



Increasing America's Tax Base through the Reduction of Corporal Punishment in Public Schools

Proposed Priority 9 -- Promoting Economic Opportunity, underscores the very purpose of education. Economic progress is strongly correlated with educational attainment, where a high school graduate will earn almost \$10,000 more per year than a worker with less than a high school diploma. Similarly, a worker with a bachelor's degree will earn about \$24,000 more per year than a worker with only a high school diploma.¹ The average projected increase in wages for a bachelor's degree holder over a work-life is \$1,056,000.²

College graduation potential of learners has been shown to be negatively correlated with the use of corporal punishment on learners in their teenage years. Studies have isolated corporal punishment's impact on college graduation, separate from other variables namely: violence between the parents of the student, age of the student, race of the student, and educational attainment of the student's parents.³ The research, based on cohort studies conducted in 1975 and 1985, shows a negative correlation with the use of corporal punishment and the probability of college graduation.⁴

The 1975 study shows that for each of the first three corporal punishments received by a male student their probability of graduating from college is decreased by 11% per corporal punishment session.⁵ Similarly, the 1975 research shows that female teens subjected to corporal punishment have a decrease by 8% in college graduation rates for each of the first three corporal punishment sessions. The 1985 study reaffirms these results, displaying a consistent 8% decrease in college graduation rate per corporal punishment for the first three instances of corporal punishment for both male and female teens.⁶

¹U.S. Department of Education. (2017). "Secretary's Proposed Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs." Available at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/10/12/2017-22127/secretarys-proposed-supplemental-priorities-and-definitions-for-discretionary-grant-programs>.

²Vander Ley, D. (2017). "Math Scratch Pad: Work-Life Salary Calculations." Available at: <http://www.grandrapidsdecision.com/mathsketchpad2.html>.

³Straus, M. A., Douglas, E. M., & Medeiros, R. A. (2014). College graduation. In *The primordial violence: Spanking children, psychological development, violence, and crime* (pp. 157-166). New York, NY: Routledge.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

The average economic impact of using corporal punishment on a teen is \$45,450 per corporal punishment session each for the first three sessions.⁷ According to the Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), over 110,000 learners were subjected to corporal punishment in school during the 2013-2014 academic year.⁸ While the literature on the correlation between graduation rates and corporal punishment is limited in scope specifically to the teen population and the Department of Education's recorded 110,000 corporal punishment sessions is presented without age parameter; for the sake of assessment one may assume corporal punishment induces the same consequences for young children as teenagers. With this operating assumption, the averaged economic impact of corporal punishment in public schools for the 2013-2014 education year may be calculated at \$4.99 Billion.⁹ If the assumption that the young are equally susceptible to decreased college graduation rates due to corporal punishment as teenagers is not accepted, an alternative approach is to limit the calculations to represent only the teenage population, with the associated economic loss of \$1.92 Billion per year.¹⁰ Public school corporal punishment, if the cohort studies can be trusted, failed to promote economic opportunity at the cost of between \$1.92B and \$4.99B in the 2013-2014 tax year alone. If this trend continues unaddressed over the potential eight-year presidency of Donald Trump, America's economic opportunity, by way of child-hitting, will be reduced by between \$15.3 Billion and \$39.99 Billion.¹¹

Further, Title I funded schools, in states which allow corporal punishment, are almost twice as likely to use corporal punishment as the schools not receiving Title I funds.¹²

⁷Vander Ley, D. (2017). "Math scratch pad: Financial cost of a corporal punishment session on a teen." Available at: <http://www.grandrapidsdecision.com/mathsketchpad7.html>.

⁸U.S. Department of Education. (2016). "Letter to States Calling for an End to Corporal Punishment in Schools." Available at: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/files/corporal-punishment-dcl-11-22-2016.pdf>.

⁹Vander Ley, D. (2017). "Math scratch pad: Financial cost of a 110,000 corporal punishment sessions on the U.S. economy." Available at: <http://www.grandrapidsdecision.com/mathsketchpad9.html>.

¹⁰Vander Ley, D. (2017). "Math scratch pad: Cost of corporal punishment of teen learners on the United States economy 2013-2014 fiscal year." Available at: <http://www.grandrapidsdecision.com/mathsketchpad10.html>.

¹¹Vander Ley, D. (2017). "Math Scratch Pad: Projected cost of corporal punishment on the United States economy 2017-2024." Available at: <http://www.grandrapidsdecision.com/mathsketchpad11.html>.

¹²Font, S. A., & Gershoff, E. T. (2017). Contextual factors associated with the use of corporal punishment in U.S. public schools. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 79, 408-417. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.06.034

The Department of Education’s description of Title I reads in part: “to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.”¹³ Everything known about the economically damaging effects of corporal punishment, the disproportional use of corporal punishment at Title I funded public schools, the disproportional use of corporal punishment on male learners, minority learners, and learners with disabilities¹⁴, raises Title VI concerns of disparate impact. The section on disparate impact within Title VI reads in part: “utilize ... methods of administration ... (which) have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the program”.¹⁵

I kindly request the Department of Education to augment its Proposed Priority 9 “Promoting Economic Opportunity” to specifically address the economic losses created by the use of corporal punishment on the children in our publicly funded education system.

Sincerely,

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¹³U.S. Department of Education. (2015, October 5). Title I, Part A program. Available at: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html>.

¹⁴U.S. Department of Education. (2016). “Letter to States Calling for an End to Corporal Punishment in Schools.” Available at: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/files/corporal-punishment-dcl-11-22-2016.pdf>.

¹⁵U.S. Department of Justice. (n.d.). Section VII: Proving Disparate Impact. In Title VI legal manual. Available at: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/case-document/file/923556/download>.