

Parental attitude and practice regarding physical punishment of school children in Santiago de Chile

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Four hundred and twenty-three parents from two free, nonconfessional, public schools placed in medium and low income areas, and 104 parents from a private, for-pay Catholic school in a medium and high income zone filled out an anonymous self-applied survey to learn attitudes and practices regarding child physical punishment. In the for-pay school parents declared better education. Child battering was admitted by 80.4% (public schools) and 56.7% (private school) despite that 34.1% (public schools) and 51.9% (at the private school) declared that battering should never be used. Females admitted and justified physical punishment in higher proportions than males. Poor school performance, defiance, and running away from home were the preferred reasons to justify battering at public schools, while defiance was preferred at the private school where poor performance was sent to the fourth place. To check parents data and get children's opinions, 192 seventh and eighth grades students were surveyed.