



Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education
P.O. Box 1033, Alamo CA 94507-7033
Tel.: (925) 831-1661 FAX: (925) 838-8914 E-mail: riak@nospank.net

Web site: Project NoSpank
www.nospank.net
PTAVE is a 501(c)(3)
nonprofit organization
E.I.N. 94-2884062

September 9, 2006

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
50 E North Temple St.
Salt Lake City, UT 84150

Dear Brethren,

While the LDS are to be commended for their ongoing efforts to promote healthy family life, we wish to suggest a way to significantly enhance the effectiveness of that campaign. We believe there is no better time than now to take LDS Church President Gordon B. Hinkley's wise observations about nonviolent childrearing to heart, and to make them central to the effort.

Today, one cannot pick up a newspaper or switch on the TV without being reminded that we live in a world racked by violence. From the blood-soaked battle zones of sectarian strife overseas to the deadly gang-ruled neighborhoods of cities here at home, there seems to be no relief in sight.

But there is a solution — not one that works instantly, but one that does work in the long term. Here's what President Hinkley says on the subject:

“It is so plainly evident that both the great good and the terrible evil found in the world today are the sweet and the bitter fruits of the rearing of yesterday's children. As we train a new generation, so will the world be in a few years. If you are worried about the future, then look today at the upbringing of children. In large measure the harshness that characterizes so much of our society is an outgrowth of the harshness imposed upon children years ago.”

From “The Environment of Our Homes,” *Tambuli*, Oct.–Nov. 1985, 1

And:

“I have never accepted the principle of ‘spare the rod and spoil the child.’... I am persuaded that violent fathers produce violent sons... Children don't need beating. They need love and encouragement. They need fathers to whom they can look with respect rather than fear. Above all, they need example.”

From Church of Latter-day Saints, 1994 General Conference

We sincerely hope that the LDS will now put these wise suggestions at the top of its healthy-family-life agenda. The best way to do that, we believe, is by promulgating a position statement unequivocally condemning corporal punishment, a.k.a. “spanking,” “switching,” “paddling,” “swatting,” “belting,” “licking,” “whopping,” “smacking,” and 1,001 other euphemisms for assaults on the defenseless. We further urge you to initiate programs that will reeducate parents in nonviolent childrearing methods, and to promote legislation making such methods the only acceptable standard.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Jordan Riak, Executive Director