

Preface

Over 200,000 U.S. children were subject to school corporal punishment in the 2009–2010 school year. Although permitted by the Supreme Court and by the legislatures of 19 states, a majority of Americans disapprove of school corporal punishment and a large number of professional organizations condemn it. This monograph discusses the past, present, and future of school corporal punishment in the U.S. We first summarize current and historical prevalence of corporal punishment and attitudes about it, as well as disparities in its use by gender, race, and disability. We next present what is known about the impacts of school corporal punishment on children and present results from a policy analysis that examines the effect of state-level school corporal punishment bans on trends in juvenile crime. We then review the legal basis for school corporal punishment and end by discussing potential legal, policy, education, and advocacy avenues for reduction and potential abolition of school corporal punishment at local, state, or federal levels.

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