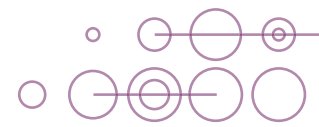


Corporal Punishment – 10 key messages

- 1. Corporal punishment is the most common form of violence against children worldwide**, leading to the injury and death of thousands of children each year. Its very widespread social acceptance means that a level of violence in childrearing is normalised, entrenching children's low status and paving the way for other forms of violence and mistreatment.
- 2. An ever-growing body of research links corporal punishment with a wide range of negative outcomes**, including physical harm, poorer mental and physical health, atypical brain function, lower cognitive development and educational outcomes, school dropout, increased aggression and poor moral internalisation, and perpetration of violence and anti-social behaviour in adulthood.
- 3. Corporal punishment affects children regardless of their age, race, gender and social background.** However, there is evidence that some children are more likely to experience corporal punishment than others. For instance, **younger children** are the most likely to be subjected to corporal punishment; children with disabilities are also at higher risk. **Girls** may suffer different types of punishment, and corporal punishment can be used to control their behaviour, to encourage deference, submission and timidity, and to reinforce traditional ideas of what it is to be female. There is also evidence of higher levels of corporal punishment in racially or economically marginalised groups.
4. Corporal punishment is **a violation of children's human rights** to respect for physical integrity and human dignity, health, development, education and freedom from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
5. In their ratification of international human rights laws, and commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals, **States are already obligated and committed to prohibiting and eliminating corporal punishment** in all settings, including the home. In order to achieve SDG commitments to ending violence against children by 2030, States must act to prohibit and eliminate corporal punishment now!
6. While most countries give adults legal protection from assault, only **14% of children** worldwide have the same safeguard. **Prohibiting corporal punishment is about ensuring children are equally protected under the law on assault as adults.** As the smallest and most vulnerable members of society, children deserve more, not less, protection from violence.
7. Corporal punishment can **damage family relationships** and, far from showing children how to behave well, it teaches them that violence is acceptable in caring relationships or as a way of resolving conflict.
- 8. The main purpose of prohibiting corporal punishment is to send a clear message that it is no more acceptable to hit a child than to hit anyone else**, and to bring about a cultural change towards non-violent childrearing. This helps to increase respect for children across society and decrease tolerance of all other forms of violence and mistreatment of children.
- 9. The purpose of prohibition is not to punish parents and other caregivers.** Laws banning corporal punishment should be implemented with children's best interests at the forefront. It is rarely in children's best interests for their parents to be imprisoned or heavily punished, or to be separated from their parents, unless it is essential to keep the child safe. There is no evidence of increased prosecution of parents in countries where corporal punishment is banned. However, there is plenty of evidence that parents and others can be supported to use non-violent approaches; all parents and caregivers should have access to this support.
- 10. The numbers of States enacting prohibition of corporal punishment continues to grow!** 40 years ago, only one State had banned all violent punishment of children, today 63 States have enacted this foundational measure for children – with more actively working towards it. However, most children worldwide still have little or no legal protection from corporal punishment, and huge numbers regularly suffer violence and humiliation under the guise of "discipline" at home, in schools and in other settings.





Together to #EndViolence Policy Proposals

In July 2021 the End Violence community came together to publish **six game-changing policy proposals to end violence against children**. The proposals were endorsed by 50 leaders of international organisations committed to ending violence against children.

Policy Proposals on Corporal Punishment:

- a. All states (that have not already done so) commit to introducing legislation to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings by the end of 2022;
- b. All states to have achieved prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings by 2030;
- c. All states commit to accelerating the elimination of corporal punishment, by implementing a national action plan that includes public education campaigns, positive parenting support for all, promotion of safe schools and communities, professional training and more;
- d. All states commit to measuring progress by including SDG indicator 16.2.1 in national statistical programmes.



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