

parents cannot be expected to avoid this behavior without training. "Rather than arguing that parents need to learn certain skills before they can stop using corporal punishment," Straus argues, "I believe that parents are more likely to use and cultivate those skills if they decide or are required to stop spanking" (p. 156).

**Myth 6: If you don't spank, your children will be spoiled or will run wild.** It is true that some children who are not spanked run wild, but it is equally true that some children who are spanked run wild. The key to having well-behaved children is being a consistent disciplinarian, not being a physical disciplinarian.

**Myth 7: Parents spank rarely or only for serious problems.** It is true that many parents perceive that they reserve spanking for serious problems, but Straus maintains that parents simply do not realize how often they hit their children. This is especially true for parents who use spanking as their primary discipline technique.

**Myth 8: By the time a child is a teenager, parents have stopped spanking.** The national child maltreatment surveys indicate that more than half of parents of 13- and 14-year-olds had hit their children in the preceding 12 months. With teenagers, corporal punishment is more likely to be a slap to the face than a slap to the bottom.

**Myth 9: If parents don't spank, they will verbally abuse their children.** Parents who spank frequently are actually more likely than nonspanking parents to be verbally abusive.

**Myth 10: It is unrealistic to expect parents never to spank.** Straus is clearly frustrated by the level of acceptance of corporal punishment in the United States. He asks, "Is it unrealistic to expect husbands not to hit their wives? Why is violence unacceptable between strangers but acceptable between a parent and child?" Straus concedes that it is probably not feasible to criminalize spanking in this culture, but he asserts that scholars who oppose spanking can make some progress "by showing parents that spanking is dangerous, that their children will be easier to bring up if they do not spank, and by clearly saying that a child should never, under any circumstances, be spanked" (p. 162).