

**It is the child, the trusting child, the damaged child, the child in pain, the dependent child, the eager child, the child who is born deserving better, who should stand as the symbol of violence against women, of violence against everybody. Page 7.**

# EMPATHIC PARENTING

Journal of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Volume 17

Issue 1  
(Recession Format)

Winter 1994



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for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

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## "It Is *Too* My Business!"

To do good, I speak to and yell at and in other ways humiliate people who abuse their kids in my presence.

Oh sure, I tried other ways. But what I realized finally is it's first necessary that you stop doing it, and then we talk about your personal or social victimization.

I'm usually scared when I do it. I'm smaller than most of the people I try to stop. I have been a victim of this type of abuse, and of a worse sort than I'm likely to see in public. I don't want to live in a world where, now that I'm an adult, people can hurt others when I'm nearby and get away with it. And I don't think young citizens of my community should have to live in that world either.

I worry. I doubt myself. I doubt my motives. I doubt I am doing good. I put myself through the wringer about my ethics, my morality, and my rage. But I've realized I can't do perfect good -- that I have to do my own flawed good, with my own rage and outrage as my armour and shield.

So if you're out there degrading kids verbally and physically, you should know that I'll be all over you, right there in front of your friends and neighbours. I might just get in a real dumb "yes you are, no I'm not" yelling match with you. Or I might say just the right profound and poetic and elegant thing. But you better bet I'll be there.

And another thing -- it is *too* my business!

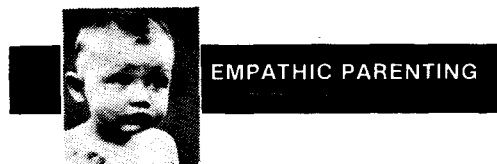
Kap Richards  
Eugene, Oregon

### WHAT IS EMPATHIC PARENTING?

**Being willing and able to put yourself in your child's shoes in order to correctly identify his/her feelings, and**

**Being willing and able to behave toward your child in ways which take those feelings into account.**

**Empathic Parenting takes an enormous amount of time and energy and fully involves both parents in a co-operative, sharing way.**

**EMPATHIC PARENTING**Journal of the Canadian Society for the  
Prevention of Cruelty to ChildrenVolume 17 Issue 1 Winter 1994  
(Date of Issue - January 1994)

Editor: E.T. Barker, M.D., D.Psych., F.R.C.P.(C)

Editorial Assistant: Jan Hunt, M.Sc.

Printed by Midland Printers, Midland, Ontario  
on recycled paper

With Vol. 7, Issue 3, Summer '84, EMPATHIC PARENTING became the official title of what was formerly the Journal of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISSN 0705-6591)

EMPATHIC PARENTING, official publication of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, is published four times a year (Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall) and is mailed without charge to all CSPCC members.

Annual Associate Membership	\$10.00
Annual Supporting Membership	\$25.00
Annual Sustaining Membership	\$100.00
Annual Endowing Membership	\$250.00

All Membership fees and donations are income tax deductible. Registration No. 0457960-09-13.

The Editor welcomes letters, suggestions for content, articles, photos, drawings, etc. for consideration. Opinions expressed in EMPATHIC PARENTING are not necessarily those of the CSPCC or the Editor.

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Subscription orders, undeliverable copies, and change of address notices should be sent to CSPCC, 356 First Street, Box 700, Midland, Ontario, L4R 4P4. (705) 526-5647. Fax (705) 526-0214

Indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index, the Canadian Magazine Index, and available on-line and on CD ROM through Canadian Business and Current Affairs.

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We very much appreciate the growing number of CSPCC members from the United States. Unfortunately, second class mailing rates for the journal are only available to bona fide subscribers in Canada, and mail costs to the U.S. are, in comparison, astronomical -- far outweighing even the big currency differential between the U.S. and Canadian dollar.

We are therefore, regrettably, asking U.S. members to add \$5.00 to the Canadian Membership rates.

# Letters...

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Re Kap Richards (Inside Covers)

Kap is one of three women who made a pact together that none of them would ever stand idly by when a child was being harassed in public. They agreed that no matter what happened they would call the other two when they got back home to report and get support.

Jan

Your Journal just gets better and better -- thank you so much for keeping on. Every day we read in the media confirmations of what you have been saying for so long. God Bless.

Mrs. Harold Ottosen  
Red Deer, Alberta

I was so pleased to receive the Journal "Will It Enhance the Affection Amongst Us?" - Volume 15 and 16, 1992 and 1993. The material is truly "familiar" to this long time member. To have it all under one Table of Contents is just great.

Yours truly  
Judge Eric Diehl  
Melfort, Saskatchewan

Unfortunately we have not received the following issues of Empathic Parenting - nothing for 1993! I would like you to know how much the staff and students enjoy reading this magazine, and I hope there is not a problem. Again, thank you for having us on your mailing list and I

hope to hear from you soon.

Linda Weaver  
Library Secretary  
Bramalea Secondary School,  
Bramalea, Ontario

In the madness of the world and the families I work with daily, along comes the '93 issue of Empathic Parenting.

Inspired!

Inspiring!

Thank you Dr. Barker. Thank you.

Name withheld by author  
out of deference to the "families".

Recent issue of Empathic Parenting is particularly interesting - thank you! I wish I could contribute more but my circumstances prevent this.

Very sincerely,  
Molly Hancock  
Sudbury, Ontario

I'm sorry to say I hadn't heard of your organization until my father gave me your "omnibus volume" which I took some time to peruse.

I have a few thoughts -- why haven't I heard of your group before?? How come the Toronto Chapter of the CSPP to Animals is constantly in the news or fundraising? Have you given any thought to actively seeking more publicity?

I suspect some feminist organizations are opposed to your message of the im-

portance of a constant, empathic care-giver in the early years. This is a terrible shame, and something I have seen evidence of in the media. Another kind of denial, to mask the guilt of choosing or having to work with young children. It's a terrible shame that people pushing for better daycare feel opposed to people whose message is the best care for young children is still for one parent to stay home -- and lets face it, its usually the mother. I feel myself to be a staunch feminist, but I also think the best child care is the mother. I usually hear or read statements from both sides that support or deny this view, but never see the root research. Could you suggest any books which describe fundamental research into pros and cons of daycare vs. homecare (maybe from the Scandinavian countries)? Thanks.

Janet Noble  
Toronto, Ontario

*Several years ago a film crew interviewed me for a program on daycare they were preparing for BBC Channel four. Before they came they asked a question very similar to yours, so I'll quote my reply.*

*"I write in reply to your query re research to support the concern that paid group substitute care under age three risks producing partial psychopaths.*

*Depending primarily on one's own personal experience (i.e. how one's own children under three were cared for and how you yourself were cared for under three) there are three general answers to your question about scientifically based*

*research.*

**ONE:**

*There is an abundance of highly suggestive, highly worrisome related evidence first collected and published in 1950 by John Bowlby for the World Health Organization, followed by many, many other studies most recently reviewed in James and Joyce Robertson's 1989 book "Separation and the Very Young".*

**TWO:**

*There is no evidence to support any concern.*

**THREE:**

*There is a serious inevitable risk but the precise, definitive studies haven't been done yet because:*

*(a) there are only imprecise definitions and measures of attachment and psychopathy,*

*(b) there is a long delay between the damage (under three) and the resulting symptoms (after age 18),*

*(c) the prevailing political climate does not encourage such research to be done because "We all know paid substitute care under three is necessary."*

*I hope that programs such as the one you are researching will, in providing genuine balance, begin to make news of "the down side" of daycare available -- news which has been consciously and/or unconsciously suppressed by the media for the last twenty years.*

Sincerely  
Elliott Barker

# Letters...

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*This issue of research proving or disproving that daycare for infants and toddlers is potentially harmful or beneficial is raised so frequently that it deserves even more of an answer.*

*Burton White, who was probably the first serious researcher publicly cautioning parents about the dangers of daycare for under threes felt that about ten percent of parents were so damaged themselves that their kids would be better off in daycare. Jerome Kagan, White's friend at Harvard who is often quoted as a daycare advocate has said (CBC 1983) that the methods used to measure attachment are very superficial and in twenty years we may find that daycare children are less closely attached. "Science is always tentative. So maybe there is a difference in attachment we can't detect yet."*

*The real issues about social science research "proof" run deeper. They were set out very nicely by Janet Rogers in her chapter "The Role of Research" in K.G. Ross's 1978 book GOOD DAYCARE -- Fighting For It, Getting It, Keeping It. She says: "The world of social science research is permeated by the politics of getting adequate funding ... the source of funding has a decided impact on the kind of research done ... Once it has been funded, the next influence on research is the bias of the researcher(s). As much as some people in the social sciences have aspired to be "objective", it is clear that subjectivity is an integral part of social research. It is impossible to be objective, especially when studying social phenomena which impinge on one's own life. Researchers who claim objectivity are really concealing their attitudes..."*

*She concludes that "...there are very few communities where research*

*would be a good tactic now." And, most candidly, "Research should be undertaken with the goal of furthering the cause of daycare in your community."*

*Jay Belsky, in his 1986 article "Infant Daycare: A Cause for Concern?" writes: "The moment a poor scientist stumbles on evidence suggesting a potentially negative effect of daycare and reports it, a host of ideologues are raising questions, criticizing methodology, mounting ad hominem attacks, or simply disregarding the data entirely in their pronouncements ... Scientists, of course, are susceptible to similar biases, however much we try not to be. This fact was brought home to me recently in a most vivid way as part of a correspondence with a colleague whose work on and opinions about daycare I admire and respect greatly. In sharing with me her plans to carry out a meta-analysis of research bearing on the influence of daycare on mother-infant attachment, this mother of a young infant in sitter care wrote to me that: "I think historical and cross-cultural data can be used to support the position that shared caregiving, which is what daycare is, is not detrimental to child development"*

*I think J.R. Seeley summed up the issues best in his 1962 paper "Personal Science" which was reprinted in part on page 98 of the last issue of Empathic Parenting. He concludes: "It should be obvious too that what is selected for exposition out of this interminable tangle is neither free of personal motive or political consequence: indeed it arises almost altogether out of the first and eventuates almost altogether in the second. (The word "almost" is meant to cover the barring of patently false propositions, which is indeed one of the virtues of social science over less scrupulous propaganda.)"*

ETB

# Real Daddies

*Linda Schultz*

The man drying my VW bus at the carwash wore a blue T-shirt that read, "Anyone can be a father, but it takes someone special to be a daddy".

While the message might help, you don't need T-shirts to spot Real Daddies! You can even pick them out when they're without their children. First, try hanging around women's restrooms..

Real Daddies:

- \* hold dolls in hallways outside women's restrooms
- \* need to be told only once not to hold the dolls upside down by their legs
- \* marry Real Mommies
- \* say "Owie!" when they hammer their thumbs
- \* use painted rock paper-weights
- \* keep their pencils in cans decorated with gold sprayed macaroni
- \* drink more Kool-Aid than Perrier
- \* like peanut butter, whether they want to or not
- \* buy super-size candy bars and, most of the time, don't get to eat any part of them
- \* know that strawberry shortcake is not always a dessert
- \* have heard of Scooby Doo
- \* sometimes carry pink plastic purses over their shoulders with their cameras
- \* carry extra diapers next to the telephoto lens in their camera bags
- \* take more pictures of smiles than of sunsets
- \* aren't in any of their vacation snapshots
- \* have more pictures than credit cards

in their wallets

Sometimes you can find Real Daddies around other people's children; not all Real Daddies have kids of their own. They:

- \* hold open heavy doors so you can push your stroller through
- \* make funny faces at babies in restaurants and other places
- \* buy lots of Girl Scout cookies - and lots of anything kids sell door-to-door
- \* pretend they're really scared when pint-size monsters come to their doors on Halloween
- \* squat when they talk with anyone below their belt loops
- \* pretend that a pitch thrown by a 5-year old is too hot to handle

Real Daddies can even be found with their own children at times.

Real Daddies:

- \* stick out from under the cars they repair with a child holding a wrench sitting on their knees
- \* change diapers on the bathroom floors at drive-in movies. (Yes, I know one. He was 18, and it was my more-than-just-wet baby brother he changed. Yes, I married him.)
- \* always come back from the playground with sand in their shoes
- \* have played Candy Land more than once
- \* are good at catching softballs and french fries
- \* help the Easter Bunny hide enough candy to open a confectionery

You may even have had a Real Daddy

*Special thanks to Margie and Allan Katz for drawing this article to the attention of the editor. Unfortunately we were unable to locate the author or source of first publication. Our apologies to both. We thought it was just too good to not reprint in EMPATHIC PARENTING.*

of your own. They:

- \* let you push the cart at the supermarket

- \* will hold your teddy bear while you get a 10-cent hotpink superball from a vending machine

- \* crawl under the vending machine to retrieve the hotpink superball while you hold your teddy bear

- \* take you shopping and let you buy the prettiest dress in the store

- \* laugh when they finish their coffee and find your black rubber spider at the bottom of the cup

- \* Let you sit on their shoes and ride down the hall

- \* help you with your homework even if it makes them grouchy

- \* will listen to all the knock-knock jokes you know - and laugh

- \* can read you at least half a bedtime story without falling asleep

- \* will willingly let you buy Park Place even if they own Boardwalk

- \* say "good try" every time you miss the ball

- \* will let you watch the whole parade sitting on their necks

- \* offer to help you with your science project and then end up doing the whole thing

- \* will let you keep the frog you just found

- \* never eat the last cookie - unless it's homemade chocolate-chip and a Real Mommy has hidden it from him behind the dusty wine glasses on the top shelf.

Hug A Real Daddy this week, and bake two batches of chocolate-chip cookies - one just for him. §





# To Remember the Women, Remember the Child

*Lois Scott, The Globe and Mail*

## MONTREAL MASSACRE

The tragedy at the Ecole Polytechnique is more than just a symbol of male violence against women. It is also a call to action to protect children whose parents won't or can't.

This is the fourth anniversary of the slaughter of 14 female engineering students at the Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal. On that day, Marc Lepine, a 25-year-old man sometimes described as shy, took his place as the pre-eminent symbol in Canada of violence against women. The date is now a day of remembrance, remembrance charged with feelings of anger and rage, of mourning; remembrance eliciting vows to end violence against women -- male violence against women, it goes without saying.

But is it really appropriate that a violent male should stand as the symbol of violence against women, because there is a question about violence that has to be answered first: Is it possible that there can exist an aggressor who has not first been a victim? And then there is a question about whether it is enough to remember with rage and anger the events of Dec. 6, 1989.

I am uneasy when presented with Marc Lepine as a symbol of one of the worst social sicknesses from which our culture suffers. The face of a frightened, bewildered little boy keeps appearing in my imaginings of what happened on that terrible day four years ago, for, according to accounts and interviews that came out

after the massacre in Montreal, Marc Lepine also was a victim of male violence. As was his mother. As was his father.

A painful picture of his early life was painted in 1991 in a two-part series published originally by the Ottawa Citizen and later reprinted in the Canadian Association of Journalists Review. According to the prize-winning story entitled Lepine: Portrait of a Killer, by reporters Greg Weston and Jack Aubry, Marc Lepine as a small boy often witnesses his mother being beaten by his father. He was beaten himself. In his mother's testimony at her divorce proceedings, quoted in the newspaper articles, she described incidents of her husband's anger, of how he hit the little boy in the face, leaving marks that sometimes lasted for a week, of bloodying his nose and forcing him and his younger sister to stand at stiff attention against a wall for painfully long periods. The father later told a judge that the children's punishment was no different that what he himself had received as a youth.

Violence done to children lives on.

Among the many words about children that psychiatrist Alice Miller has written are the following: "The truth about our childhood is stored up in our

*Lois Scott is an editor at The Globe and Mail, and a freelance writer. The article "TO REMEMBER THE WOMEN, REMEMBER THE CHILD" first appeared in the Globe and Mail on Dec. 6, 1993. Special thanks to Jill Farrow for drawing this article to the attention of the editor.*

**Is it possible that there can exist an aggressor who has not first been a victim?**

body, and although we can repress it, we can never alter it. ...Our intellect can be deceived, our feelings manipulated, our perceptions confused and our bodies tricked with medication, but someday the body will present its bill, for it is as incorruptible as a child who, still whole in spirit, will accept no compromises or excuses and it will not stop tormenting us until we stop evading the truth."

Few of us had perfect childhoods; most of us had things happen that should not have happened, but did. In varying degrees, many children have to contend with violence -- both personal and accidental -- because of events beyond anyone's control, because of inadequate family situations, damaged parents, through terrible accidents and natural catastrophe and from a world that permits atrocities like famine and war.

There are a number of groups today, both men's and women's, some of them antagonistic to one another, that seek an end to the kind of violence symbolized by what has come to be known as the Montreal Massacre. There are vows and demands that such a thing will not happen again. But how? Once learned, how are the lessons of violence to be unlearned?

The cycle of violence is tough and almost impervious to change. It will be hard work. It will not end with vows and anger and demands for it to end. Violence can't be ended simply by saying no to it,

as teen-agers have been told to do about drugs and unsafe sex.

It has to be tackled before it begins.

At a recent workshop, Eugene Gendlin, a psychologist and professor of behavioural science at the University of Chicago, said: "Every child is born perfect." Then, he went on, things happen, too often things that should not happen -- treachery, ridicule, neglect and physical violence, out of which emerges a truly messed-up-person. "But," he said, "the perfect child is still there."

In fact, Marc Lepine may very well be the perfect symbol of male violence against women. But it requires viewing him in a different light: Place against the picture of the atrocity that took place at the Ecole Polytechnique the picture of a once-terrified little boy and imagine the perfect child who was once there and who might still have lived within him. In that image, we might indeed have a symbol around which to rally, not principally with hate and anger and rage, but with sorrow and charity and hope for things to be different and a dedication to trying to make them different.

To stop violence against women, violence against children must stop. Everything begins with children. It is the child, the trusting child, the damaged child, the child in pain, the dependent child, the eager child, the child who is born deserving better, who should stand as the symbol of violence against women, of violence against everybody. §

**To stop violence against women, violence against children must stop.**

# Should We Intervene When Strangers Hurt Their Children in Public?

*Jan Hunt*

She is adorable, with a mass of brown curls and large blue eyes; she is just about three. She has just learned about pockets. She reaches out to take a small item from the shelf, and holds it over her pocket for a moment, then lets it drop. Plop! She gives a satisfied little laugh. She reaches into her pocket to do it again. But this is in a store and the object which costs twenty-five cents has not been paid for.

Her father, standing nearby, has seen this incident. Enraged, he rushes over, snatches the object from her hand, throws it on the shelf, and shouts at her, "I'll break your fingers." The horror of this threat collides with her laughter, and she stands there cowering, silent, and afraid.

The scene just described is, unfortunately, not fiction. It took place last year in a large department store. Although this example may be extreme, it is not unique: both physical and emotional abuse take place daily to millions of children in our society. One does not need to venture out in public long before hearing threats, impatience, mistrust and angry words directed at children.

When abuse happens behind closed doors it is seldom apparent to others until it become severe and repetitive or physical or sexual abuse is discovered. But when it happens in public, we have an opportunity to intervene.

How, then, can we as observers respond in a way that is helpful to both

the parent and the child, when we witness such abuse?

As none of us is a perfect parent, it may be most helpful to consider what type of response we would prefer if we were observed treating our own child in a less than understanding way. The following pattern may be useful in similar situations which the reader may encounter:

First, we need to show empathy for the parent: "It can really be challenging when children are little and still learning about stores."

We might then share something of our own (or our child's) experience: "I remember when I was four and my parents saw me pick something up, but I didn't really understand about stealing".

We should then empathize with the child: "It must hurt you inside to see your father get so angry." We might then add: "This is a nice toy. It must be hard for you to leave it here."

Finally, we can offer a suggestion: "My child finds it helpful to keep a wish list for the things we can't buy yet. You might find that helpful too."

While it may be difficult to think of the perfect response in the heat of the moment, the sheer act of standing up for the child can have a significant impact on the child herself, even if the parent becomes angry or defensive. Many adults in counselling sessions still remember vividly the one time that a stranger stepped in on

*Jan is the Assistant editor of EMPATHIC PARENTING. Her writing on issues that affect children has appeared in many newspapers both in the United States and Canada. Imagine my pleasure when one of my gods, Alice Miller, phoned me from Switzerland to ask permission to reprint Jan's "TEN REASONS NOT TO HIT YOUR KIDS" (EMPATHIC PARENTING Vol. 14 Iss. 1) as an Appendix to the English, French and Italian editions of her 1990 book THE UNTOUCHED KEY.*

their behalf, and how much that meant: that someone cared, and that the child's own feelings of anger were recognized and accepted.

If we respond as we would if we were to come upon our closest friend in a similar situation, we would assume the best, assume that this situation was atypical and related to stress. The first step of expressing empathy with the parent will maximize our chances of being heard, show the parent that we believe in his basic good intentions, and avoid antagonizing him into further abusive behaviour.

Even if the parent does not respond in a fully positive way, it does not necessarily mean that our message went unheard. In a quieter moment, he may remember and reconsider what he was unable to accept at the time. And while intervening can be difficult, we need to recognize that walking past a distraught child also gives a message: it says to the child that no one cares about her suffering, and it implies to the parent that we approve of abusive treatment.

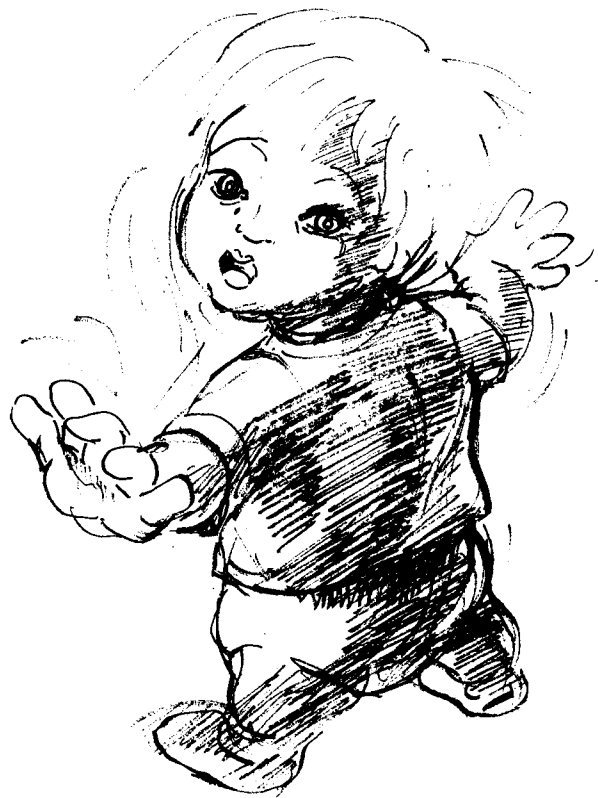
Although the father in our story meant to give his child a worthwhile moral lesson, his response is, ironically, certain to lower her self-esteem and make actual theft a real possibility. How could this little girl know that this was only a threat that no sane man would carry out? She could not know, and until someone speaks out on her behalf, she may never know.

Psychiatric case histories clearly show a direct correlation between the amount of abuse suffered in childhood and a later degree of psychopathic behaviour. Today's psychopathic adults were yesterday's abused children. We cannot take a time machine back to help yesterday's children, but we can help the children of today to become responsible adults of tomorrow, who will then teach

their own children with dignity, love, and compassion.

We can "bear witness" in public to the children. We can let them know we see them as valuable and that we do not believe they should be mistreated. If we as a society do not make it clear that we believe abuse is wrong, it will only continue.

The little girl's fingers were not touched. But her vision of the world she lives in will never be the same. §



# Picking Up the Untouched Key: The Case for Ending Physical Punishment of Children

*James Lindfield*

“A child may not be subjected to physical punishment or other injurious or humiliating treatment.” **Parent and Guardianship Code, Sweden, 1979.**

Child abuse is a term with varying definitions. One U.S. Survey into college students found that half those who had bones broken in the course of their parents punishing them, did not classify themselves as having been “abused”. Clearly the term is flexible. I will use abuse in the common Canadian manner, as being any action that causes physical damage. But I want to emphasize that I regard any physical punishment (slapping, spanking, tying up, beating et al.) as being an abuse of a child’s right to physical integrity. That is, I am applying to children the same rights as Canadian society currently accords to all adults.

In Canada physical punishment of children is a common practice. Recent surveys (Durrant, 1993) suggest that some 70% of respondents believe it to be an appropriate childrearing method. However, the majority of the respondents also believe it to be lacking in efficacy and feel that parental guilt is a likely outcome. Respondents were generally not aware of the research connection between physical punishment and physical abuse.

In the course of this article, I will briefly examine the history of the development of rights for children, the research on the connection between physical punishment: abuse, family violence and crime. I will then discuss the actions being taken on behalf of children’s rights to physical integrity in Canada and internationally.

*James Lindfield, who is currently pursuing a Masters degree in counselling at Simon Fraser University is the Co-ordinator of EPOCH Canada. EPOCH (End Physical Punishment of Children) is a program of the CSPCC.*

## The Historical Development of Children’s Rights

Christian religious doctrine formed and to some extent still forms the ideological basis for Western use of physical punishment. Writers frequently cited the Proverbs of Solomon, in the Christian Bible, though some scholars argue that these actually date back to the early Egyptians. For example: “He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chastiseth him betimes.” (Prov. 13:24) John Robinson, Minister to the Pilgrims in Holland wrote: “Surely there is in children a stubbornness, and a stoutness of mind arising from natural pride, which must in the first place be broken and beaten down.” In 1732 Susanna Wesley, mother of the founders of Methodism, John and Charles Wesley, noted that her children “when turned a year old (and some before) were taught to fear the rod and cry softly.”

Contemporaneously, across the Atlantic, Esther Burr whose husband was the President of Princeton wrote: “I had almost forgot to tell you that I have begun to govern Sally. She has been whipped once on Old Adam’s account ... she is not quite ten months old.” Use of the rod before the first year of age is still regarded today with approval by some Fundamentalist Christian writers.

Consideration of a partial list of legislative changes and events gives an indication of the development of rights of physical integrity for children.

In 1760, Blackstone first codified British Common Law. A section dealing with the use of force allowed "Rights" for masters and employers to beat apprentices, employees and servants, and for husbands to beat their wives. The law also allowed parents and teachers to beat children. (Modified versions of this law still form the basis for law concerned with use of force in England, Canada, New Zealand, and some U.S. States.)

In 1793 Poland became the first country in the world, to specifically ban school beating.

Through the 1800's Belgium, Austria, Finland, France abolished school beating.

Infanticide and child murder were not uncommon into the 1800's in parts of Europe.

In 1889 one of four demands made by striking schoolboys in London, England, was an end to caning.

In New York, in the 1890's, children's rights advocates had to resort to using a law designed to protect animals in order to save a child from further neglect and abuse. There were no laws to protect children. This case became the impetus for founding of the Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

In 1906 flogging in the British Army was banned.

In 1917 the Soviet Union abolished school beating.

In 1948, birching was abolished as a judicial punishment in the U.K.

In 1958 Sweden abolished school beating.

In 1962 U.S. Paediatrician Henry Kempe reported that many of the fractures he observed in his child patients were caused by parental beatings. Awareness

of child abuse began to grow again. In 1979, in a determined effort to reduce abuse of children, Sweden became the first country to ban parental use of physical punishment. This ban was accompanied by a widespread and imaginative educational campaign. The new law has no criminal penalty attached to it and allows for restraining children if they are endangering themselves or others.

The success of Sweden's law and educational program, in encouraging parents to develop more positive methods of childrearing, has resulted in similar laws being adopted in Finland, Denmark, Norway and Austria. Scotland and Germany are in the process of developing legislation banning some forms of parental physical punishment. Child welfare organizations in other European countries, North America, and parts of Africa are beginning educational campaigns to reduce the use of physical punishment. In 1989 the United Nations ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 19, 1 reads "States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence...". Canada signed the Convention in 1991. Many countries are now reviewing their legislation concerning children, after signing the Convention. Thomas Hammarberg (1992), Member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of The Child, notes: "At long last attitudes towards children begin to change. Their rights begin to be recognized. The case for a ban on physical punishment is now overwhelming. A refusal to abolish this punishment is no longer a passive position, it is an active undermining of the rights of the child -- and should be criticized as such."

## Research into Physical Punishment

Physical punishment may attain compliance in the short run but is ineffective in the long term. An observational study of mothers with their one year olds found that those children who had been physically punished took less notice of their mother's suggestions and commands. They also lagged behind non-physically punished children on a series of developmental tests. A U.K. study of boys canned for smoking at school found that their daily cigarette consumption actually increased afterwards. Due to its ineffectiveness as a disciplinary procedure parental use of physical punishment often escalates in severity over time.

In an extensive study into physical child abuse, Kadushin and Martin (1980) found that almost all cases of physical abuse studied had started as a punishment that then escalated out of the parent's control when the child responded contrary to their wishes. In his 1991 survey, Strauss found that physical punishment tended to "increase the probability of deviance, including delinquency in adolescence and violent crime both inside and outside the family as an adult." Crimes inside the family include: spouse assault, and physical child abuse. One U.K. study conducted over twenty years showed that the factors most predictive of developing a criminal record before age 19 were: being smacked or beaten at least once a week at age 11 and having a mother with a strong commitment to physical punishment. This was after taking into account class, educational level, and poverty, (Newson and Newson, 1989). Commissions in the U.S., Australia and Germany, concerned with violence in the home, in the schools and on the streets have all recommended that widespread campaigns be undertaken to discourage physical punishment.

Gelles and Cornell (1990) wrote in *Intimate Violence in Families*: "The widespread acceptability of physical punishment in raising children creates a situation where a conflict prone institution (the family), serves as a training ground to teach children that it is acceptable

- a) to hit people you love
- b) for powerful people to hit less powerful people
- c) to use hitting to achieve some end or goal and
- d) to hit as an end in itself."

Gelles and Strauss (1988) concluded "after nearly two decades of research on the causes and consequences of family violence we are convinced that our society must abandon its reliance on spanking children if we are to prevent intimate violence."

## The Canadian Situation

All people living in Canada are legally protected from physical assault. However, as in most countries of the world there is one exception: children. Section 43 of the Canadian Criminal Code states: "*Every schoolteacher, parent or person standing in place of a parent is justified in using force by way of correction ... If the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances*". This has been interpreted by some judges to mean that the judiciary should not interfere with parental use of physical punishment. In one 1987 case the parental punishment was a beating with a belt. In a 1992 case the punishment involved the father kicking his son. A more recent incident, involved a teacher hitting a pupil with a hammer. No conviction.

A Canadian Senate Sub-Committee entitled the **Child at Risk**, recommended in 1980 that Section 43 be "reconsidered ... in view of the sanction which this type

of provision gives to the use of violence against children." An increasing number of professionals are calling for widespread education programs and/or the abolition of Section 43. Amongst others, these include: Dr. Ezzatt Fattah, Criminologist, founder of the Simon Fraser University School of Criminology, Dr. Elliott Barker, President of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and Dr. Marie Hay, Paediatrician and Director of the Child Development Centre, Prince George. Dr. Hay has developed Canada's first "No Smacking Zone" and has proposed to the City council that the whole city be declared a "No Smacking Zone" by mayoral decree. Langley Family Services has also made an official Zone. EPOCH BC Coalition and EPOCH Ontario, affiliated with EPOCH CANADA were formed in 1993, to distribute information and help parents develop more positive means of childrearing.

Accepting that what was done to one as a child was sometimes deeply painful and humiliating demands a certain courage. Developing a commitment to treat children with empathy and understanding rather than force, demands further courage. Parents who have been able to -reflect on and feel about rejection in their childhoods, and have come to terms with what occurred, can form secure attachments with their own children (Bowlby, 1988).

I would argue that by reflecting on and feeling about our own experiences with physical punishment, a similar process can occur to interrupt the transfer of physical punishment to another generation. Alice Miller (1983) has said, "We are less a prey to this form of repetition compulsion if we are willing to acknowledge what happened to us, and do not claim that we were mistreated "for our own good".

Our current knowledge indicates how we can begin to reduce child abuse, crime and the levels of rage and human misery in our country. We now have a choice. §

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**"We don't yet know, above all, what the world might be like if children were to grow up without being subjected to humiliation, if parents would respect them and take them seriously as people."**

**Alice Miller**



# EPOCH: New Group Advocates Peaceful Discipline, No Spanking

*Doug Youmans  
Times-Review, Fort Erie, Ontario*

At the age of 17, James Davis was released from institutional care, classified as an untreatable psychopath.

Twenty-one years later, he is a calm, mild-mannered man with the goal for others not to go through the horrors he suffered while trying to come to grips with the anger that almost destroyed his life.

Now 38, Mr. Davis is trying, with his wife Kelley, to launch an Ontario chapter of a world-wide effort to end physical punishment of children.

Also known as EPOCH, it is, provincially, a program of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, with a goal to make it illegal to physically punish children and young people.

Running the program from his home in Ridgeway, Mr. Davis, who is on permanent mental disability, started contacting pediatricians and other doctors in November in an attempt to get their backing for the project.

"They probably see the results of child slapping much more than the rest of us and if I can get some of these people behind us, it's going to be a lot easier than if I try to get the message out by myself," he told the Times-Review.

He is also looking for support from business to cover the cost of printing literature which would be distributed to community and social services and food banks where he said, "people could really use a helping hand in learning how to cope with children without slapping them."

*Jim's interest in, and voluntary work for the CSPCC goes back to 1980. He is a good example of how motivation and therapy can begin to break the intergenerational cycle of abuse.*

The father of three said the violence learning process can start as early on in life as six months old if a child is punished physically on a regular basis. Parents and caregivers should be looking for alternatives to hitting their children, he said, adding that he thinks it is the best way to change the future of society.

Mr. Davis got involved with the project when his friend, Dr. Elliott Barker, founder of the CSPCC, asked him to set up a provincial wing of EPOCH. Dr. Barker started CSPCC after leaving his position as a psychiatrist at Oak Ridge, a maximum security mental hospital for the criminally insane in Penetanguishene, Ontario. The doctor left the hospital after deciding there was no effective treatment for psychopaths or violent criminals. He came to the conclusion that the only answer was to attack the root of the problem which he identified as being exposed to and learning violent behaviour at an early age. His group warns that even mild punishment - a slap, shaking, or boxing of the ears - can still, even accidentally, cause serious harm to a child and that these seemingly harmless acts can escalate very quickly into lashing out at a child rather than an attempt to discipline.

EPOCH recommends a number of alternatives contained in a booklet by Penelope Leach, a British psychologist specializing in child development, called "Spanking, A Shortcut to Nowhere..."

To avoid spanking a baby, she suggests: Grabbing hands instead of

slapping them. She says this will get a child's attention just as fast. Don't force a child to give you something. A child will only hold on tighter. She says offering a swap will work. Baby-proofing a home is a good idea, she says, as quarrels are avoided if nothing breakable or dangerous is within reach.

With toddlers, she recommends parents avoid direct confrontations as these only bring an adult down to the toddler's level. She says adults should be able to come up with some sort of diversion or distraction for misbehaving children.

If a parent is having problems with an older child, Ms. Leach summarizes her listed steps with the advice that above all, talk to a child. She says children want to be told what a parent thinks, feels and wants, and want to be treated the same way other people treat each other.

The two men met in Penetanguishene when Mr. Davis was a patient at the Oak Ridge facility.

As one of 12 children, Mr. Davis said he was not raised under ideal conditions. Without elaborating, he said he and his siblings "experienced just about everything you could think of at home ... it was very unstable".

At 14, he was placed in a training school where he spent six months before being transferred to a psychiatric hospital in Niagara Falls and Hamilton. Eventually he was sent to the maximum security facility in Penetanguishene where he remained until he was 17.

"I certainly didn't consider myself to be criminally insane, and even the doctors there now wonder if they have made a mistake in putting me there," he said, adding that it was at this time hospital staff determined his problems with violence weren't his fault, but were because of the environment in which he grew up.

Still under psychiatric care, it was not until the accidental death of a nephew that Mr. Davis found a cure. He was given a drug called Ativan to help calm him after the death. He has been on the medication now for the past 12 years.

Mr. Davis described the effect of the drug as "like putting a lid on my violent tendencies and holding me steady."

Under control for the first time in years, he began doing community work including several years as a helper with the Children's Aid Society. He also spent two years in university studying sociology and psychology.

Blaming the violence of his childhood, he says he now hopes he can help change people's attitudes toward corporal punishment.

"I think its best to start at the root of the problem and see if we can change some things in the decades to come."

Anyone wishing to become a member of the new organization and receive a newsletter, can do so by contacting **Mr. Davis at 440 Ridge Road, Ridgeway, Ontario Box 1005. L0S 1N0, or call 905-894-3842, fax 905-384-2388.**

Membership is \$25 with donations accepted. Members of industry and commerce wishing to make a donation are usually requested to give \$250 and will receive some type of advertising in the newsletter. All donations are tax deductible. §

Parents ... should be looking for alternatives to hitting their children (as) the best way to change the future of society.

# PARENTS SENSIBLES

Journal de la Société Canadienne  
pour la Prévention de la Cruauté envers les Enfants

Tome 17

Numéro 1

Hiver 1994

## "C'est Aussi Mon Affaire!"

Pour bien faire, je parle et je crie, en autre mots, j'humilie les personnes qui abusent leur enfants en ma présence.

Bien sûr, j'ai essayer d'autre façons! Mais, ce que j'ai finalement réaliser, c'est que premièrement il faut que tu arrête ces abus envers les enfants. Ensuite on pourra parler de toi -- du fait que tu as été un victime d'abus personnel et sociale.

D'habitule cela m'effroie d'intervenir. Je suis plus petit que la plupart des gens j'essaie d'arrêter. J'ai été victime de cette sorte d'abus, et même pire que la sorte d'abus que je voirais probablement en public. Maintenant que je suis adulte je ne veux pas vivre dans un monde où les gens se font du mal entre eux dans ma présence. Je ne crois pas que les jeunes citoyennes de ma communauté doivent vivre dans en monde comme ça non plus.

Je m'inquiète. Je me doute. Je doute mes motifs. Je doute si je fais du bien. Je me tourmente à propos de mes éthiques, ma moralité, et ma rage. Mais j'ai réalisé que je ne peux pas le faire parfaitement -- que je dois faire mon bien imparfait, avec ma propre rage et outrage comme mon armure et bouclier.

Alors, si vous dégradez les enfants verbalement ou physiquement, tu dois savoir que je ne te lâcherais pas, même en avant de tes amis et voisins. Je vois peut-être agir comme un imbicile et tout simplement commencer à m'argumenter avec en disant "Oui tu le fais ... Non je ne le fais pas!" Ou peut-être je vois dire des chose très profonde et poétique et élégants. Sois rassurer que je vois être là.

Un autre chose ... C'est aussi mon affaire!

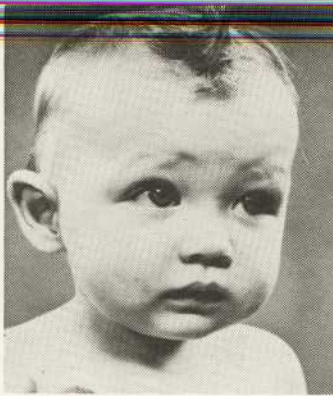
Kap Richard  
Eugène, Oregon

### Qu'est ce que c'est d'être Parents avec Compassion?

**Vouloire et être capable de te mettre dans les souliers de ton enfant en bût de**  
correctement identifier ses sentiments.

**Vouloire et être capable d'agir envers votre enfant d'une manière qui prends**  
ses sentiments en consideration.

**Etre Parents avec Compassion prends énormement de temps et d'énergie et implique**  
les deux parents qui agient en co-operation et partage.



Recognizing that the capacity to give and receive trust, affection and empathy is fundamental to being human.

Knowing that all of us suffer the consequences when children are raised in a way that makes them affectionless and violent, and;

Realizing that for the first time in History we have definite knowledge that these qualities are determined by the way a child is cared for in the very early years.

# CREDO



## WE BELIEVE THAT:

- The necessity that every new human being develop the capacity for trust, affection and empathy dictates that potential parents re-order their priorities with this in mind.
- Most parents are willing and able to provide their children with the necessary loving empathic care, given support from others, appropriate understanding of the task and the conviction of its absolute importance.
- It is unutterably cruel to permanently maim a human being by failing to provide this quality of care during the first three years of life.

## THERE IS AN URGENCY THEREFORE TO:

- Re-evaluate all our institutions, traditions and beliefs from this perspective.
- Oppose and weaken all forces which undermine the desire or ability of parents to successfully carry out a task which ultimately affects us all.
- Support and strengthen all aspects of family and community life which assist parents to meet their obligation to each new member of the human race.