



Coeur d'Alene: Spank your kid, go to jail

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WANT TO GO TO JAIL FOR A YEAR? SPANK YOUR KID IN COEUR D'ALENE

As an ancient and time-honored book of Eastern spirituality says, appropriate corporal punishment is an important part of raising children to maturity.

Administered with careful control, and in response to defiance and disobedience, it is a useful tool in breaking a child's rebellious will, training him in righteousness and protecting him from self-destructive behavior.

It is an expression of love, not child abuse.

As Solomon said in his wisdom, "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him (Prov 13:24)."

In fact, if we take Solomon's words at face value – and I do – then it is actually a form of child abuse not to spank a child when that's what he needs.

When we found it necessary to spank our young children, we never said to them, "I love you, but I have to spank you," as if the two were opposites. Rather, we said, "Because I love you, I must spank you."

We always made sure our discipline was controlled (we discovered that five swats with a wooden cooking spoon on a bare bottom had a wonderfully salutary effect), made sure they understood exactly why they were being spanked (so they understood it wasn't because we were mad but because of willful disobedience on their part – they would have to tell us in their own words why they were being spanked), and then made sure the parent who administered the discipline was the parent who comforted them after the spanking was over (we held them in a loving embrace after a spanking, dried their tears, and



enjoyed the way they melted into our arms before they run off to resume play).

We spanked them because we loved them too much to allow them to get away with defiance and disobedience, knowing it was central to their growth to full maturity to learn self-control and the importance of respecting proper boundaries.

Solomon returns to the theme of loving discipline again and again in the book of Proverbs, affirming that it has a place in the tool kit that parents use to turn children into mature and responsible adults.

Prov 19:18

Discipline your son, for in that there is hope;
do not be a willing party to his death.

Prov 22:15

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child,
but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

Prov 23:13-14

Do not withhold discipline from a child;
if you punish him with the rod, he will not die.
Punish him with the rod
and save his soul from death.

Prov 29:15

The rod of correction imparts wisdom,
but a child left to himself disgraces his mother.

Prov 29:17

Discipline your son, and he will give you peace;
he will bring delight to your soul.

As the world at large has slowly forgotten the Judeo-Christian heritage that birthed us and sustained as a nation, it has forgotten the biblical view of corporal punishment, and, sadly and dangerously, many in positions of power now regard even appropriately administered spanking as a form of child abuse.

Imagine you are watching a Fourth of July parade with your very, very active 21-month old toddler in your lap. She insists on running across the street, which easily could get her run over by a truck.

So you restrain her, even though she flops around on your lap and in your arms trying to get loose because she is so insistent on running into traffic. At one point, you even give her a couple of swats on the bottom.



Your motive, as the child's mother, is her protection.

Well, try that in Coeur d'Alene and you'll find yourself cited for criminal injury to a child and threatened with up to a year in jail.

The policemen who detained this mother – pulling her away from her other two children and therefore forcing her to abandon them in the process – saw absolutely no evidence of any kind of injury on the girl whatsoever, leading the neutral observer to ask, if the charge is “injury to a child,” don’t you need an injury in the first place?

She was eventually surrounded by four policemen, who, she said, accused her of child abuse and threatened her with a warning that the state was going to take her children from her.

Likely because there was zero evidence of any injury, the police did not take the child to a hospital to be examined, a routine procedure when there is any reason to believe abuse has occurred.

CDA police captain Ron Clark admitted that the officer who cited the mother “said there were no visible signs of injury.”

According to Capt. Clark, witnesses claimed they observed the mother “slamming her on the ground,” which is patently absurd on its face, since that certainly would have left quite visible physical marks.

Witnesses also accused the mother of “smothering” the child, when she was doing nothing more than holding her daughter closely to her chest to protect her from darting into traffic.

Said the mom, regarding the two swats on the bottom, “I think spanking her butt would hurt a lot less than getting run over by a float.”

Plus, spanking is not against the law in Idaho, as much as these bystanders may want it to be. And appropriate corporal punishment is not child abuse, as much as these bystanders may think it is.

Unmoved by the lack of physical evidence and the absurdity of the accusations, Capt. Clark said plaintively, “It will be up to the judge to decide whether that action that was committed was a crime or not.”

Certainly easy for him to say, because no one has falsely accused him of abusing his own children nor threatened to take his children away from him. And he doesn’t have to scrounge up thousands of dollars to defend himself against charges that never should have been brought in the first place.



I spoke with both parents last night, Rob and Melissa Farrell, who informed me that they themselves took little Laila to a hospital after the citation, to have her examined for their own protection. The hospital found her to be in perfect health with no sign of any of abuse.

Said Rob, quite correctly, “If there was no injury, there should have been no ticket.”

These hospital records, of course, are available to the prosecutor, who at last word is still intending to prosecute Melissa to the full extent of the law despite the utter and complete lack of any physical evidence that a crime has occurred.

The Farrells have discovered, from conversations with lawyers in the Coeur d'Alene area, that if the prosecutor insists on taking this foundationless case to trial, they will be forced to spend \$5,000 to defend themselves even though Melissa did nothing wrong, other than trying to keep her daughter from getting run over by a truck.

Rob, the husband, is currently working three jobs to support his family, and has virtually no way to afford the cost of a defense.

Melissa will have to appear in court on July 23, when she will be formally charged. If she pleads "Not Guilty," as she must – otherwise she in essence would be perjuring herself in a court of law – she may have to face the cost and uncertainty of a jury trial.

At a minimum, she will be under intense pressure to plead guilty to a lesser charge to avoid the cost and anxiety of a jury trial, when she did nothing wrong, and when a guilty plea to anything involving her children could place custody at risk in the future.

As the father pointed out, this sad story raises a fundamental question. "Are we allowed to discipline our children? ... If I was to grab my child, would it be a hostage situation? How extreme do we let this get? We might as well live in a country where we're told how to dress our children, when to feed our children."

Perhaps it's time to remind the Kootenai County Prosecutor of these words:

Prov 23:13-14

Do not withhold discipline from a child;
if you punish him with the rod, he will not die.
Punish him with the rod
and save his soul from death.

Note: You can see unedited video footage of Melissa's explanation of the event at the video link below (note: she lets slip a profanity at one point).

You may call the Coeur d'Alene City Attorney's office at 1-208-769-2323 with this simple message: "I'm calling to urge the city attorney to drop all charges against Melissa Farrell," and ask the receptionist to pass your message along to Wes Somerton, the city attorney handling the case.

[SR.com: Father: Police overreacted in spanking incident](#)

[Coeur d'Alene Press Newspaper - Spanking sparks fireworks](#)

[Featured Video | KREM2: Mom explains why she spanked her child](#)

[Huckleberries Online: Husband: Cops Went Too Far On Spanking Ticket](#)

IVA IN THE NEWS:

The Idaho Statesman excerpted parts of yesterday's Update on the essential difference between conservatism and liberalism.

Other Voices | Opinion | Idaho Statesman: The 'Ultimate Resource'

If you value the work of the IVA in representing our values, please consider a gift to our work. You may do so [here](#). Together we can make Idaho the friendliest place in the world to raise a family! Thank you!

BONUS BYTES

∅ Wednesday night, several members of Congress took the floor of the House of Representatives and issued a call for the de-funding of Planned Parenthood, which does almost 300,000 abortions a year and is a billion dollar business which receives over \$336 million in taxpayer funds. One Congresswoman called Planned Parenthood the “Wal-Mart of big abortion.” Idaho’s Rep. Bill Sali spoke on behalf of the call, quoting Mother Teresa, who said, “Any country that accepts abortion is the poorest of the poor.” Sali pointed out that Planned Parenthood cleared \$112 million in “excess revenue over expenses” in 2006 alone, not bad for a tax-exempt “not-for-profit” organization. Further, he observed that we are subsidizing the abortion industry in the U.S. while at the same time refusing to fund such services overseas on moral grounds. ([De-Fund Planned Parenthood Abortion Business, Members of Congress Say](#))



∅ Sen. Barack Obama left no doubt yesterday about the kind of judges he will appoint if he wins the presidency. He proudly and defiantly said, “I stand by my votes against confirming Justices Roberts and Alito,” who have brought sanity and restraint to the bench, and said, “I will never back down in defending a woman’s right to choose.” Obama opposed the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, and has pledged that his first order of business as president will be signing the Freedom of Choice Act, which would undo virtually every piece of pro-life legislation that has been enacted in the last 35 years. ([Barack Obama Slams John McCain For Opposing Abortion, Activist Judges](#))

∅ Obama is clearly out of step with the American people in his insistence that, rather than asking immigrants to learn English, we instead should learn Spanish (you parents, he said, “need to make sure your child can speak Spanish”). According to Rasmussen Reports, just 13% of the American people agree with him. Rasmussen discovered also that Americans, when it comes to illegal immigration, are more unhappy with their own government for doing nothing about the problem or doing the wrong thing about the problem than they are with illegals themselves. Fifty-nine percent of us believe that most government officials encourage immigrants to retain their home country culture rather than assimilating into American life. ([Rasmussen Reports™: Voters Reject Obama's call for Bilingualism](#))



∅ McDonald’s, home of the Happy Meal, made it clear yesterday that they think you and me, ordinary Americans who believe marriage ought to be between a man and a woman and who take our procreated children to the Golden Arches in droves, are hatemongers and homophobes. McDonald’s spent twenty thousand bucks to purchase a seat on the board of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Said its corporate

spokesman, about those who oppose the normalization of homosexuality for religious reasons, "Hatred has no place in our culture." Perhaps he will discover that McDonald's will have no place in the lives of increasing numbers of American families. The IVA's parent organization, the American Family Association, has called for boycott of the burger chain because of its homosexual advocacy and its refusal to take a neutral position in the culture war. ([McDonald's: Christian boycotters 'hate' homosexuals](#))

- Ø Good news: a Christian registrar in England, who refused to conduct gay weddings on conscience grounds, has won a landmark discrimination battle and a victory for religious liberty. For her stand against same-sex marriage, she was bullied and threatened with termination by the Islington Council, but the court ruled that employees should not be required to act against their consciences in such matters, and upheld her claim that she had been a victim of religious discrimination, harassment and victimization. The court admonished the city council because it "took no notice of the rights of Miss Ladele by virtue of her orthodox Christian beliefs," and had "created an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating (and) offensive environment" for her. Said Miss Ladele, "Gay rights should not be used as an excuse to bully or harass people over their religious beliefs." ([Christian registrar who refused to conduct gay weddings wins case - Telegraph](#))



- Ø If you're looking for someone to blame for \$5.00 a gallon gas, look no further than Big Enviro and its activist judicial accomplices. Just when oil company BP was ready to expand its refinery in Whiting, Indiana, up jumped the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to file a lawsuit to stop it. No new refineries have been built in the U.S. in over three decades because of obstructionist litigation just like this. The refinery expansion would bring another 620 million gallons of gas into the Midwest every year, creating 2,000 construction jobs and 80 permanent jobs along the way. But all that is no matter to radical environmentalists determined to stop the exercise of man's God-given dominion over natural resources. ([CNSNews.com - Environmental Group Sues to Block Oil Refinery Expansion](#))