



MEDIA RELEASE

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Latest Smacking Research Shows Benefits

Family First NZ is welcoming the latest research showing that light and reasonable smacking is beneficial to children in their development, and despite claims by government funded groups, kids aren't damaged by its occasional use.

"Previous research has not been able to compare children who have been smacking with those who have never been smacked, because children who've never been smacked were hard to find as most kids received physical discipline at least once in their life," says Bob McCoskrie, National Director of Family First NZ. "But due to the pervading anti-smacking ideology, this has changed."

"Yet this study found that young children smacked by their parents may grow up to be happier and more successful than those who have never been smacked. Children smacked up to the age of six were likely as teenagers to perform better at school and were more likely to carry out volunteer work and to want to go to university than their peers who had never been physically disciplined. Only those children who continued to be smacked into adolescence showed clear behavioural problems."

Marjorie Gunnoe, professor of psychology at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, said her study showed there was insufficient evidence to deny parents the freedom to choose how they discipline their children. Gunnoe's work drew on a study of 2,600 people, of whom about a quarter had never been physically chastised.

This follows earlier research from Duke University which showed that if a culture views spanking as the normal consequence for bad behavior, kids aren't damaged by its occasional use because parents are less agitated and more consistent.

"This is more evidence to go alongside previous NZ-based research from Professor Fergusson at Christchurch School of Medicine and from Otago University showing that light smacking is not child abuse, is actually beneficial when used in a positive and loving family environment, and should definitely not be a criminal offence in this country," says Mr McCoskrie.

"Law-abiding kiwi parents are being forced to changed their parenting techniques based on flawed and unproven ideology. Yet these techniques are proven to be beneficial to raising law-abiding and positive members of society."

"It's time the government listened to the thorough and balanced research on smacking and the concerns of parents and grandparents raising or who have raised great kids, rather than the flawed ideology and scaremongering of government funded groups which should be focusing on actual child abuse."

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For More Information and Media Interviews, contact Family First:

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