

The perils and perks of spanking your child

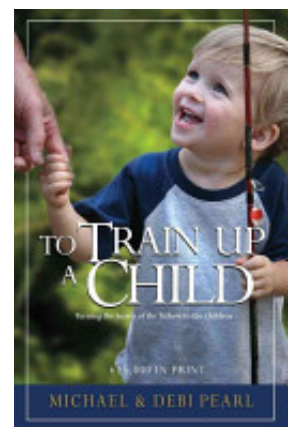
Spanking your child is one of those subjects best discussed after talk about religion and politics has already cleared the room. Yeah, we're willing to discuss both the good and bad, the perils and perks of spanking your child.

Constructive conversation on the subject of spanking your child isn't helped when [the media reports on parents beating 3-year-olds](#), or when Anderson Cooper's aptly titled "[Christians spank child to death in the name of God](#)" piece goes viral. There's even a Youtuber who, without ironic reference to his own Islamic tradition, points to how Christianity might be to blame for these spanking deaths:

A growing practice among the Fundamentalist Christians who beat children in the name of God. They preach that God commands in the Bible to beat the child with a rod. This news clip shows one adopted girl that was beaten to death. – [A Muslim](#)

And there's plenty in the Old Testament Bible to suggest a long tradition of spanking your child:

Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them. – Proverbs 13:24



The controversial book *To Train Up A Child* seems to be, at worst, a means for abusive parents to justify the brutal beatings of their children, according to those who criticize spanking traditions. However, Michael Pearl, one of the authors, [defends his book](#) with vehemence: "No court, judge,

police or child protection service has ever accused us of doing anything that was an endangerment to children," said Pearl. "There's no way that a person who reads the book could be led to violence."

Paul Thomas, MD seems take another approach, [defending the perks of spanking your child](#), but within hard boundaries and guidelines: "I've only spanked one of my ten children," he offers. "If you're showing your child that the way to handle a situation that is stressful is through violence or force, then what are they going to do when they are going through life and they are faced with a situation where they don't know how to handle it, and they are trying to exert their will as we do with parents, so they're going to do this with force. We need to learn to calm down in a crisis situation."

Today, nearly [65% of parents believe that they spank responsibly](#). There are [plenty of videos](#) explaining what methods and boundaries should be used for spanking a child.

The [law generally defends the right to spank children](#), including a recent four-judge panel ruling in a unanimous decision in Suffolk County, New York:

“The father’s open-handed spanking of the child as a form of discipline after he heard the child curse at an adult was a reasonable use of force and, under the circumstances presented here, did not constitute excessive corporal punishment.”

But there are few perks of spanking your child; instead, responsible parents call it the "last resort" and a method for discipline that comes after all else fails. Only the most egregious and negligent parents could ever claim that they enjoy spanking children, so it's with compassion other parents should approach these responsible parents who feel they have exhausted every other option.

Discipline can take many forms, and spanking your child is the very last method for coming to a solution.

The final decision to spank or not to spank will come down to a parent's decision whether it is appropriate for that child. While some children may respond to timeouts and verbal rebukes, others may require a strong hand to fall in line.

The last thing this anti-helicopter parent wants is to suggest spanking your child has something to

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do with the negligence or act of violence by others.