



# Living With Children

**By John Rosemond**  
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Four sentences into her Wall Street Journal article on recent research into spanking (“Spanking for Misbehavior? It Causes More!” December 17, 2017), the author, Susan Pinker, makes two grievous errors: first, she says that children under 7 cannot master their emotions; second, she says a fair amount of misbehavior on the part of a young child distinguishes him from a robot.

So, here we go again with a typical post-1960s parenting canard: proper discipline, which should indeed instill reasonably good emotional control into children

as young as 4, turns children into unquestioning robots. I heard this claptrap in graduate school, courtesy of my professors, most of whom were enamored with new ideas concerning children. I truly thought it had run its course.

Ms. Pinker references a 2016 survey found that two-thirds of American parents are in favor of at least occasional spankings – “hard” ones, even. According to her, that’s bad news because another 2016 study – a meta-analysis of five decades of research into spanking – found that spanking is associated with increased “acting out” and future mental health problems. Now, in fairness, Pinker admits that these correlations do not prove a cause-effect relationship. But she is then quick to point out that a new study from the University of Texas, Austin, strengthens the argument that spankings actually cause future psychological and behavior problems.

It is interesting to note that a meta-analysis of fifty years of media coverage of spanking would certainly find that the mainstream media has been quick to publish any research that maligns spanking but has consistently turned a blind eye to research by credible, respected researchers like Diana Baumrind (UC-Berkley) and Robert Larzelere (Oklahoma State) finding that occasional, moderate spankings by loving parents (operative conditions), is associated with

not only better behavior but also improved psychological well-being.

Having said that, I’ve taken a close look at UTA’s study and truth be told have no problem with its basic finding. First, I think most parents who spank make a mess of it and accomplish nothing. Since they accomplish nothing, the behavior problems for which they are spanking continue to worsen. Second, as research finds and common sense confirms disobedient children are no happy children. So, it makes perfect sense that researchers find that spanking is associated with both increased misbehavior and later mental health problems.

But that is not an indictment of spanking; not, at least, unless the researcher in question set out intending to malign it. Being a social scientist myself, I can attest that most social “science” simply finds what the researcher expected, even wanted, to find, meaning that most social scientists are not scientists; rather, they are ideologues.

In my estimation, the real problem is that today’s parents, by and large, do not know how to properly convey authority. They think authority is expressed by using proper consequences. So, they attempt to discipline by manipulating reward and punishment. That works with dogs, but it does not work very well at all with human beings, the only species with free will. Under the circumstances, behavior problems worsen, parental stress builds, and emotion-driven and therefore completely botched spankings become increasingly likely.

The conveyance of authority is accomplished via a proper attitude, not proper methods. The characteristics of the attitude in question – calm, confident composure – are universal leadership qualities. That attitude is what causes a child to invest complete trust in his parents, even if they occasionally spank him.

*Family psychologist John Rosemond: johnrosemond.com, parentguru.com.*

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# Obituaries





**ELDER/COACH WILLIE REEVES**

Elder/Coach Willie Reeves went from labor to reward. He departed this life on Wednesday, December 27, 2017. He was born on February 25, 1946, to the proud parentage of Ms. Warneda Reeves, who preceded him in death,

Elder Willie Reeves was born and raised in Lexington. He attended Ambrose Vocational High School and completed high school at Lexington Attendance Center in 1964. He graduated from Coahoma Community College in Clarksdale with an Associate of Arts degree. He earned his Bachelors of Science degree from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. He

also attended the University of New Mexico. Elder Reeves was a stellar football star and was drafted to the San Diego Chargers but decided to play in the Canadian League and Semi-Pro for a season. He worked in the corporate world as was appointed by Mayor Daley to his task force to bring a truce between major gangs in the City of Chicago.

He met the love of his life and on May 2, 1989 he married Sherri Lynn Felder, to their union five children were born.

Elder Reeves was devoted to his family, community and church. He joined Asia Missionary Baptist Church at a young age. He accepted the call on his life and began his ministry. He was ordained and licensed to preach the gospel by Reverend Clifford D. Wilson, former pastor of Asia Baptist Church, on November 17, 1991. He later joined the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church Conference and was ordained an elder on July 20, 2000 by the late Bishop Thomas

L. Hoyt, Presiding Prelate. Elder Reeves pastored several churches in the Greenwood-Jackson District for nine years. During this time, he had a vision to start a peewee football program in the City of Lexington. He talked with Ms. Mattie Coleman who was the first to start a peewee program in the City of Durant. With her support and guidance, Elder Reeves began the task of putting the Lexington Colts Youth Sports, Inc. organization together. Countless young men and boys along with cheerleaders received mentoring and male influence through the coaching of Willie Reeves and coaches. He ran the organization for 17+ years. He was also active politically. He ran for several offices and supported many who are serving today. His love for the youth never waived as he was a strong education and community advocate.

He was preceded in death by his grandfather Willie Reeves, his mother, his aunt Essie Mae Reeves and his daughter Deborah Ruth Reeves.

Elder/Coach Willie Reeves leaves to mourn his vast and precious memories: wife Sherri; children, Anthony Ray (Carroll) Reeves of Camden, DE, Peter Aaron Reeves, John Andrew Reeves, Paul Timothy Reeves and Benjamin James Reeves, all of Lexington; brothers, George Ray Reeves and Manford “Jimmie” Reeves, both of Lexington; mother-in-law Mrs. Georgia White; two special cousins, Anthony Nalls and Elmer Reeves; and a host of relatives and friends.

**MILDRED DYE CRISWELL**

Mildred Dye Criswell, 89, died January 14, 2018 at Lexington Manor Nursing Home in Lexington. Visitation was held from 10:00 a.m. until service time at 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at Southern Funeral Home in Durant. Burial was in Hillcrest Cemetery in Goodman.

Mrs. Criswell was a member of Main Street Baptist Church and a former supervisor for Durant Sports-wear.

Survivors are her daughter Alline Self of Goodman; two grandchildren; and five great grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to Main Street Baptist Church, 9857 Main Street, Goodman, MS 39079.

**ALLINE ROSS WILKS**

Alline Ross Wilks transitioned to be with the Lord on Monday, January 1, 2018 in Wilmington, DE. A memorial service will be held on Friday, February 19, 2018 at 12 noon at Lebanon Church in Lexington.

**LITTLE CONNOR D. HIGHTOWER**

Little Connor D. Hightower, 2, of Durant, MS, passed away on Friday, January 5, 2018. Funeral services were held at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, January 12, 2018 at Durant City Cemetery in Durant. Winters Funeral Home in Kosciusko, MS handled the arrangements.

**MALISSA KING TEMPLE**

Malissa King Temple, 91, of Lexington, MS passed away Friday, January 12, 2018 in Pensacola, FL.

She was born to I. R. King, Sr. and Louise King on July 25, 1926 in Nutbush, TN.

She was a daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, sister, aunt and friend. She loved her family and her church. She will be missed by all who knew her.

Her husband Richard R. Temple preceded her in death on July 13, 2009.

She is survived by her daughters, Sandra Hubbard and husband Larry of Trinidad, TX and Linda Vick and her husband John of Pensacola, FL; five grandchildren; and ten great grandchildren.

Visitation will be held at Southern Funeral Home in Lexington, MS on Friday January 19, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. with services following at noon. Pallbearers will be Lanny Hubbard, Chris Hubbard, Kevin Jones, Jack Vick, Tim Vick and Phil Cohen





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