

By: [Juliana Keeping](#)

AnnArbor.com Health/Environment Reporter

Dads who spank kids are more likely to be under stress or using drugs, alcohol than those who don't

Topics: [Health](#), [News](#), [Parenting](#), [UM Campus](#)

22 Comments. [Comment Now](#)

[Share this article](#)

Print

Email

[Share](#)

Posted: Jan 11, 2011 at 12:50 PM [Yesterday]

Over half of dads don't spank, but those who do may be [spanking](#) because they can't cope with parenting stress, or they're abusing alcohol or drugs, according to new research.

The research, which appears in the current issue of the Journal of Interpersonal Violence, is one of the first studies to delve into [corporal punishment](#) as it relates to a father's mental health, drug and alcohol use and paternal stress.

Wayne State University professor **Shawna Lee** led the study with help from **University of Michigan** social work professor **Brian Perron** and others.

Authors collected data from 2,309 biological fathers in 20 cities with populations over 200,000. Some dads were married, some cohabitating and others didn't live in the same household as their children. Their children were age 3.



Fathers who drink alcohol are more likely to spank their children than those who don't, a study found.

Besides providing information about their mental health, dads also reported on the frequency of drug or alcohol use over the last year. Study authors also quizzed fathers on whether or not they had used corporal [punishment](#) on children over the last 30 days.

Dads who drank heavily, defined as having at least four drinks, were more likely to have spanked children than sober dads, the study found. Stressed or depressed fathers and those who used drugs also used corporal punishment more. Boys are more often subjected to their fathers' corporal punishment than girls, according to the study.

Race has a role in the use of [corporal punishment](#), the study also found. Hispanic fathers were less likely to spank their children than white dads, but black fathers were more likely than white fathers to hand out moderate spankings.

Other findings include:

- Young dads doled out corporal punishment more often than older dads.
- Married fathers spank their kids more than cohabiting or unmarried dads.
- Children whose mothers were reported to be aggressive were more likely to get spankings from their fathers.

What are your thoughts on spanking children? Tell us what you think. Take the poll or leave a comment below.

Is spanking kids OK?

Yes-always



Yes-sometimes



No-never



No-if you're angry



It's situational



Closed

Total Votes: 367

[poll by twiigs.com](#)

Juliana Keeping is a health and environment reporter for AnnArbor.com. Reach her at julianakeeping@annarbor.com or 734-623-2528