



Global Initiative to
**End All Corporal Punishment
of Children**

GLOBAL INITIATIVE NEWSLETTER 19 **(JANUARY 2012)**

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2012. We're delighted to begin the year with the announcement of another African state prohibiting corporal punishment in all settings including the home – and news of bills on their way through parliaments elsewhere. Other highlights include the adoption of a complaints mechanism for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, significant new conclusions by the European Committee of Social Rights and other treaty bodies and the publication of our latest global progress report.

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NEW: GLOBAL PROGRESS REPORT 2011

The new global progress report for 2011, published jointly by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children and Save the Children Sweden, was released in December. The report charts the progress and the delay in prohibiting corporal punishment of children worldwide, with graphic analyses covering the five years since the UN Study on Violence against Children recommended prohibition as a matter of priority. It describes the work of the Global Initiative, active campaigns for prohibition at regional and national levels, and the involvement of faith groups in the issue. It includes a state by state analysis of the legality of corporal punishment in the home, schools, penal systems and alternative care settings. The report is available [online](#); for hard copies email info@endcorporalpunishment.org.

1 GLOBAL PROGRESS

Prohibition of all corporal punishment

Republic of Congo: Article 28 of the Law on the Protection of the Child (2010) states that children have a right to be guided by their parents. Article 53 states that corporal punishment may not be used to discipline or correct a child (“Il est interdit de recourir aux châtiments corporels pour discipliner ou corriger l’enfant.”) This explicitly prohibits all corporal punishment of children in all settings, including the home. Article 107 states that persons who inflict cruel inhuman or degrading punishment on children are liable to the penalties in the penal code. Article 130 states that international conventions ratified by the Republic of Congo on the rights of the child are an integral part of this law; article 131 repeals all previous laws in conflict with the new law. This brings the total number of states worldwide to have achieved prohibition in all settings to 32 (five in Africa). Detailed information will shortly be available at www.endcorporalpunishment.org.

Other positive moves towards law reform

Brazil: In December, Brazil’s Lower House approved a bill to prohibit all physical and other humiliating punishment of children. The bill will hopefully soon be passed by the Senate.

Mali: In December, Mali adopted a new Family Code which removes the legal defence for the use of corporal punishment. However, this is a silent repeal and further reform is necessary to explicitly prohibit all corporal punishment.

Pakistan: A Bill which would explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in education and care institutions is under discussion in Balochistan.

Paraguay: Legislation has been drafted with a view to prohibiting corporal punishment in all settings, including the home. The draft is currently being reviewed and a national working group is developing a plan of action aiming to ensure the law is passed in 2012.

Philippines: A Bill which aims to prohibit all corporal punishment was passed by the House of Representatives and is now pending in the Senate. Campaigning organisations have concerns about the detail of the Bill and are hoping for revisions; the Global Initiative has submitted comments.

US, Mississippi: Senate Bill 2180, entitled “An Act to amend section 97-5-39, Mississippi Code of 1972, to revise the offense of felonious abuse or battery of a child; and for related purposes”,

sponsored by Senator Brice Williams, would make it a felony to “whip, strike or otherwise abuse any child” thereby causing “bodily harm” to the child. However, “reasonable discipline” would be an exception to this offence and further reform would be necessary in order to properly prohibit all corporal punishment. (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 25 January 2012)

But ...

Ghana: Former MP for Sunyani West, Mr Kwadwo Adjei-Darko, has called for the re-introduction of corporal punishment in basic schools. (*Ghana News Agency*, 21 December 2011)

India: It is thought unlikely that proposed legislation to update juvenile justice law in Jammu and Kashmir will be passed soon as the bill has been awaiting clearance from the Finance Department for many months. It had been hoped that the bill would be tabled in the upcoming Assembly session. (*Greater Kashmir*, 28 January 2012)

Malaysia: Sibuluan MP and Bukit Assek assemblyman Richard Wong Ho Leng said that corporal punishment is not always appropriate but said that he was not against caning and called only for schools to follow the Education Department regulations on administering corporal punishment. (*BorneoPostonline*, 21 January 2012)

UK: Labour MP David Lammy said that parents should be allowed to smack their children, that politicians should spend less time telling parents what to do and that the law should revert to how it was before the reform in 2004. (*BBC News*, 24 January 2012) (Smacking a child is lawful in the UK: since 2004 the “reasonable punishment” defence is applicable in charges of common assault whereas previously the “reasonable chastisement” defence was available also in more serious cases.)

Other developments

Colombia: The interim mayor of Bogota has sanctioned an anti-corporal punishment initiative in an effort to protect children from corporal punishment; an annual campaign is to promote non-violent ways of educating children, implemented by the Ministry of Health. (*Colombia Reports*, 29 December 2011)

India: The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), following a visit to Meghalaya to investigate the problem of child labour, issued directives to the state to address the problem and to ensure that corporal punishment is not practised in the schools. (*sify news*, 1 November 2011)

The Orissa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSCPCR) is to take action to ensure the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools is implemented following the case of 14 year old Harapriya Kanhar who was hospitalised after allegedly being forced to do 200 sit-ups by her teacher. The Committee for Legal Aid to the Poor (CLAP) submitted a memorandum to the Commission calling for directions to schools as to the definition of corporal punishment and declaring them to be corporal punishment-free zones. (*IBNLive*, 7 November 2011)

Pakistan: The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), in collaboration with the Education Department in Lahore, held a consultation on “Development of school based complaint mechanisms for corporal punishment”. The consultation was attended by government educational institute heads, representatives of Children Complaints Office, the Punjab Education Foundation and civil society organisations. Iftikahr Mubarak of SPARC stated that the effort to ban corporal punishment in schools was appreciated but it falls short of

law reform which can be enforced through the justice system. (*The Nation*, 9 November 2011)

The Punjab Education Foundation has established institutional mechanisms in its partner schools to stop the use of corporal punishment. The initiative includes school committees and a complaints system which aims to deal with complaints immediately. (*The International News*, 28 December 2011)

The FATA Civil Secretariat has issued a notification stating that corporal punishment should not be used in any of its schools and other education institutions, including formal and non-formal, public and private settings. Measures are to be developed for monitoring and redress. (*DAWN.com*, 23 December 2011)

Republic of Korea: The Seoul Metropolitan Government proclaimed an ordinance to protect the human rights of students. The ordinance, which had been the subject of controversy, prohibits corporal punishment in schools and follows the earlier proclamation of similar ordinances in Gyeonggi Province and Gwangju Metropolitan City. It has been published in the official gazette and is now in force in the city's kindergartens and elementary, middle and high schools. However, the ordinance has met with opposition: the education ministry has filed litigation with the Supreme Court to nullify it and a petition to request that it be suspended until the court makes its decision. (*Yonhap News Agency*, 26 January 2012)

Venezuela: Ombudsperson Gabriela Ramirez has announced that effectively implementing the law prohibiting corporal punishment is a priority for 2012. (Notice from Save the Children, 17 January 2012) (Venezuela achieved prohibition in all settings in 2007.)

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2 CAMPAIGNS AND CALLS FOR PROHIBITION

National news

Ghana: In December, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) published its 2005-2011 report on the state of human rights in Ghana. In presenting the report in Accra, Commissioner Ms Laureta Vivian Lamptey called on the Government to repeal the law on corporal punishment from the statute books. (*Ghana News Agency*, 9 December 2011). The Commission has also called on the Ghana Education Service to ensure compliance with its policy on corporal punishment in schools, until caning is discontinued altogether. (*ModernGhana.com*, 23 December 2011)

India: As part of Plan International's "Learn Without Fear" campaign, Plan India supported by another NGO Nidan held a state level consultation in Bihar, attended by, among others, the chairperson of Bihar State Child Labour Commission and the chairperson of Bihar State Child Rights Protection Commission. Members of Samastipur Children's Club staged a street play depicting corporal punishment in schools. (*The Telegraph*, 17 November 2011)

Ireland: Minister for Children Frances Fitzgerald is considering bringing in legislation to prohibit all corporal punishment of children. (*katekatharina.com*, 29 December 2011) (Ireland has a longstanding commitment to prohibiting all corporal punishment but has given no indication of timing.)

Pakistan: The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) is promoting the repeal of section 89 of the Penal Code (1860) which allows corporal punishment in disciplining children below the age of 12. SPARC Assistant Manager Gulnaz Zahid said that this legislation had led

to gaps in newer laws on the issue and that in order to bridge these gaps SPARC was pushing an anti-corporal punishment bill in Sindh. (*Pakistan Today*, 2 January 2012)

At a forum organised by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) – “Tackling Corporal Punishment” – held in December, national manager of the Legal Advisory Unit Rashid Aziz drew attention to section 89 of the Penal Code which provides a legal defence for the use of corporal punishment by caregivers and to section 35 of the Punjab Destitute and Neglected Children Act which exempts parents from legal liability for inflicting corporal punishment. Proposed amendments to the Penal Code would punish corporal punishment whoever the perpetrator. (*The Express Tribune*, 21 December 2011)

Children from state-run schools in Balochistan performed a play at the Quetta Press Club to mark Prevention of Child Abuse Day in November. The play was organised by the NGO SEHER: children took the parts of political leaders and key government figures and reported on a number of forms of violence against them, including corporal punishment. (*The Express Tribune*, 19 November 2011)

Philippines: The Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) is showing a free play about positive discipline. The play, “Rated PG”, was created to promote a culture of respect for the dignity of children and uphold their right to protection from all forms of violence, as part of the ARTS (Advocate Right to Safety) Zone for Children which champions children’s rights. The play was funded by Terre Des Hommes Germany and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and is playing July 2011 – June 2012.

South Africa: The Children’s Rights Project based at the University of the Western Cape has proposed to the Department of Social Development that corporal punishment in the home be prohibited. The proposal is supported by other children’s organisations, including the Children’s Institute, Childline SA and the Centre for Child Law. The Department is currently considering whether to amend the Children’s Act. There is to be a consultation on the issue, including with children’s rights campaigners, religious organisations and traditional leaders. (*iolnews*, 29 January 2012)

Uganda: Children’s representative Leticia Nankabirwa, speaking at the national children’s press conference on violence against children in Uganda, in Kampala, called on members of parliament to enact laws to combat corporal punishment in schools. (*UGPulse*, 7 December 2011)

US: The US Alliance to End the Hitting of Children, formed following the Global Summit on Ending Corporal Punishment and Promoting Positive Discipline held in Texas in 2011, brings together individuals, groups, and organisations to create a unified voice calling for, and working toward, the end of all forms of physical and emotional punishment against children, especially in schools and homes.

And ...

A technical workshop on achieving law reform to prohibit all corporal punishment in West African states was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in December 2011. Organised by Save the Children Sweden and Plan International in collaboration with the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, it brought together key governmental, parliamentarian and civil society representatives, to share ideas and experience and adopt national action plans in order to advocate for law reforms to end corporal punishment on children. Eighty-one participants (59 adults, 22 children)

came from 11 African countries: Burkina-Faso, Togo, Mali, Benin, Niger, Ghana, Guinea, Senegal, Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda. The workshop aimed to strengthen participants' capacity in advocating for law reform to prohibit corporal punishments of children and to facilitate the development and adoption of national action plans to support key actors' efforts to end violence against children. Follow up to the workshop will involve: (i) implementation by participants of the national action plans developed during the workshop and (ii) provision of support by the organisers to countries going through law reform. For more information, please contact: Ngende.Nathalia@plan-international.org; EnyoG@waf.savethechildren.se

A meeting on **follow up to the UN Study on Violence Against Children in Central America** was held in December 2011, organised by the Dominican Republic Government in collaboration with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence Against Children, Marta Santos Pais. Government and civil society representatives, national human rights institutions, children and adolescents and international organisations agreed on a process to publicise the recommendations of the UN Study and evaluate their implementation and to support the establishment of national and regional mechanisms for monitoring implementation. A declaration was adopted – the “Santo Domingo Declaration 2011” – which recognises that eliminating violence against children requires sustained and coordinated efforts, including legislative measures. The UN Study recommendations included prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings, including the home, as a matter of priority.

The **World Day of Prayer and Action for Children**, an initiative of Arigatou International which encourages secular and faith-based organisations to work together, was celebrated on 20 November 2011. For 2011-2013 the theme of the day is “Stop Violence Against Children”. A UN panel discussion was organised under the auspices of the Permanent Mission of Chile to the UN to discuss the principles of positive parenting, its relationship to child development and how it can prevent or reduce violence against children. More than 85 activities were celebrated in 71 countries, including:

Angola: As part of an ongoing partnership between UNICEF, the Ministry of Family and the 10 major churches representing more than 80% of the population, church services during November focused on preventing corporal punishment.

Iran: The first national inter-religious conference on the role of religion and religious leaders in combating violence against children, with a focus on corporal punishment in family and educational settings, was held in October, at which religious leaders adopted a declaration committing them to advocacy against violence against children and for non-violent disciplining.

Jamaica: A consultation with religious leaders focused on corporal punishment of children in the home and positive discipline.

Mauritania: A ceremony was held to highlight a 2009 *fatwa* against the use of corporal punishment, and five awareness-raising sessions on non-violent discipline were held.

Sri Lanka: The negative effects of corporal punishment were discussed at an event attended by religious leaders, community leaders and young people.

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3 HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING

Key decisions and recommendations, etc

In December 2011, a new **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child** was adopted by the UN General Assembly which provides for a complaints procedure for violations of

children's rights. Welcoming the new instrument, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said: "Children will now be able to join the ranks of other rights-holders who are empowered to bring their complaints about human rights violations before an international body.... We see every day examples of a wide range of human rights violations against children – from discrimination to child trafficking to all forms of physical or mental violence. I encourage States to sign this Optional Protocol to give child victims of such violations direct access to an international human rights complaints mechanism." Further information is available [here](#).

The working group reports of states reviewed during the 12th session of the **Universal Periodic Review** in October are now available. Recommendations were made to prohibit corporal punishment and were accepted by the Governments of [Lithuania](#), [Swaziland](#), [Tajikistan](#), Timor-Leste and [UR Tanzania](#); similar recommendations were rejected by the Governments of [Antigua and Barbuda](#) and [Zimbabwe](#). The Global Initiative has now completed an analysis of the whole first cycle of the UPR which will shortly be available on the [website](#) or email info@endcorporalpunishment.org.

The **Committee Against Torture** published its concluding observations following its 47th session in October/November, addressing corporal punishment of children for almost all states examined. To Bulgaria and Germany, both of which have enacted legislation which prohibits corporal punishment of children in all settings including the home, the Committee recommended measures to ensure implementation of the prohibition, including sustained awareness raising and the promotion of positive, non-violent discipline. To Djibouti, Madagascar, Morocco, Paraguay and Sri Lanka – all of which allow corporal punishment in the home and in settings outside the home – the Committee recommended law reform to prohibit all corporal punishment of children. For details of the legality and practice of corporal punishment, including extracts from the Committee's recommendations, see the Global Initiative's individual country reports for [Bulgaria](#), [Djibouti](#), [Germany](#), [Madagascar](#), [Morocco](#), [Paraguay](#) and [Sri Lanka](#).

The **Human Rights Committee** issued its concluding observations on states examined at the 103rd session in October/November. The Committee expressed concern at the legality of corporal punishment, including in the home, and recommended prohibition to Jamaica and Iran. The Committee welcomed the clarification of prohibition of corporal punishment through the 2010 amendments to the Children Act in Norway. Extracts from the concluding observations are included in the Global Initiative's individual country reports for [Iran](#), [Jamaica](#) and [Norway](#).

In January, the **European Committee of Social Rights** published its conclusions on the 2011 examination of states under the European Social Charter and the Revised Social Charter, which included a focus on protection of children from corporal punishment in the family. The Committee has previously established that conformity with the Charters requires prohibition of all corporal punishment, including in the home. While noting that many states had achieved the necessary law reform since they were last examined on the issue – currently 22 of the 47 Council of Europe member states have enacted laws prohibiting all corporal punishment – the Committee found that many had not done so. For these states, the Committee concluded that they are not in conformity with the Charter or Revised Charter because corporal punishment is not prohibited in all settings: Andorra, Armenia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Georgia, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia, TFYR Macedonia, Turkey, and UK. The conclusions in full are available [here](#) and will soon be available at www.endcorporalpunishment.org. Relevant extracts will be included in the individual country reports for the European states, available soon at www.endcorporalpunishment.org.

The **African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** released its report on the 18th session, held in Algeria in November/December. The Committee asked questions about corporal punishment in its examination of Niger and Senegal. The recommendations made to states are not yet available. For details about the legality of corporal punishment, see the Global Initiative's individual country reports for Niger and [Senegal](#).

Briefing the human rights bodies

The Global Initiative regularly briefs human rights treaty monitoring bodies prior to examination of state parties, and encourages national NGOs and human rights institutions to do likewise. We are particularly trying to identify “key” NGOs and human rights institutions in each state with whom we can work more closely in briefing the treaty bodies: if you would like to be considered for this work please contact info@endcorporalpunishment.org.

The following information concerns briefing the treaty bodies with a view to influencing the lists of issues which are adopted for each state coming up for examination. We are always willing to advise NGOs and human rights institutions on the practical details of how to submit briefings (email info@endcorporalpunishment.org).

The *Committee on the Rights of the Child* pre-sessional working group will be meeting in June 2012 to decide on the Lists of Issues for future examinations of Austria, Namibia, Guinea-Bissau, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liberia, Canada and Albania (information to be confirmed).
Briefings should be submitted in April (date to be confirmed).

The *Committee Against Torture* pre-sessional working group will be meeting in May/June 2012 to adopt Lists of Issues for Gabon, Norway, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Senegal, Tajikistan and Togo; Lists of Issues Prior to Reporting will be adopted for Azerbaijan, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Israel, Moldova, New Zealand, Nicaragua Slovakia, Spain and Philippines. **Briefings should be submitted by 7 March 2012.**

The *Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* pre-sessional working group will be meeting in May 2012 to consider the issues to raise in its forthcoming examinations of Azerbaijan, Iceland, Iran, Jamaica, Japan, Republic of Congo and Equatorial Guinea. **Briefings on these countries should be submitted by 1 April 2012.**

The *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women* pre-sessional working group will be meeting in July/August 2012 to consider the issues to raise in its future examinations of Angola, Austria, Cambodia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Pakistan and TFYR Macedonia.
Briefings should be submitted by 25 June 2012 (date to be confirmed).

The country report task forces of the *Human Rights Committee* will be meeting in July 2012 to adopt Lists of Issues for Angola, Germany, Haiti, China-Macao and Peru; Lists of Issues Prior to Reporting will be adopted for Afghanistan, Croatia, Israel, New Zealand and San Marino.
Briefings should be submitted by 9 April 2012.

The 14th session of the *Universal Periodic Review* will take place in October/November 2012.
Briefings should be submitted by 19 March 2012 for Czech Republic, Argentina, Gabon, Ghana, Peru, Guatemala and Benin; **by 26 March 2012** for Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Pakistan, Zambia, Japan, Ukraine and Sri Lanka.

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4 RESEARCH AND REPORTS

International and regional reports

The **International Harm Reduction Association** published a report on the sentencing of persons convicted of drug and alcohol offences, including children, to corporal punishment. *Inflicting Harm: Judicial corporal punishment for drug and alcohol offences in selected countries* examines this

practice in 12 countries – Singapore, Malaysia, Iran, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Libya, Brunei Darussalam, Maldives, Indonesia (Aceh) and Nigeria (northern states) – though it states that the list of countries practising judicial corporal punishment for such offences is likely to be longer.

Our previous newsletter referred to the work of the **South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC)**, formed as part of follow-up to the UN Study on Violence against Children. The regional report on progress towards prohibiting corporal punishment in all South Asian states, published in 2011 by SAIEVAC with the support of Save the Children Sweden and the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, is now available [here](#).

The **South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC)**, comprising representatives from the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, representatives of civil society, and children working to end violence against children, is to launch a regional campaign to prohibit and eliminate corporal punishment of children in all eight member states. The Initiative was formed as part of follow-up to the UN Study on Violence against Children. Its first technical meeting on legal reform and corporal punishment was held in Kathmandu in November 2010 at which national action plans to achieve prohibition of corporal punishment were developed. A second workshop was held in September 2011. SAIEVAC's Governing Board also endorsed a regional progress report to be jointly published with the Global Initiative and Save the Children Sweden at the launch of the campaign in November.

National research and reports

Australia: An investigation for *The Advertiser* found that many parents smack their children but are reluctant to tell anyone that they do so. An online poll found that 89% of parents have at some time smacked their child, with only 7% never having done so; 4% said they had done so only when danger was present. (Reported in *FoxNews.com*, 5 December 2011)

Czech Republic: A 2011 poll found that about 30% of teachers at Czech elementary schools had slapped a pupil, despite corporal punishment being considered unlawful. (Reported in *Prague Daily Monitor*, 25 November 2011)

Equatorial Guinea: The National Child Protection Study, carried out by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Promotion of Women in 2008-2009, found that 80% of children and young people had experienced physical punishment or verbal aggression in the family. The study involved 749 children, 152 parents and 100 teachers. (Reported in the sixth periodic report of Equatorial Guinea to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 14 April 2011, CEDAW /C/GNQ/6)

India: A study by ChildLine India Foundation found a high prevalence of corporal punishment in schools despite prohibition. Almost 95% of 198 schools (128 government schools and 70 private institutions) across 11 states were found to use some form of corporal punishment, the most prevalent being identified as detention, humiliation, beatings and threats. Only 6% of government schools and 4% of private schools were found to be free from corporal punishment. The findings are part of a larger study on child safety conducted between 2009 and 2011 covering the states of Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Manipur, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Delhi and Goa. (Reported in *India Today*, 5 January 2012)

Pakistan: A baseline study by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child found that over 76% of parents in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province believe that moderate corporal punishment is important in disciplining children. (Reported in *Pakistan Today*, 2 January 2012)

UK: The Children’s Rights Alliance for England released its report for 2011 – *State of Children’s Rights in England: Review of Government action on United Nations’ recommendations for strengthening children’s rights in the UK*. It criticises the Government for skating over serious rights violations, including corporal punishment, in its reports to treaty bodies and for failing to address corporal punishment in a review of child protection (“the Munro review”). It draws attention to the ongoing campaign of the Children Are Unbeatable! Alliance, with the support of over 600 organisations and more than 250 Parliamentarians, for the repeal of the “reasonable punishment” defence.

A study by the Institute for Public Policy Research found that several madrassas use “excessively strict approaches to discipline”, including a number using corporal punishment. The study – *Inside Madrassas: Understanding and engaging with British-Muslim faith supplementary schools* – was based on a survey of 179 institutions and interviews with parents, pupils, madrassa teachers and local authority representatives.

US: A map created by Southern Echo documents recorded incidents of school corporal punishment in 108 of the 152 school districts in Mississippi. Overall, 67 districts reported a decrease in the number of incidents of corporal punishment in the 2010-2011 school year compared with the 2009-2010 school year and 33 districts reported an increase in the number of incidents of corporal punishment. (Reported by *Southern Echo*, 19 January 2012, <http://southernecho.org/s/?p=2439>)

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5 MEDIA WATCH

A selection of media reports ...

Bangladesh: A school teacher in Rampura allegedly caned 37 students for failing to remember a topic they were taught before the Eid vacation, despite a Supreme Court declaration that all corporal punishment in schools is unlawful and unconstitutional. (*The Daily Star*, 21 November 2011)

China: A primary school teacher in Cixi, Zhejiang province, reportedly forced three young boys to run round the school’s track with their trousers down and assigned young girls to “supervise” the punishment. According to news reports, the teacher apologised for the incident and attempted to resign but following an investigation has been “given another chance” and will remain in post. Lawyers noted that the punishment was “disguised corporal punishment” and therefore unlawful under the Protection of Minors Act which states that “school and nursery staff should respect the human dignity of minors and students and should not inflict corporal punishment, disguised corporal punishment or other degrading punishment upon children” (*KanKanNews*, 4 November 2011) In Jiangsu province, a teacher has been found making students as young as nine slap each other for indiscipline. The teacher apologised but other similar incidents are being investigated. (*sifynews*, 22 December 2011)

An initial investigation by the educational bureau into the suicide of a girl in Luoyang, Henan province, suggested that she may have been influenced by her teacher’s decision to inflict corporal punishment. The girl and her classmates had been made to do squat thrusts for not completing their homework on time – identified in the report as “corporal punishment in disguised form”. The investigation is ongoing. (*China Daily*, 22 November 2011)

A businessman describing himself as “wolf dad” has prompted debate on corporal punishment

in childrearing since he published a book on his parenting which has become a bestseller. Xiao Baiyou, who has four children, has a strict set of rules involving the use of the cane. One report described this as “a series of practices that would see Xiao imprisoned for child abuse in many countries” (*China News*, 22 November 2011; *Global Times*, 18 November 2011)

An 11 year old boy was hospitalised after reportedly being beaten by his parents and then slashed with a knife by his mother for repeatedly using internet bars and neglecting his studies. (*Shanghaist*, 22 January 2012)

Ghana: The Ghana Education Service has said it is unhappy with the continuous use of corporal punishment by some teachers. Teachers who use the cane are put before the disciplinary committee, they said. (*Citifmonline.com*, 22 November 2011)

To commemorate the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse, the NGO YouthLife Africa organised a debate entitled “Prevention of Corporal Punishment” which aimed to educate parents and children about the issue. (*Ghana News Agency*, 19 November 2011)

India: A Class VII student was allegedly whipped and badly bruised by the school principal for arguing with his teacher. The boy’s parents complained to the police and the incident is being investigated under the Penal Code. (*Deccan Chronicle*, 6 November 2011). In another incident, a Class I student was left with injuries to his forehead after allegedly being beaten by his teacher when his father failed to pay his school fees. (*Deccan Chronicle*, 20 November 2011). Two girls were allegedly caned 50 times each for not wearing their school badges: they required treatment for bruising and swelling to their hands and legs. (*The Times of India*, 15 December 2011)

The latest report from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) shows an increase in reports of corporal punishment, with 68 complaints made in 2010-2011 compared with 61 in 2009-2010 and 42 in 2008-2009. (*Daily News & Analysis*, 4 December 2011)

Indonesia: Sixty-four teenagers in Aceh have been detained for “re-education” in a remedial school, for being “punk” and disturbing the peace. They were doused with cold water and their punk hairstyles were shaved off by the police, who said they were not trying to harm them but to protect them. Aceh Human Rights Coalition chief Evi Narti Zain spoke against the harsh measures taken by the police. (*BBC News*, 14 December 2011)

Maldives: Religious protests have been led by opposition parties opposed to “anti-Islamic” activities, such as the sale of alcohol and commercial massage parlours, and promoting strict Islamic law. The Maldives recently came under scrutiny for its practice of publicly flogging women for adultery. (*TriValleyCentral.com*, 31 December 2011)

Nepal: 15 year old Sushmita Acharya of St Joseph School in Biratnagar required hospital treatment after reportedly being beaten by the school teacher. Chairperson of NGO Child Nepal, Krishna Subedi, condemned the incident and called for compensation for the child. (*The Himalayan*, 8 December 2011)

Pakistan: Foundation for Rehabilitation and Education of Special Children (FRESH) Secretary General Ashba Kamran identified corporal punishment as the main reason children drop out from primary schools in the public sector, with 50% dropping out before completing their primary education. (*Pakistan Today*, 22 November 2011)

Police rescued dozens of students, boys and men aged 12 to 50, from an Islamic seminary in

Karachi where several were reportedly found chained in the basement. (*Los Angeles Times*, 13 December 2011)

Philippines: The Ifugao Federation of Day Care Workers (IFDCWs) completed three days training on positive discipline provided by the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office. The training was organised when an analysis of day care services uncovered child abuse as a major issue for day care children. (*PIA Daily News*, 9 November 2011)

Qatar: A young boy was reportedly assaulted by a private school principal who allegedly stabbed him repeatedly with a sharpened pencil to the point of injury, sparking debate on the issue of corporal punishment. The boy's parents have filed a complaint with the police and asked the Supreme Education Council to investigate the incident. The Qatar Foundation for the Protection of Women and Children (QFPWC) is providing psychological support for the boy. (*The Peninsular*, 5 and 11 December 2011)

Saudi Arabia: According to Fox News, which received translations of school textbooks for 2010-2011 obtained from Saudi Arabia by the Institute for Gulf Affairs in Washington DC, teenagers are being taught barbaric practices, including how the hand and feet of a thief should be amputated. (*Fox News*, 21 December 2011). In December, a man had his right hand amputated after he was found guilty of the theft of gold, a pistol and a mobile and of taking part in the theft of a car. (*Saudi Gazette*, 2 January 2012)

South Africa: Reports to KwaZulu-Natal's Childline indicate that children aged 9-12 continue to be physically punished by teachers despite the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools. Violence reported in the six months to November 2011 include children being hit over the head, being hit repeatedly on their hands, and suffering burst eardrums and broken limbs at the hands of their teachers. (www.iol.co.za, 28 November 2011)

According to the South African Democratic Teachers Union, many teachers are resigning because corporal punishment is prohibited and there is a lack of support from the department of education. (*SowetanLive*, 21 December 2011)

In a website article, President Zuma was quoted as supporting the use of corporal punishment, saying that modernity brought by Christianity and the West – including laws against corporal punishment – had been harmful to society. Cape Town Archbishop Thabo Cecil Makgoba spoke against his comments: “Consequences of corporal punishment are grave in any language, creed and colour. On this, I respectfully disagree with the president”. (*iolnews*, 21 December 2011)

Sudan: In response to demonstrations against the rising cost of living in October, Sudanese authorities reportedly arrested and flogged protestors, including children. A 13 year old boy was arrested and ordered by the court to be flogged 13 lashes. (*Sudan Tribune*, 11 November 2011)

UK: A teacher was jailed for kicking and slapping children during religious lessons at a mosque. The teacher admitted to charges of assault after being caught inflicting the blows on a hidden camera and exposed by the Channel 4 documentary *Dispatches*. (*Daily Mail*, 24 November 2011)

A mother who took her child out of school after she was put in an isolation room may face legal action for not ensuring her daughter receives education. She said she believes that punishing children by isolating in the room for hours with only a short break violates her daughter's rights. (*Daily Gazette*, 3 November 2011)

Popular soap “Coronation Street” is running a storyline involving the smacking of young girl

by her adoptive mother's partner, prompting debate on the issue including on daytime TV. (*Metro.co.uk*, 22 January 2012; *Daybreak ITV.com*, 22 January 2012)

US: There was much coverage of a video of a Texan judge – Judge William Adams – beating his then teenage disabled daughter, which she posted on the [web](#). The video renewed national debate on the issue and CNN launched a series of [programmes](#) addressing different aspects of the corporal punishment, broadcast on radio, TV and the internet. The judge is not facing charges as the statute of limitations has expired; the State Commission on Judicial Conduct investigated the incident. Debate also continued on religious support for corporal punishment following recent child deaths and the controversial teachings of Michael and Debi Pearl reported in the previous newsletter.

A grandmother faced criminal charges after allegedly beating a toddler in a department store so severely that other shoppers intervened and called for help. (*KHOU11*, 4 November 2011)

A man who acted as a mentor to teenagers at his Korean church in California is accused of beating a 15 year old boy with a metal pole until the boy's legs were bruised and swollen, after the boy's parents asked him to discipline their son in the belief that he had been smoking. The case is being investigated. (*The New Haven Register*, 31 December 2011)

The struggle over the control of the catholic St Augustine High School and the disciplinary measures used (see previous newsletters) has been resolved with an agreement that there will be no attempt to reintroduce corporal punishment. The founding Josephites had ordered it to stop in 2010 but a coalition of parents, alumni and local board members had wanted it to continue. (*The Times-Picayune*, 23 December 2011)

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6 CAN YOU HELP?

Promoting positive, non-violent discipline

We are collecting resources for the promotion of positive discipline in homes, schools and other settings for listing on the website. Contact elinor@endcorporalpunishment.org to suggest resources for inclusion. Resources which promote positive discipline as part of a campaign for law reform or which are clearly linked to prohibition that has already been achieved are especially welcome.

Research on corporal punishment of children

Evidence of the nature and prevalence of corporal punishment gathered through national studies is important to keep the issue visible and to assess the effectiveness of implementation of prohibiting laws and of measures to change attitudes and practice. Please let us know of any research studies on corporal punishment that have been carried out recently or that are being planned (email elinor@endcorporalpunishment.org).

And ...

Other ways to contribute to the work of the Global Initiative include:

- joining our list of volunteer translators
- sending us information on laws prohibiting or authorising corporal punishment
- letting us know about opportunities for promoting law reform (e.g. if draft legislation is being considered) and when new laws are passed which prohibit corporal punishment
- sending us photos and other illustrations of campaigns etc for use in our publications
- providing contact details for organisations actively working to promote the prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children.

If you can help with any of the above, please email info@endcorporalpunishment.org.

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We hope you find this newsletter informative and useful and welcome your comments: please email info@endcorporalpunishment.org. We are sending the newsletter to supporters of the aims of the Global Initiative and others who we think will be interested. If you do not want to receive future editions, please tell us at info@endcorporalpunishment.org. If your organisation is not listed as supporting the aims of the Initiative, please consider signing up (online at www.endcorporalpunishment.org or email info@endcorporalpunishment.org).

To receive the latest developments between newsletters, please sign up to the RSS news feed at [@](#).

“The UN SG’s Study report, which I presented to the General Assembly in 2006, set a target of 2009 for prohibition of all legalised violence against children. Yes this was wildly over-optimistic – but how could we justifiably be ‘realistic’ about the time it takes to convince governments to prohibit such obvious human rights violations against their youngest citizens? How could we be true to children and yet condemn another whole generation to suffer childhoods scarred by deliberate and legalised adult violence?...”

Professor Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, The Independent Expert who led the UN Secretary General’s Study on Violence against Children and Commissioner and Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, OAS, in *Ending legalised violence against children: Global report 2011*