

# Newsletter — Spring, 2022

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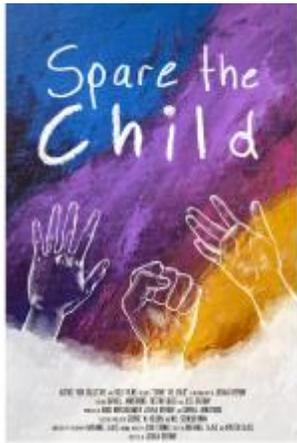


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✚ **1. FEATURE: An interview with the creators of a new film: *Spare the Child***

*Spare the Child* is a new 30-minute documentary about the negative impact of corporal



punishment on the children. The *Alliance* gave its support to the production of this film, and not long ago, I (SD) met with Andie Morganlander (ANDIE), who is the creative producer of the film, and Josh Overbay (JOSH), who is the director of the film. (They are husband and wife.) This is Part One of that interview....

**SD:** Congratulations to both of you for an excellent documentary about a very difficult subject. Who originated the idea of making this film, and when and why?

**JOSH:** The idea started with me, but Andie was - and remains - a major driving force in the process. The initial idea came to me when we were attending a workshop at the Indie Grits Film Festival in 2018 — it was a documentary workshop on impact producing and, essentially, how colonialism has impacted documentary filmmaking and allowed extractive storytelling to flourish at the demise of the communities examined. I'm a filmmaker, but I had never made a documentary. So, this was all new. And at the time, I was also going to therapy and starting to uncover the roots of some of my OCD. Everything kept returning to my childhood, specifically the negative impact that spanking had and continues to have on me. The realization was unexpected and certainly eye-opening. And when I'm processing something personally or something strikes me as important or thematically resonant, my almost immediate thought is, "Maybe I can make a movie about it." And as I continued to think about it, I became increasingly excited about the possibility of bringing this topic to a wider audience.

I had never seen a documentary about spanking. And based on my experience, people are very hesitant to talk about it. In this country, it's a touchy, taboo subject. And in the South, which is where I was raised, it was always talked about through the lens of religion. Preachers in particular used the Bible to not only justify spanking, but to demand that their parishioners do the same. Thus, good parenting equals spanking, and things like, "time outs" were considered weak parenting strategies.



Josh Overbay

But the science is clear and has been for decades: spanking does not work under any circumstances whatsoever, period, end of story. And I think it's just really unfortunate that — especially in the United States — we haven't caught up to that science — certainly not culturally, but also in our legislation.

So yeah. Initially, I wanted to make this film because I knew it would help me process my trauma. But ultimately, I wanted to bring this subject matter into the cultural foreground. It needs to be talked about. It needs to be debated. You could even say it needs to be politicized. Right now, it lives in the shadows, but its impact permeates everything. It's beyond time to shine the light.

**SD:** And so, you brought Andie on board to produce the film.

**JOSH:** I did. Yes, pretty quickly.

**ANDIE:** At that time, I was deeply involved with Light A Path — a non-profit bringing yoga,



Andie Morganlander

meditation, strength training and running to youth, the incarcerated, the unhoused, older adults, veterans, and those in recovery in western North Carolina — communities that often are denied access to those types of tools. So, the mission of healing is one that's really central to who I am and to what I care about. My mom's also in the public health field, so she was familiar with the different trauma resilience research that has been happening. And I just really thought that a heartfelt portrayal of people that had been through this as adults could be a really powerful tool to add to this conversation about childhood trauma and peaceful parenting and different ways of parenting that I knew were already happening in other public health spaces. So, getting on board was easy.

**SD:** Did you have a similar childhood background of corporal punishment?

**ANDIE:** No, very different. I'm one of four siblings and we were never spanked.

**SD:** So how did you find Destiny and Darrell and Jess [the three “stars” of the film]?

**ANDIE:** Jess, whose name is now Archer, is Josh's brother and we knew he would have a unique story to tell based on his upbringing and his relationship to Josh and their dad and mom. We asked him right away and he was on board from the beginning. Then we put out some different calls. We connected with Dr. George Holden from the U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children pretty quickly. We're super grateful to him and Al Schneiderman from the New York Foundling for helping to finance our film. And when we told them, “Hey, we are searching for four different people that might be interested in sharing their story in a documentary such as this one,” they pretty quickly connected us with Reverend Darrell Armstrong.

Destiny actually found us through a post on a Facebook group. We were going to be in Trenton interviewing Reverend Armstrong, and Pittsburgh — where Destiny lives — wasn't too far from there. So, Destiny just said, “I'm open and would love to share my story.” All of them have been a part of the dialogue and the screenings that we've had so far. So, it's been really cool hearing their stories and seeing their vulnerability during the film, but also their continued dialogue with these different organizations afterwards and throughout the screenings as well.

**SD:** You said Archer is your brother, right Josh? That means that Jess in the film was your little sister before he transitioned, and when he says at the end of the film about having his older brother watch as he was beaten, that was you, wasn't it?

**JOSH:** Correct.

**SD:** So, this was a very personal story that you were telling about yourself as well.

**JOSH:** Absolutely. I grew up in East Tennessee. My dad and grandfather were both preachers. Violence was a constant in my life — either violence (or the threat of violence) from God, or violence from my peers or violence from my parents. And I did everything I could to avoid it — to stay safe. My strategy was to be the most obedient child possible. Otherwise, any misstep, would lead to being whipped with a belt. I don't think I realized how deep the roots go until I started seeing a therapist. Before that, I was just told to: “Suck it up. Be a man. Stop whining.” And there was certainly no one else to talk to about it as a kid. All my friends were spanked. It was the cultural norm, especially at church. I can't actually remember a church service where I didn't hear some poor kid out back being whipped, screaming and crying while everyone sat there pretending it was okay. I just knew I didn't want that to be me. For a long time, spanking has not been considered abuse. But it *is* child abuse. Just a socially acceptable form. And it's time for that to change.

**SD:** I'm sure someone reading this is going to want to actually see your film. How would they go about that today?

**ANDIE:** Right now, the video is not available to the general public. The most immediate way would be to reach out to us at Justice Film Collective: JusticeFilmCollective @ gmail.com. Send us an email telling us you want to view the film and we'll tell you how you can do it. We're going to try to get it up on a streaming service, hopefully within the next couple of months. But right now, all we can do is give you a link to watch it — and you'll be part of an exclusive group. We'd also appreciate sending us a review after you watch. That's JusticeFilmCollective @ gmail.com.

Part 2 of this interview will appear in our next newsletter (Summer, 2022)

## 2. A letter from John Kenny Adeya in Uganda

If you walked into Uganda, you'd surely receive the warmest welcome with the best foods and courtesy at its peak. The country is so hospitable that you would feel at home and enjoy peace of mind.



However, the reverse is true if you enrolled in a Ugandan school; you are promised a certain magnitude of suffering if you don't "focus". A child learns to work toward the teacher/parent expectations rather than the goal of learning and acquiring skills.

During my childhood, violence from parents and teachers was considered the normal form of teaching; and a child was supposed to endure it until they learned how to do whatever was expected of them. The problem with this is that you grow up to become a less confident person — a bully with very barbaric manners. Some kids brag about having experienced violent situations in their homes; those that weren't beaten were considered weaklings, who probably suffered from some serious problems.



However, as I grew up, I discovered that everything happens because someone chose it to happen, and that's when I realized that adults too can be wrong. I noticed that the government is only concerned with decreasing the number of school dropouts instead of improving the learning environment in schools. However, nobody wants to learn in a terrifying environment.

Throughout school, I was sponsored by Compassion International whose goal is to instill Christ-like characteristics in individuals experiencing poverty or health issues. In this environment, I grew up with a different perspective on discipline. I learned to be friendly to adults, unlike my mates who shunned them because of the embarrassment and anger that comes with getting spanked in front of classmates. But I was too young to change an average African adult's mind because children are treated like pets who can be beaten.



**John Kenny Adeya**

Since 2018, after attending a journalism class, my passion has been to change people's lives using my writing and articles. For this reason, I started my own blog, Kampala Edge Times. I write articles to inspire other people with positivity so they can stop being bitter towards disadvantaged and powerless people including young children. Fast forward to 2022. Here I am still doing the same by writing and publishing content hoping to convince people to change how they treat minors and other inferior people because I believe people's attitude entirely depends on their perception.

In 2018 I was lucky to discover the U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children and I hope it will help extend my work to other countries so that people can spread a little more love toward those who actually can't harm them. In 2021, I won \$1,400 from the Hit No More contest, with the help of my kid brothers who contributed to the making of my video as well as voting for it. Recently I was able to afford a website of my own ([kampalaedgetimes.com](http://kampalaedgetimes.com)) which I intend to use to spread very inspiring articles to the whole world.

With the right efforts, we can end all sorts of negative energy — especially violence and corporal punishment — from the world. I believe that when I meet the right people at the right time, there will be a breakthrough and the world will have no option but to accept the message of love and harmony. The only thing limiting me is funds. Children themselves have a ton of potential; they shouldn't be underestimated! For this reason, I tell everyone I meet about my goal of spreading positivity with my magazine and telling them to care for kids instead of scaring them to death. I tell them little children can unleash the potential of an adult, so do not beat them up in the name of making them grow. Let them mature naturally and they will later share with you their secrets and we will build violence-free communities. Thank you for reading about my efforts to end corporal punishment! It's our responsibility to end corporal punishment against children! What have you done about it?

*Editor's note: This letter received some light editing for clarity and space limitations.*

### **3. An Update from Tate Aldrich about the Arkansans Against School Paddling**

(Tate Aldrich is the Director of *Arkansans Against School Paddling* and the newest member of the Board of Directors of the *Alliance*.)

*Arkansans Against School Paddling* is an education watchdog and advocacy group that launched last May. As an official state chapter of the U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children, we work with concerned families, public school personnel, and state legislators to protect the dignity and safety of Arkansas's students. In our state, 67% of school districts still endorse corporal punishment, and recent efforts to ban the practice statewide have been met with stiff opposition. Our supporters are growing in numbers, though, and we feel more encouraged than ever.



We have a motto at AASP: “Educate. Advocate. Repeat.” Our strategic plan includes providing the school districts that still endorse paddling with an annual resource to help them rethink their policies. This year, we’re partnering with the folks at Lives in the Balance, a national organization that trains educators in non-violent, non-exclusionary practices, to create a “toolkit” of alternatives to paddling. Over 220 elementary schools in Arkansas will receive the free resource this summer.

For more information on AASP, visit our website at [BanPaddlingAR.com](http://BanPaddlingAR.com).

#### ✚ 4. Louisiana is asking for help!

A bill has been re-introduced in the Louisiana House of Representatives to end paddling in schools. (Louisiana is one of 19 states that still allows corporal punishment of students by teachers and administrators.) One of our ambassadors—Stacie LeBlanc—is organizing a grass roots effort to contact legislators to encourage them to vote in favor of this legislation. She needs a team of volunteers to help call them. To volunteer or to get more information, please email (Stacie@theupinstitute.com) or call her (504-343-5899).

#### ✚ 5. News from the Board of Directors for the last two meetings

The *Alliance*'s Board of Directors is growing! In the past year, five new board members have joined the board. That means the board currently consists of nine members. Deb Sendek and George Holden are co-founding board members. The *Alliance* was one of the outcomes of an international conference on ending corporal punishment held in Dallas, TX in 2010. Robbyn Peters Bennett joined the board in 2013. Then we enlisted Ellen Chiocca in 2014, the year the *Alliance* became a 501(c)(3). (Several other people served as board members but have rotated off.). This past year Madeleine (Mady) Gomez and Yolanda Renteria were voted in as board members. At the February 2022 meeting, Tate Aldrich, Mitch Hall, and Stephen Davis (our newsletter editor) came onboard. Brief bios of the board members are available on [our website](#).

At the March 2022 meeting, the board voted unanimously to hire Samuel Adams as our first Executive Director and grant writer. Sam has a long and very successful history of procuring grant support for non-profits working in the human rights area. He is also very committed to the mission of ending corporal punishment. If you haven't read his book, *Thy Rod and thy staff, they comfort me: Christians and the spanking controversy*, you should! It is available to download for free at <http://www.biblechild.com/> or if you want a paperback edition, it can be purchased on Amazon for \$14.95 (<https://www.amazon.com/Thy-Rod-Staff-They-Comfort/dp/0978533909>). The board is very excited about our first hire!

The Board also continued discussing merging with StopSpanking.org, developed by Robbyn Peters Bennett and Amy Bryant, which has long been an important educational resource for the movement with a focus sharing the most recent research regarding corporal punishment and trauma, as well as providing information about positive parenting. In addition, they also have a history of presenting or sponsoring trainings and events, such as the NoSpank Challenge. The suggestion is that this merger will allow the Alliance to expand its influence through access to the many individuals who follow StopSpanking on Facebook or their website. However, further research is needed to determine the legal ramifications of merging two non-profits and how that will impact the operation of both organizations.

*Editor's note: "News from the Board" is a new feature of the newsletter. These brief pieces are intended to share some information about what the Board of Directors is working on or doing.*

## 6. April 30 is the International Day to End Corporal Punishment of Children

April 30 is the International Day to End Corporal Punishment of Children, a day that draws awareness to this important issue and urges for new efforts to combat it. To mark that moment, *End Violence* is hosting two high-level events. Both #ENDviolence events are focusing on ending corporal punishment.

The first will take place on April 30. The event will look at the progress – and delays – in the global movement to prohibit corporal punishment of children, while the second, on June 4, will examine how prohibiting corporal punishment can be put into practice. The latter event will showcase international examples of leadership and implementation, and both will include the voices of young people, governments, experts from the human rights, legal and academic fields, and practitioners from across the world.

For the April 30 event, expect to hear from speakers like Kimura Tetsuya, Japanese ambassador to the United Nations; Dr Joan Nyanyuki, Executive Director of the African Child Policy Forum and Co-Chair of the End Violence Executive Committee; Mr. Adrien Taquet, Secretary of State for Children and Families, France; and many more. For more information about both events, including the full speaker list, please click [here](#).

In addition, *End Violence* is issuing a statement that calls on all governments to prohibit corporal punishment and to begin the legislative process that will protect children in all settings. We are asking everyone – from governments to organizations to individuals – to endorse this statement and accelerate progress on this critically important issue. The signatures we collect will show widespread support for the prohibition of corporal punishment and will be an essential tool to push legislative change forward. You can sign the statement [here](#).

The International Day to #EndCorporalPunishment on 30 April is our opportunity to show support for all child victims of corporal punishment and call for better, faster protection of children as human rights holders.

Governments have committed to ending violence against children by 2030, but corporal punishment continues to be a blight on many millions of children. We know what works and we have eight years to #EndCorporalPunishment. Let's join together and call for urgent action to end corporal punishment of children all year round, and especially raise our voices between April 25–30, 2022.

*End Violence* is pleased to share an advocacy and communications pack with you and hope it supports your planning and work. The pack includes objectives, key messages, suggested actions, resources, social media assets and more. We will keep updating it as we get closer to April 30. You can access the pack [here](#).

## 7. The End Violence Partnership launches its strategy for 2022-2024

It is estimated that violence against children impacts one billion children every year, with devastating long-term consequences for individuals, families and societies. It takes place in every country, and in every environment: at home, at school, online and within every community. This

epidemic of violence and abuse undermines the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all other investments in children, including in their health, education and development.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed children everywhere to an even greater risk of violence, exploitation and abuse. In doing so, it has also highlighted the unacceptable scale and impact of violence — compelling action.

To respond to these challenges the [Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children](#) is launching its new three-year strategy to build back a safer world for all children. The End Violence Partnership Strategy 2022-24 is the first partnership-wide strategy, developed with broad consultation and input from partners. It reflects the collective ambition of partners, united by a shared vision — a world in which every girl and every boy grows up in a safe, secure and nurturing environment, and provides a framework for action and collaboration.

You can read the complete strategy [here](#).

## SO TAKE ACTION NOW !!!

### 8. No Hit Zones

We encourage all family homes, schools and universities, hospitals, religious institutions, communities—anyone who is committed to non-violent discipline—to become a No-Hit Zone. This means no adult shall hit a child, no child shall hit another child, no adult shall hit another adult, and no child shall hit an adult. For more information and the steps to take, visit the No Hit Zone website: <https://nohitzone.com/>



You can also become a No-Hit Zone advocate as an individual or organization and display this gold seal on your email and website: <https://nohitzone.com/become-a-certified-advocate/>

### 9. Become an Alliance Ambassador for Children



## AN ALLIANCE AMBASSADOR...

- defends the right of children to be free from all forms of violence, especially in their home
- encourages adults to defend a child's right to equal protection under the law from assault
- encourages community leaders to end the practice of corporal punishment

The *Alliance* is committed to ending all hitting of children and youth in all places (i.e., schools and homes). By joining, you are indicating your support to this cause. When you join, you become a lifetime ambassador for the organization and the movement. You do not need to rejoin the organization each year, though we will gladly accept new donations! We will keep you informed through quarterly newsletters.

For more information, watch this [1-minute YouTube video](#) and then go [here](#).

### **10. How to have Amazon.com donate to the U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children**

Did you know that Amazon.com will donate .5% of every purchase you make to the *Alliance*? All you have to do is ask them to (instructions below) and then make sure you shop at [SMILE.amazon.com](#) from now on. ([smile.amazon.com](#) is the same catalog of products and services at the same price as [amazon.com](#))

That's right. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and excluding shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service charges. From time to time, Amazon may offer special, limited time promotions that increase the donation amount on one or more products or services or provide for additional donations to charitable organizations. And they have donated more than \$334 MILLION to U.S. charitable organizations in the last decade. For more details, click [here](#).

To start Amazon supporting the *Alliance* is as easy as *A-B-C*. All you have to do is:

**A.** Instead of going to [amazon.com](#) to make purchases, go to [smile.amazon.com](#).

**B.** Choose the charity you want to support. (Be sure to choose the US Alliance to End the Hitting of Children.)

**C.** You're all set. From now on, every purchase you make that qualifies will generate a donation that AmazonSmile Foundation will automatically send to us — AS LONG AS YOU PURCHASE USING [SMILE.AMAZON.COM](#). (The price of what you buy is the same as you would pay on regular [amazon.com](#), so basically, it's free money Amazon will send us!)

