

Progress towards prohibiting all corporal punishment in North America



End Corporal Punishment

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Also available online at www.endcorporalpunishment.org

The following table summarises the legal status of corporal punishment of children – and progress towards achieving prohibition – in all settings in all states in North America. As at March 2019 no state has achieved prohibition in all settings, including the home, nor made a commitment to doing so.

State	Prohibited in the home	Prohibited in alternative care settings	Prohibited in day care	Prohibited in schools	Prohibited in penal institutions	Prohibited as sentence for crime
Canada	NO ¹	SOME ²	SOME ³	YES ⁴	YES	YES
USA	NO	SOME ⁵	SOME ⁶	SOME ⁷	SOME ⁸	YES

Note

The above information is based wherever possible on examination of national legislation; additional information is gathered from many sources, including reports to and by the United Nations human rights treaty bodies. Information in square brackets is unconfirmed. We are very grateful to government officials, UNICEF and other UN agencies, NGOs and human rights institutions, and many individuals who have assisted us in our research. We welcome corrections and updates: email vohitos@who.int. For further details on all states see the individual state reports at www.endcorporalpunishment.org.

¹ 2004 Supreme Court ruling limited but upheld parents' right to physically punish children

² Prohibited in state provided care in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Yukon, and in foster care in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario; in Ontario prohibited in provincially licensed childcare programmes and in foster homes for children receiving services from provincially licensed/approved child protection agency or other service provider

³ Prohibited in all states/territories except Quebec

⁴ Unlawful under 2004 Supreme Court ruling but this not yet confirmed in laws relating to private schools and to all schools in Alberta and Manitoba

⁵ Prohibited in all care settings in 31 states, and in some settings in other states and District of Columbia

⁶ Prohibited in all care settings in 31 states, and in some settings in other states and District of Columbia

⁷ Prohibited in public schools in 29 states and District of Columbia, and in public and private schools in Iowa and New Jersey; federal bill which would prohibit under discussion (2019)

⁸ Prohibited in 32 states