Jordan Navratil

**You are teaching a parenting class next year as part of your new job. The topic for today’s class with the parents who have been court-ordered to attend your class is discipline. The topic of “spanking” is raised. One parent says in a loud voice for everyone to hear, “I was spanked as a child and I turned out just fine.” What’s wrong with spanking?**

I firmly believe that spanking does not solve any issues. I understand that it may not affect a child in the long run, but corporal punishment is a way of stopping the behavior once immediately, not stopping it permanently and in the long run. Children do not learn right from wrong, and although children may not misbehave in front of parents, they might be more inclined to misbehave when parents aren’t around. Student Learning Objective 1: Foundations of Child Development, states that, “Students will have an understanding of the theoretical, empirical, and philosophical foundations of the discipline. In addition, students will be able to apply their knowledge while working with children, families, and fellow professionals.” I know through my work in child development that there are simpler means of disciplining children than using corporal punishment. Through my practical use in a preschool-aged classroom, I see that the way you say and convey things to children get them to oblige with ease, and that using corporal punishment is not necessary.

I have gained this knowledge through classes such as Moral Issues in Parenting, where I read articles about physical abuse and corporal punishment. There is a fine line between the two of them, but it is easy to see that the two have many similiarities as well. My concern would be that if corporal punishment is a preferred method of discipline, that it could at times cross over into physical child abuse. I have used this information in real life every time I work with children. I would never think of laying a hand on a child because I have been in practical, real-life situations where using only my voice has diffused problematic situations in my classrooms. Simply talking to children, using positive reinforcement and redirection are a few easy ways to get children to comply to the things you are asking of them. This way, they learn what they are doing wrong and should be given suggestions of how to improve their behavior, instead of being spanked a couple times and left to wonder what they did wrong and how to change their behavior in the future.