



**DANE COUNTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ISMAEL R. OZANNE**



**PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release**

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**NEW PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT
ASKS PARENTS TO RECONSIDER
THE USE OF PHYSICAL DISCIPLINE WITH THEIR
CHILDREN**

April is Child Abuse Prevention and Family Strengthening Month and local leaders have teamed up in a new [public service announcement](#) asking parents to reconsider the use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline.

Dane County District Attorney Ismael Ozanne, Judge Everett Mitchell, and the Executive Director of the Rainbow Project Sharyl Kato cite years of research that shows physical punishment increases the likelihood of childhood aggression, mental health problems and turning to violence for conflict resolution. In the PSA, the three are asking parents to think deeply about corporal punishment's long-term effects on families, our community, and the criminal justice system.

"Building a more compassionate and meaningful criminal justice system starts with shifting our thinking about discipline and conflict resolution," according to District Attorney Ozanne. "This starts with recognizing that early childhood experiences impact both the individual and the systems around them."

"With 100 years of research at hand, we know that there is absolutely zero benefit to spanking and hitting children," Ozanne said. "We know that physical discipline leads to more disobedience and aggressive behavior as children become teenagers and young adults. We see more bullying, fighting and even gun violence."

"We know better now," Judge Mitchell said. "Kids will mimic us as parents. So if we show them consistency, love, kindness and mutual respect then they will apply these skills when it comes to problem solving."

"My kids will grow up not knowing physical violence because it didn't happen to them," Mitchell added.

[A 2016 study* by Psychologists Elizabeth T. Gershoff and Andrew Grogan-Kaylor](#) found that physical punishment can lead to detrimental outcomes in children, including:

- Increased disobedience and aggression,
- Physical and mental health problems as adults,
- Use of violence as a means to solve problems and
- Increased likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior.

We know that spanking and hitting hurt children on the inside and outside, according to Rainbow Project Executive Director Sharyl Kato.

“Trauma at a young age can freeze a child’s social and emotional growth at a time when building their sense of stability in themselves and their surroundings is essential to their development,” she said.

In 2016, District Attorney Ozanne turned his office into a NO HIT ZONE to promote safety and comfort for all people. He continues to encourage creating NO HIT ZONES inside agencies, hospitals, businesses, schools and all public spaces as a way to promote an intentional, anti-violence message where individuals and families live, work, learn and do business.

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CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION & FAMILY STRENGTHENING MONTH

• April •



DID YOU KNOW?

- Physical punishment does not improve behavior in long term. It actually leads to more disobedience and aggression in children
- Hitting or spanking teaches children to use violence to solve problems
- Using violence as punishment leads to children doing poorly in school and lacking the ability to concentrate
- Experiencing violence as children can lead to physical and Mental Health problems as adults



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Dane County No Hit Zone



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