



Parenting Dilemma: Kids Spanked Over The Knee... Good Idea Or Bad?

By Kelly Nault

When we are in the “deep end” of parenting—at the end of our rope—we will grasp at the first thing we think of to stop our child’s misbehavior. When our kids are pushing every button we have (and even some we didn’t know we had), spanking kids over the knee may seem like a good idea to get them to REALLY learn from their mistakes. But does it work?

No doubt about it, spanking can interrupt misbehavior you don’t like. If you are a mom who has ever yelled, spanked or punished your child, you can join the other millions of moms out there. And after you have punished your child, do you ever experience that wee bit of satisfaction that comes from feeling like you’ve “won”, that you’re FINALLY getting them to do what you want them to do? But then don’t you also experience GUILT? Since kids spanked over the knee will often stop their immediate misbehavior, you may have concluded that spanking is an effective way of disciplining them (despite the guilt).

Long-Term Effects of Being Spanked over the Knee

While on a beach in Santa Barbara, I met a guy in his late 20s who as a child had been spanked over the knee. When he found out I was the author of the parenting book ***When You’re About To Go Off The Deep End, Don’t Take Your Kids With You***, he excitedly shared how spanking had helped him to listen to his mother, do what he was told, and learn about right and wrong. “Being spanked over her knee also taught me how to use the wooden spoon on *her*,” he laughed. I went for the bait. “How did it do this?” I asked. One Christmas, when he was four years old, his Mother was mad at herself for forgetting to water the Christmas tree. As she got down on her hands and knees to pick up the fallen pine needles, her son snuck into the kitchen, got the wooden pasta spoon that doubled as the spanking spoon, and boldly took a whack at her rear end (just like she had taught him!) yelling, “Bad Mommy, Bad Mommy!” Her response? She spanked him.

What a Mom Sows, She Also Reaps in Parenting

That’s the simple truth about spanking kids on the bottom as a punishment. Call it human nature, but there is a natural tendency to seek revenge when we believe we have been unjustly punished. Kids spanked over the knee have dozens of ways to get back at us, including:

- Using the silent treatment
- Getting poor grades in school
- Acquiring sudden Alzheimer’s when it comes to chores
- Performing award-winning temper tantrums
- Saying “I hate you!” (the granddaddy of all revenge tactics).

Spanking also establishes a powerful model for our children to follow in their “monkey see, monkey do” fashion. Kids will often use our punishment approach to also get their own way. Eldest children are especially prone to pick up on a mom’s authoritative approach and will attempt to pull rank, be boss, and even bully others (especially siblings). Where did they learn this? Yup! From that pretty woman who looks back at you in the mirror each day.

So, although spanking can stop misbehavior in the short term, be warned! Spanking a child over the

knee can lead to them “spanking” you—and others—later on down the road.

Do you want your children to end up spanking you?

Probably not. The good news: there are dozens of effective parenting strategies that can get you what you want (great behavior) while giving your children what they need (the opportunity to be responsible, happy and compassionate). Learn these positive parenting tools and you and your children can thrive in a spank-free, guilt-free environment!

Kelly Nault, MA corporate spokesperson and award winning parenting author of *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* inspires moms to put themselves first—for the sake of their children. She shares time-tested tools that motivate children to want to be well behaved, responsible and happy! Sign up for her free online parenting course at www.UltimateParenting.com.

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