

Children First

Our mission is to respond to the complex needs of abused and neglected children, and those involved in their care, by providing best practice counseling, legal, and educational services. Through research, communications and training initiatives, we work to expand these programs to prevent abuse and help more children heal.



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Spare the Rod: Save the Child

By Mary L. Pulido, Ph.D.

Executive Director, The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

When was the last time you read an article about the benefits of corporal punishment? My guess is—never. Resorting to corporal punishment means that the adult uses dominance, power and violence to try to control the child. And, far from teaching the child how to behave, how to right the wrong that upset the parent in the first place, it leaves the child angry, upset and in pain. Nothing is learned and so much is lost.

Corporal punishment hurts, harms and often kills children. Discipline is what The NYSPCC recommends parents use; but, it takes more work on the parent's part. So, unfortunately, some parents opt for a "good beating" instead.

Corporal punishment includes hitting children such as with hands and objects, being kicked, shaken, forced to maintain uncomfortable positions (think kneeling on rice) and a wide range of degrading and pain-inducing treatment. There are several important factors to think about in these situations too. The adult is often much more powerful than the child. They can easily underestimate the force of the blow that they are inflicting. The adult is usually very angry. Parents in an angry rage often lose sight of the harm that they are inflicting. Like the cases we've seen on the news lately, the hitting can very easily escalate so that the child is badly harmed. And, if the child should happen to talk back to the parent, or not give the parent the reaction they are expecting, more hitting can follow.

The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children recently published a summary of research with very serious findings about the dangers of corporal punishment.

Here are a few key findings:

- Corporal punishment kills thousands of children a year, injures many more and is the direct cause of many children's impairments.
- Most violence against children that is considered "abuse" is corporal punishment.
- There is abundant evidence that it is associated with increased aggression in children. (How could it not? In essence, the adult is teaching the child that hitting—or worse—is how you resolve problems.) Bullying and increased aggressive fighting with other children are common side effects.
- Children learn that violence is an appropriate method of getting what you want and copy a parent's behavior.
- Corporal punishment is closely related to intimate partner violence and often coexists with it.
- It has a detrimental impact on the developing child; both their physical and mental health are impacted. Self-esteem is harmed.
- It can severely damage the relationship with the parent.

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Letter from the Executive Director



Dr. Mary Pulido

Dear Friends:

Thanks to you—our dedicated supporters—our programs continue to flourish in 2016, providing hope and healing to thousands of vulnerable children and families. I am pleased to share with you some of the good work The NYSPCC has been doing to help children and educate parents, professionals and agencies that are also dedicated to protecting the safety and well-being of children.

A focus this year has been on helping child protection workers and clinicians to manage secondary traumatic stress (STS). Professionals that regularly work with trauma survivors often develop STS, which can compromise their health and capacity to help clients. In response, The NYSPCC provides **crisis debriefing counseling sessions following critical incidents**. The NYSPCC is the sole provider of crisis debriefing for the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and offers these services

to other organizations as requested. The NYSPCC also trains child protective workers nationwide on the management of STS. In 2016, The NYSPCC provided STS trainings throughout New York State and in San Diego and Washington, DC.

We are proudly expanding our child sexual abuse prevention efforts to reach more parents, teachers, school administrators and community leaders—because **the protection of children is everyone's responsibility**. In October, at Penn State's Conference on Child Protection and Well-Being, I gave a lecture to approximately 150 teachers, researchers, and child welfare professionals, describing our child sexual abuse prevention program, Safe Touches. In November, I was invited to Barclays to provide a workshop for company employees on how to talk to their children about child sexual abuse. Both presentations were very well received. To request child sexual abuse prevention education workshops for your company or parent/community group, please contact The NYSPCC's Training Institute at training@nyspcc.org.

We also continue to work with the ELIZA-Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to replicate Safe Touches in Greece. In April 2016, with support from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, The NYSPCC trained ELIZA staff on how to implement the program and facilitate Safe Touches workshops. ELIZA launched Safe Touches in Athens schools in May 2016 and will expand the program over the next two years, bringing the **empowering lessons of Safe Touches to children throughout Greece**.

To stay informed about NYSPCC activities and upcoming events, please visit our website, follow us on social media, and join our e-mail list. We have the Family Benefit, our Spring Luncheon and a Junior Committee event coming up in the spring. I'd love to see you there!

On behalf of everyone at The NYSPCC, I wish you and your families a happy and healthy holiday season!

Warm regards,

Mary L. Pulido, Ph.D.
Executive Director



"Like" The NYSPCC on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/NYSPCC

Please participate in our holiday toy drive and consider supporting The NYSPCC when making your year-end charitable donations.

info@nyspcc.org

A Warm Welcome To Our Newest Board Member



Mr. Rosario "Russ" Coniglio has been actively involved at The NYSPCC since September 2015 and we are thrilled to welcome him to this new role. He has supported many of The NYSPCC events including serving as a Vice-Chair of the 2016 Spring Luncheon and Co-chair of the 2016 Food & Wine Gala.

Mr. Coniglio is the Founder of Renaissance Beauty Supply company, a distributor of professional hair and skin care products to over 8,000 retail stores throughout the US and Canada. Mr. Coniglio also previously served as the President of Goodman Noodle & Matzo Company.

He received his B.A in Accounting and also graduated with a joint M.B.A/J.D. from Hofstra University. Mr. Coniglio has a daughter and son and shares his time between West Hampton, New York and Boca Raton, Florida.

Spring Luncheon

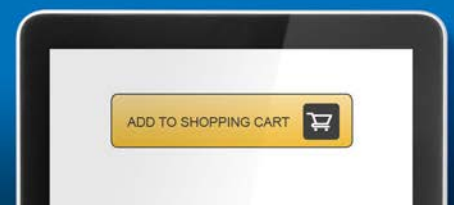
On April 21, 2016, The NYSPCC hosted the annual Spring Luncheon at The Pierre Hotel, benefiting the Trauma Recovery Program. The event featured Actress, Author, and Mother, Drew Barrymore. Ms. Barrymore spoke and read passages from her bestselling new book, *Wildflower*, for more than 250 distinguished guests gathered at The Pierre. A big thanks to our Co-Chairs Elizabeth Mayhew, Valesca Guerrand-Hermès, Maarit Glocer, Joan Granlund, Tania Higgins and Connie Newberry, as well as our Vice-Chairs Peggy Anderson, Russ Coniglio, and Dr. Penny Grant. We would also like to thank our Board of Directors and everyone else who helped make the afternoon a wonderful success raising essential funds for the agency.

Photography: Patrick McMullan



Shopping Online This Holiday Season?

Choose The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children at **AmazonSmile**, and support us every time you shop!



Junior Committee Event

The NYSPCC's remarkable Junior Committee hosted their Annual Spring Benefit at Tao Downtown on Thursday, May 12, 2016. The evening featured signature cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, along with a silent auction. We are deeply grateful for the Committee's continued enthusiasm and dedication. Special thanks to our corporate partner, Golden Door and our 2016 Junior Committee Officers: Alexandra Papanicolaou Shaheen, Chani Churchill, Hudson Bova and Matt Semino.

Photography: Francine Fleischer



Alexandra Shaheen and Kathy Van Ness



Daniel Feldman, Nicole and Russ Coniglio, Remy Schneyer



Elizabeth Tooter, Hudson Bova, Jonathan Klein, Alexandra Shaheen, Matt Semino, Audrey Seybert, Marc Lewinstein

Support Our Holiday Toy Drive



The NYSPCC is working to ensure that every child in our programs receives a gift this holiday season. You can help us bring smiles to each and every one of their beautiful faces. We are seeking gifts for approximately 200 children. The NYSPCC serves boys and girls, ranging from six months to 18 years old. We request new toys for children and gift cards for teens. Please

call (212) 233-5500, ext 220 or email info@nyspcc.org to join us in this important effort!

SAVE THE DATE

APRIL
19

The NYSPCC's

Spring Luncheon

April 19, 2017

The Pierre Hotel

JUNE
4

Family Benefit

**Charlie AND THE
Chocolate
Factory**

June 4, 2017

Matinee Performance: 1:00pm

Post-show Party: 4:00pm

Limited Tickets Available

FOR MORE INFORMATION

 **212.233.5500 ext. 216**

 **info@nyspcc.org**

Spare the Rod: Save the Child

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Now that I've stressed what NOT to do, what should a parent do? All children misbehave at times. It's a natural part of being a child. Here's what The NYSPCC recommends:

The NYSPCC encourages the use of effective discipline techniques with children. Discipline is more effective and more nurturing when parents know how to set and enforce limits and when they encourage appropriate behaviors based on their child's age and level of development. To be effective, discipline needs to be consistent, perceived as "fair" by the child, age-appropriate, and should teach the child how to act in the future. Please note that babies are never candidates for discipline, they are too young.

As your children grow, the methods of discipline will change. For example, if a toddler is trying to play with a breakable object, the parent should take it away and exchange it for a safe object, or redirect the child's attention to a more appropriate activity. As children grow, verbal instruction and using logical consequences can be used. If a child was supposed to draw on a paper and draws on the wall instead, the parent can take the crayons away, give the child a "time-out" and then let the child help with the clean-up to teach accountability.

Discipline provides guidance to your child while spelling out the consequences if they do not listen. Here are the steps:

- Clearly, calmly tell or show your children what to do.
- Don't get trapped in a cycle of arguing. If your child argues with you, simply repeat your calm, firm statement.
- Express strong disapproval if needed, but be careful not to attack with words. Tell your child how you feel about their

behavior and why you feel that way. Make sure they understand it's the behavior that you don't like.

- Give your children a choice, but only one that you can live with. For instance, "You may walk beside me or ride in the shopping cart, you decide." Let them know, clearly, in advance, what you want them to do.
- Take action if they don't listen. "Since you are not walking beside me, you must ride in the cart."
- Try to be consistent in your approach, use it in public and in your home.
- Realize that everyone makes mistakes. If you realize that you have mistreated your child, don't be afraid to tell them you are sorry, that their feelings are important to you. This also sets a good example for them.

Approval, praise and affection are the most powerful motivators for children.

Finally, have an emergency support plan. If you think you are going to "lose it" and find yourself getting angry or frustrated with your child or baby, reach out for help. Ask your spouse, partner, friend or neighbor to take care of them while you regroup. If you think you are depressed or anxious talk to your doctor about what can help. Call the parent helpline at 1-800- CHILDREN (1-800-244-5373). The demands of parenting can be fierce and draining, but they pass.

For more information about how to keep your child healthy and safe visit www.nyspcc.org.

Program Spotlight: A Story of Resilience & Healing

Nikki* has experienced a long history of neglect. Her mother, who suffered from severe drug abuse, abandoned her when she was just two years old. Nikki was found by child protection services unsupervised, with no food in the home. The vulnerable girl was malnourished, had no hair, could not speak, and was wearing a filthy diaper. Child protective services placed her in foster care. Still in foster care at eleven years old, Nikki began manifesting her anger and sadness through aggressive behavior at school and home. At this time, she was referred to The NYSPCC's Trauma Recovery Program.

Initially, when her NYSPCC clinician attempted to employ talk therapy to discuss the girl's feelings and behaviors in relation to her history of neglect, Nikki changed the topic or shut down. The clinician shifted gears and decided to try play therapy techniques. In a subsequent session, the clinician suggested to Nikki that they play a game and provided the girl with a menu of options. Nikki chose to create her own role play game. Nikki explained that she and the clinician would pretend to be lions and reenact her abandonment by her mother. Nikki took on the role of a lion cub and asked the clinician to play the mother lion. The girl gave the clinician directions on how to portray the mother, including what to say and do. As the mother lion, the clinician fed her cub, protected her from prey, and assured her cub that she was a "good baby." As the game progressed, the girl instructed the clinician to have the mother die and the cub acted out her sadness. This was a turning point in Nikki's treatment. Nikki was finally able to express the sadness she felt towards her mother's abandonment without having to act out at school or in the foster home.

Not long after this breakthrough session, the clinician presented Nikki's case to the rest of the NYSPCC clinical team to seek feedback on how to develop a therapeutic strategy. With advice and suggestions from the clinical director and her peers, the clinician began focusing on caregiver attunement work with the child's foster mother, helping her "tune-in" to Nikki's vocalizations, body language and facial expressions. In this way, Nikki's foster mother was able to better understand the girl's needs and improved their communication overall. The strategy proved effective. The foster mother successfully developed a stronger bond with Nikki, which assisted in her recovery. Nikki's aggressive behavior reduced significantly, and she is developing secure attachments with her foster family and her friends at school.

*Name is changed to protect our client's identity.

Help Us Keep Children Safe!



Safe Touches: Personal Safety Training for Children is a child sexual abuse prevention program that empowers children with the knowledge they need to protect themselves from sexual abuse and to seek help if they ever feel unsafe.

Since 2007, The NYSPCC has been bringing *Safe Touches* to children in Kindergarten through 3rd grade, in NYC schools. These children, ages 5-9, are in the highest-risk age group for child sexual abuse – so it is a critical time period to teach them about the privacy of their bodies.

In 2015, The NYSPCC provided *Safe Touches* workshops to 3,657 children in 21 NYC schools, and your support can help us reach even more.

Please consider making a gift at one of the following levels:

- **\$500** provides one classroom with a *Safe Touches* workshop.
- **\$250** provides one *Safe Touches* workshop adapted for parents.
- **\$100** provides 100 children with a free copy of the activity book, *Keeping My Body Safe!*
- **\$ _____** Other amount.

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Special Thanks

We are grateful to the following supporters who have made Annual Fund gifts of \$500 or more from March through October 2016, to help support our work with NYC's children:

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