

1993 to 2017 saw decreasing trend in prevalence of spanking

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(HealthDay)—From 1993 to 2017, there was a decreasing trend in the

prevalence of spanking among parents in the United States, according to a research letter published online July 27 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Christopher J. Mehus, Ph.D., and Megan E. Patrick, Ph.D., both from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, and colleagues used national panel data from the Monitoring the Future study on 25 consecutive cohorts (graduating [high school seniors](#) in 1976 to 2000) assessed 17 years later. The analytic sample included 16,390 participants; respondents with children were asked how often they spank their children.

The researchers found that spanking declined during 25 years in a sample of parents at modal age 35 years with children aged 2 to 12 years. From 1993 to 2017, the modeled prevalence of spanking decreased from 50 to 35 percent. The best fit was provided for a zero-joinpoint model (single decreasing trend). For men and women, the modeled prevalence decreased from 52 to 36 percent and from 48 to 35 percent, respectively, in post hoc analyses. Among a subset of [parents](#) with a child aged 2 to 4 years living at home, the modeled prevalence decreased from 60 to 39 percent.

"Although a [downward trend](#) was observed, there is a clear need for ongoing education about alternative discipline strategies," the authors write.

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