



American College of
Emergency Physicians®

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE 

POLICY STATEMENT

Approved June 2022

Corporal Punishment of Children

Revised June 2022, October 2016

Reaffirmed October 2007

Revised September 2001

Approved October 1993

Emergency physicians have the responsibility to care for and protect any child who seeks care in the emergency department. While effective disciplinary techniques are essential to healthy child development, research on corporal punishment has demonstrated deleterious short- and long-term impacts on most children.

ACEP strongly discourages the use of corporal punishment as a method of disciplining children and instead encourages the use of non-corporal corrective strategies.

ACEP encourages reporting corporal punishment actions of a severity that caused a child's significant injury to the appropriate child welfare and protective services as is already required by law in all states.

ACEP recommends parental education regarding the potential negative effects of corporal punishment and the benefits of using alternative techniques for discipline.