



**Parent Support Services
Society of BC**

Letter to the Editor

Vancouver Sun

September 18, 2014

Parent Support Services Society of BC is alarmed and deeply disappointed that the Vancouver Sun chose to print, on the front page, a column by a sports reporter that defends the use of corporal punishment.

The Adrian Peterson incident is an incredible opportunity for the Sun to educate readers and provide resources on constructive discipline, healthy parenting and the laws that protect children. Instead you chose to give a platform that promotes corporal punishment as correcting “behaviour in the short term” and making a “lasting impression, not of violence but of What Not To Do From Now On.”

We know parents can struggle to find ways to “correct” their child’s inappropriate behavior. Spanking and strapping can happen in emotional, stressful or frightening situations, where everything may seem out of control, and as parents, we can feel caught in the moment with seemingly no other options. Violence cannot ever be an option. Just because we may have been raised with corporal punishment and “survived” does not ever make it acceptable.

- Physical abuse is any use of physical force that may intentionally or unintentionally hurt or injure a child
- Punishment and abuse may temporarily stop a child’s negative behavior. However, no benefit comes from that approach and the risk of lasting (and escalating) harm is exceedingly high.
- Long term consequences for the child, include physical, psychological and emotional harm; low self-esteem; distrust of adults; and difficulty forming healthy relationships
- Punishment and abuse hurt the child; constructive, respectful, discipline supports healthy happy child development.

Corporal punishment, is abuse; child abuse is illegal. We encourage your readers to seek out the many excellent resources available to assist all caregivers with alternative, non-threatening, thoughtful, caring and productive discipline strategies. We encourage the Sun to take a clear stand against all forms of child abuse.

Sincerely,

Carol Ross, Executive Director

Creating a world where children and families are nurtured, valued, and safe.
www.parentsupportbc.ca

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PROVINCIAL OFFICE

204 – 5623 Imperial Street
Burnaby, BC

V5J 1G1

Ph 604.669.1616

Fax 604.669.1636

Toll Free 1.877.345.9777

Email office@parentsupportbc.ca

GRG Support Line

Ph 604.558.4740

Fax 604.669.1636

Toll Free 1.855.474.9777

Email grgline@parentsupportbc.ca

REGIONAL OFFICES

**Metro Vancouver, Coastal,
Fraser Valley & Interior**

204 – 5623 Imperial St., Burnaby,
BC V5J 1G1

Ph 604.669.1616

Fax 604.669.1636

Toll Free 1.877.345.9777

Email office@parentsupportbc.ca

North

P.O. Box 21106

Spruceland RPO

693 West Central Street Prince
George, BC

V2M 7A5

Ph. 250.962.0600

Toll Free 1.877.345.9777

Email parentnorth@shaw.ca

Victoria

P.O. Box 31075

University Heights RPO

Victoria, BC

V8N 6J3

Ph 250.384.8042

Fax 250.384.8043

Toll Free 1.877.345.9777

Email

psscoordinator@shaw.ca

Central Island

P.O. Box 86

Nanose Bay, BC

V9P 9J9

Ph 250.468.9658

Fax 250.468.9668

Toll Free 1.877.345.9777

Email parent@telus.net