A Dissertation

entitled

*Corporal Punishment, The Theory of Planned Behavior, and Changing Intentions for Future Parenting Techniques*

by

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 Positive and negative parenting and discipline techniques have been implicated in the child’s attachment style, psychosocial adjustment, and overall mental health. Specifically, a parent’s use of corporal punishment has been positively associated with childhood aggression and other antisocial behavior as well as an increase in truancy, animal cruelty, childhood drug use, and feeling of helplessness, humiliation, and anxiety. Despite the empirical literature indicating the increased incidence of numerous negative consequences, corporal punishment continues to be an accepted and popular form of discipline used by parents in the United States.

Recently, many national organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the National Association of Social Workers, and the American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry have denounced the use of corporal punishment and strongly suggest the implementation of alternative means of discipline. However, it is unclear how many future parents intend to implement corporal punishment as a form of discipline. According to the Theory of
Planned Behavior, one’s intention to engage in a certain behavior is affected by the person’s behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and perceived behavioral control. In addition, research illustrates that the most effective means of changing the intention to engage in the target behavior is to address all three of the aforementioned components.

The purpose of the current study is two-fold. First, the current study empirically describes the forms of discipline that future parents intend to use with their children. Suggest that nearly half (44.8%) of future parents plan on engaging in some form of corporal punishment of their children while 17.2% reported that they plan on engaging in some form corporal punishment of their infant. Secondly, the current study empirically evaluates the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD developed by Michele Knox, Ph.D. and her colleagues in changing beliefs and intentions of parents to engage in the use of corporal punishment. The DVD addresses the behavioral, normative and perceived behavioral control beliefs surrounding the use of corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment including time-out and rewarding positive behavior. Results indicate that after viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD participants’ favorable normative beliefs, favorable behavioral beliefs, and intentions regarding the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique are significantly lower than their normative beliefs were prior to viewing the DVD.
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Chapter One

Introduction

Parenting is often considered the most joyful stress because the rewards, memorable moments, and times of sharing and love are often intertwined with expectation, uncertainty, and frustration. It seems that every week there is a new newspaper article or new magazine that accompanies the mass media coverage and thousands of self-help books lining the shelves, all attempting to show parents how to survive the daily challenges encountered while raising a child. The public interest in understanding and implementing the most effective discipline techniques is also shared by many researchers. Yet, despite the immense public interest and extensive scientific research, uncertainty and strong debate continue.

One of the most contentious issues within the debate of effective discipline techniques is about the use of corporal punishment (Lazelere, 2000; Gershoff, 2002). Bitensky (2006) defined corporal punishment as “the gratuitous intentional infliction of pain on children’s bodies for the purpose of modifying behavior” (p. 2). “Spanking” which is defined as “to strike especially on the buttocks with the open hand” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2007) is the most common form of corporal punishment (Bitensky, 2006).
The results of a recent meta-analysis on published research and multiple outcomes performed by Elizabeth Thompson-Gershoff (2002) indicate that, although the use of corporal punishment seems to increase immediate compliance, its use is also associated with minimal long-term effect on compliance and many negative childhood behaviors and experiences. Specifically, corporal punishment is associated with increased aggression and delinquency, lower levels of mental health and internalization, and an increase in physical abuse of the same child. Furthermore, Elizabeth Thompson-Gershoff identified distal associations including decreased mental health, increased criminal behavior, increased physical violence with their sexual partner, decreased adult mental health, increased likelihood that they will corporally punish their own children, and increased risk of abusing one’s spouse or child.

As a result of the growing empirical literature indicating the ineffectiveness and possible negative consequences of corporal punishment, many professional organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1998), the American Medical Association (American Medical Association, 2003), the National Association of Social Workers (National Association of Social Workers, 2006), and the American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 1998) have publicly denounced its use. Despite increased consistent research findings, and these denouncements, spanking continues to be one of the most commonly implemented means of discipline in the United States (Regalado, Sareen, Inkelas, Wissow, & Halton, 2004).

Although past research has indicated that nearly 83% of likely parents support the practice of corporal punishment and intend to corporally punish their children (Graziano
& Namaste, 1990), this research was conducted prior to the public statements denouncing its use. There is currently a dearth of knowledge about the attitudes of contemporary likely parents as well as how to effectively change attitudes that are not consistent with current research.

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985; 1988; 1991), multiple factors affect the probability that one will engage in a target behavior. Although one’s attitude is a factor determining the probability of an individual engaging in the target behavior, other factors including normative beliefs and perceived behavioral control also affect this decision (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB has been applied assessing the intentions of many health related issues (Norman, Connor, & Bell, 1999; Montano & Taplin, 1991; Gantt, 2001; DeVellis, Blalock, & Sandler, 1990; Sutton, McVey, & Glanz, 1999), in assessing the effectiveness of advertisements and safety messages (Welbourne, & Booth-Butterfield, 2005), and in assessing the effectiveness of changing future behavior (Shapiro & Watson, 2000).

The current study sought to empirically describe likely parents’ behavioral beliefs, their normative beliefs, and their control beliefs regarding disciplinary practices of children including corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment. In addition, the proposed study also sought to empirically describe the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD created by Michele Knox, Ph.D. and colleagues in changing likely parents’ behavioral, normative, and control beliefs regarding disciplinary practices of children. To assess its effectiveness, the three factors identified by the TPB that influence one’s intention to engage in future behavior were assessed prior to and after viewing the corporal punishment DVD.
The project is presented in five chapters. Chapter One provides a brief project description and rationale for the importance of the research. To introduce the reader to previous research on attachment theory and parenting techniques, Chapter Two provides a literature review. Chapter Three provides a detailed description of the project’s methods, including participant descriptions, procedure, and measures used. Chapter Four presents the study results. Finally, Chapter Five describes the importance and the rationale behind the findings as well as clinical implications, limitations, and future research ideas.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

For nearly a century, researchers have strived to understand the role of parent-child relationships on the socialization and personality development of children. Although Freud was not the first to theorize the significance of parent-child relationships on an individual’s mental states and motivations, he has been one of the most influential with respect to subsequent theories and conceptions. Specifically, Freud’s (1940) psychoanalytic conclusion that early experiences in a child’s life, including those interactions with their parents, have a lasting effect later in life has been adopted by many later theorists, in particular attachment theorists.

Attachment Theory

All major theories on the socialization and personality development of children have addressed the development of attachments and the importance of parenting behaviors. John Bowlby’s (1969) attachment theory has been one of the most influential theories of infant and toddler attachment. Attachment theory incorporated the emerging cognitivist focus on mental processes becoming the leading perspective on parent-child interactions (Lamb & Lewis, 2005). Since adults vary in their degree of responsiveness and sensitivity, infants, in turn, vary in their attachment to them (Lamb & Lewis).
Many scholars have expanded on Bowlby’s theory, focusing on the lasting effects of parenting behavior on the socialization and attachments of children. For example, according to Bowlby’s attachment theory, infants should (1) use their parents as a secure base from which they can explore the unfamiliar environment, (2) draw closer to their parents upon the entrance of the unfamiliar adult, (3) and request the return of their parent through crying once their parent had departed from the room (Lamb & Lewis, 2005). Teti and Teti (1996) observed that this is precisely how 65% of the infants observed in the United States responded, and described these infants as being securely attached. Infants who exhibited an insecure attachment style were seemingly unable to employ their parent as a secure base from which they could explore the unfamiliar environment. There is much research indicating that nurturing, attentive, and nonrestrictive parenting is associated with secure attachment behavior in infants in the United States as well as in other cultures (De Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997; Posada et al., 1999; Thompson, 1998). Research suggests that infants who engage in insecure-avoidant and insecure-resistant behaviors have mothers who engage in more socially undesirable behaviors (Lamb & Lewis, 2005). Parents who repeatedly engage in intrusive, overstimulating, and rejecting behaviors have infants who engage in insecure-avoidant attachment behaviors. Parents who repeatedly engage in inconsistent and unresponsive parenting behaviors have infants who engage in insecure-resistant attachment behaviors (Belsky, 1999). Furthermore, parents who often engage in abusive and maltreatment parenting behaviors have infants who engage in disoriented attachment style behaviors (Lyons-Ruth & Jacobvitz, 1999; Teti, Gelfand, Messinger, & Isabella, 1995). Additional research suggests that the development of disoriented attachment behavior may be a result of an infant perceiving a
parent’s behavior as frightening or disturbing (Main & Hesse, 1990; Schnuengel, Bakermans-Kranenburg, van IJzendoorn, & Blom, 1999).

Many researchers have documented the association between the attachment behavior exhibited during Ainsworth’s Strange Situation and interaction styles with other individuals (Berlin & Cassidy, 1999; Kerns, 1996; Sroufe, 1996). Secure-attachment behavior in infants is associated with more cooperative play with peers and adults later in life, superior problem-solving abilities in a variety of situations in pre-school, and increased persistence and enjoyment in cognitively demanding tasks (Frankel & Bates, 1990; Grossmann, Grossmann, & Zimmerman, 1999; Sroufe, 1983). In addition, much research has also indicated that insecure-attachment in infancy is associated with increased incidents of antisocial behaviors and externalizing behavior problems in childhood (Lyons-Ruth, Easterbrooks, & Davidson, 1997; Shaw, Owens, Vondra, & Keenan, 1996).

Discipline

Early research addressing models of parenting behaviors primarily focused on classifying parents’ behaviors, particularly discipline. The word “discipline” is derived from the Latin, disciplina, meaning “instruction given to a disciple.” Specifically regarding the raising of children, it refers to the actions implemented by the caregiver to develop or modify a specific behavior. Furthermore, “disciplina” is derived from the Latin, discipulus, which is the sense of “treatment that corrects or punishes.” Smith (1967) describes discipline as the techniques that caregivers implement in the attempt to increase compliance and discourage behavior deemed inappropriate.
Schaffer and Cook (1980) defined the behaviors that parents engage in to modify and control their child’s behavior as “control techniques” that range from an angry glance to physical punishment. In addition to the types of “control techniques” employed by parents, the consistency to which these techniques are implemented has also received much attention. A consistent discipline style has been stressed by many scholars who have identified that an inconsistent discipline style tends to reinforce unwanted behaviors (Wahler & Dumas, 1986). Furthermore, additional studies have identified a positive correlation between inconsistent discipline styles and conduct problems in children (Chamberlain & Patterson, 1995).

Consistency between parents is also important. Research has suggested that disagreement between parents regarding when to discipline is associated with increased noncompliance (Elder & Caspi, 1984). Using factor analysis, Symonds (1939) proposed a model that accounts for the multiplicative effects of two parent-behavior factors: (1) “love vs. hostility”, and (2) “autonomy vs. control.” Symonds proposed that these two independent variables that distinguish between emotional tone and level of control, describe many existing concepts of parenting behavior. Symonds’ theory was later expanded upon to include a variable incorporating the parental psychological contribution (Schaefer 1959; Becker 1964). Other researchers have since focused on this three variable model currently defining the three variables as parental support, behavioral control, and psychological control (Barber, 2002).

Some of the most influential research addressing how specific childrearing patterns are associated with identifiable child outcomes was conducted by Baumrind beginning in the 1960s (Baumrind, 1966, 1967, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1991; Baumrind &
Black, 1967). While other researchers focused on classifying individual behaviors of parents, Baumrind classified parents according to the cumulative parenting behaviors. Specifically, she identified four patterns of parenting: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved or neglectful, each distinguishing between parental levels of responsiveness and permissiveness. According to Baumrind, authoritarian parents are the most demanding, valuing obedience and often engaging in forceful implementation of the parent’s will. Baumrind described permissive parents as being the most responsive, yet non-intrusive, valuing child freedom and autonomy. Uninvolved or neglectful parents also value freedom and autonomy, but “are less passive and exert more control than permissive parents” (Baumrind, 1975, p. 14). Authoritative parents are both responsive and demanding, valuing independence while attempting to modify their children’s behavior through rational explanation.

Additional research conducted by Baumrind (1971, 1973, 1975) suggests that parents with an authoritative parenting style are aware of, sensitive to, and facilitate their child’s ever-changing sense of self. In addition, authoritative parents understand the dynamic relationship present where just as they have an effect on their children, their children also have an effect on them. Understanding that this is a bidirectional relationship, these authoritative parents allow themselves to learn from their children just as their children learn from them. These interpersonal give-and-takes between parent and child are associated with many positive childhood outcomes including increased social competence and compliance (Lamb & Lewis, 2005). For both authoritarian and permissive parents, the dynamic relationship between parent and child fail to encourage the child’s development of social competence. While authoritarian parents exert too
much control within the interpersonal dynamic, permissive parents exert no control within the interpersonal dynamic. Through the balance of reasoning and punishment, authoritative parents create a balanced interpersonal relationship which values independence while employing a value system distinguished by adherence to social and cultural norms (Lewis & Lamb).

While Baumrind’s (1965) model of parenting behavior categorized parenting styles, Hoffman (1970, 1983) proposed an alternative model of parenting behavior based on Schaefer’s (1965) model of classifying specific disciplinary techniques. Specifically, Hoffman’s model of parenting classified disciplinary techniques according to whether or not the technique employed helped the child improve their internalization of the morals valued by society. The three classifications of disciplinary techniques that he identified were (a) induction, (b) assertion of power, and (c) withdrawal of love.

Hoffman defined induction as those discipline techniques employed by parents to show children how their behavior affects others. Inductive discipline techniques often involve a description of the child’s problematic behavior by the parent followed by suggestions for improvement. In addition, Hoffman defined the assertion of power as those discipline techniques that employ physical control, a removal of privileges, and threats. These discipline techniques seek to induce a high level of emotional arousal in children, influencing them to alter their behavior. Finally, Hoffman defined withdrawal of love as those discipline techniques that employ nonphysical but direct expressions of dissatisfaction. These discipline techniques seek to alter a child’s problematic behavior through ignoring the child, threatening the child that they will withdraw love or abandon the child.
Schaefer’s Model

Symond’s, Baumrind’s, and Hoffman’s models of parental behavior have all been beneficial in promoting the research addressing the classification and efficacy of parental behavior and discipline techniques. However, the broad nature of these models has proved problematic for research addressing the effects of specific discipline techniques employed by parents. Each category within these models of parenting behavior fails to separate parental characteristics, including characteristics of personality and attitudes about parenting, from the discipline techniques that they employ. Research applying these models of parenting behaviors results in confounds between discipline techniques and additional parental characteristics (i.e., emotional responsiveness). These confounds make it impossible for research to identify the efficacy of specific discipline techniques. Separating discipline techniques from parental characteristics is necessary to identify negative and positive outcomes of the use of different discipline techniques.

Schaefer’s (1965) three-factor model of parental behavior does separate discipline techniques from parental characteristics. Applying the principles of exploratory factor analysis to reports by both children and parents regarding parental discipline techniques, Schaefer identified three factors including: (a) parental support, (b) psychological control, (c) and behavioral control.

Parental Support

According to Schaefer (1965), parental support includes the parent’s level of affection, approval, emotional supportiveness, and involvement. Research has indicated that the best disciplinary system combines parental nurturance with communication employing give-and-take communication techniques between parent and child (Larzelere,
2000; Magnus et al., 1999) and positive adjustment in children and adolescence (Armsted & Grenberg, 1987; Holmbeck, Shapera, & Hommeyer, 2002; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Papini & Roggman, 1992). In addition, research by Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbush, and Darling and later supported by Holmbeck, et al. (2002) indicates that high levels of parental support were associated with improved academic performance.

Since parental support encompasses many different parental behaviors, it has been difficult for researchers to identify which specific parental behaviors are the strongest predictors of childhood outcomes. To gain a clearer conceptualization of the effects of parental behavior, researchers have since focused on specific behaviors within the category of parental support. Of the many supportive parental behaviors identified, reward, reasoning, and parental monitoring have received the most scholarly attention.

Psychological control. The second category of discipline identified by Schaefer (1965), psychological control, includes methods of control implemented by the parent preventing the autonomous development of the child. Psychological control has also been described as a passive-aggressive manipulation characterized by hostility towards the child (Silk, Morris, & Steinberg, 2003). In addition, Barber (2002) later concluded “psychological control appears not to be an objective strategy for training children for healthy psychological and emotional development; rather, it reflects a type of interpersonal interaction in which the parent’s psychological status and relational position to the child is maintained and defended at the expense and violation of the child’s development of self” (p. 6).

Although the concept of psychological control has been identified for over forty years, the construct has only received consistent attention over the last ten years. Until
recently research addressing the concept of psychological control was unable to separate elements of psychological control from elements of behavioral control and other areas of parenting such as rejection and responsiveness (Barber, 1996). Past research that combines the parent’s behavior into parenting styles makes it impossible to separate and investigate the individual dimensions within each style to determine their contributions on the development of the child (Barber, Stolz, Olsen, & Maughan 2004). However, recent research has concluded that psychological control is associated with internalizing problems, such as depression and anxiety (see Barber, 2002c, for a review) eating disorders (Jensen, 1997), and externalizing problems, such as delinquency (Bradford et al., 2003), defiance (Bronstein, 1994), and aggression (Hart, Nelson, Robinson, Olsen, & McNeilly-Choque, 1998). In addition to identifying the association with internalizing and externalizing problems, Barber and Harmon (2002) and Holmbeck, et al. (2002) both identified that parental psychological control was also associated with poor academic performance in children and adolescents. Barber (1996) has suggested that through manipulation and exploitation of the parent-child bond, this type of control has the potential to inhibit the psychological development of the child.

The increased scholarly focus on the effects of parental psychological control on children has also resulted in an increased understanding of the specific techniques used by parents. Three subcategories of psychological control have been identified including: behavioral, cognitive, and emotional (Morris, et al., 2002). According to Morris, et al. (2002), “behavioral constraint” is described as parental behaviors constraining the socialization of their children. These parents attempt to isolate their children from outside influences, often resulting in dependency. Morris, et al. (2002) defined
“cognitive control” as a parent’s efforts to control the child’s cognitions and expressions by attempting to constrain the child’s verbal and individual expression. These parental behaviors often result in decreased independent thinking and limited expression of ideas in children. Furthermore, Morris, et al. (2002) defined “emotional control” as a parent’s attempts to control and manipulate the child’s emotions. This is obtained through manipulating their own emotional responses towards the child or by constraining or invalidating the emotions of the child.

In summary, psychological control is a category of discipline techniques characterized by passive-aggressive manipulation that prevents a child from developing autonomously from their parent. This is often accomplished by controlling the child’s emotions, cognitions, or behaviors. Research has indicated that such parental behavior is associated with internalizing behaviors, externalizing behaviors, and poor academic functioning in children and adolescents.

Behavioral control. Schaefer (1965) describes behavioral control as the level of strictness of rules implemented and enforced by parents setting limits on their children. In general, the child’s expectation of a negative consequence and the level of parental control have both been positively correlated with increased compliance (Braine, Pomerants, Lorber, & Krantz, 1991; Smith, 1983). Typically, the literature addressing parental techniques of behavioral control have loosely defined behavioral control. As a result, the conceptualization is quite broad and numerous techniques have been identified. Since much of the research has combined behavioral control techniques such as coercion, privilege removal, time-out, and physical punishment, the results have varied greatly. To help clarify the effectiveness of the many discipline techniques employed by parents,
researchers have begun categorizing them in order to gain a better understanding of them. Current research has tended to focus on two categories: privilege removal and physical punishment (Larzelere, 2000; Wade & Kendler, 2000).

Privilege removal. Privilege removal is the domain of nonaversive parental behavioral control that involves the removal of a reinforcing stimulus. This includes a range of behaviors such as time-out, grounding, and removal of specific privileges. Recently, time-out has become the most commonly implemented form of privilege removal. Time-out is the immediate isolation of the child, removing them from any rewarding stimuli when the child misbehaves (Jones & Downing, 1991). This time in isolation provides both the parent and child time to “cool off” and regain control of their emotions. Time-out is useful for children who are aggressive, harmful, or engage in disruptive behavior that cannot be ignored (Olsen and Roberts, 1987). Research has indicated that time-out is an effective disciplinary practice for both clinical and non-clinical populations (Miltenberger, Parrish, Rickert, & Kohr, 1989) and children with developmental delays (Mace & Heller, 1990; Matson & Keyes, 1990).

Since time-out is almost always accompanied by parental reasoning, research has assessed the effectiveness of both forms of discipline together. A discipline technique involving the combination of time-out practices and verbal reasoning has been associated with increased immediate compliance and increased compliance for future behaviors (Mace, Page, Ivancic, & O’Brien, 1986). Since infants typically respond to verbal disapproval alone, time-out is rarely needed for children under the age of 18-months. In fact, time-out is most effective for defiant children between the ages of two and four (Roberts, 1988; Roberts & Powers, 1990). Research suggests that older children
typically respond more positively to grounding and privilege removal (Caesar, 1988; Joubert, 1992) than to time-out.

The age of the child is a vital determining factor regarding the appropriateness of discipline techniques. Relational complexity theory views cognitive development as a child’s ability to increasingly understand and manage complex relations between information (Andrews & Halford, 2002). Additional research suggests that increases in relational complexity are associated with tasks involving a greater cognitive demand (Birney, Citron-Pousty, Lutz, & Sternberg, 2005). This has a direct bearing on the appropriateness of discipline techniques, for as a child’s cognitive ability develops, so does their ability to understand outcomes and consequences associated with their behaviors. Specifically, young children under the age of two can exhibit challenging behavior, yet may not be amenable to rational discussions regarding their behavior.

Physical punishment. Although not the only means of behavioral control, recent research has identified that corporal punishment is one of the most commonly implemented discipline techniques in America. An estimated 90% of American parents engage in some form of physical punishment for their children (Straus, 1991). Specifically, 74% of parents of children 17-years-old or younger use corporal punishment (Gallup, 1995). Furthermore, 94% of parents of three and four-year-olds report using this disciplinary tactic (Straus & Stewart, 1999).

Bitensky (2006) defines corporal punishment as “the gratuitous intentional infliction of pain on children’s bodies for the purpose of modifying behavior” (p. 2). In America, the most commonly implemented form of corporal punishment is “spanking”
which is defined as, “to strike especially on the buttocks with the open hand” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2007).

Within the psychological literature, corporal punishment has been defined differently by different researchers. Baumrind, Larzelere, and Cowan (2002) define spanking as the hitting of a child with an open hand on the buttocks or extremities without leaving a bruise or resulting in physical harm. This definition was provided in hopes to separate occasional spanking from more severe forms of corporal punishment. Yet, the definitional problem continues to exist because corporal punishment for many parents continues to include more severe tactics such as the use of objects (e.g., belts, paddles, etc.). Although these forms of corporal punishment are seen as potentially abusive by most researchers, due to high number of parents who report using these techniques as a form of corporal punishment, some researchers have included them in their definition of corporal punishment (e.g., Gershoff, 2002). These differing theories of what acts to include in the definition of corporal punishment may lead to researchers yielding conflicting results.

Corporal punishment has been the focus of extensive empirical review over the years. Some research has indicated that the implementation of corporal punishment is an effective means of increasing child compliance (Chapman & Zahn-Waxler, 1982). Additional research has indicated that mild forms of corporal punishment can reduce noncompliance and aggressiveness when applied as a backup to milder forms of discipline such as reasoning and time-outs (Larzelere, 2000).

However, recent research has indicated that, although corporal punishment may immediately decrease problematic behaviors, it is typically not associated with a long-
term affect (Gershoff, 2002). Furthermore, not only does corporal punishment not
decrease negative behaviors, it fails to teach prosocial behaviors, and teaches that the use
of aggression is an acceptable option in social problem-solving (Shaw & Braden, 1990).

Recent research has also indicated that corporal punishment is associated with a
significant increase in detrimental consequences (Gershoff, 2002). Gershoff conducted a
meta-analysis based on data from all available, empirically-sound research on the
association between corporal punishment and various child behaviors and experiences.
This resulted in 88 studies, representing over 36,000 participants, covering the years 1938
to 2000. The results corroborated the association between the use of corporal punishment
and child behavior problems. The implementation of corporal punishment has been
positively correlated with childhood aggression and antisocial behavior (Brezina, 1999;
Flynn, 1999; Stormshak, Bierman, McMahon, Lengua, & Conduct Problems Prevention
Research Group, 2000; Strassberg, Dodge, Pettie, & Bates, 1994; Straus & Donnelly,
2001; Straus, & Kantor, 1994; Straus, Sugarman, & Giles-Sims, 1997). Corporal
punishment is also associated with an increase in truancy and running away (McCrown,
Driscoll, & Roop, 1996), animal cruelty (Flynn, 1999), an increase in feeling of
helplessness, humiliation, and anxiety (Biehler & Snowman, 1997; Cryan, 1995), and
criminal activity and drug use (Straus & Lauer, 1992).

In addition to the increased risk of future problematic behaviors, corporal
punishment also increases the risk for the physical harm of a child. Heymann (1991)
reported that 1,157,270 American children are spanked each year, and of these children,
nearly 20,000 are seriously injured as a result of the punishment. Many researchers have
empirically identified this strong link between the use of corporal punishment and the
incidence of child abuse (e.g., Gelles & Straus, 1988; Gil, 1973; Graziano, Hamblen, & Plante, 1996; Schumacher & Carlson, 1999; Straus & Kantor, 1994; Vasta, 1982; Wolfe, 1987; Zigler & Hall, 1989). This link has been so strongly supported that many researchers now consider corporal punishment to often be the first step in the child abuse process.

In a recently published article, Gershoff (2002) conducted a meta-analysis to summarize the results of the empirical literature on corporal punishment published over the past sixty years. She concluded that, although corporal punishment was associated with an increase in immediate compliance, it was also linked to many negative childhood behaviors and experiences. She identified that corporal punishment is “strongly” associated with increased aggression and delinquency, lower levels of mental health and internalization, and an increase in physical abuse of the same child. She also concluded that adults who were corporally punished as children have a significantly increased incidence of depression in adulthood and are more likely to engage in criminal behavior, become physically violent with their sexual partner, and corporally punish their own children.

Based on the vast empirical literature suggesting the limited effectiveness and significant increase in numerous negative consequences of corporal punishment, many organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Medical Association, the National Association of Social Workers, and the American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry have denounced its use and strongly suggest the implementation of alternative means of discipline (American Academy of Pediatrics,
As of this writing, 24 nations have current laws banning the use of corporal punishment of children illegal. Furthermore, the United Nations Secretary General’s Study on Violence Against Children has recently recommended the “prohibition of corporal punishment and other forms of cruel or degrading punishment” (United Nations, 2006).

Despite these denouncements, more than 59% of medical professionals have reported that they continue to support the use of corporal punishment of children (McCormick, 1992) and 21% report recommending its use to patients (Knox & Brouwer, 2007). In addition, past research has indicated that 83% of college students plan to corporally punish their children (Graziano & Namaste, 1990). However, this research focusing on likely parents was conducted prior to many of the public denouncements of the use of corporal punishment. There is currently a dearth of information regarding contemporary likely parents’ views of corporal punishment.

In addition, although there is vast empirical literature illustrating the negative effects of corporal punishment, few studies have addressed changing individual’s intentions of using corporal punishment. These studies have yielded conflicting results. Griffin, Robinson, and Carpenter (2000) randomly assigned students to write an article either in support of or against the use of corporal punishment. Their hypothesis that increasing students’ knowledge of the negative effects of corporal punishment would change their attitudes to opposing its use was not supported. Robinson, Funk, Beth, and Bush (2005) argued that the random assignment used in the aforementioned study most
likely resulted in treatment diffusion resulting in confounded data. Using a quasi-experimental design, Robinson et al. allowed students to choose which view of corporal punishment they would like to write an article on. The results suggest that some students who initially expressed that they would use corporal punishment to discipline their future children and then wrote an article identifying the ineffectiveness of corporal punishment changed their attitudes. Upon completing the essay these participants expressed that they do not plan on using corporal punishment as a means of discipline in the future. However, it is possible that those who chose to write about the ineffectiveness of corporal punishment held less strong beliefs supporting the use of corporal punishment and were more likely to change their attitudes. In addition, the intervention failed to have an effect on 78% of the students, with only eight students changing their views.

The conflicting results indicate a need for clarity regarding changing likely parent’s intention to engage in the corporal punishment of their children. In addition, there is also a need for future research to be more theoretically bound. Specifically, when assessing intentions to engage in a target behavior, future research should apply empirically supported approaches regarding changing behavioral intentions.

Theory of Planned Behavior

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) first developed the Theory of Reasoned Action while attempting to study the discrepancy between attitudes and behavior. This theory proposed that an individual’s attitude is the primary factor influencing behavior. However, in 1980 Ajzen and Fishbein discovered that behavior did not appear to be completely voluntary. Instead, behavior appeared to be strongly influenced by factors in addition to attitudes. As a result, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) succeeded that
of Reasoned Action, and incorporating additional factors in the prediction of ones’ behavior.

Ajzen’s TPB model empirically describes the influences of information and motivation on behavior (Ajzen, 1985; 1988; 1991). According to TPB, all human behavior is influenced and guided by three types of considerations including: 1) behavioral beliefs, 2) normative beliefs, and 3) control beliefs. The term “behavioral beliefs” describes the impact of the perceived consequences of a planned behavior leading to the development of favorable or unfavorable attitudes towards the behavior. The term “normative beliefs” describes the presence of social behavioral expectations and the level of motivation to comply with these norms that lead to perceived social pressure. In addition, the term “control beliefs” describes the presence of factors that lead to the facilitation or impediment of the performance of the planned behavior. These identified factors provide the actor with a perception of power leading to behavioral control. Ajzen (1991) defines behavioral control as the extent to which an individual perceives the performance of the planned behavior as being easy or difficult, while holding motivation constant. According to TPB, all three of these factors work in combination leading to the formation of behavioral intention. Generally, the more favorable the formulated attitude, social expectations, and the greater the perceived control, the stronger the intention of engaging in the planned behavior is. In turn, intention is viewed as the immediate antecedent of the planned behavior (Ajzen, 2002). However, since many behaviors involve some degree of difficulty in terms of execution limiting control, perceived behavioral control often supplements intention (Ajzen, 2002).
Figure 1 is Ajzen’s representation of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 2006).

Ajzen’s TPB has been widely applied in the prediction of a variety of health related intentions and behaviors including the cessation of smoking (Norman, Connor, & Bell, 1999), mammography (Montano & Taplin, 1991), postpartum smoking relapse (Gantt, 2001), the screening of cancer (DeVellis, Blalock, & Sandler, 1990), and condom use (Sutton, McVey, & Glanz, 1999). In addition, the TPB has been applied to assess the effectiveness of advertisements and safety messages (Welbourne, & Booth-Butterfield, 2005) and means of changing future behavior (Shapiro & Watson, 2000).

TACT: The interaction between behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs described by the TPB helps explain why advertisements and safety messages that merely provide information are not effective in changing planned behavior. These messages typically only provide information and fail to address beliefs and influences relative to the target behavior. The transfer of knowledge is only one component of an effective message. Messages that dedicate attention to attitudes, subjective norms, and
the perceived behavioral control are more effective in changing planned behavior than messages only providing information.

Ajzen (2002) suggests defining the behavior of interest in terms of the **Target, Action, Context, and Time** (TACT). Once the construct is clearly defined, intentions and attitudes of the action behavior can be obtained through self-report questionnaires (Ajzen).

The TPB is built upon the individual’s beliefs and it is assumed that these beliefs are the cognitive and affective basis for the intention to engage in the target behavior (Ajzen, 2002). Theoretically, measuring beliefs regarding the target behavior provides insight into the cognitive foundation underlying the attitudes, subjective norms, and the perception of behavioral control (Ajzen). Since behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs all affect the intention to engage in a particular behavior, empirically assessing these beliefs provides the ability to empirically describe the likelihood of engaging in the target behavior in the future.

Self-report measures can measure predictor variables including intention, attitude toward behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2002). The validity of the measures depends on the developed scales being directly compatible with the TACT behavior (Ajzen). The scale should measure the theory’s construct through the implementation of multiple items applying a Likert scale addressing each predictor variable (Ajzen). To increase the utility of the questionnaire, adjective sets should be used defining each pole of the Likert scale and items should be counterbalanced to manage possible response sets (Ajzen).
Summary of Past Research

In summary, the literature addressing the effectiveness of changing an individual’s attitudes regarding corporal punishment is limited and inconclusive. The few studies that have addressed this issue have focused on students and researched the effectiveness of corporal punishment (Griffin, Robinson, and Carpenter, 2000; Robinson, Funk, Beth, and Bush, 2005) but have not focused on the effectiveness of public service announcements about the ineffectiveness and negative consequences associated with corporal punishment. Although Ajzen’s TPB has been applied to many health behaviors, in measuring the effectiveness of safety announcements and in the prediction of future behavior, it has yet to be applied to assess the current beliefs of the use of corporal punishment and other discipline techniques. In addition, the TPB has also not been applied in assessing the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD in changing current beliefs regarding discipline techniques including corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment.

The Current Study

A vast amount of empirical literature has addressed the nature, techniques, and the effects of parental discipline. Specifically, over the past 60 years, much focus has addressed the efficacy, outcomes and appropriateness of corporal punishment. However, despite this research attention, at this time, the behavior beliefs, normative beliefs and control beliefs of likely parents regarding discipline techniques are unknown. In addition, there is a dearth of knowledge on the effectiveness of public announcements in changing these beliefs.
Applying Ajzen’s use of TACT to the proposed study, the Target is the child, the Action is the techniques used for discipline, the Context is the occurrence of misbehavior of the child, and the Time is the age of the child. In addition, according to the TPB, assessing the behavior, normative and control beliefs of likely parents allows for the empirical examination of their intentions of engaging in particular disciplinary practices. The purpose of the current study was two-fold. First, the current study empirically describes the intentions of likely parents to engage in several disciplinary techniques by assessing their current behavior, normative and control beliefs about these techniques. Self-report questionnaires were used to assess likely parents’ behavioral, normative and control beliefs as well as their intentions to engage in several discipline techniques for children of varying ages including: infants under the age of 1, toddlers between the ages of one and three-years-old, and children between the ages of four and five-years-old. In addition, the current study also empirically assessed the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD created by Michele Knox, Ph.D. and colleagues in changing likely parents’ intention to engage in several discipline techniques including corporal punishment. After viewing the DVD participants were asked to complete a post-measure questionnaire again assessing their behavioral, normative, and control beliefs as well as their intentions of engaging in several disciplinary techniques for the three aforementioned age groups of children. This post-measure was used to empirically assess the effectiveness of the DVD at changing parents’ intentions and beliefs related to corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment.
Hypotheses

1) Likely parents will have favorable beliefs about the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice.
   a) Likely parents will endorse favorable behavioral beliefs regarding the corporal punishment of children as measured by their response to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre-test questionnaire.
   b) Likely parents will endorse favorable normative beliefs regarding the corporal punishment of children as measured by their response to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre-test questionnaire.
   c) Likely parents will endorse favorable control beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment of children as measured by their response to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre-test questionnaire.

2) The likelihood that likely parents plan on using corporal punishment as a means of discipline will be related to the child’s age.
   a) Likely parents’ likelihood to use corporal punishment as a form of discipline will increase as the age of the child increases with the likely parents having the greatest likelihood for children ages 4 to 5-years-old and the least likelihood for infants under the age of one as measured by the pre-video discipline techniques questionnaires.

3) Viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD will change the behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and perceived behavioral control beliefs of likely parents regarding the use of corporal punishment of children.
a) After watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, likely parents will demonstrate a decrease in favorable behavioral beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment as an effective means of disciplining children as measured by their response to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires.

b) After watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, likely parents will demonstrate a decrease in favorable subjective normative beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment as an effective means of disciplining children as measured by their responses to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires.

c) After watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, likely parents will demonstrate an increase in their perceived control of preventing themselves from using corporal punishment as a discipline technique for their future children as measured by their responses to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires.

4) Viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD will change the behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and perceived behavioral control beliefs of likely parents regarding the use of alternatives to corporal punishment including time-out and rewarding positive behavior.

   a) After watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, likely parents will have an increase in favorable behavioral belief regarding the
use of alternatives to corporal punishment including time-out and rewarding positive behavior as effective means of disciplining their future children as measured by their responses to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires.

b) After watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, likely parents will have an increase in favorable subjective normative beliefs regarding the use of alternatives to corporal punishment including time-out and rewarding positive behavior as effective means of disciplining their future children as measured by their responses to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires.

c) After watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, likely parents will have an increase in their perceived control of the use of alternatives to corporal punishment including time-out and rewarding positive behavior as effective means of disciplining their future children as measured by their responses to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires.

5) Viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD will change the intentions of likely parents to engage in the use of corporal punishment and the intention of likely parents to engage in alternatives to corporal punishment when disciplining their future children.

a) After watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, likely parents will have a decrease in their intentions to engage in the use of
corporal punishment as a discipline technique for their children as measured by their responses to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires.

b) After watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, likely parents will have an increase in their intentions to engage in the use of alternatives to corporal punishment as a discipline technique for their children as measured by their responses to the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires.

Exploratory Question 1: How will the participants react to the “Considering Spanking” DVD?
Chapter Three

Methods

Participants

Participants were male and female college students enrolled in undergraduate classes at the University of Toledo. The participants were students who were not currently parents but were planning on having children in the future. Students were recruited through the use of the University’s online subject pool. Through this process, most of the students were enrolled in the undergraduate Introductory Psychology course, which requires those enrolled to participate in three credits of research. A website is used to facilitate the process of signing up for the research study. A description of the study was posted on this website where students were able to sign up for times predetermined by the researcher. Included in the study’s description, the researcher indicated that participants should be individuals who plan on having children in the future. The final sample of participants included 116 college undergraduates (40 males; 76 females) ages 18 – 22 ($M = 18.8$). The participant pool was somewhat limited in diversity with sixty-nine percent of students reported that they were of European-American, thirteen percent reported that they were African-American, and seventeen percent endorsed “Other.”

Measures

*Pre- and Post- video discipline techniques questionnaires* (Appendix C and E: Knox & Brouwer, 2007). The pre- and post-video discipline techniques questionnaires were used to assess which disciplinary techniques the participants plan to use when
disciplining their future children. The pre- and post- questionnaires were both developed by Michele Knox, Ph.D. and colleagues to assess the views and recommendations regarding the use of disciplinary practices of early childhood professionals. The original questionnaires were slightly modified to better apply to the current population of college students. The questionnaires assessed the likelihood that likely parents will engage in certain techniques for disciplining children of three age ranges including the following: children ages four-years to five-years, toddlers ages one-year to three-years, and infants (less than one year). The questionnaires are comprised of 48; 45 assess the likelihood that the respondent will engage in certain discipline techniques, and 3 allow the respondent to describe any additional technique that they plan to use. Respondents were asked to rate items on a five-point Likert scale that includes the following response choices: very likely, likely, neutral, unlikely, and very unlikely. Each item was scored ranging from 1-5; with higher numbers indicating a greater likelihood the respondent will engage in the specified behavior. Since this questionnaire was not developed with the intention of having internal reliability, Cronbach’s alpha for the full questionnaire was not computed.

Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires (Appendix D and F; Ajzen, 2002). The pre- and post-video TPB questionnaires were developed by the primary investigator based on Ajzen’s (2002) guidelines for the development of questionnaires to assess the TPB. These questionnaires were used to assess intentions to use corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment, such as time-out and rewarding positive behavior, as means of disciplining children in the future. The questionnaire includes 30 questions assessing the intentions and the behavioral,
normative, and perceived control beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment. Questions assessed the respondent’s behavioral intention, attitudes toward the behavior, subjective normative beliefs, and perceived behavioral control regarding the use of corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment (See Table 1). To complete the scale, participants were asked to rate items on a five-point Likert scale. The response choices are different to best fit each question. (E.g. For me to use corporal punishment will be…rated Pleasant to Unpleasant, and I plan on using corporal punishment whenever my child misbehaves…rated Definitely False to Definitely True.) One question on the post-video questionnaire was a qualitative measure of the participant’s reaction to the “Considering Spanking” DVD. To assess the internal reliability of the newly developed measures, Cronbach’s alpha was computed for each construct within the measure. The measures exhibited acceptable reliability for each construct (See Table 2).
Table 1

*Constructs by Item for the Theory of Planned Behavior Questionnaire*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Construct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1, 14, 25</td>
<td>Behavioral Intention toward corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3, 12, 13, 20, 28</td>
<td>Normative beliefs of corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7, 18, 23, 27</td>
<td>Perceived behavioral control toward corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9, 16, 21</td>
<td>Attitude toward corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17, 29, 30</td>
<td>Behavioral intention toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2, 5, 15, 22, 26</td>
<td>Normative beliefs of alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6, 8, 10, 19</td>
<td>Perceived behavioral control toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4, 11, 24</td>
<td>Attitude toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

*Cronbach’s Alpha by Construct for the Theory of Planned Behavior Questionnaire*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Construct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.758</td>
<td>Behavioral Intention toward corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.861</td>
<td>Normative beliefs of corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.545</td>
<td>Perceived behavioral control toward corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.709</td>
<td>Attitude toward corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.835</td>
<td>Behavioral intention toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.774</td>
<td>Normative beliefs of alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.387</td>
<td>Perceived behavioral control toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.551</td>
<td>Attitude toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All items were scored using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1-5. For the items assessing behavioral and normative beliefs about the use of corporal punishment and the use of alternatives to corporal punishment, higher scores indicate a greater favorable belief for the respective discipline technique. Likewise, higher scores on items assessing the perceived behavioral control beliefs regarding preventing from engaging in corporal punishment and engaging in alternatives to corporal punishment indicate a greater perceived behavioral control, and higher scores on the items assessing intentions indicate a greater intention to engage in the discipline technique.

To facilitate statistical analysis, sixteen variables were created from the Theory of Planned Behavior pre- and post-video questionnaires (Refer to Table 1 for items included in each construct). Eight of the variables were created from relevant items on the Theory
of Planned Behavior pre-video questionnaire. Four of the new variables are the mean scores on items assessing each component of the TPB for the use of corporal punishment including: behavior beliefs, normative beliefs, perceived behavioral control and intentions. The other four new variables from the pre-video questionnaire are the mean scores on the relevant items assessing each component of the aforementioned components of TPB for the use of alternatives to corporal punishment. Similarly, eight new variables created from the post-video questionnaire are the mean scores on items assessing each component of the TPB for both, the use of corporal punishment and the use of alternatives to corporal punishment (See Table 3).

“Considering Spanking” DVD (Knox, 2007). Participants viewed an educational video developed by Michele Knox, Ph.D. and colleagues entitled “Considering Spanking.” The DVD was produced by the Center for Effective Discipline in Columbus, Ohio and funded by the Ohio Children’s Trust Fund. The DVD is approximately twenty-two minutes long and presents information on the ineffectiveness and negative outcomes associated with the use of corporal punishment on children. The video also addresses the worldwide perspective on the use of corporal punishment describing the numerous countries that have passed laws against this practice. In addition, the video describes alternative discipline techniques that research suggests are more effective and are associated with fewer negative outcomes.
Table 3

*Created Variables Measuring Constructs of the TPB Questionnaire*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Variable</th>
<th>Mean of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total score for the behavioral intentions toward corporal punishment</td>
<td>1, 14, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score for normative beliefs of corporal punishment</td>
<td>3, 12, 13, 20, 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score for perceived behavioral control toward corporal punishment</td>
<td>7, 18, 23, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score for attitude toward corporal punishment</td>
<td>9, 16, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score for behavioral intention toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
<td>17, 29, 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score for normative beliefs of alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
<td>2, 5, 15, 22, 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score for perceived behavioral control toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
<td>6, 8, 10, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total score for attitude toward alternatives to corporal punishment</td>
<td>4, 11, 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedure

Participants completed questionnaires in classrooms at the University of Toledo. The questionnaires were arranged in packets containing all of the measures to be completed by the participants. Prior to administration, numbers were placed on the pages of the pre- and post- measures allowing the investigator to pair the measures without identifying the participant. The packets were arranged with the pre-video measures on
the top of the packet. The pre-video measures include a consent form (Appendix A), a demographics questionnaire (Appendix B), a pre-video discipline techniques measure (Appendix C) assessing their intentions to engage in corporal punishment and alternative discipline techniques for children of three ages: infants under the age of one-year-old, toddlers between the ages of two and three-years-old, and children between the ages of four and five-years-old, and a pre-video Theory of Planned Behavior measure (Appendix D) assessing their current behavioral, normative, and control beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment and alternative discipline techniques. Following the pre-video measures, a page with a “stop” sign was between the pre-video and post-video measures and the participants were instructed to complete the measures and stop upon coming to this page. After completion, all three of the pre-video measures were collected by the primary investigator and the consent forms were separated from the other measures to ensure confidentiality. Volunteers then viewed the “Considering Spanking” DVD presenting information on the ineffectiveness and negatives outcomes associated with the use of corporal punishment. After viewing the DVD, the volunteers were then asked to complete a post-video discipline techniques measure (Appendix E) again assessing their intentions to engage in corporal punishment and alternative discipline techniques for children of three ages: infants under the age of one-year-old, toddlers between the ages of one and three-years-old, and children between the ages of four and five-years-old, and a post-video Theory of Planned Behavior measure (Appendix F) assessing their current behavioral, normative, and control beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment and alternative discipline techniques. The completed questionnaire was then collected by the primary investigator.
Chapter Four

Results

Frequency analyses were computed analyzing the parenting techniques that each participant experienced as a child. Table 4 reports the percentages of participants who reported experiencing spanking, grounding, threats, time-out, rewarded for positive behavior, and removal of privileges as a child.

Table 4

*Percentage of Sample Reporting Experiencing Different Parenting Techniques as a Child*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting Technique</th>
<th>Percentage who Experienced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanking</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounding</td>
<td>71.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-Out</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewarding Positive Behavior</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privilege Removal</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 116.*

Frequency analyses were computed by child age (Hypothesis 1). Table 5 reports the combined percentage of participants who reported being likely and very likely to engage in each discipline technique for each child age group prior to viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD (infant, toddler’s ages 1 to 3 years, and Children ages 4 to 5 years).
Table 5

**Percentage of Sample Reporting “Likely” or “Very Likely” to Implement the Various Discipline Techniques by Child’s Age Prior to Viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline Technique</th>
<th>Infants under the age of 1 year (n=19)</th>
<th>Toddlers ages 1 to 3 years (n=21)</th>
<th>Children ages 4 to 5 years (n=55)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Redirecting Child’s Attention</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit Child with an Object</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising Voice to Child</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward Good Behavior</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>94.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spank With Hand</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-Out</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>81.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell Child Correct Behavior</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>96.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap Child</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove Privileges</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignore Misbehavior</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat Activity for Punishment</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling Own Good Behavior</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>85.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punish with Soap or Hot Sauce</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise Child for Good Behavior</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Child &quot;Undo Harm&quot;</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>91.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect of the age of child on the likelihood that a likely parent plans on using corporal punishment as a means of discipline prior to viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD (Hypothesis 2). The dependent variable is the participant’s score on the created variable, the likelihood of engaging in corporal punishment. This variable is the participant’s mean score on items 2, 5, 8, and 13 on the pre-video discipline techniques questionnaire measuring their reported likelihood of engaging in the corporal punishment of their children in the future. The independent variable is the child’s age with three levels (infant under the age of one, toddler between the age of one and three, and children between the age of four and five). There was a significant main effect for child’s age, $F(2, 345) = 52.797, p < .0$. 

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Post hoc contrasts were conducted in the form of paired comparison $t$-tests to determine where the significant differences occurred. The Tukey HSD procedure was used to control for Type I error. For these post hoc analyses, the dependent variable is the mean score of the items assessing the likelihood of engaging in corporal punishment on pre-video discipline techniques questionnaire and the independent variable is the child’s age with three levels (infant under the age of one, toddler between the age of one and three, and children between the age of four and five). All three of the post hoc comparisons were found to be significant. See Table 6 for a list of significant differences and $p$-values.

Table 6

_Pairwise Comparisons Between Means and Child’s Age_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$(i)$ Group (j) Group</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant (&lt;1) Toddler (1-3)</td>
<td>.487*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant (&lt;1) Child (4-5)</td>
<td>.940*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler (1-3) Child (4-5)</td>
<td>.453*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*$p < .01$

Paired samples $t$-tests were conducted to evaluate whether viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD changed the college students’ normative beliefs, perceived behavioral control beliefs, attitudes, and their intentions to engage in corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment (Hypothesis 3, Hypothesis 4, and Hypothesis 5). Using the Bonferroni approach to control for Type I error across the eight $t$-tests, a $p$ value of less than .006 (.05 / 8 = .006) was required for significance. The results of the 4 $t$-test analyses for the use of corporal punishment presented in Table 7 show that 3 out of
the 4 were statistically significant. Specifically regarding the statistically significant analyses, participants reported having less favorable normative beliefs and attitudes regarding the use of corporal punishment and reported having less likely intentions to engage in corporal punishment after viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD than they reported prior to viewing. In addition, the results of the 4 $t$-test analyses for the use of alternatives to corporal punishment presented in Table 8 show that 1 out of the 4 were statistically significant. Specifically regarding the statistically significant analysis, participants reported having more favorable attitudes towards the use of alternatives to corporal punishment after viewing the DVD than they reported prior to viewing the DVD.

Table 7

*Means, Standard Deviations, and $t$ values Levels by Time for the Use of Corporal Punishment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normative Beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DVD</td>
<td>13.59</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>3.41*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DVD</td>
<td>12.77</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Behavioral Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DVD</td>
<td>17.29</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DVD</td>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.029*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DVD</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DVD</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.671*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DVD</td>
<td>7.24</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DVD</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .01
Table 8

Means, Standard Deviations, and t values of Measure by Time for the Use of Alternatives to Corporal Punishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normative Beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DVD</td>
<td>18.04</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>-2.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DVD</td>
<td>18.66</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Behavioral Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DVD</td>
<td>16.52</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DVD</td>
<td>16.74</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-3.37*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DVD</td>
<td>12.38</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DVD</td>
<td>13.03</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-DVD</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-DVD</td>
<td>12.66</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 116. *p < .01

A two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect of gender and race/ethnicity on the intention to engage in corporal punishment. For this analysis, the independent variables are gender (male and female) and race/ethnicity (European American, African American, and Other). The dependent variable is the participant’s score on the created variable, which is the intention to engage in corporal punishment prior to viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD. The results of the ANOVA are reported in Table 9. There was no significant main effect for gender, $F(1, 108) = .900, p = .345$ and no significant main effect for race, $F(3, 108) = 2.40, p = .071$. Furthermore, the results also indicate no significant interaction effect for gender and race, $F(2, 108) = 1.48, p = .232$. These results indicate that there are no significant differences on the reported likelihood of engaging in the corporal punishment of their future children by gender or race/ethnicity of the participants.
Table 9.

One-way Analysis of Variance for Intention of Engaging in Corporal Punishment prior to Viewing the DVD by Gender and Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender * Race</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 116

In addition, a one-way repeated measures analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate the effect of gender on the participant’s change in intention to engage in the corporal punishment over time. For this analysis, the independent variable is gender (male and female) and the dependent variables are the participant’s scores on the created variables that assess the intention to engage in corporal punishment before and after viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD. There was a significant main effect for gender, $F(1, 114) = 4.823, p = .030$ with females experiencing a greater change over time than males.

Participants’ responses to the qualitative measure of their “reaction to the „Considering Spanking’ video” were examined using content analysis. Participants’ responses were categorized into six different constructs and a frequency analysis was conducted. See Table 10 for the constructs and their frequencies.
Table 10

Frequency of Constructs Reported by Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video was very informative</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The video has changed my intentions</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still believe in benefits of corporal punishment</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I already had similar views prior to watching the DVD</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The video was boring</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video was one sided and fabricated</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The choice should be up to the parent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The total frequency of responses is greater than the number of participants because many participants mentioned multiple constructs.

An exploratory analysis was conducted to examine possible relationships between several key study variables. Correlation coefficients were computed for the following variables: gender, race, if the participant experienced spanking as a child, their pre-intention to engage in corporal punishment, and their post-intention to engage in corporal punishment. Using the Bonferroni approach to control for Type I error across the 10 correlations, a $p$ value of less than .005 ($0.05 / 10 = 0.005$) was required for significance.

The results of the point biserial correlational analyses presented in Table 11 show that 4 out of the 10 correlations were statistically significant and were greater than or equal to .003.
Table 11

*Correlations Among Participant Descriptive and Demographic Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Pre-Intent CP</th>
<th>Post-Intent CP</th>
<th>Experienced Spanking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.205</td>
<td>-0.128</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-0.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race Pre-Intent CP</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race Post-Intent CP</td>
<td>.719*</td>
<td>.372*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.327*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N = 116. *p < .01
Chapter Five

Discussion

The current study describes the intentions of likely parents to engage in several disciplinary techniques by assessing their current behavior, normative and control beliefs about these techniques. In addition, the current study also empirically assessed the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD created by Michele Knox, Ph.D. and colleagues in changing likely parents’ intention to engage in several discipline techniques including corporal punishment. Results support the hypothesis that many likely parents initially plan on implementing corporal punishment as discipline technique for the children in the future, and the hypotheses indicating that the “Considering Spanking” DVD is an effective means of decreasing likely parents’ positive beliefs and intentions of engaging in the corporal punishment of their future children.

Past Parenting Experiences As a Child

The present study investigated the parenting techniques that participants experienced as a child. Responses suggest that the most common parenting technique experienced was the rewarding of positive behavior (78.4%). Grounding (71.6%) and spanking (69.0%) were the next highest parenting techniques experienced, followed by privilege removal (62.9%) and time-out (62.1%). Experiencing threats was the least endorsed parenting technique experienced (33.6%). Although it is encouraging to see that rewarding positive behavior is the most common parenting technique experienced by the participants, the results support previous research indicating that spanking is one of
the most commonly implemented parenting techniques (Gallup, 1995; Straus, 1991; Straus & Stewart, 1999).

**Intended Parenting Techniques**

The present study also investigated likely parents’ attitudes, intentions, and beliefs regarding the use of various discipline techniques for children, and the effectiveness of an intervention designed to change young adults’ intentions to engage in discipline techniques by educating parents about the negative effects associated with the practice of corporal punishment and about more effective alternatives to corporal punishment.

Although a majority of likely parents originally expressed having intentions to engage in forms of corporal punishment with their future children, the present study illustrates the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD in decreasing these intentions.

Responses suggest that nearly half (44.8%) of likely parents planned on engaging in some form of corporal punishment of their children while 17.2% reported that they planned on engaging in some form of corporal punishment of their infant. In addition, 29.3% reported planning on using “spanking” as a form of discipline for their future children. Also alarming is the small but significant portion of likely parents who plan on implementing disciplinary practices that are likely to result in the physical harm of the child such as hitting with an object (3.4%) and spanking an infant (6.9%).

Results of the present study did not identify any significant gender or race/ethnicity differences in the likelihood of engaging in the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique for their future children. Although gender and race differences are well documented in the discipline techniques literature (Straus & Mathur, 1996;Straus & Stewart, 1999), the present study may have lacked the power needed to
identify these differences as a result of the population’s limited diversity (observed power for gender = .156; observed power for race/ethnicity = .587).

Recent research indicates that corporal punishment is associated with a variety of poor outcomes including childhood aggression and antisocial behavior (Brezina, 1999; Flynn, 1999; Stormshak, Bierman, McMahon, Lengua, & Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group, 2000; Strassberg, Dodge, Pettie, & Bates, 1994; Straus & Donnelly, 2001; Straus, & Kantor, 1994; Straus, Sugarman, & Giles-Sims, 1997), truancy and running away (McCrown, Driscoll, & Roop, 1996), animal cruelty (Flynn, 1999), an increase in feeling of helplessness, humiliation, and anxiety (Biehler & Snowman, 1997; Cryan, 1995), and criminal activity and drug use (Straus & Lauer, 1992). Furthermore, many researchers have empirically identified a strong link between the use of corporal punishment and the incidence of child abuse (e.g., Gelles & Straus, 1988; Gil, 1973; Graziano, Hamblen, & Plante, 1996; Schumacher & Carlson, 1999; Straus & Kantor, 1994; Vasta, 1982; Wolfe, 1987; Zigler & Hall, 1989). This link has been so strongly supported that many researchers now consider corporal punishment to often be the first step in the child abuse process.

It is disconcerting that likely parents express intentions to engage in these forms of corporal punishment despite the clear empirical research documenting the possible negative effects, in addition to the political and professional criticism of this practice. Results also indicate that participants are significantly more likely to use corporal punishment disciplinary practices as their child becomes older. Participants reported being most likely to engage in the corporal punishment of their children between four to five years of age and least likely to engage in the corporal punishment of their infant
under the age of one. Although it is encouraging to see that participants are less likely to engage in corporal punishment of infants, research clearly indicates that children of all of the included age ranges (0 years to five years old) are at highest risk of serious injury constituting 82% of child abuse fatalities in the United States (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2008).

Effectiveness of the Intervention

The present study also investigated the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD in changing an individual’s attitudes, intentions, and beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment. Results indicate that after viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD participants’ favorable normative beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique are significantly lower than their normative beliefs were prior to viewing the DVD. The term “normative beliefs” describes the presence of social behavioral expectations and the level of motivation to comply with these norms that lead to perceived social pressure. Therefore these results suggest that after viewing the DVD participants report feeling less social pressure to engage in these disciplinary techniques which, in turn, results in feeling less motivation to comply with this social pressure. Therefore, according the Ajzen’s Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) a decrease in an individual’s favorable normative beliefs over time would result in a decreased motivation to engage in a behavior that they once felt was socially acceptable (Ajzen, 2002). The present study indicates that the “Considering Spanking” DVD significantly reduced the belief that the use of corporal punishment is a socially desirable behavior, likely resulting in a decreased intention of engaging in the disciplinary practice.
Results also indicate that after viewing the DVD, participants’ favorable behavioral beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique are significantly lower than their behavioral beliefs were prior to viewing the DVD. The term “behavioral beliefs” describes the impact of the perceived consequences of a planned behavior leading to the development of favorable or unfavorable attitudes towards the behavior. These results indicate that after viewing the DVD participants report having less favorable attitudes towards the use of corporal punishment of children. The TPB suggests that a decreased favorable attitude regarding the use of corporal punishment suggests that participants held less favorable behavioral beliefs regarding the consequences of its practice (Ajzen, 2002). This suggests that after viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD, participants believed that the use of corporal punishment is a less effective disciplinary practice than they believed prior to viewing the DVD.

Likewise, according to the theory this decrease in favorable attitude results in a decrease in the individual’s plan on engaging in the behavior (Ajzen, 2002). These results suggest that the “Considering Spanking” DVD could be an effective and cost-efficient means of educating young adults about the negative effects and limited effectiveness of the use of corporal punishment leading to the decrease in favorable normative and behavioral beliefs and intentions of engaging in the practice.

Results of the present study did not indicate a significant change in participants’ control beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment. The term “control beliefs” describes the presence of factors that lead to the facilitation or impediment of the performance of the planned behavior. These results suggest that although participants reported feeling that they have slightly more control over their ability to prevent
themselves from engaging in the use of corporal punishment, this difference was not
great enough to be statistically significant. Although the video addresses the challenge of
parenting and discusses how some parents have reported that they had difficulty
controlling their frustration, it is very possible that since the participants did not have
children of their own they did not feel that there would be any situations where they
would not be in control of their actions. The participants held relatively high control
beliefs prior to viewing the video, suggesting that they identified having a belief about
possessing a high degree of control over their behavior if they would choose to engage in
corporal punishment or alternatives. As a result of having such high control beliefs prior
to viewing the video, there was little room for a significant increase in these beliefs after
viewing the video.

Ajzen’s model (2002) suggests that the significant decrease in participants’
normative beliefs and behavioral beliefs, paired with the slight decrease in participants’
control beliefs would result in a corresponding decrease in the participants’ intentions to
engage in the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice. The results of the
present study indicate just this. After viewing the DVD, participants’ intentions to
engage in the corporal punishment of their children as a disciplinary technique are
significantly lower than their intentions were prior to viewing the DVD. These results
indicate that participants feel less likely to engage in the corporal punishment of their
future children after viewing the DVD than they did prior to viewing the DVD.

This data supports the relationship between normative beliefs, behavioral beliefs,
and control beliefs illustrated by the TPB (Ajzen, 2006) and supports the effectiveness of
the use of the “Considering Spanking” DVD in decreasing likely parents’ plan for
engaging in this disciplinary practice. According to Ajzen’s theory of planned behavior, an individual’s behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs of a given action all work in combination, leading to the formulation of an individual’s behavioral intentions. The results of the present study indicate that after watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, participants held less favorable normative beliefs, less favorable attitudes, and similar control beliefs regarding the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique for their future children. Supporting Ajzen’s TPB, these changes resulted in participants having less behavioral intentions regarding engaging in this practice. This leads to a decreased likelihood of engaging in this behavior indicating that the “Considering Spanking” DVD is an effective means of decreasing the likelihood of young adults engaging in the corporal punishment of their future children as a disciplinary technique.

The present study also investigated the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD in changing individual’s attitudes, intentions, and beliefs regarding the use of alternatives to corporal punishment and alternatives to corporal punishment. Results indicate that after watching the “Considering Spanking” DVD, participants held significantly more favorable attitudes regarding the use of alternatives to corporal punishment than they did prior to viewing the DVD. Furthermore, participants also reported having more favorable normative beliefs, more favorable control beliefs, and higher intentions for the use of alternatives to corporal punishment with their future children. Although these results were not significant, they approached significance. The present study may have lacked the power necessary to identify these differences.
Furthermore, the present study investigated the effects of gender on the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD at changing the intentions of engaging in the corporal punishment of children. There was a results of the present study identifies a significant effect for gender, with female participants having a greater change in their reported intentions of engaging in corporal punishment than male participants. There was no significant gender difference at pre-test and it is unclear why females responded more to the DVD. Use of alternatives to corporal punishment may be more consistent with the traditional female gender role than with the traditional male role. The individual talking on the “Considering Spanking” DVD is a female, making it easier for females to identify with her than for males. It would be useful to add a male presenter to this type of presentation to determine if this effect is a result of differences between male and female participants or male and female presenters.

Examining participants’ qualitative responses regarding their reactions to viewing the “Considering Spanking” DVD, many reported being surprised at the negative consequences related to the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique. Many expressed being unaware of the empirical research documenting the possible negative effects, and the political and professional criticism on the practice of the corporal punishment of children. Despite that fact that 23 nations have outlawed the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice for children (not including the United States), ignorance about the well-documented consequences of this practice is reflected in the present participants’ comments. Specifically, one participant reported “the DVD was very informative. I was very surprised to hear that the U.S. is one of the only countries that allow it”. There is a great need to systematically educate young adults about the
consequences that various disciplinary techniques are likely to have on their children. The current study indicates that the “Considering Spanking” DVD is an effective means of educating young adults who plan on having children in the future. Specifically, this brief and cost-efficient presentation appears to be an effective way to increase the likelihood they will engage in alternatives to corporal punishment, while decreasing their likelihood of engaging in corporal punishment of their future children.

Limitations

The current study has several limitations. Participants were a convenience sample of college students from a one region of the United States. A larger sample size and national sampling would be needed to improve the generalizability of present findings. In addition, participants received research participation credit that is required for their undergraduate course. Since there are multiple studies for participants to choose from, it is possible that students chose to participate or not to participate in the current study based on the subject matter being researched. Students holding either no interest in the subject matter or deeply entrenched beliefs and intentions regarding the use of corporal punishment or alternatives to corporal punishment may have participated for their own reasons. In addition, participants may also have different interpretations of the discipline techniques in the questionnaires. Although the term “spanking” was clearly defined to each participant prior to the completion of the questionnaires, other terms used such as “tap” could have been interpreted differently between participants. Finally, the current study only evaluated only the short-term effects of the “Considering Spanking” DVD and additional research is needed to address the persistence of change.

Implications
The current study suggests there may be a reduction in the percentage of college students who have intentions of using corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice of their future children. Graziano and Namaste (1990) reported that 83% of their college student participants held intentions of using corporal punishment of their future children while the current research indicates that approximately 45% of college undergraduates plan on implementing its practice. In addition, the research indicates that a greater percentage of college students have intentions of employing less harmful discipline techniques including rewarding of positive behavior (78.4%) and grounding (71.6%). However, the current research also indicates that many college students remain unaware of the possible negative effects and the growing political and professional criticism of the practice of corporal punishment. Furthermore, the current research indicates that educating college students about these possible negative consequences and about the limited effectiveness of the use of corporal punishment, combined with educating students about alternatives to corporal punishment through the “Considering Spanking” DVD is an effective means of decreasing college students’ intentions to use corporal punishment. However, through analysis of the qualitative responses of those participants who did not change their intentions, it is evident that these students held very deep-rooted values and opinions regarding the use of corporal punishment. As a result, these individuals were not likely to change their values and intentions after hearing one 20-minute DVD discussing its ineffectiveness and possible negative consequences. Given the rate at which younger teenagers are becoming sexually active, it may be more effective to begin educating individuals about these negative outcomes at a younger age, perhaps in middle school. Currently nearly 46% of adolescents age 15 to 19 years-old
report being sexually active and nearly 15% report having sex before the age of 15 (Abma, Martinez, Mosher, & Dawson, 2004). In addition, sexually active teens who do not use birth control have a 90% chance of becoming pregnant during their first year of sexual activity (Abma, et al.). The current DVD or a similar presentation could easily be added to any middle school health class curriculum providing adolescents with the knowledge needed to help them develop well-informed beliefs and intentions regarding disciplinary practices with their future children. Furthermore, the current DVD or a similar presentation could also be easily included in childbirth education or parenting classes offered by community agencies.

**Future Research**

Future research should include more diverse groups. Future research should also address whether changes persist beyond the short term to determine the effectiveness of the “Considering Spanking” DVD on long-term changes in beliefs and intentions regarding disciplinary practices. Furthermore, although the current research suggests that the DVD is an effective means of changing behavioral intentions for future disciplinary practices, the most effective and cost-efficient means of presenting the DVD may be different for different groups. For example, the DVD could easily be applied to many different situations such as physician’s waiting rooms, childbirth education classes, or, as previously noted, with the regular high school or middle school curriculum.
References


behavior. In J. Solomon & C. George (Eds.), *Attachment disorganization* (pp. 71-94). New York: Guilford.


National data on prevalence, chronicity, severity, and duration, in relation to


Purpose: You are invited to participate in the research project entitled, Parents’ Intentions for Discipline Techniques which is being conducted at the University of Toledo under the direction of Jason J. Brouwer, M.A. and Jeanne B. Funk, Ph.D. The purpose of this study is to investigate how likely parents intend to use discipline techniques for their children.

Description of Procedures: This research will take place in classrooms at the University of Toledo main campus. In order to participate in this study you must be at least 18 years of age and not have any children. You will be asked to complete some questionnaires with questions about your background, including the discipline techniques you experienced and what discipline techniques you plan on using to raise your children in the future. Next you will view a DVD providing information regarding certain discipline techniques. Finally, you will complete some additional questionnaires asking what discipline techniques you plan on using to raise your children in the future. Approximately one hour of your time will be needed and you will receive credit for one hour of experimental participation. After you have completed your participation, the research team will debrief you about the data, theory and research area under study and answer any questions you may have about the research.

Potential Risks: There are minimal risks to participation in this study, including loss of confidentiality. There is a slight possibility that you may become uncomfortable with some aspects of the questionnaires or DVD. If so, you may stop at any time.

Potential Benefits: If you participate in this research you may benefit from an increased understanding of effective discipline techniques for raising children. In addition, you may also learn how psychology experiments are run. Others may also benefit from the results of this study.
**Confidentiality:** The researchers will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you provided information, or what that information is. The consent forms with signatures will be kept separate from responses, which will not include names and which will be presented to others only when combined with other responses. Although we make every effort to protect your confidentiality, there is a low risk that this might be breached.

**Voluntary Participation:** Your refusal to participate in this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled and will not affect your relationship with The University of Toledo or any of your classes. In addition, you may discontinue participation at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits. If you decide not to participate or wish to discontinue your participation at any point you will still receive one unit of research credit.

**Contact Information:** Before you decide to accept this invitation to take part in this study, you may ask any questions that you might have. If you have any questions at any time before, during or after your participation or experience any physical or psychological distress as a result of this research you should contact a member of the research team (Principal Investigators: Jason J. Brouwer, M.A. at ext 2721 and Jeanne B. Funk, Ph.D. ext 4392). If you have questions beyond those answered by the research team or your rights as a research subject or research-related injuries, please feel free to contact Jeffrey Busch, research compliance coordinator at 419 530-2844, or the Chairperson of the SBE Institutional Review Board, Dr. Barbara Chesney, in the Office of Research on the main campus at 419 530-2844.

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over.

**SIGNATURE SECTION – Please read carefully**

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above, you have had all your questions answered, and you have decided to take part in this research.

The date you sign this document to enroll in this study, that is, today's date must fall between the dates indicated at the bottom of the page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Subject (please print)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Person Obtaining Consent</td>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO
SOCIAL, BEHAVIORAL & EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

The research project described in this consent form and the form itself have been reviewed and approved by the University of Toledo Social, Behavioral & Educational Review Board (SBE IRB) for the period of time specified below.

SBE IRB #: ___________________ Approved Number of Subjects: ______

Project Start Date: ________________ Project Expiration Date: ________________

_________________________________________  Date: ________________

Barbara Chesney, Ph.D., Chair
UT Social Behavioral & Educational IRB
Appendix B: Demographics Questionnaire

Participant No._____

Background Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions. Remember, your answers are completely private and no one will know how you answered.

Gender ______ male ______ female

Age ______

Current Grade or Year in College

- ______ First year undergraduate
- ______ Second year undergraduate
- ______ Third year undergraduate
- ______ Fourth year undergraduate
- ______ Fifth year undergraduate
- ______ Graduate school

Race/Ethnicity

- ______ European American
- ______ African American
- ______ Hispanic/Latino
- ______ Other ____________________________

Source of income (Check all that apply)

- ______ Self Supported
- ______ Parents
- ______ Student Loans
- ______ Other: Please describe_____________________________

What types of discipline did you experienced as a child? (Check all that apply).

- ______ Spanking
- ______ Time out
- ______ Grounding
- ______ Rewarding Good Behavior
- ______ Threats
- ______ Privilege Removal
- ______ Other: Please Describe: ______________________________

How likely is it that you will have children in the future?

## Appendix C: Pre-Video Discipline Techniques Questionnaire

**PRE-VIDEO DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. When your children are between the ages of 4 years to 5 years, how likely are you to implement the following discipline methods to prevent or deal with misbehavior:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very likely</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Very unlikely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Redirecting child’s attention to a different (less problematic) activity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Hitting the child with an object (e.g., wooden spoon, etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Raising your voice to be sure the child takes you seriously</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Rewarding good behavior whenever it happens</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Spanking the child with hand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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PRE-VIDEO DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES QUESTIONNAIRE

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Appendix D: Pre-Video TPB Questionnaire

THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR PRE-TEST

1: I intend to spank with my hand to prevent or deal with my child’s misbehavior.
   1  2  3  4  5

2: People in my life whose opinion I value
   Use alternatives: _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Do not use alternatives
   to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when their children misbehave.
   5  4  3  2  1

3: Most people who are important to me use spanking to manage their children’s misbehavior.
   Completely True: _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Completely False
   5  4  3  2  1

4: For me to use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to manage misbehavior will be
   Good: _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Bad
   5  4  3  2  1

5: Most people who are close to me think that
   I should: _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : I should not
   5  4  3  2  1
   Use alternatives to corporal punishment (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when my child misbehaves.

6: How much control do you believe that you will have over whether or not you use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to manage your child’s misbehavior.
   No control: _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Complete control
   1  2  3  4  5
7: If I wanted to, I could stop myself from spanking when my child misbehaves.

5 4 3 2 1

8: It is mostly up to me whether or not I use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when my child misbehaves.

Strongly Agree : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Strongly Disagree
5 4 3 2 1

9: Spanking my child will make me feel

Good : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Not Good
5 4 3 2 1

10: If I wanted to, I could use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when my child misbehaves.

5 4 3 2 1

11: Using alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) whenever my child misbehaves will be

1 2 3 4 5

12: Most people who are close to me think that

I should : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : I should not
spank my child when s/he misbehaves.

5 4 3 2 1

13: When my child misbehaves, people will expect me to hit my child on the bottom with my hand.

5 4 3 2 1

14: I plan on using spanking whenever my child misbehaves.

1 2 3 4 5
15: When my child misbehaves, it will be expected of me to use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.).

1 2 3 4 5

16: Hitting my child on the bottom with my hand whenever my child misbehaves will be

1 2 3 4 5

17: I plan on using alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) whenever my child misbehaves.

1 2 3 4 5

18: It is mostly up to me whether or not my child is hit on the bottom when s/he misbehaves.

Strongly Agree : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Strongly Disagree
5 4 3 2 1

19: For me to not use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) whenever my child misbehaves will be

Impossible : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Possible
1 2 3 4 5

20: Many people like me spank their children when they misbehave.

5 4 3 2 1

21: For me to spank my child to manage misbehavior will be

Good : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Bad
5 4 3 2 1

22: Most people who are important to me use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to manage their children’s misbehavior

Completely True : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Completely False
5 4 3 2 1
23: For me to not use spanking whenever my child misbehaves will be

Impossible : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Possible
1 2 3 4 5

24: For me to use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) will be

5 4 3 2 1

25: I will hit my child on the hand or bottom to manage my child’s misbehavior.

Strongly Disagree : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Strongly Agree
1 2 3 4 5

26: Many people like me use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when they misbehave.

5 4 3 2 1

27: How much control do you believe that you will have over whether or not you use spanking to manage your child’s misbehavior.

No control : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Complete control
1 2 3 4 5

28: People in my life whose opinion I value

5 4 3 2 1

their child(ren) when they misbehave.

29: I intend to use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to prevent or deal with my child’s misbehavior.

1 2 3 4 5

30: I will use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to manage my child’s misbehavior.

Strongly Disagree : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Strongly Agree
1 2 3 4 5
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Hitting the child with an object (e.g., wooden spoon, cord, etc.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Raising your voice to be sure the child takes you seriously</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Rewarding good behavior whenever it happens</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Spanking the child with hand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Time-out</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Telling the child what the correct behavior is, and guiding them in that behavior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Tapping the child on the bottom or other body part</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Removing toys or privileges</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Removing your attention / ignoring misbehavior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Having child repeatedly perform an activity they do not like as punishment (e.g., strenuous activity, chores, etc.) Please specify: (_______)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Showing the child how to handle difficult situations by modelling (showing them) your own good behavior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Using soap, hot sauce, or other material in the child’s mouth as punishment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Praising the child (e.g., “good job”) whenever s/he engages in good behavior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. Having the child “undo harm” such as apologizing or doing something nice for the person they hurt.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Other ______________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F: Post-Video TPB Questionnaire

THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR POST-TEST

1: I intend to spank with my hand to prevent or deal with my child’s misbehavior.

Extremely Unlikely: 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : Extremely Likely

2: People in my life whose opinion I value

Use alternatives: 5 : 4 : 3 : 2 : 1 : Do not use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when their children misbehave.

3: Most people who are important to me use spanking to manage their children’s misbehavior.

Completely True: 5 : 4 : 3 : 2 : 1 : Completely False

4: For me to use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to manage misbehavior will be

Good: 5 : 4 : 3 : 2 : 1 : Bad

5: Most people who are close to me think that

I should: 5 : 4 : 3 : 2 : 1 : I should not Use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when my child misbehaves.

6: How much control do you believe that you will have over whether or not you use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to manage your child’s misbehavior.

No control: 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : Complete control
7: If I wanted to, I could not spank my child when my child misbehaves.

5 4 3 2 1

8: It is mostly up to me whether or not I use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when my child misbehaves.

Strongly Agree : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Strongly Disagree
5 4 3 2 1

9: Spanking my child will make me feel

Good : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Not Good
5 4 3 2 1

10: If I wanted to, I could use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when my child misbehaves.

5 4 3 2 1

11: Using alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) whenever my child misbehaves will be

1 2 3 4 5

12: Most people who are close to me think that

I should : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : I should not
spank my child when s/he misbehaves.
5 4 3 2 1

13: When my child misbehaves, people will expect me to hit my child on the bottom with my hand.

5 4 3 2 1
14: I plan on using spanking whenever my child misbehaves.
1 2 3 4 5

15: When my child misbehaves, it will be expected of me to use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.).
1 2 3 4 5

16: Hitting my child on the bottom with my hand whenever my child misbehaves will be
1 2 3 4 5

17: I plan on using alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) whenever my child misbehaves.
1 2 3 4 5

18: It is mostly up to me whether or not my child is hit on the bottom when s/he misbehaves.
Strongly Agree : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Strongly Disagree
5 4 3 2 1

19: For me to not use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) whenever my child misbehaves will be
Impossible : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Possible
1 2 3 4 5

20: Many people like me spank their children when they misbehave.
5 4 3 2 1
21: For me to spank my child to manage misbehavior will be
Good : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Bad
5            4           3           2           1

22: Most people who are important to me use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to manage their children’s misbehavior
Completely True : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Completely False
5            4          3            2           1

23: For me to not use spanking whenever my child misbehaves will be
Impossible : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Possible
1           2           3            4          5

24: For me to use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) will be
5            4           3           2           1

25: I will hit my child on the hand or bottom to manage my child’s misbehavior.
Strongly Disagree : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Strongly Agree
1           2            3           4           5

26: Many people like me use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) when they misbehave.
5            4           3            2           1

27: How much control do you believe that you will have over whether or not you use spanking to manage your child’s misbehavior.
No control : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Complete control
1           2           3            4          5
28: People in my life whose opinion I value


their child(ren) when they misbehave.

29: I intend to use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to prevent or deal with my child’s misbehavior.


30: I will use alternatives to spanking (e.g. time-out, rewarding positive behavior, etc.) to manage my child’s misbehavior.

Strongly Disagree : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : _____ : Strongly Agree

31: Describe your general reaction to the “Considering Spanking” DVD.