



American College of  
Emergency Physicians®

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE 

# POLICY STATEMENT

Approved October 2016

## *Corporal Punishment of Children*

Revised October 2016

Reaffirmed October 2007

Revised September 2001

Approved October 1993

As medical professionals in the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), it is our duty to care for and protect any child who seeks care in the Emergency Department.

The acceptance of corporal punishment of children in our society arose from the notion that physical reprimand with the intent to cause pain was distinct from physical abuse. This ranged from a light spanking with a hand, to use of various instruments such as paddles or belts, to brutal beatings. Recent literature on corporal punishment has emphasized the short and long term negative impact on most children.

ACEP does not support and encourages reporting of corporal punishment actions leading to significant physical or emotional injury to a child to the state's appropriate child welfare and protective services.

Furthermore, ACEP disapproves of the use of any form of corporal punishment as a method of disciplining children.

ACEP recommends parental education regarding the potential negative effects of corporal punishment and the use of alternative techniques for instruction and reprimand.