physical Aggression Toward Children, Lying, and

Stealing all tied for the fourth highest percentage among mothers who felt that these behaviors would require a spanking as a consequence (22.6%).

Among the 31 mothers in the sample, only 5 or 16.1% indicated that they had never spanked their child. Slightly more than one-fourth of the mothers in the sample (25.8%) said they had spanked their child in the past week prior to completing the survey. Only one mother had spanked her child within the last 24 hours. Only one mother reported using an object when she spanked. When asked how often they spanked their child in a typical month, 22.6 % said 0 times, 25.8% said 1-2 times. Few mothers reported spanking their children three or more times per month.

Mothers were asked if their children misbehaved with the intention of making the parent angry. Slightly more than half of mothers surveyed indicated that their children never or almost never misbehaved with the purpose of making parents angry (53.8%). An additional 38.5 % of mothers surveyed said that their children occasionally or sometimes misbehaved with the purpose of making a parent angry, and 7.6 % of mothers indicated their children frequently or almost always misbehaved with the purpose of making a parent angry. Thus, just under one-half of the mothers (43.1%) made hostile attributions about the intent underlying their children's misbehaviors at least occasionally or sometimes.

Although most mothers did not believe that their children misbehaved with the intent to cause anger, 38.7% of the mothers indicated that they got moderately angry to very angry before they spanked their children. Only 22.6% of the mothers got slightly angry, and an additional 22.6% of mothers say they never got angry just before they spanked their children.

The majority of mothers (61.3%) claimed they rarely use corporal punishment, and when they did, it was a last resort. A few mothers (19.4%) indicated that they were moderately quick

to use corporal punishment, but only after they tried some other form of punishment. Similarly, the majority of mothers (58.1%) described the typical spanking they give as involving “one swift swat for which the pain goes away quickly.” An additional 19.4% of mothers described the typical spanking that they give as moderate and involving “2-3 swats, pain lingers a minute.”

The vast majority of mothers (71.0%) reported that spanking does not at all make them feel satisfied, and 77.4% of mothers reported that spanking makes them feel slightly to very sad.

Table 3

Mothers' Current Practices

	Frequency	Percent
Ever Spanked Child 12 mos. to 5 yrs.		
Yes	26	83.9
No	5	16.1
Spanked Child 12 mos. to 5 yrs. in Past Week		
Yes	8	25.8
No	18	58.1
Spanked Child 12 mos. to 5 yrs. in Past 24 Hours		
Yes	1	3.2
No	25	80.6
Typically use an Object When Spanking		
Yes	1	3.2
No	25	80.6
Typically Spans per Month		
0 Times	7	22.6
1-2 Times	8	25.8
3-4 Times	3	9.7
5-6 Times	1	3.2
7 or More Times	1	3.2
How Quick are you to Spank		
Rarely—Only as a Last Resort	19	61.3
Moderately Quickly—Tried Something Else First	6	19.4
Fairly Quickly—Sometimes This is First Response	1	3.2

Table 3 (con't)

	Frequency	Percent
Description of Typical Spanking		
Slight—One Swift Swat, Pain Goes Away Quickly	18	58.1
Mild—2-3 Swats, Pain Lingers a Minute	6	19.4
Moderate—1 or More Hits, Pain Lingers a While	1	3.2
Does Spanking Reduce Your Stress		
Yes	2	6.5
No	23	74.2
Does Spanking Fulfill Responsibility as a Parent		
Yes	5	16.1
No	21	67.7
How Satisfied are you After Spanking		
Moderately Satisfied	1	3.2
Slightly Satisfied	2	6.5
Not at All Satisfied	22	71.0
How Angry do you Feel Before Spanking		
Very Angry	8	25.8
Moderately Angry	4	12.9
Slightly Angry	7	22.6
Not at all Angry	7	22.6
How Sad do you Feel After Spanking		
Very Sad	7	22.6
Moderately Sad	9	29.0
Slightly Sad	8	25.8
Not at all Sad	2	6.5
Frequency of Exploding in Anger		
Very Often	1	3.2
About Half the Time	2	6.5
Once in a While	16	51.6
Never	10	32.3
Frequency of Yelling or Shouting		
Very Often	2	6.5
About Half the Time	4	12.9
Once in a While	20	64.5
Never	2	6.5

Table 3 (con't)

	Frequency	Percent
Frequency Scold/Criticize Improve Behavior		
Very Often	3	9.7
About Half the Time	3	9.7
Once in a While	15	48.4
Never	7	22.6
Frequency Scold/Criticize not Meeting Expectations		
Very Often	4	12.9
About Half the Time	2	6.5
Once in a While	12	38.7
Never	9	29.0
Frequency Take Away Privilege no Explanation		
Very Often	2	87.1
Once in a While	5	16.1
Never	20	64.5
Child Misbehaves to Make Angry		
Never or Almost Never	14	45.2
Occasionally	10	32.3
A lot, frequently	1	3.2
Always or Almost Always	1	3.2

Additionally, Table 3 shows the frequency with which mothers reported engaging in other coercive parenting behaviors such as exploding in anger, yelling or shouting, criticizing to improve behavior, criticizing for not meeting expectations, and taking away a privilege with no explanation. For all but one category of coercive parenting behavior, the modal response was “Once in a while.” For taking away a privilege with no explanation, the modal response was “Never.”

How mothers think about corporal punishment in terms of *their* rationale for using it, what they hope to teach *their* children by using it, the rationale that other parents have for using it, what they think other parents hope to teach by using it, and why they think the use of corporal punishment is so common are reported in Table 4. Many mothers in the sample chose not to

answer this section of the survey; therefore, data to these responses are missing. For those who answered these questions, most mothers agreed that they used corporal punishment to stop a child from engaging in dangerous behavior, to get a child's attention, and to stop misbehavior. Only a few mothers (three to five mothers) indicated that they used corporal punishment because nothing else worked, or because it was punishment for misbehavior, or because it was a way for parents to express anger or stress. In terms of what these mothers hoped to teach their children by using corporal punishment, most who answered the question said they hope to teach their children to avoid engaging in dangerous behavior. Other responses given were to pay attention, to make better choices, and to obey parental requests. These mothers also reported on the rationale they thought other parents give for using corporal punishment. Responses included, "other methods of discipline are ineffective," "to stop misbehavior," and "to make child listen or obey." Similarly, mothers listed what they thought other parents want their children to learn from corporal punishment. Responses included, "right from wrong," "to stop misbehavior," and "to listen to parents."

Finally, mothers were asked why they thought parental use of corporal punishment is so common. Responses included, "parents lack education on alternative methods for disciplining children," "parents' history of having received corporal punishment," "corporal punishment seems effective at the time," and "corporal punishment is an easy way to deal with child misbehavior."

Table 4

Reasons Mothers Give/Reasons They Think Other Parents Give, Why it is so Common, What Parent Hope to Teach/Message They Think is Given

	Frequency	Percent
Reasons Mothers Give:		
Child in Danger		
Yes	7	22.6
No	3	9.7
Get Child's Attention		
Yes	11	35.5
No	3	9.7
Stop Misbehavior		
Yes	8	25.8
No	1	3.2
Nothing Else Works		
Yes	5	16.1
No	3	16.1
Consequence/Punishment for Misbehavior		
Yes	3	9.7
No	4	12.9
Parent Expresses Anger or Stress		
Yes	4	12.9
No	2	6.5
What Mothers Hope to Teach:		
Gets Child's Attention		
Yes	5	16.1
No	4	12.9
Make Better Choices		
Yes	4	9.7
No	4	12.9
Nothing		
Yes	2	6.5
No	4	12.9
Avoid Danger		
Yes	8	25.8
No	3	9.7
Listen and Obey		
Yes	4	12.9
No	3	9.7
Right Versus Wrong		
Yes	3	9.7
No	4	12.9

Table 4 (con't)

	Frequency	Percent
Respect for Authority		
Yes	2	6.5
No	12.9	
Consequences or Punishment for Misbehavior		
Yes	6	19.4
No	3	9.7
Think Before Acting		
Yes	0	0.00
No	4	12.9
Reason Mothers Think Other Parents Give:		
Dangerous Situation		
Yes	4	12.9
No	4	12.9
Other Methods are Ineffective		
Yes	6	19.4
No	1	3.2
Disobedience or Misbehavior		
Yes	6	19.4
No	3	9.7
Religious Reasons		
Yes	2	6.5
No	5	16.1
Gain Child's Respects		
Yes	2	6.5
No	5	16.1
Make Child Listen and Obey		
Yes	6	19.4
No	2	6.5
Personal History		
Yes	2	6.5
No	5	16.1
Stressful Situation or Anger		
Yes	3	9.7
No	3	9.7
Punishment		
Yes	2	6.5
No	4	12.9
Child is Out of Control		
Yes	1	3.2
No	5	16.1

Table 4 (con't)

	Frequency	Percent
Teach Right From Wrong		
Yes	1	3.2
No	5	16.1
Get Child's Attention		
Yes	4	12.9
No	5	16.1
What Mothers Think Other Parents Hope to Teach:		
Right From Wrong		
Yes	4	12.9
No	6	19.4
Stop Misbehavior		
Yes	5	16.1
No	6	19.4
Listen to Parents		
Yes	4	12.9
No	6	19.4
Safe Versus Unsafe		
Yes	2	6.5
No	6	19.4
Rejection or to Fear Parent		
Yes	2	6.5
No	4	12.9
Consequences for Misbehavior		
Yes	4	12.9
No	4	12.9
Why It Is So Common		
Historical Practice		
Yes	5	16.1
No	7	22.6
Seems Effective at the Time		
Yes	4	12.9
No	5	16.1
Easy Way to Deal With Misbehavior		
Yes	4	12.9
No	5	16.1
Lack Education on Other Methods		
Yes	6	19.4
No	6	19.4
Spank out of Anger or Stress		
Yes	3	9.7
No	6	19.4

Table 4 (con't)

	Frequency	Percent
Sends More Powerful Message		
Yes	1	3.2
No	8	25.8
Parents Think it Makes Child Have Respect		
Yes	1	3.2
No	8	25.8
Socializes Child to be More Civilized		
Yes	1	3.2
No	7	22.6

Summary statement: The child behaviors most likely to elicit a spanking include noncompliance or disobedience and dangerous/unsafe or risky behaviors. Slightly less than 40% of mothers said their children misbehaved with the purpose of making the parent angry, and slightly under 40% of mothers said they get moderately angry to very angry before they spank their children. The majority of mothers claim that they use corporal punishment only as a last resort, and for most mothers, the corporal punishment is one quick swift swat. Finally, mothers claimed that administering corporal punishment failed to make them feel satisfied.

Bivariate Correlations Between Normative Contextual Variables of Corporal Punishment and Mothers' Current Practice of Corporal Punishment

Table 5 reports the bivariate correlations between the normative contextual variables of mothers' values and beliefs about what corporal punishment teaches children and their current practice of corporal punishment. Twenty-eight correlation coefficients were calculated to determine if the various maternal values and beliefs about what corporal punishment teaches children are related to mothers' reports of ever spanking their children and mothers' reports of spanking their children in the past week. Among the 28 correlation coefficients calculated, 21 were statistically significant, which is more than one would expect if the correlations were significant only by chance.

In particular, mothers who reported ever spanking their children were more likely than mothers who have never spanked their children to believe that (a) spanking is sometimes necessary, (b) that parents who don't spank are too permissive, and (c) that it is a parent's responsibility to spank. Similarly, mothers who reported ever spanking their children were more likely than mothers who reported never spanking their children to view spanking as acceptable for all age groups of children. The strength of these correlations ranged from .64 to .33, which are moderately strong, especially for a sample size of 31 mothers.

Table 5. *The Normative Context of Corporal Punishment: Correlations Between Maternal Values About the Acceptability of Corporal Punishment, Maternal Beliefs About What Corporal Punishment Teaches Children, and Current Practices*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Sometimes Necessary ^a	-	.52**	.57**	-.39*	-.67**	-.59**	-.48**	-.31**	.61**	.35*	.54**	.32*	.36*	.25	-.47**	-.47*
2. No Spank, too Permissive ^a	-	-	.59**	-.37*	-.49**	-.45**	-.42*	-.32*	.37*	.27	.41*	.30	.49**	.27	-.29	-.33*
3. Parent's Responsibility ^a	-	-	-	-.23	-.68**	-.66**	-.50**	-.28	.56**	.51**	.64**	.50**	.59**	.36*	-.47**	-.36*
Spanking is Acceptable																
4. 1 to 2 Years ^b	-	-	-	-	.36*	.24	.51**	.13	-.41*	-.27	-.50**	-.37*	-.41*	-.32	.35*	.37*
5. 3 to 6 Years ^b	-	-	-	-	-	.59**	.51**	.27	-.59**	-.52**	-.80**	-.59**	-.41*	-.50**	.55**	.50**
6. 7 to 9 Years ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	.47**	.46**	-.51**	-.40**	-.50**	-.34*	-.35*	-.35*	.33*	.40*
Lesson Children Learn																
7. Not to Misbehave Again ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.40*	-.47**	-.33*	-.68**	-.49**	-.44**	-.71**	.30	.25
8. Respect Adult Spanking ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.31*	-.30*	-.41**	-.21	-.39*	-.40*	.02	.36*
9. Hitting Gets Want ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.62**	.62**	.29	.48**	.23	-.64**	-.61**
10. Disrespect for Adult ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.67**	.67**	.37*	.07	-.60**	-.51**
11. Want to Get Back at Adult ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.74**	.46**	.64**	-.49**	-.50**
12. Hatred for Adult ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.32*	.41*	-.52**	-.41*
13. Fear of Adult ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.32	-.30	-.42*

Table 5 (con't)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
14. Nothing ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.17	-.10
15. Ever Spanked Child ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.72**
16. Spanked in Past Week ^b																

Notes. Ns range from 26 to 31 due to missing data. Maternal values about corporal punishment that were not included in these analyses because of lack of variability in responses include, "Bible instructs corporal punishment," "Spanking acceptable for 0 to 6 months," "Spanking acceptable for 7 to 11 months," "Spanking acceptable for 10 to 12 years," and "No age group for whom spanking is acceptable." Response option A: 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly agree. Response option B: 1= Yes, 2= No. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Bivariate Correlations Between Situational Variables of Corporal Punishment and Mothers' Current Practice of Corporal Punishment

Table 6 presents the bivariate correlations between the situational variables of corporal punishment (i.e., child behaviors that elicit mothers' use of corporal punishment with mothers' perception of the child's misbehavior as intended to cause anger, mothers' emotions, mothers' quickness to use corporal punishment, and the severity of corporal punishment), and mothers' current practices of corporal punishment. Eighty correlation coefficients were computed to determine whether child behaviors that elicited mothers' use of corporal punishment were related to child's intent to cause anger, mothers' emotions, and aspects of mothers' practice of corporal punishment. Among the 80 correlation coefficients, 26 were statistically significant, which is more than one would expect by chance. The findings revealed that mothers who said they would spank their children for engaging in aggression toward other children were also more likely than mothers who would not spank for this child misbehavior to perceive that their child engaged in misbehaviors with the intent to cause anger, feel satisfaction after giving the child a spanking, be more quick to resort to using spanking, rate the typical spanking given as more severe, and report having spanked her child within the past week of completing the survey. Likewise, mothers who said they would spank for aggression toward adults were also more likely than mothers who would not spank for this child misbehavior to perceive that their child engaged in misbehaviors with the intent to cause anger, be more quick to resort to using spanking, rate the typical spanking given as more severe, and report having spanked her child within the past week of completing the survey. The very same relationships were found for mothers who said they would spank a child for noncompliance. In addition, however, mothers who said they would spank for noncompliance also said they felt sad after spanking their child. Similar correlations were also found for mothers who said they would spank their child for talking back or

disrespecting an adult, although being likely to spank for talking back to an adult was not related to feeling sad after giving a spanking. Finally, mothers who said they have ever spanked their child were likely to say they would spank for 5 of the 10 categories of child misbehaviors. Mothers who reported having spanked in the past week were likely to say they would spank for 6 of the 10 categories of child misbehaviors. Lying, bad language, stealing, engaging in dangerous behavior, doing something they should not do, and engaging in unsafe behavior were related to very few of the variables describing the situational context of corporal punishment, which included perceiving that the child intends to misbehave to cause anger, mother feeling angry before spanking, mother feeling sad after spanking, mother's feelings of satisfaction after spanking, mother's quickness to use corporal punishment, severity of the spanking, ever spanked, and spanked within the past week before completing the survey.

Table 6. *The Situational Context: How Child Behaviors That Elicit Mothers use of Corporal Punishment Correlate With the Child's Intent to Anger Mothers, Mothers' Emotions, Mothers' Quickness to use Corporal Punishment, the Severity of Corporal Punishment, and Mothers' Current Practices of Corporal Punishment*

	Aggression Toward Children	Aggression Toward Adults	Lying	Bad Language	Stealing	Noncompliance	Dangerous Behavior	Something They Should Not Do	Unsafe Behavior	Talking Back/ Disrespect Adults
Child Intends to Anger Mother	-.69**	-.53**	-.22	-.28	-.31	-.37*	.08	-.26	.23	-.39*
Mothers' Anger Before Spanking	.01	-.07	.26	.21	.11	.13	.37*	.05	.43*	-.10
Mothers' Sadness After Spanking	.23	.01	-.03	.11	.06	.42*	.25	.06	.12	.08
Mothers' Satisfaction After Spanking	-.36*	-.25	-.17	-.26	-.17	-.28	-.27	.13	-.31	-.22
Mothers' Quickness to Spank	-.61**	-.43*	-.30	-.08	-.30	-.45*	-.29	-.02	-.20	-.38*
Severity of Spanking	-.61**	-.57**	-.26	-.36*	-.33	.05	-.01	.12	-.42*	
Ever Spanked	.25	.30*	.24	.19	.24	.45**	.48**	.14	.28	.33*
Spanked Within Last Week	.52**	.53**	.26	.34*	.26	.53**	.42*	.12	.20	.40*

Note. Ns range from 24 to 31 due to missing data. Response option A: 1=Never or almost never, 2=Occasionally, sometimes, rarely, 3>About ½ the time, 4= A lot, frequently, 5=Always or almost always. Response option B: 1=Not at all angry (or sad, or satisfied), 2=Slightly angry (or sad, or satisfied), 3=Moderately angry (or sad, or satisfied), 4= Very angry (or sad, or satisfied). Response option C: 1=Rarely, 2=Moderately quick, 3=Fairly quick, 4=Very quick. Response option D: 1=Slight, 2=Mild, 3=Moderate, 4=Severe, 5=Extremely Severe. Response option E: 1=Yes, 2=No. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

Discussion

This study has several limitations that warrant caution when interpreting the findings. First, the data are correlational in nature and were collected at one point in time; therefore, neither causality nor direction of effects can be inferred. The findings presented here suggest that maternal attitudes, values, and beliefs about corporal punishment influence mothers' decision to administer corporal punishment. However, it could be that mothers' history of administering corporal punishment influences their attitudes, values, and beliefs about the practice. Only longitudinal research can delineate the direction of effects between attitudes, values, beliefs, and practices involving corporal punishment. A second limitation is that the sample size is small and drawn from mothers who enrolled their young child at a university-based preschool program. The sample was fairly homogeneous regarding race, religion, and education. Thus, findings from this study cannot be generalized to the broader population of mothers with young children.

Nonetheless, the descriptive and correlational findings add to the body of literature regarding factors associated with parents' use of corporal punishment with their young children. A major finding from this study is that mothers in this sample seemed to be rejecting their cultural, contextual norms that permit and even encourage the practice of corporal punishment with young children. Recall that the majority of these mothers were raised in the South, a region in the United States in which most parents (both African American and Caucasian parents) use corporal punishment with regularity, and in which most parents view other parents who do not use corporal punishment as too permissive. Also recall that the mothers in this sample were themselves the recipients of corporal punishment during their own childhood, and they believed that scripture instructs them to use corporal punishment. Nonetheless, this sample of mothers

was less likely to endorse the use of corporal punishment as sometimes necessary, and on average, they reported using it very infrequently and only as a last resort. This finding is consistent with previous investigations suggesting that Caucasian parents with higher levels of education and socioeconomic status are less likely to endorse or practice corporal punishment (Dietz, 2000; Giles-Sims et al., 1995; Straus & Mather, 1996; Xu et al., 2000). However, findings from this study run counter to those from previous investigations suggesting that parents raised and currently residing in the Southern region of the United States are more likely to endorse and practice corporal punishment. Findings from this study also suggest that these mothers actively rejected Biblical instruction to use corporal punishment. Thus, it appears that the practice of corporal punishment is falling out of favor with parents as compared to its widespread acceptance in the early 1990s (Smith, 2012; Taylor et al., 2011). Future investigations of parents' beliefs in Biblical instructions about childrearing should also include parents' interpretations of the term, "the rod." Many parents of Christian faith may view this term as symbolic for needing to give children guidance rather than punishment. Parents with this symbolic interpretation of scripture would not feel as if they were violating religious beliefs by choosing not to practice corporal punishment.

The majority of the mothers claimed that they rarely used corporal punishment, but when they did, their rationale for using it was to either stop misbehavior, stop the child from engaging in dangerous or risky behavior, or to get their child's attention. These findings are consistent with a recent study that examined parents' rationales for using corporal punishment (Taylor et al., 2011) and with young adults' recollections of what they learned from receiving corporal punishment (Curtner-Smith et al., 1999). Contrary to an earlier study conducted in the 1990's (Straus & Mathur, 1996), mothers in this sample did not believe it was their responsibility to

administer corporal punishment to their children, nor did they perceive parents who choose not spank as permissive.

This study is perhaps the first to examine what category of child misbehaviors are likely to elicit a spanking from a parent. Mothers indicated that they are most likely to spank when their children are noncompliant/disobedient, or engaging in dangerous or unsafe behaviors. These reports are consistent with mothers' rationale for using corporal punishment. Mothers also indicated that they hope that the experience of receiving corporal punishment will teach their children right from wrong. This finding is consistent with previous research which suggested that parents believe that corporal punishment teaches children right from wrong (Gershoff, 2012). Other important results from this study include finding that a sizable minority of mothers perceived that their children misbehave with the intention of making the parent angry and that about the same percentage of mothers reported feeling moderately angry to very angry prior to spanking their children. Future research should examine how mothers' perception of whether their children misbehave with the intention to make the parent angry is related to mothers' quickness to use corporal punishment and severity of the corporal punishment administered.

Results from the correlational analyses of normative contextual variables with mothers' current practice of corporal punishment were consistent with previous studies conducted by Straus and Mathur (1996) and by Taylor et al. (2011). Specifically, mothers who ever spanked their children were more likely to believe that spanking is sometimes necessary, that parents who do not spank are too permissive, and that it is a parent's responsibility to spank.

Results from the correlational analyses of situational variables with mothers' current practice of corporal punishment revealed that several types of child misbehaviors were correlated with mothers' perceptions of the child's intent to cause anger, mothers feeling moderately to

very angry prior to giving a spanking, mothers feeling satisfied after administering a spanking, mothers being more quick to use corporal punishment, and mothers reporting more severe administration of corporal punishment. Future research might adopt a parent diary method of collecting data on these situational variables as they occur in real time. Mothers may be more accurate in reporting their level of anger, sadness, or satisfaction if they report on their feelings soon after responding to a child's misbehavior rather than weeks or months later. More accurate and precise data on the situational context of children's misbehaviors and how parents respond will help parent educators develop better parent education programs. These programs may need to include coping strategies to help parents deal with their own negative emotions of anger, satisfaction following administering corporal punishment and sadness. Moreover, these programs would be aimed at teaching parents ways to cope with children's negative behaviors and how to guide children into positive behaviors.

REFERENCES

- Bender, H.L., Allen, J.P., McElhaney, K.B., Antonishak, J., Moore, C.M., Kelly, H.O., et al. (2007). Use of harsh physical discipline and developmental outcomes in adolescence. *Development and Psychopathology, 19*, 227-242. doi: 10.1017/S0954579407070125
- Berkowitz, M.W., & Grych, J.H. (1998). Fostering goodness: Teaching parents to facilitate children's moral development. *Journal of Moral Education, 27*, 371-391.
- Curtner-Smith, M.E., Dudley, J., & Williams, S.T. (1999). *This will teach you a lesson!: Young adults' recollections of the lessons they learned from having received corporal punishment during childhood*. Poster to be presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on Family Relations, November, 1999, Irvine, CA.
- Curtner-Smith, M.E., Jordan, E.F., Plyler, S.B., & Boswell, C. (2009). *Lessons learned: Young adults' recollections of the lessons they learned from receiving corporal punishment in childhood*. Poster presented at the Biennial Meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver, CO.
- Davidson, H. (1997). The legal aspects of corporal punishment in the home: When does physical discipline cross the line to become child abuse? *Children's Legal Rights Journal, 17*, 18-29.
- Dietz, T.L. (2000). Disciplining children: Characteristics associated with the use of corporal punishment. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 24*, 1529-1542.
- Dobson, J. (1976). *The strong-willed child: Birth through adolescence*. Wheaton, IL: Living Books/Tyndale House.
- Donnelly, M., & Straus, M.A. (2005). *Corporal punishment of children in theoretical perspective*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Dupper, D.R., & Montgomery Dingus, A.E. (2008). Corporal punishment in the U.S. schools: A continuing challenge for school social worker. *Children & Schools, 30*, 243-250.
- Ellison, C.G., & Sherkat, D.E. (1993). Conservative Protestantism and support for corporal punishment. *American Sociological Review, 58*, 131-144.
- Ellison, C.G., Musick, M.A., & Holden, G.W. (2011). Does conservative Protestantism moderate the association between corporal punishment and child outcomes? *Journal of Marriage and Family, 73*, 946-961.
- Ember, C.R., & Ember, M. (2005). Explaining corporal punishment of children: A cross-cultural study. *American Anthropologist, 107*, 609-619.
- Flynn, C.P. (1994). Regional differences in attitudes toward corporal punishment. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 56*, 314-324.

- Gershoff, E.T. (2002). Corporal punishment by parents and associated child behaviors and experiences: A meta-analytic and theoretical review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(4), 539-579.
- Gershoff, E.T. (2012). Spanking and child development: We now know enough to tell people to stop hitting our children. *Child Development Perspectives*, 7, 133-137.
- Giles-Sims, J., Straus, M.A., & Sugarman, D.B. (1995). Child, maternal, and family characteristics associated with spanking. *Family Relations*, 44, 170-176.
- Gregory, J.F. (1995). The crime of punishment: Racial and gender disparities in the use of corporal punishment in U.S. public Schools. *Journal of Negro Education*, 64, 454-462.
- Gregory, J.F. (1997). Three strikes and they're out: African American boys and American schools' responses to misbehavior. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 7, 25-34.
- Grusec, J.E., & Goodnow, J.J. (1994). Impact of parental discipline on the child's internalization of values: A reconceptualization of current points of view. *Developmental Psychology*, 30, 4-19.
- Hempel, L.M., & Bartkowski, J.P. (2008). Scripture, sin, and salvation: Theological conservatism reconsidered. *Social Forces*, 86, 1647-1674.
- Ispa, J.M., & Halgunseth, L.C. (2004). Talking about corporal punishment: Nine low-income African American mothers' perspectives. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 19, 463-484.
- Lassiter, R.F. (1987). Child rearing in black families: Child abusing discipline? In R.C. Hampton (Ed.). *Violence in the Black family: Correlations and consequences* (pp 39-53). Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Lee, S.J., Perron, B.E., Taylor, C.A., Guterman, N.B. (2011). Paternal psychosocial characteristics and corporal punishment of their 3-year-old children. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 26, 71-87.
- Newsom, C., Flavell, J.E., & Rincover, A. (1983). The side effects of punishment. In S. Axelrod & J. Apsche (Eds.), *The effects of punishment on human behavior* (pp. 285-316). New York: Academic Press.
- O'Callaghan, K. (2006). Is it okay to spank? *Parenting*, 20(7), 142.
- Regalado, M., Sareen, H., Inkelas, M., Wissow, L.S., & Halfon, N. (2004). Parents' discipline of young children: Results from the National Survey of Early Childhood Health. *Pediatrics*, 113, 1952-1958.
- Samalin, N. (1995). What's wrong with spanking? *Parents (01950967)* 70(5), 35.

- Scot, G.R. (1996). *The history of corporal punishment*. London: Senate.
- Smith, B.L. (2012). The case against spanking. *Monitor on Psychology*, 43(4), 60.
- Straus, M.A., & Mathur, A.K. (1996). *Social change and change in approval of corporal punishment by parents from 1968 to 1994*. In D. Frehsee, W. Horn, & K-D.D. Bussmann (Eds.), *Family violence against children: A challenge for society* (pp. 91-105). New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Straus, M.A., & Stewart, J.H. (1999). Corporal punishment by American parents: National data on prevalence, chronicity, severity, and duration in relation to child and family characteristics. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 2, 55-70.
- Straus, M.A. (2001). *Beating the devil out of them: Corporal punishment in American families and its effects on children*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Taylor, C.A., Hamvas, L., & Paris, R. (2011). Perceived instrumentality and normativeness of corporal punishment among black mothers. *Family Relations*, 60, 60-72.
- UNICEF. (2010). *Child disciplinary practices at home: Evidence from a range of low- and middle-income countries*. Retrieved from http://www.childinfo.org/files/report_Disipl_FIN.pdf
- Xu, X., Tung, Y., & Dunaway, G. (2000). Cultural, human, and social capital as determinants for corporal punishment: Toward an integrated theoretical model. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 15, 603.

Appendix A
IRB Approval

August 4, 2011

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
R E S E A R C H

Brooke Latham
The University of Alabama
CHES
Box 870160

Re: IRB# 11-OR-244: "Maternal Attitudes and Values about
Corporal Punishment"

Dear Ms. Latham:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your application will expire on August 3, 2012. If the study continues beyond that date, you must complete the IRB Renewal Application. If you modify the application, please complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, please complete the Request for Study Closure form.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this application, please include the assigned IRB application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]



Carpantato T. Myles, MSM, CIM
Director & Research Compliance Officer
Office for Research Compliance
The University of Alabama

358 Rose Administration Building
Box 870127
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0127
(205) 348-8461
FAX (205) 348-7189
TOLL FREE (877) 820-3066

Appendix B

Recruitment Letter

Recruitment Letter

Maternal Attitudes and Values About Corporal Punishment:

Brooke Latham Wilson, Graduate Student

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Curtner-Smith, Associate Professor, Human Development and Family Studies

We would like to invite you to participate in a research study. This study is entitled “Maternal Attitudes and Values About Corporal Punishment.” The study is being done by Mrs. Brooke Latham Wilson, who is a graduate student at The University of Alabama. Mrs. Brooke Latham Wilson is being supervised by Dr. Mary Elizabeth Curtner-Smith, who is an Associate Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies.

What is this study about?

We are studying mothers’ attitudes and values about the use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline with young children ages 12 months to 5 years.

Why is this study important?

We want to identify factors that help explain why some mothers use corporal punishment.

Why have I been asked to be in this study?

You have been asked to be in this study because you have a child who is 12 months to 5 years who is enrolled in The University of Alabama Children’s Program.

How many people besides me will be in this study?

One hundred mothers are being recruited to be in this study.

What will I be asked to do in this study?

You are being asked to complete a take-home survey. The survey contains questions about your attitudes and values about corporal punishment, as well as your use of corporal punishment as a form of child discipline.

How much time will I spend being in this study?

You will spend about 30 minutes completing the survey.

Will being in this study cost me anything?

The only cost to you will be your time spent completing the survey.

Will I be paid for being in this study?

No, you will not receive any compensation for being in this study.

What are the risks (dangers or harms) to me if I am in this study?

There is minimal risk involved in participating in this study. Sometimes when people think about their lives and their family experiences, they feel sad or blue. Any risk involved would be related to completing questions about sensitive topics involving parenting. All participants in this study will be provided with mental health referrals for where to get help for feelings of sadness as part of the Debriefing Form.

What are the benefits (good things) that may happen if I am in this study?

We hope that the information we gain from this study will be used to help parent educators better understand mothers' attitudes, values, and practices involving corporal punishment.

How will my privacy be protected?

ALL of your responses will be completely anonymous. You will be able to complete the survey in the privacy of your own home or whatever location is convenient for you. You may skip any questions that make you uncomfortable or stop answering questions at any time. However, we do encourage you to try and answer as many questions as possible.

What will happen to the information the study keeps on me?

No individual participants will be identified. Completed surveys will not be linked to a mother's name. Therefore, all answers are anonymous and the data will be de-identified. Information from the surveys will be kept on a password protected computer that is located in a locked office belonging to Dr. Mary Elizabeth Curtner-Smith.

What are the alternatives to being in this study?

The alternative to being in this study is not to participate.

What are my rights as a participant in this study?

Taking part in this study is voluntary. It is your free choice. You can refuse to be in the study. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. There will be no effect on your relations with The Children's Program or The University of Alabama.

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board ("the IRB") is the committee that protects the rights of people in research studies. The IRB may review study records from time to time to be sure that people in research studies are being treated fairly and that the study is being carried out as planned.

Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

If you have questions about the study, please call Brooke Latham Wilson (phone 205-391-7068) or email her at latha017@crimson.ua.edu. In addition, you may contact Dr. Mary Elizabeth Curtner-Smith (phone 205-535-0333) or email her at mcurtner@ches.ua.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact Ms. Tanta Myles,

The University of Alabama Research Compliance Officer, at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066.

You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach website at <http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO> or email us at participantoutreach@bama.ua.edu.

After you participate, you are encouraged to complete the survey for research participants that is online at the outreach website or you may ask the investigator for a copy of it and mail it the University Office for Research Compliance, Box 870127, 358 Rose Administration Building, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0127.

Appendix C
Mothers' Survey

Definition of Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is defined as “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child physical pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correcting or controlling the child’s behavior” (Donnelly & Straus, 2005, p. 3).

In this study, we are specifically interested in asking mothers about their attitudes and practices involving spanking or swatting children. Spanking or swatting refers to hitting a child on the buttocks, leg, arms, or hands, and is commonly used as a method of child guidance in the United States.

Mother’s Survey

This questionnaire is designed to collect information about you and your family. Please circle the number beside the most appropriate responses or fill in the blank. Some questions will ask about how you discipline a particular child who is between the ages of 12 months and 5 years. If you have more than one child between the ages of 12 months and 5 years, please base your answers on how you discipline your oldest child who is between 12 months and 5 years. In recognition of the personal nature of the following questions, I would like to emphasize that your answers are anonymous. Thank you for your participation.

Part I. Demographic Information

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your marital status? ___single ___married ___divorced ___remarried ___cohabitating
___separated ___widowed
3. How would you describe your ethnic background?
 - a. White
 - b. African American
 - c. Hispanic
 - d. Other (please specify) _____
4. In what region of the U.S. did you spend the majority of your childhood?
 - a. Northeast
 - b. South
 - c. Midwest
 - d. Northwest
 - e. Southwest
 - f. Not from the U.S. _____(please specify)

Part II. Current Attitudes and Values

15. How much do you agree with the following statement? "It is sometimes necessary for parents to give children a good hard spanking."

- Strongly agree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Strongly disagree

16. Do you think spanking is an acceptable method of discipline for children of certain ages? Please indicate the age groups of children whom you think might benefit from an occasional spanking or swatting.

Please check all that apply

- a) 0-6 months yes no
- b) 7-11 months yes no
- c) 1-2 years yes no
- d) 3-6 years yes no
- e) 7-9 years yes no
- f) 10-12 years yes no
- g) No age group is acceptable

17. Regardless of your values about spanking, what do you think that most children get from being spanked? *From the list below, check all that apply*

- ❖ not to engage in the misbehavior again
 yes no
- ❖ to respect the adult who is giving the spanking
 yes no
- ❖ hitting someone is the way to get them to do something that you want them to do
 yes no
- ❖ disrespect for the adult who is giving the spanking
 yes no
- ❖ desire to get back at the adult who is giving the spanking
 yes no
- ❖ hatred for the adult who is giving the spanking
 yes no
- ❖ fear of the adult who is giving the spanking
 yes no
- ❖ Children learn nothing from getting spanked
 yes no

❖ Other
Please explain_____

18. Do you think that it is necessary for parents to sometimes spank their children for the following reasons? *From the list below, check all that apply*

- a) physically aggressive behavior toward other children
 yes no
- b) physically aggressive behavior toward adults
 yes no
- c) lying
 yes no
- d) bad language
 yes no
- e) stealing
 yes no
- f) noncompliance/disobedience
 yes no
- g) dangerous or risky behavior
 yes no
- h) doing something that, because of their age, they should know not to do (e.g., wet their pants, spill a drink, fidget when they need to sit still)
 yes no
- i) engaging in behavior that is unsafe (e.g., playing in the street)
 yes no
- j) talking back or being disrespectful to an adult
 yes no
- k) other
please explain_____

19. How much do you agree with the following statement? “Parents who don’t spank their children are too permissive.”

- Strongly agree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Strongly disagree

20. Do you think it is acceptable for parents to spank their children when they (the parents) are angry?

- yes no

21. How much do you agree with the following statement? “It is a parent’s responsibility to sometimes spank his/her child for misbehaving.”

- Strongly agree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Strongly disagree

Part III. Current Practices

22. Most Americans spank as a form of child discipline. Have you ever spanked or swatted your child or children aged 12 months to 5 years?
yes no

If YES, please continue on with question 23.
If NO, please skip to question 37.

23. Have you spanked or swatted any of your children who are 12 months to 5 years old in the past week?
 not applicable yes no
24. Have you spanked your child or any of your children who are 12 months to 5 years old in the past 24 hours?
 not applicable yes no
25. Do you typically use an object when you spank?
yes (please describe) no
26. In a typical month, how often do you spank your child who is between 12 months and 5 years? _____
27. Does spanking or swatting your child because they misbehaved reduce your stress?
 yes no
28. Does spanking or swatting your child make you feel as though you've fulfilled your responsibility as a parent?
 yes no
29. In general, how satisfied do you feel after you have spanked or swatted your child?
 not at all satisfied
 slightly satisfied
 moderately satisfied
 very satisfied
30. In general, how quick are you to spank or swat as a discipline strategy?
 rarely—only as a last resort in a few extreme situations
 moderately quick—often tried something else first
 fairly quick—sometimes this is my first response and at other times I try something else first
 very quick—this is always my first response

31. Which of the following describes the typical spanking or swatting that you give your child or children 12 months to 5 years of age?

Please circle the most appropriate answer

Slight	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Extremely Severe
One swift swat on the leg, bottom, or arm. Pain went away almost immediately.	Two-three swats on the leg, bottom, or arm. Pain lingered for a minute or two.	One or more hits that caused the skin to redden and slightly swell. Pain lingered for several minutes.	One or more hits that caused bruising. Pain lingered for longer than several minutes.	One or more hits that caused swelling, bruising, and bleeding. The pain lasted a day or longer.

32. How often does your child misbehave with the purpose of making you angry?
 never or almost never
 occasionally, sometimes, rarely
 about ½ of the time
 a lot, frequently
 always, or almost always

31. In general, how angry do you feel just before you have spanked or swatted your child?
- not at all angry
 - slightly angry
 - moderately angry
 - very angry
32. In general, how sad do you feel after you have spanked or swatted your child?
- not at all sad
 - slightly sad
 - moderately sad
 - very sad
33. What are your reasons for using physical discipline such as spanking or swatting?
34. What do you hope to teach your child through spanking or swatting?
35. Why do you think that physical discipline, such as spanking and swatting, is so common among American parents?

Appendix D
Debriefing Page

Maternal Attitudes and Values on Corporal Punishment Study Debriefing

Parenting is hard work, and sometimes children can be very challenging. This study is intended to find out more about the range of parental discipline practices used by mothers, and the reasons mothers give for using these specific discipline practices. The data from your questionnaire will be combined with data from other parents.

The questionnaire you completed included questions about your personal discipline style, your beliefs about the use of corporal punishment, and your opinion on the prevalence of corporal punishment as a discipline practice.

The goals of this study are to a) assess mothers' attitudes and values about the use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline, and b) to identify the reasons mothers give for why they use corporal punishment.

The data collected from this study will be useful in helping parent educators better understand mothers' core values, attitudes, and beliefs about corporal punishment, and in addition, will be beneficial in developing education programs for parents.

If you have any questions pertaining to your participation in this research project, you may call Dr. Mary Elizabeth Curtner-Smith, PhD, CFLE at 348-8151 or e-mail her at mcurtner@ches.ua.edu and she will be happy to address your questions in confidence.

Sometimes, when people think about their lives and their family experiences, they feel that they would benefit from some help. There are many places you can get help for all kinds of problems that you or someone you know might be having. Here are the names and phone numbers of some nearby places that can help. The agencies listed below see clients from the community. A person does not have to work at The University of Alabama to request services from any of the agencies below.

Capstone Marriage and Family Therapy Clinic	205-348-8154
University of Alabama Counseling Center	205-348-3863
Turning Point, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services for West Alabama	205-758-0808

www.turningpointservices.org

Call the UA Police Department at (205) 348-5454, the Tuscaloosa Police Department at (205) 349-2121, or 911 when the centers are closed.

Thank you for participating in this important research project!!!

Appendix E
Follow-Up Recruitment Letter

Follow-up Recruitment Letter

Dear Parents,

We hope you received our Recruiting Letter, Mother's Survey, and Debriefing Page for our study entitled "Maternal Attitudes and Values About Corporal Punishment." If you have already completed and returned the Questionnaire, we appreciate your participation. If you have not, please take 30 minutes at your earliest convenience to complete the survey and return it to your child's classroom. Thanks in advance for your consideration.

If you need another copy of the survey, or additional envelopes, please email me at latha017@crimson.ua.edu and I will be happy to place the documents you need in your child's box at The Children's Program.

Sincerely,

Brooke Latham Wilson

Masters Student

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Curtner-Smith

Associate Professor

