

Caribbean Coalition for the Abolition of Corporal Punishment of Children

Newsletter 5
September 2015



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Welcome to the September 2015 e-newsletter from the [Caribbean Coalition for the Abolition of Corporal Punishment of Children](#). This newsletter is sent to those across the region who have indicated their support for prohibition and elimination of all corporal punishment and others who we hope will be interested. We hope you find it useful; please share it and if you have any comments, contributions or feedback, email us at info@endcorporalpunishment.org.

News and developments

Children in Trinidad & Tobago protected from corporal punishment in all settings except the home

Trinidad & Tobago has become the first independent state in the Caribbean to achieve prohibition of corporal punishment of children in all settings of their lives

except the family home (Curacao and Sint Maarten, two Caribbean territories of the Netherlands, have achieved prohibition in all settings including the family home). The Children Act 2012, which prohibits corporal punishment by all adults except parents, was proclaimed in May 2015. In June 2015, Clifton De Coteau, Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development, [spoke](#) publicly against corporal punishment by parents: “At one point in time, I did support corporal punishment but all the educational psychology books will tell you that it has a negative impact on the child. Corporal punishment is the thing of the past and I would not support it.”

Global Movement for Children prioritises advocacy for prohibition of corporal punishment

At its Directors’ Meeting in July, the [Global Movement for Children in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) decided that its priority for at least two years would be achieving a region free of corporal and other humiliating punishment. The Global Movement is an alliance of more than 15 child rights organizations which work together on advocacy at the regional level.

Positive developments

Antigua and Barbuda: The Child Justice Bill which is currently under discussion would prohibit corporal punishment as a sentence for crime: “... a sentence of life imprisonment or capital punishment or any form of corporal punishment shall not be imposed on a child” (art. 72(1)). The Bill does not prohibit corporal punishment in penal institutions.

Barbados: The Prisons (Amendment) Act 2015 has repealed provisions which allowed for corporal punishment in the Prisons Act 1964. Prohibition in all penal institutions has not yet been achieved, as provisions in the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Act 1926 still authorise the use of corporal punishment on boys.

Guyana: The new Juvenile Justice Bill would make corporal punishment unlawful in penal institutions and as a sentence for crime. In June 2015, the Guyana Human Rights Association released a [statement](#) calling for Parliament to support the Ministry of Education to abolish corporal punishment in schools.

St Lucia: In response to an incident in which a video of a child being beaten was circulated online, Elizabeth Lewis, Director of the Department of Human Services, part of the Ministry for Health, Wellness, Human Services and Gender Relations, [said](#) that her department does not support corporal punishment:

“Corporal punishment for us, is not the best way at all. It is not something that we support at Human Services, because we realize it entails some level of violence and we are certainly not in favour of violence against children.” The Ministry, in collaboration with UNICEF, has [released](#) a [music video](#) calling for an end to corporal punishment.

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Advocacy resources

[*New website for the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children*](#). The new and improved site presents the Global Initiative’s up to date information on progress towards universal prohibition of all corporal punishment of children, guidance on advocacy for law reform and detailed reports on every country including all Caribbean states and territories, as well as the latest news, research summaries and advocacy resources. New features include links to national campaigns for law reform and information on upcoming treaty body and UPR examinations, including deadlines for briefing, in individual country reports.

[*Towards non-violent schools: prohibiting all corporal punishment, Global report 2015*](#). This new report, published jointly by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment and Save the Children, charts progress towards prohibition of corporal punishment in schools and identifies the states where progress is not being made. The report sets out the human rights standards relating to prohibition of corporal punishment, summarises research documenting the continued use of corporal punishment in schools and together with extracts from national legislation authorising corporal punishment as well as from laws prohibiting it, describes how laws can be reformed to achieve abolition. The report features the eleven Caribbean states in which corporal punishment in schools remains lawful.

[*Faith-based support for prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment of children – a global overview*](#). This briefing, prepared by the Churches’ Network for Non-violence, provides examples of faith-based support across the world, including both multi-religious support for prohibition and relevant perspectives from specific faiths that can be used to advocate for prohibition. With extracts from key statements and links to further information, the summary is a key tool in addressing the faith-based elements of promoting prohibition and elimination of all corporal punishment of children.

[Ending violent punishment of children for a world free from fear and violence: including indicators on violent punishment of children in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). This new briefing, prepared by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, highlights that ending violent punishment – the most common form of violence against children – is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, which are to be adopted at a special meeting of the UN General Assembly on 25-27 September 2015. Indicators which will be used to monitor progress towards the goals are currently under discussion. The briefing urges the adoption of global indicators on the legality and prevalence of violent punishment of children.

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Using the UN human rights system

This section of the newsletter lists the next examinations of Caribbean states by UN treaty bodies and under the Universal Periodic Review and gives outcomes of these examinations since the last CCACPC newsletter in April 2016.

When their state is examined, NGOs and national human rights institutions can contribute to the process by submitting information, with the aim of encouraging the body to recommend prohibition of corporal punishment. Recommendations made to states add to the pressure on governments to work for prohibition and are powerful tools for NGOs and NHRIs to use in their advocacy.

The CCACPC can provide advice and support on using the UN human rights system and its recommendations to advocate for prohibition. Contact elinor@endcorporalpunishment.org for more information.

Details of exact deadlines for sending information on each country are posted on the [individual country reports](#) on the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children's website when they become available.

[Antigua and Barbuda](#) will be examined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in September 2016. The adoption of the list of issues which the state will be examined on will take place in October 2015. It will also be examined by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in 2016.

[Barbados](#) will be examined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in June 2016. The adoption of the list of issues for the examination will take place in October 2015.

[Haiti](#) will be examined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in January 2016 and by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in Feb/Mar 2016. It will be reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in 2016.

[Jamaica](#) was reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in 2016. The government rejected recommendations to prohibit corporal punishment. The list of issues for its examination by the Human Rights Committee will be adopted in March 2016 and the state will be examined in October 2016.

[St Kitts and Nevis](#) will be reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in November 2015; the deadline for submitting information has passed.

[St Lucia](#) will be reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in November 2015.

[St Vincent and the Grenadines](#) will be examined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2016. The list of issues for the examination will be adopted in October 2015. It will be reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in 2016.

[Suriname](#) will be examined by the Human Rights Committee in October 2015 and by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in September 2016. It will be reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in 2016.

[Trinidad & Tobago](#)'s list of issues for its upcoming examination by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women will be adopted in November 2016. It will be reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review in 2016.

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“Beating a child is abusive and always wrong. It has survived in Guyana only because the concept of a child as a human person in his/her own right is outweighed by authoritarian notions of children as property of adults, whose character is to be shaped by fear, pain and suffering. Corporal punishment abuses children, demeans teachers and fosters no positive values whatsoever.”

Guyana Human Rights Association, June 2015

Note: The CCACPC is supported by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (www.endcorporalpunishment.org).

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