

# New change.org petition circulates after a Missouri school board reinstates corporal punishment

*A school board in Missouri recently voted to reinstate corporal punishment in their district after 20 years of not allowing it. Change.org petition started.*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- A school board in Missouri recently voted to reinstate corporal punishment in their district after 20 years of not allowing it.

The U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children today announced it was joining forces with the students at Cassville High School to urge the Cassville R-IV School Board to rescind their adoption of "the use of physical force as a method of correcting student behavior."

Dr. George Holden, President of The Alliance, explained why. "More than 1,500 research studies have examined corporal punishment and virtually all have found that, in addition to being ineffective as discipline, corporal punishment can result in many serious problems, including increased aggression, anxiety and other mental health issues, relationship difficulties with parents, violence, alcohol and drug abuse, even brain damage and health problems later in life. The American Academy of Pediatrics outlines many of the developmental problems in its 2018 policy statement against corporal punishment, and you can read some of the actual studies at [endhitting.org](https://endhitting.org)."

Dr. Katie A. McLaughlin, Associate Professor of the Social Sciences and director of the Stress & Development Lab in the Department of Psychology at Harvard University said in a [2021 study](#) that children who come from schools where corporal punishment is used as a punishment are



Students at Cassville High School protest the new school board policy bringing back corporal punishment.

"more likely to develop anxiety, depression, behavior problems, and other mental health problems." She continues, "but many people don't think about spanking as a form of violence".

In 2016, the National Women's Law Center summed it up, saying "Aside from the infliction of pain and physical injury that often result from the use of physical punishment, these violent disciplinary methods impact students' academic achievement and long-term well-being. Harsh physical punishments do not improve students' in-school behavior or academic performance. In fact, one study found that schools in states where corporal punishment is used perform worse on national academic assessments than schools in states that prohibit corporal punishment."

On August 29, 2022, the Springfield News-Leader reported that Kalia Miller and Gabe Moore, both seniors at Cassville High School, were upset by the new board policy and have formed a student-led initiative called Students Against Abusive Policies.

"I was really shocked because a policy like this hasn't been in place at Cassville since 2001," the newspaper quoted Moore, 17. "Most students are scared, the fact that they'll be hit by a 30- or 40-year-old man, and mostly women are scared that they'll be spanked or hit by a man with another guy in the room and they would feel embarrassed or see it as a call-back to trauma. It's really frightening for a lot of students. Some students see it as abuse, and it IS abuse." Moore said students have also long been told they need to give consent for someone else to touch them. "It doesn't really matter if the parents are for this policy because the students should have to consent if they are going to get hit or not," Moore said. "Parents are opting in for their child to get abused."

"This policy is demeaning. It diminishes us as humans, as people," Kalia Miller, 17, said. "It is just not an efficient or successful way to deal with these behaviors that they say students deserve to be punished for or hit over. It has been proven so many times that corporal punishment and physical punishment don't really work," she said. "It just causes more behavioral issues."

To support the students, the U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children has sponsored a [change.org](https://chnng.org) petition to put pressure on the Missouri school board, which can be found at <https://chnng.it/XgZrwpzH5X>.

According to their website, "The U.S. Alliance is a non-profit organization founded in 2011 that brings together individuals, groups, and organizations to create a unified voice calling for, and working toward, an end to corporal punishment - an antiquated and dangerous form of disciplining a child - especially in schools and homes. The Alliance, through education and legal means, seeks to end all social justifications and legal authorizations of corporal punishment. Achieving these goals will give children the same legal protection from assault and battery that is already enjoyed by adults under state and federal law."

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