

## Poor practice persists

Tuesday, April 14, 2009

The breakdown of discipline was under way in Memphis City Schools in 2005 when the Board of Education's corporal punishment ban went into effect.

Spanking wasn't working, and studies showed why: It stops bad behavior momentarily, but in the long run it does nothing to curtail the problem.

Anti-spanking activist Paula Flowe has been picketing [Memphis Academy of Health Sciences](#) to call for an extension of that policy to the charter school, where spankings are conducted and students' hands are struck with leather straps in assemblies reminiscent of public floggings.

Her arguments are strong. Charter schools are supposed to be innovative and experimental. They're supposed to develop new methods that will improve academic performance. There is nothing innovative about corporal punishment, a practice with roots in Colonial America that became ingrained in Southern culture during the antebellum era.

Many successful business leaders have testified that they were subjected to corporal punishment as children. So have violent inmates at San Quentin. It has been an easy way to avoid addressing the underlying reasons for bad behavior.

Physical punishment used to be an accepted way to discipline sailors, military trainees, prison inmates and spouses, too. Only in some public and private schools is it still accepted. Memphis charter schools should not be among them.



### Comments

There are **10 responses** to this article. Comments are meant to offer our readers a forum for thoughtful, robust

Posted by **KidsRpeople2** on April 14, 2009 at 6:46 a.m.

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THANK You for recognizing that children in schools should not SUFFER PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL PAIN AND SUFFERING AT THE HANDS OF "EDUCATORS" ENTRUSTED WITH THEIR CARE AND EDUCATION!

Discipline practices at MAHS are harmful to children, PADDLINGS/HAND STRAPPINGS OF BOYS AND GIRLS, DONE WEEKLY IN FRONT OF ALL OF THE MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS - NOT "BEST PRACTICES" FOR 21ST CENTURY EDUCATION! MAHS must cease and desist IMMEDIATELY with touching any child, IT IS NEVER JUSTIFIED! Our children are NOT receiving EQUAL CIVIL RIGHTS TREATMENT, when Corporal Punishment is ILLEGAL IN 29 STATES! ALL CHILDREN MUST HAVE ACCESS TO SAFE AND HEALTH SCHOOL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS! Please sign the online petition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in U.S. Schools.

Posted by **rcox** on April 14, 2009 at 8:02 a.m.

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Why are "Health" and "Sciences" part of the title of the charter school? What foundation of health supports the idea that a more painful and humiliating treatment should ever be advocated when other less miserable means of promoting health are available... means that, at the least, are as effective and often are more effective? Nowhere in the health sciences has corporal punishment ever demonstrated any measurable, long-term, positive effect. The sponsors of the Memphis Academy of Health Sciences are selling something that it is not. I am amazed that so many of the primary caregivers of the school's students, their parents, are still willing to be taken in by this sham.

Posted by **leftisright** on April 14, 2009 at 8:03 a.m.

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AMEN!!!

Posted by **ChickPea** on April 14, 2009 at 9:54 a.m.

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in response to **rcox**

A charter school that is supposed to focus on Health Sciences that uses corporal punishment???

Sounds totally perverse and twisted. Is their curriculum is also from the middle ages, then?

Posted by **todd** on April 14, 2009 at 9:55 a.m.

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If corporal punishment isn't working it's because you aren't hitting them hard enough.

Good idea about the work detail, Todd. If they aren't going to behave and get an education they better get used to doing real work.

Posted by **Thereitis** on April 14, 2009 at 7:38 p.m.

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Posted by **twin14u** on April 15, 2009 at 1:04 p.m.

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Paula is my HERO! my FRIEND! AND MY SISTA. You go GIRL!

Look, a teacher's job is to EDUCATE not SPANK OR BEAT anyone's child. I'm sure their training did not consist of "How to Beat a Child into Submission 101".

As it has been said about Black folks, we live by the Wish factor and I WISH! someone would lay a hand on my child!